

# Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy



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APA NEWSLETTER ON

# Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy

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CARLOS ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ, EDITOR

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## FROM THE EDITORS

Carlos Alberto Sánchez and Lori Gallegos  
de Castillo

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

This issue of the newsletter begins with the winner of the 2019 APA Prize in Latin American Thought. In his award winning essay, Noell Birondo seeks to reconsider the relationship between Aristotelean and Aztec ethics. Particularly, Birondo seeks to redeem Aristotle from the post-Conquest appropriations of Spanish interpreters. He argues that “a consideration of the actual historical collision of these two radically distinct belief systems, Christian and Aztec, reveals the possibility—even in the early modern period—of a helpfully ‘dialogical’ Aristotelianism, one that strains to understand, from within, the perspective of alien others.”

Our second essay is an ambitious and thought-provoking piece by Andrew C. Soto. Its aim is both to set the tone for and propose the epistemological contours of a “Chicano/a philosophy.” In “Chicano/a Philosophy: Rupturing Gringo Anti-Chicano/a Paradigms and Philosophies,” Soto argues that a Chicano/a philosophy will not get off the ground if its grounding epistemology is reflective of or imitates the grounding paradigms of the West, what he calls “gringo paradigms.” The reason why this starting point will not do is that those epistemologies “are upheld by a violent gringo legal system that a priori and necessarily constructs the Chicano/a as a permanent threat to its civilized and rational institutions.” What is needed is a “complete rejection of integrationist and assimilationist logics, anti-Chicano/a gringo ethics, and philosophies centered on the need for gringo recognition.” A Chicano/a philosophy, furthermore, “must seek to build on a Chicano/a logics that centers Chicano/as as creators of reason, knowledge, history, and philosophy.” Soto’s grounding intuition is that non-white, non-Anglo philosophers in the US seeking to articulate their own philosophical voice sabotage themselves by demanding recognition from a system that continues to marginalize them and oppress them. Soto’s article should evoke much discussion.

We continue with two book reviews. The first, by Manuel Chavez, considers Roberto D. Hernández’s *Coloniality of the U-S///Mexico Border: Power, Violence, and the Decolonial Imperative*. Chavez reads Hernandez’s text as a philosophical exploration of immigration and violence that “offers . . . a philosophically provocative way to rethink the

hegemonic discourses about the politics of the border.” According to Chavez, Hernández’s text allows us to rethink contemporary instances of anti-immigrant violence (such as the 1984 McDonald’s shooting as well as the 2019 Walmart shooting) as extensions of colonial oppression. Ultimately, writes Chavez, Hernández “Hernandez provides a political and moral ‘philosophy born of colonial struggle’ that can help us imagine and create resistant possibilities together.”

The second book review, by Roy Ben-Shai, is of Carlos Pereda’s *Lessons in Exile*. Ben-Shai’s review is less an academic review and more of a persuasive invitation to read Pereda’s text as offering a phenomenology of exile or, as Ben-Shai says, a “paradigm for experience in general.” Pereda’s *Lessons in Exile* is about exile, specifically, about Pereda’s own exile in Mexico (he’s originally from Uruguay), something that allows this small philosophical text to open a phenomenological window into the phenomenon, allowing, moreover, for one to have an experience of exile along with Pereda. As Ben-Shai puts it, “I did not anticipate, in fact, just how far Pereda’s book would end up [teaching me the] kind of lessons exile has to teach.”

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## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy* is accepting contributions for the FALL 2020 issue. Our readers are encouraged to submit original work on any topic related to Hispanic/Latino thought, broadly construed. We publish original, scholarly treatments, as well as reflections, book reviews, and interviews. Please prepare articles for anonymous review.

All submissions should be accompanied by a short biographical summary of the author. Electronic submissions are preferred. All submissions should be limited to 5,000 words (twenty double-spaced pages) and must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language and *The Chicago Manual of Style* formatting. All articles submitted to the newsletter undergo anonymous review by members of the Committee on Hispanics.

### BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews in any area of Hispanic/Latino philosophy, broadly construed, are welcome. Submissions should be accompanied by a short biographical summary of the author. Book reviews may be short (500 words) or long (1,500 words). Electronic submissions are preferred.

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## DEADLINES

Deadline for spring issue is November 15. Authors should expect a decision by January 15. Deadline for the fall issue is April 15. Authors should expect a decision by June 15.

Please send all articles, book reviews, queries, comments, or suggestions electronically to the editor, Carlos Alberto Sánchez, at [carlos.sanchez@sjsu.edu](mailto:carlos.sanchez@sjsu.edu), or by post: Department of Philosophy, San Jose State University, One Washington Sq., San Jose, CA 95192-0096.

## FORMATTING GUIDELINES

The *APA Newsletters* adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Use as little formatting as possible. Details like page numbers, headers, footers, and columns will be added later. Use tabs instead of multiple spaces for indenting. Use italics instead of underlining. Use an “em dash” (—) instead of a double hyphen (--). Use endnotes instead of footnotes. Examples of proper endnote style: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 90. See Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?” *Noûs* 34 (2000): 31–55.

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## ARTICLES

### *The Virtues of Mestizaje: Lessons from Las Casas on Aztec Human Sacrifice*

Noell Birondo

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Winner, 2019 APA Essay Prize in Latin American Thought

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Western imperialism has received many different types of moral-political justifications, but one of the most historically influential justifications appeals to an allegedly universal form of human nature. In the early modern period this traditional conception of human nature—based on a Western archetype, e.g., Spanish, Dutch, British, French, German—opens up a logical space for considering the inhabitants of previously unknown lands as having a “less-than-human” nature.<sup>1</sup> This appeal to human nature originally found its inspiration in the philosophy of Aristotle, whose ethical thought pervaded the work of European philosophers at the outset of the early modern period and the modern age of empire. Indeed some Spanish writers—most famously, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (b. 1494)—explicitly appealed to Aristotle’s moral-political philosophy in order to justify the conquest of the Americas in the early sixteenth century, for instance, to justify war against the Aztecs and other indigenous peoples.<sup>2</sup> At the time of European arrival, the Aztec civilization was easily the greatest in Mesoamerica—and yet the Europeans generally considered the Aztec people to be “barbaric,” i.e., less-than-fully-human.<sup>3</sup>

Despite Aristotle’s association with the history of Western imperialism, the past forty years in moral philosophy have seen an explosion of interest in Aristotle’s ethics,

especially the idea that the virtues are indispensable to a good human life. Today, proponents of an Aristotelian ethics can insist that Aristotle’s appeal to human nature can easily allow for—and even celebrate—the wide variety of lifestyles found in different cultural-historical contexts, that it can allow for a more flexible conception of the ways in which human nature is realized in different cultures and historical moments. Several philosophers have even developed accounts of previously overlooked virtues that people will need under conditions of oppression or social marginalization, conditions that are often the result of intercultural imperialism.<sup>4</sup> These recent developments flow naturally from an Aristotelian orientation,<sup>5</sup> and such developments should lead us to consider, further, whether the assumptions that enabled Western imperialism might linger enough today to influence contemporary conceptions of the virtues—for instance, unreflective assumptions about European cultural supremacy and American exceptionalism.

My main hypothesis here is that such unreflective and deep-seated cultural prejudices have shaped the Western development of Aristotelian ethics in various ways—as already illustrated in Sepúlveda’s appeal to Aristotelian “natural slaves”—and that such prejudices partially explain the felt need for an extra-ethical foundation for the virtues, one provided by a universal and morally determinative form of human nature. An acknowledgement of the actual world-historical development of Aristotelian ethics would therefore be a first, but crucial step towards developing a more modest, intercultural version of a contemporary neo-Aristotelian ethics—an approach that aims precisely, in its open-endedness and epistemological humility, to supersede any form of imperialism. Such cultural prejudices can obscure a more plausible and open-ended version—an intercultural and self-consciously “mestizo” version—of a plausible neo-Aristotelian ethics.<sup>6</sup>

What I argue in this paper, much more specifically, is that a consideration of the actual historical collision of these two radically distinct belief systems, Christian and Aztec, reveals the possibility—even in the early modern period—of a helpfully “dialogical” Aristotelianism, one that strains to understand, from within, the perspective of alien others. This dialogical Aristotelianism disavows an “epistemology of ignorance”—it disavows the need *not* to know, the motivation *not* to learn, something that is arguably essential to Eurocentrism.<sup>7</sup> A dialogical Aristotelianism strongly suggests that a philosophical version of “mestizaje” can enrich the best philosophical accounts of the virtues we have, both now and in future research on moral character (I will return to what, in my view, this type of philosophical “admixture” will fruitfully include in §5 below).<sup>8</sup>

#### 2. THE AZTECS AS ALIEN OTHERS

In order to illustrate this dialogical version of an Aristotelian ethics, I will discuss two of the central arguments deployed by Bartolomé de Las Casas (b. 1484) in defense of Aztec human sacrifice.<sup>9</sup> This defense was originally delivered in front of the Council of the Indies, a tribunal convened in 1550 by Charles I of Spain—Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire—in order to determine the fate of the native inhabitants of the Indies (our Americas). The question

before the Council was whether waging war against the native inhabitants of the Indies was morally justified in order to convert them to the Christian faith. This question seemed urgent given the apparently barbaric nature of the Aztecs and other indigenous peoples—something most notably demonstrated by the religiously sanctioned practice of human sacrifice and the equally morbid practice (or so it was believed)<sup>10</sup> of consuming the flesh of the sacrificial victims. Despite these apparently barbaric practices—which genuinely horrified sixteenth-century Europeans—Las Casas defends the rationality of the Aztec way of life.

The discussion here should not, of course, be thought to question the gruesome nature of Aztec human sacrifice. One recent historian, drawing on authoritative sources, offers this lurid description:

In a typical ritual . . . the helpless individual was confronted with the sight of the great sacrificial stone, stained with blood, which also matted the hair of the magnificently adorned priests. Seized by these gory apparitions, the victim was stretched backwards over the stone altar, each limb extended by a priest so that the back was arched and the chest stretched taut and raised high toward the heavens. A fifth priest struck open the chest with an obsidian knife, excised the heart with knife and hands and raised the fertile offering to the heavens, displaying to the gods the sacrificial fruit.<sup>11</sup>

Las Casas addresses the question of whether it would be just to wage war against the Aztecs, in the name of Christianity, in order to end this practice and to spare the lives of the innocent victims. The answer he gives is “No.”

Las Casas’s defiant approach to these issues already shows in his response to a different Spanish pretext for war. According to this different justification, war against the indigenous peoples is justified because they are guilty of killing Christians and therefore guilty of thwarting the spread of Christianity. Las Casas provides a sharp response. It highlights the contemporary relevance of thinking through his arguments—for instance, their relevance in evaluating past and present US policy toward indigenous peoples and their descendants.<sup>12</sup> In response to this initial pretext for war—that war is justified because the Indians kill Christians and prevent the spread of the Gospel—Las Casas responds that although the Indians have indeed killed Christians, they have not killed them *qua* Christians. Rather, the Indians kill Christians *qua* perpetrators of violence, theft, rape, torture, and murder. This insightful distinction is a distinction of which any Aristotelian can be justly proud. Its contemporary relevance should be obvious.

### 3. ON ARISTOTELIAN ENDOXA

Overall, Las Casas argues that the Aztec way of life “cannot be excused in the sight of God” (that the Mexica are not objectively correct about the propriety of human sacrifice) but that it “can completely be excused in the sight of men.”<sup>13</sup> What this means is that no one can justifiably blame the Aztecs for their violent religious practices—but certainly not the Spaniards.<sup>14</sup> Thus the following line of inquiry, with

which Las Casas opens his discussion of human sacrifice, is certainly intended to sting. Las Casas says that, “It would not be right to make war on them for this reason.” This is because

it is difficult to absorb in a short time the truth proclaimed to them. . . . Why will they believe such a proud, greedy, cruel, and rapacious nation? Why will they give up the religion of their ancestors, unanimously approved for so many centuries and supported by the authority of their teachers. . . ?<sup>15</sup>

In this passage Las Casas gestures toward the first of his two main arguments here, which is that the Aztecs are committing what he calls a “probable” error. In explaining the nature of probable error, as he sees it, Las Casas makes direct reference to Aristotle’s *Topics* Book I. Las Casas insists that “as the Philosopher says, that is said to be probable which is approved by all men, either the majority of wise men or by those whose wisdom has the greatest following.”<sup>16</sup> What is this reference to Aristotle?

At the outset of the *Topics*, one of his logical treatises, Aristotle distinguishes between two types of deductions or “syllogisms.” He calls the first type a “demonstration,” and he calls the second type a “dialectical” deduction. Aristotle explains the distinction in the very passage Las Casas cites:

Now a deduction (*sullogismos*) is an argument in which, certain things being laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them. It is a demonstration, when the premisses from which the deduction starts are true and primitive, or are such that our knowledge of them has originally come through premisses which are primitive and true; and it is a dialectical deduction, if it reasons from reputable opinions (*ex endoxôn*).<sup>17</sup>

Aristotle goes on to explain what he means by saying that in the case of dialectical deductions the premisses are reputable opinions—the Greek word here is *endoxa* (sometimes also translated as “probable assumptions”). Regarding such *endoxa* Aristotle says that, “those opinions are reputable which are [i] accepted by everyone or [ii] by the majority or [iii] by the wise—i.e., by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and reputable of them.”<sup>18</sup> This means that dialectical deductions will differ from demonstrations. For demonstrations begin from premisses that are (or are derived from premisses that are) “true and primitive.” That is, demonstrations begin from premisses which, like each of the first principles in an Aristotelian science, “should command belief in and by itself.”

By contrast, a “dialectical” deduction will proceed from *endoxa*—it will proceed from those reputable opinions or modest human starting points which, as Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, are the only appropriate starting points in ethics.<sup>19</sup> In a practical subject like ethics, the appropriate starting points are the ethical opinions that are accepted by everyone, or by the majority, or by the wise. We must start from things that are evident to us. Our starting points in ethics will certainly never have the epistemological firmness of premisses that are “true and primitive.” Rather,

our starting points in ethics can only amount to the best ethical judgments that we and our society have managed to arrive at so far—the ethical judgments that seem most evident to us. This will be a subject that, as a historical matter, merits our ongoing ethical reflection.<sup>20</sup>

Las Casas's explicit recognition of Aristotle's ethical methodology—along with the way he utilizes this methodology in defense of the Aztec way of life, for instance by castigating the ethical outlook of his fellow Spaniards—indicates that Las Casas interprets Aristotle's ethics in terms of what I have characterized elsewhere as an "internal" validation of the virtues of character.<sup>21</sup> An internal validation of the virtues of character disavows any "external" appeal to a universal and morally determinative form of human nature from which one could derive a specific conception of the virtues of character. The general form of this different type of validation—an external validation of the virtues—manifests itself most obviously in interpretations of Aristotle that appeal to an alleged "metaphysical biology" or other form of natural teleology, usually culminating in a naturalistic conception of well-being or flourishing.

By contrast, Las Casas seems to recognize that Aristotle's ethical project can be understood as significantly more modest than that. Indeed, Las Casas seems to follow Aristotle down this different philosophical path. This more modest Aristotelianism would certainly explain the sharp contrast between the charitable hermeneutical understanding deployed by Las Casas (even with respect to human sacrifice) and the quite different apology for conquest deployed by Sepúlveda—i.e., an apology for conquest that exhibits a form of willful hermeneutical ignorance, especially, but not only, in its appeal to natural slavery.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE NATURAL LIGHT

Las Casas also argues that it is not easy to convince even rational people to abandon their cultural heritage in a short amount of time, especially given *only* the resources provided by "natural light of reason"—that is, without the further epistemological resources that Las Casas believes are provided by "faith, grace, and doctrine." Waging war on the Aztecs would therefore be unjustified, because "it is difficult to absorb in a short time the truth proclaimed to them." Here Las Casas emphasizes that the "natural light of reason" displays epistemological limitations—that in the absence of divine revelation, natural reason seems to provide justificatory reasons *in favor* of human sacrifice.<sup>23</sup>

In what follows I want to mention three possible strategies for supporting this second line of defense. Las Casas employs the first two strategies in the *Defense*. His avoiding the third one must have been determined by facts on the ground.

First, Las Casas appeals to biblical and historical precedents of human sacrifice that seem to illustrate its consistency with natural reason. He cites biblical episodes apparently indicating that God sometimes requires (or permits) human sacrifice. He also cites episodes of human sacrifice within Western civilizations: for instance among the Greeks, Romans, and even "our own Spaniards."<sup>24</sup>

Second, Las Casas argues that natural reason seems even to *require* sacrificing humans to God. He proceeds by first establishing four principles (mostly by appeal to theological and philosophical authorities): (1) No nation is so barbarous that it does not have at least some confused knowledge of God; (2) People are led by natural inclination to worship God according to their capacities and in their own ways; (3) There is no better way to worship God than by sacrifice, which is the principle act of *latría* [adoration]; (4) Offering sacrifice to the true God, or to the one who is thought to be God, comes from the natural law, whereas the things to be offered to God are a matter of human law and positive legislation.<sup>25</sup> From these principles Las Casas derives the conclusion of the natural light of reason (given that no earthly thing is more valuable than human life). He writes:

Therefore nature itself dictates and teaches those who do not have faith, grace, or doctrine, who live within the limitations of the light of nature, that, in spite of every contrary positive law, they ought to sacrifice victims to the true God or to the false god who is thought to be true, so that by offering a supremely precious thing they might be more grateful for the many favors they have received.<sup>26</sup>

A similar conclusion might also be reached by direct appeal to Christianity, as follows.

Third, Las Casas might have emphasized—something that he does indeed mention—that Christianity itself essentially involves human sacrifice.<sup>27</sup> Hence the activity of human sacrifice cannot, by itself, be any sign of barbarism and cannot be contrary to the natural light of reason. The charitable view would be that the Aztecs are only partially mistaken here (in absence of divine revelation), since the sacrificial debt has already been paid in the person of Jesus Christ. Moreover, as I myself would emphasize, if one takes seriously the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation—that the bread and the wine of the Eucharist are not mere representations of the body and the blood of Christ, but that they literally are the body and the blood of Christ—then Christianity also involves a form of cannibalism.

What each of these strategies demonstrates is the possibility of a radical form of hermeneutical charity even regarding the allegedly barbarous practices of the Aztec people. Gustavo Gutiérrez nicely summarizes this in his magisterial study of Las Casas. Gutiérrez writes:

By attending to the customs, lifestyles, and religious freedom of the Indians, [Las Casas] created the necessary conditions for a dialogue to be conducted in respect for both parties. In this manner of dialogue, reason, not undue pressure, makes possible an integral presentation of the gospel message: now that message is offered—without prejudice to the values of the one proclaiming it—for the free acceptance of each hearer.

Such a dialogue will respect the rational freedom of both parties. It will also involve, not only the giving of reasons, but also the taking of them:

If evangelization is a dialogue, it will not exist without an effort to understand the position of one's interlocutor from within, in such a way that one may sense the vital thrust of these positions and grasp their internal logic. Neither will it be possible unless one is ready to give *as well as to receive*.<sup>28</sup>

This passage characterizes the dialogical approach to ethics that I am urging (but without any appeal to the supernatural). Although we should certainly be wary, in intercultural contexts, of any appeal to "evangelization," Las Casas's radical hermeneutical charity advances the discussion here.<sup>29</sup> Las Casas demonstrates the central virtue involved in a philosophical version of *mestizaje*: a radical hermeneutical charity that constitutes a distinctive form of epistemic justice. This epistemic virtue disavows an epistemology of ignorance by recognizing and—where appropriate—encouraging philosophical admixture. This philosophical admixture will occur, in my view, in at least the following two ways. First, it will occur across spatio-cultural geography and between different philosophical, cultural, and academic communities. This is a kind of cross-pollination—something that seems to be more often lauded than practiced. Second, it will occur across world-historical time, as a result of one's own historical (i.e., "genetic") philosophical inheritance, an inheritance that shapes one's overall philosophical outlook, one's framework of thought. This is a kind of dialogue with the past.<sup>30</sup> In the final section I gesture toward a more rounded view of each of these.

## 5. EPISTEMIC JUSTICE IN ARISTOTELIAN ETHICS

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle restricts the audience of his ethical lectures on the grounds that those who engage in moral philosophy must have been well brought up or brought up in good habits.<sup>31</sup> What is less frequently noticed is that this requirement—to have appropriate ethical starting points and to have a character sufficiently well formed that one is not swayed by, for instance, unruly desires<sup>32</sup>—is also one that applies to Aristotle himself, and to Aristotelian moral philosophers in general, since they are also engaged in the practice of moral philosophy. But in the aftermath of the Spanish conquest of Tenochtitlán and other parts of the Americas, Aristotelian moral philosophy did not generally embrace the dialogical approach advocated by Las Casas. I believe we need to trace the history of the damage done to moral philosophy in the long historical interim.<sup>33</sup>

By way of analogy, consider an episode of European barbarism, recorded from the perspective of Aztec witnesses immediately before the fall of Mexico. In this episode, Spanish soldiers block the exits during a festive religious gathering, allowing the soldiers to massacre the participants. This gruesome episode seems to be taking inspiration from something in Homer and giving inspiration to something in George R. R. Martin—except that this actual historical episode involves gross violations of human dignity:

And when they had closed them off . . . they then entered the temple courtyard to slay them . . . they surrounded those who danced whereupon they went among the drums. Then they struck the arms of the one who beat the drums; they severed both his hands, and afterwards struck his neck, [so that] his neck [and head] flew off, falling far away. . . . Of some, they struck the belly, and their entrails streamed forth. And when one in vain would run, he would only drag his entrails like something raw, as he tried to flee. . . .

And the blood of the chieftains ran like water; it spread out slippery, and a foul odor rose from the blood. And the entrails lay as if dragged out. And the Spaniards walked everywhere, searching the tribal temples; they went making thrusts everywhere in case someone were hidden there. Everywhere they went, ransacking every tribal temple they hunted.<sup>34</sup>

Ultimately it is unclear whether Anglo-American moral philosophy has displayed an understanding of cultural others that has been *much* better than the understanding displayed in this historical episode. Whether intentionally or not, mainstream Anglo-American philosophy has been remarkably effective at securing its borders against what many of its practitioners consider to be alien influences. This includes influences from other cultures and from demographics other than the dominantly situated demographic in the profession; from other academic disciplines (for instance history, sociology, and anthropology, although this is improving in some quarters); and from philosophical methodologies other than the methodologies developed within Anglo-American philosophy in the early- and mid-twentieth century and still insisted upon by some philosophers today as the defining mark of any genuine philosophy. Indeed, some philosophers seem to be eerily at home with the history of Western imperialism. This is a history that such philosophers seem to think can be neatly left in the past, in such a way that they—and their favored research projects—can continue to benefit from centuries of past injustice.

Obviously, I cannot fully develop these suggestions here.<sup>35</sup> Instead of doing so, I will emphasize something that I think is utterly crucial for developing a plausible neo-Aristotelian ethics informed by an intercultural perspective. This is a radical form of cultural self-scrutiny, especially a scrutiny of the ethical and epistemic prejudices that are embedded within our social-historical framework of thought—a framework of thought that is, of course, usually taken for granted. It ceases to be taken for granted—or *can* do so—when it comes into contact with radically alternative frameworks, ones that are culturally or historically distant from our own current location. To put the point differently: contemporary moral philosophers need to pay greater attention to history in at least two senses. We need a better understanding of the history and the historicity of philosophy, an understanding of the former that is not willfully inaccurate and that disavows the arrogance of knowing only one's own philosophical tradition.<sup>36</sup> We also need a better appreciation of our current place in history

and our cultural particularity—a critical understanding of the framework of thought that can, of course, seem inevitable to us. This would be a form of neo-Aristotelian ethics that takes seriously those genealogical approaches that still remain very much against-the-current in contemporary moral philosophy. It would also be a form of Aristotelian ethics that, in better appreciating our current (globalized, multicultural, postcolonial/neo-colonial) place in history, strains to embody the virtues of epistemic justice.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**NOTES**

1. Cf. Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*, chaps. 1–2; Alcoff, “Philosophy and Philosophical Practice: Eurocentrism as an Epistemology of Ignorance.” On the earliest debates concerning the general capacity of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, see Hanke, *All Mankind Is One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians*, chap. 1.
2. Beuchot (*The History of Philosophy in Colonial Mexico*, 28) mentions the Scottish philosopher John Major (Mair) (b. 1467) and the Spanish Bishop Juan de Quevedo (b. 1450) as Sepúlveda’s precursors in the appeal to Aristotelian “natural slaves.” Cf. Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians: A Study of Race Prejudice in the Modern World*, 14–16.
3. Alcoff (“Philosophy and Philosophical Practice,” 402) argues that the Eurocentrism involved here essentially involves an epistemology of ignorance: “Such a construction of barbarian identity removes any motivation to learn other ways or creeds. The claim that those designated are inferior and inadequate thinkers is not justified by a study and evaluation of different practices, customs, forms of religiosity, institutions, beliefs, and the like, but simply on the observation that a group is not-Christian or not-rational or not-self.” She argues that Las Casas recognizes his own perspective as a perspective, and hence that he can “see the Other as having a substantive difference, and not simply as a ‘not-self’” (405). Cf. Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*, passim, and 188–189, quoted below; Beuchot (*The History of Philosophy in Colonial Mexico*, 26–36). See also Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, chap. 4, on the move to considering the native peoples of the Americas to be “nature’s children.”
4. See, e.g., Tessman, *Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles*; Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Justice, and Resistant Imaginations*.
5. Philosophers who are explicitly indebted to Aristotle here include Tessman, *Burdened Virtues*, and Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*. Recent discussions of epistemic injustice are all ultimately indebted to the revival of Aristotelian ethics in the latter part of the twentieth century. In future work I aim to urge the importance of this genealogical fact for the future development of any plausible neo-Aristotelian ethics: Such an ethics must embody epistemic justice.

6. Cf. Beuchot, “The Study of Philosophy’s History in Mexico as a Foundation for Doing Mexican Philosophy,” 126–27.
7. Alcoff, “Philosophy and Philosophical Practice,” 402; cf. Mills, “White Ignorance”; Pohlhaus, “Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice: Toward a Theory of ‘Willful Hermeneutical Ignorance’”; Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*.
8. Julio Covarrubias’s recent case for “letting go” of mestizaje rightfully emphasizes concerns about epistemic settler erasure and the logic of elimination that threatens indigenous communities (Covarrubias, “Letting Go of *Mestizaje*: Settler Colonialism and Latin American/Latinx Philosophy,” §3). But the virtues of mestizaje are directed at the *dominantly* situated paradigm in philosophy, a Eurocentric paradigm which, as Alcoff says, apparently cannot “play well with others” (“Philosophy and Philosophical Practice,” 401); see also Pappas, “The Latino Character of American Pragmatism,” on the observations in William James and John Dewey of what North American philosophy and culture can learn from Latin America. Hence it is not true in this context that “to speak of *mestizaje* is to speak . . . of a kind of cultural genocide that reproduces settler erasures” (Covarrubias, “Letting Go of *Mestizaje*,” 6). What is good for the dominantly situated gander is not necessarily good for the marginally situated goose: cf. *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) II.6, 1105a35–1106b7.
9. To speak of the Aztecs here is perfectly appropriate, in spite of the fact that the conquest of Tenochtitlán (1521), the Aztec capital, antedates the debate between Las Casas and Sepúlveda at Valladolid (1550–1551). In the minds of sixteenth-century Europeans, nothing compared to what the Spaniards witnessed at Tenochtitlán. Here I am following the lead of Anthony Pagden, who notes that “The most famous of the Amerindian cannibals were, of course, the Mexica, whose spectacular bouts of human sacrifice were assumed to have been followed by orgiastic feasts on the flesh of the victims” (*The Fall of Natural Man*, 83). The example of Aztec human sacrifice has been paradigmatic for late twentieth-century moral philosophers interested in intercultural understanding. See, e.g., Taylor, “Understanding the Other: A Gadamerian View on Conceptual Schemes”; Williams, *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics*, 24–26.
10. See, e.g., Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 80–90.
11. Dodds Pennock, *Bonds of Blood: Gender, Lifecycle and Sacrifice in Aztec Culture*, 21; cf. *Florentine Codex* 2.2.
12. On the contemporary relevance of the Valladolid debate, see the excellent recent treatment in Santana, “‘The Indian Problem’: Conquest and the Valladolid Debate”; see also the magisterial discussion of Las Casas in Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*. The best short book on the debate in English—which encompasses both its prelude and its aftermath—remains Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians*. See also the more detailed discussion in Hanke, *All Mankind Is One*.
13. Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, 221.
14. For details, see Las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*. It has been long recognized that for rhetorical and political purposes (this was quite common) Las Casas engages in certain exaggerations of the devastation he documents, especially regarding magnitude (e.g., number of deaths). For contemporary discussions that significantly temper the “Black Legend” of unparalleled Spanish brutality, see Greer, Mignolo, and Quillian, *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires*.
15. Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, 221.
16. *Ibid.*, 220–21.
17. Aristotle, *Topics* I.1, 100a25–b18, revised Oxford translation.
18. *Ibid.*, 100b20–23; cf. NE VII.1, 1145b2–7.
19. NE I.4, 1095a30–b4. In Aristotelian science we presumably start from what is “better known to us,” proceed to what is “better known by nature,” and construct “demonstrations” of the completed science.
20. On Aristotle’s method in ethics, Kraut (“How to Justify Ethical Propositions: Aristotle’s Method”) provides a helpful overview, noting on Aristotle’s behalf that when we engage in ethical inquiry, “it is reasonable to throw into the mixture of opinions

that we take seriously not only the theories of those who have spent their lives studying the subject, but also the common moral consciousness, not only of our time and place, but of other times and places as well" (80). See further references in n. 21, below, and the discussions of neo-Aristotelian ethics cited there.

21. An internal validation contrasts with an external validation, the latter of which I have characterized elsewhere as follows: "An external validation of the virtues of character is an attempt to demonstrate that possession of the virtues of character is necessary in order to secure some good, or to avoid some harm, where the good in question, or the harm, is recognizable as such independently of the particular evaluative outlook provided by possession of the virtues themselves. The validation will thus rely on resources that are 'external' to the particular evaluative outlook to be validated" (Birondo, "Aristotle and the Virtues of Will Power," 85; "Virtue and Prejudice: Giving and Taking Reasons," 191). An internal validation of the virtues need not be philosophically trivial, as I attempt to illustrate in "Patriotism and Character: Some Aristotelian Observations."
22. Cf. Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice"; Fricker, "Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance."
23. Cf. Beuchot, *The History of Philosophy in Colonial Mexico*, 28–30.
24. Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, 224. For a helpful discussion of Las Casas's use of historical sources here, see Carman, "Human Sacrifice and Natural Law in Las Casas's *Apología*, 285–88.
25. Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, chap. 35.
26. *Ibid.*, 234.
27. *Ibid.*, 239; cf. Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 227, n. 198.
28. Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*, 188–189, my emphasis). Gutiérrez finds a similar hermeneutical charity in the work, much later, of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (b. 1648); see Gutiérrez, *Las Casas*, 525, n. 69. On the importance of taking as well as giving reasons in intercultural contexts, see Birondo, "Virtue and Prejudice," to which the current paper is a kind of late addendum.
29. This seems to be the context in which to understand Alcoff's claim that in contrast to a Cartesian form of self-understanding, Las Casas is "groping toward a different self-understanding, in which one's own inclinations are analyzed in relation to their social context" ("Philosophy and Philosophical Practice," 405). She immediately adds something that could be helpful for contemporary philosophers: "Within this approach, dialogic models of philosophical thought, especially those that can span cultures and belief systems, are non-negotiable necessities for the development of understanding." Castro (*Another Face of Empire: Bartolomé de Las Casas, Indigenous Rights, and Ecclesiastical Imperialism*) and von Vacano (*The Color of Citizenship: Race, Modernity, and Latin American/Hispanic Political Thought*) reach rather harsher verdicts on Las Casas's evangelism. But neither author seems to me adequately to address Gutiérrez's painstaking case for the claim that a "single idea" governs Las Casas's *Apología*: "respect for the Indians' religious customs" (Gutiérrez, *Las Casas: In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ*, 174).
30. Beuchot ("The Study of Philosophy's History in Mexico as a Foundation for Doing Mexican Philosophy") helpfully argues for the type of anti-presentism that I mention here. He argues that contemporary Mexican philosophers can benefit from a neo-Aristotelian outlook that appreciates the influence of cultural-historical tradition—he cites the work of Alasdair MacIntyre and Hans-Georg Gadamer (127). Beuchot reasonably asks: "If it is true that we live within a tradition, how can we advance in it or even oppose it if we do not have at least a minimum knowledge of it?" (114). The right hermeneutical balance can nevertheless be, in any specific context, difficult to strike; see O'Gorman, "Art or Monstrosity," on understanding Aztec archeological artifacts, specifically the magnificent statue of Coatlicue in the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City.
31. NE I.4, 1095b4–6.
32. NE I.3, 1095a4–6.
33. The valuable collection of essays in Miller, *The Reception of Aristotle's Ethics*, provides a good beginning here—it considers the historical reception of Aristotle's ethics—except that there is

no consideration of the European encounter with the Americas or the Latin American world. A valuable corrective can now be found in Aspe, *Aristóteles y Nueva España*.

34. *Florentine Codex* 12.20, 53–54.
35. The historiographical study in Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon*, and the work of Robert Bernasconi, Walter Mignolo, and Charles Mills (among others) have helpfully gotten the discussion going, as have recent attempts to generate "new histories of philosophy"—but see also Allais, "Kant's Racism," and Ameriks, "Kant and Dignity: Missed Connections with the United States," for helpfully more sympathetic views of the late eighteenth century and Kant in particular. Recent work on Aztec ethics and Aristotle (Purcell, "Eudaimonia and Nefiliztli: Aristotle and the Aztecs on the Good Life") and Aztec metaphysics (Maffie, *Aztec Philosophy: Understanding a World in Motion*) illustrates another type of void waiting to be filled.
36. Latin American philosophy provides an epistemological opportunity for Anglo-American philosophy: to scrutinize its own historical development from the radically alternative perspective of world-historical marginality. This theme in Latin American thought—the theme of marginality—has been especially emphasized in the work of Leopoldo Zea, Enrique Dussel, and Walter Mignolo. See, for instance, Zea, *The Role of the Americas in History*; Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of 'the Other' and the Myth of Modernity*; Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*; see also Alcoff, "Philosophy and Philosophical Practice"; Schutte, *Cultural Identity and Social Liberation in Latin American Thought*. On the dangers that can prevent dominantly situated groups from taking advantage of such epistemological opportunities, see Mills, "White Ignorance"; Pohlhaus, "Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice"; and Fricker, "Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance."

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## Chicano/a Philosophy: Rupturing Gringo Anti-Chicano/a Paradigms and Philosophies

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### I. THE EMERGENCE OF CHICANO/A PHILOSOPHY

Chicano/a philosophy axiomatically rejects the use of gringo paradigms, logic, reason, and philosophies. It is grounded in the axioms, paradigms, logics, circumstances, and history of the Chicano/a people. It is a field that has emerged from the interdisciplinary work of scholars across numerous fields, including activists, students, artists, musicians, educators, laborers, farmworkers, and several others dedicated to liberating Chicano/as from racist gringo institutions and gringo anti-Chicano/a systems of reason, morality, philosophy, and logics. This gringo system has terrorized Chicano/as by unwaveringly attempting to imprison them to US institutions grounded in a racist/imperial logics that has legally, logically, axiomatically, economically, socially, philosophically, and politically made their exploited existence, their every breath, gesture, and thought, a permanent threat to Western society.

Octavio I. Romano-V in his trailblazing article "Social Science, Objectivity, and the Chicanos," is clear that in contrast to Western paradigms rooted in a Western logic that shapes and maintains the institutions, norms, ideals, standards, ethics, categories, and philosophies of Western man and woman, a Chicano/a paradigm is "the symbiotic relationship within the universe, that is the historical patrimony of Chicanos, revolves around a philosophical system about the nature of man and man, of man in nature, and man in the universe. In essence, this philosophy is non-Weberian, non-Hegelian, and it is very dissimilar to Greek ontology."<sup>1</sup> Put another way, in opposition to a racist Western system of logic and reason that has historically constructed the Chicano/a as a threat, foreigner, and

nonhuman in the imagination and psychotic institutions of the gringo, Chicano/a philosophy provides Chicano/as with a methodology, framework, and paradigm to analyze and theorize their intersubjectivity and historical relation to colonialism, empire, white supremacy, and Western anti-Chicano/a logic/reason.

Provided this as a point of departure, Chicano/as become creators and guardians of their own philosophical systems, logics, epistemologies, and institutions. Simultaneously, as Chicano/as are institutionally constructed as nonhumans within anti-Chicano/a Western paradigms, they implode, destruct, and contour the gringo world by recognizing, analyzing, and understanding it as a permanent psychological and physical threat to their existence and by rejecting the axioms and imperial/genocidal logics that undergirds anti-Chicano/a Western paradigms and philosophies. Extending Octavio Romano's thesis in "Social Science, Objectivity and the Chicanos," Nick C. Vaca in "The Mexican-American in the Social Sciences," Miguel Montiel in "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican American Family," Alfredo Mirandé in *The Chicano Experience: An Alternative Perspective*, and Deluvina Hernandez in the *Mexican American Challenge to a Sacred Crow*, shed light on the violence, institutional tyranny, and threat Western paradigms pose to Chicano/as.<sup>2</sup> These scholars persuasively articulate how concepts in Western philosophy, such as objectivity and dualism, are used by gringo and gringo-minded academics of color to institutionally, conceptually, and logically validate the permanent creation of the nonhuman Chicano/a subject.

As Alfredo Mirandé advances in *The Chicano Experience: An Alternative Perspective*, many early Chicano/a scholars rejected the use of Western paradigms as tools to theorize and analyze Chicano/a culture.<sup>3</sup> Instead, they aimed to create "new paradigms or theoretical frameworks that [were] consistent with a Chicano world view and responsive to the nuances of Chicano culture."<sup>4</sup> They understood Western logic and reason, not as systems that transcend our environment or material world, but systems dependent on the very Western institutions they inform, shape, and create. Mirandé's point is critical because it means that Western logic and Western institutions can only survive and maintain their dominance in conjunction with each other. In Octavio Romano's essay "Social Science, Objectivity, and the Chicanos," he explains the impossible task one must undertake to meet the standards of objectivity within Western logic and how this standard is the centerpiece to pathological and racist academic theories:

As a part of this historical process, there followed a renewed exploration into the concept of objectivity. As generally defined in Western thought, the concept of objectivity is impossible without a corresponding belief in man's ability to separate his mind not only from his body, *but also from all of his ecological surroundings, whether or not these ecological surroundings are human or physical*. It is in this manner that the mind, when believed to be in its objective state, has come to be viewed as separable in Western science just as the soul has been seen as separable in traditional Western theology.<sup>5</sup>

Romano adds, "Western man, then, in his quest for a pure objective reality (that is, to be objective) began to consider events, phenomena, and ideas as apart from personal self-consciousness, to be dealt with ideally in a detached, impersonal, and unprejudiced manner."<sup>6</sup> He understood that logic and the concepts of objectivity and dualism were central components to the gringo's arsenal of violence, lies, and mythmaking. These concepts provide researchers and scientists with the false belief that if they apply a critical eye to their analysis it can be free of biasness and prejudice. In other words, in a system where gringos have control and power over reason, logic, research, and academia, objectivity and dualism are nothing more than concepts gringos use to manipulate the world to their standards, ethics, laws, and norms. Hidden behind these concepts, the gringo is able to create and advance pathological Chicano/a theories that are said to be neutral, fair, rigorous, and scientific. Ultimately, critiquing both Pythagoras's and Plato's dualism, "the belief in the dualistic nature of man, i.e., the separation of mind and body,"<sup>7</sup> Romano exquisitely argues against the use of key Western philosophical axioms and underscores their racist and white supremacist functions.

In his 1968 essay, "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans," Octavio Romano articulates how both gringo and gringo-minded academics of color have for decades deliberately distorted history and created pathological theories about Chicano/as framed within Western logic, objectivity, dualism, and scientific theory, i.e., within their own racist anti-Chicano/a paradigms. Masked in academic theory, scholars advanced calculated myths that Chicano men were machismo, alcoholics, abusers, deadbeat fathers, criminals, and overall threats to American society and their own culture. While Chicanos were theorized as deviants and predators, Chicanas were theoretically pathologized by academics as "superpassively-fatalistic with a touch of sado-masochism."<sup>8</sup>

Echoing Octavio Romano's critique of Western gringo paradigms, Miguel Montiel in his 1970 article "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family" argues that studies of the Mexican-American family "have relied almost totally upon a psychoanalytic model in which there is an uncritical use of concepts like *machismo* . . . relegat[ing] explanations of Mexican family life to a pathological perspective."<sup>9</sup> Borrowing Western ideas about the nature of man and Alfred Adler's individual psychology, Latin American scholars such as Samuel Ramos,<sup>10</sup> Leopoldo Zea,<sup>11</sup> and Octavio Paz<sup>12</sup> adopt these European ideas to "explain" the causes of Mexican and Mexican-American inferiority.<sup>13</sup> As Montiel notes:

Alfred Adler's theory postulates that children born with hereditary organic weaknesses are inclined to compensate both physically and emotionally in the direction of the defective function.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Adler's theory asserted that "the whole human race is blessed with deficient organs," and thus there exists a continual resistance to the establishment of a harmonious life situation.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, he claimed that most individuals suffer from a "sense of female inferiority" and as a result "both sexes have derived an overstrained desire for masculinity."<sup>16</sup>

Adler's theory universally subsumes all human beings as defunct, broken, and defective. This defectiveness, regardless of race, ethnicity, and culture, leads people to yearn for their masculinity as a way to cope with their inferiority.

Derived from the understanding of the European man and woman and the death, rape, and evilness Europeans wrecked on the indigenous and Mexicans, Samuel Ramos, Leopoldo Zea, and Octavio Paz adapted Adler's concepts to theorize and ultimately pathologize Mexican and Chicano culture.<sup>17</sup> As Alfredo Mirandé highlights in *Hombres Y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture*, Adler's individual psychology is center to the overall pathological anti-Brown construction of the machismo Mexican and Chicano:

[T]he so-called cult of machismo developed as Mexican men found themselves unable to protect their women from the Conquest's ensuing plunder, pillage, and rape. Native men developed an overly masculine and aggressive response in order to compensate for deeply felt feelings of powerlessness and weakness. Machismo, then, is nothing more than a futile attempt to mask a profound sense of impotence, powerlessness, and ineptitude, an expression of weakness and a sense of inferiority.<sup>18</sup>

Chicano/a philosophy must resist the urge to theorize about the Chicano/a condition by adapting European concepts. The gringo imperial system of rationality is grounded on an anti-Chicano/a logics that axiomatically and incessantly categorizes Chicano/a people as threats, defective, and less than human. Theorizing Chicano or Mexican males within gringo logics permanently filters out pathologies that "remains imbued with . . . negative attributes as male dominance, patriarchy, authoritarianism, and spousal abuse."<sup>19</sup> Since Western logics and Western institutions are mutually dependent on each other, Chicano/as are permanently and necessarily imprisoned between anti-Chicano/a logics and anti-Chicano/a institutions. As long as Chicano/as continue to subscribe to Western philosophy, their very existence will always be controlled, manipulated, and exploited by the gringo.

In "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans," Octavio Romano asked, "What are these Mexican-Americans who have been created by Social Scientists?"<sup>20</sup> After rigorously analyzing the pathological theorization by several academics, he concluded that their research was grounded in the same axiomatic anti-Brown logic as centuries before. As he highlights, "[t]hese opinions were, and are, pernicious, vicious, misleading, degrading, and brainwashing in that they obliterates history and then re-write it in such a way as to eliminate the historical significance of Mexican-Americans, as well as to simultaneously question the legitimacy of their presence in contemporary society."<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Maxine Baca Zinn in "Sociological Theory in Emergent Chicano Perspective," Alfredo Mirandé in "A Reinterpretation of Male Dominance in the Chicano Family," "Chicano Sociology: A New Paradigm for Social Science," and "Rascuache Lawyering: A Chicana/o Vision of Rebellious Law Practice, Pedagogy, and Clients,"

set the foundation for a paradigm shift in Chicano/a scholarship.<sup>22</sup> Resisting the racist epistemologies, ethics, logics, and metaphysics of gringo theorization, scholars such as Octavio Romano, Alfredo Mirandé, Miguel Montiel, Nick C. Vaca, Deluvina Hernandez, and Maxine Baca Zinn, created new categories of knowledge grounded in a Chicano/a logics where Chicano/as are the creators of reason, theory, history, and philosophy.

## II. CHICANO/A POWER, CHICANISMO, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHICANO/A LOGIC

Ignacio M. García in *Chicanismo: Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* highlights how key Chicano leaders, such as Reies López Tijerina, Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, and José Angel Gutiérrez, unapologetically rejected a liberal and assimilationist ethics. As García notes:

By the early 1960s, many Mexican Americans were disenchanted with traditional politics. These liberal politics centered on an active government that would provide economic development, protect civil rights, and guarantee cultural pluralism. It was an approach that required faith in the established institutions and patience in the face of slow change. It was a steady approach of government action, judicial litigation, and Anglo American leadership. It also required that Mexican Americans wait for the "real" civil-rights problems—those of Black Americans—to be solved before the focus shifted to them.<sup>23</sup>

Opposed to working within the American system, these scholars sought to create their own institutions framed in Chicano/a power, Chicanismo, and Chicano/a reason. They understood US institutions to be a priori racist and anti-Chicano/a. In José Angel Gutiérrez's *A Chicano Manual on How to Handle Gringos*, he presents Chicano/as with a Chicano/a culturalogics to rupture gringo anti-Chicano/a categories and institutions. His manual "provides a roadmap to minority empowerment through an effective use of analysis, practical experience, and anecdote . . . Gutiérrez analyses various types of power and evaluates Chicano and Latino access to it at various levels of US society."<sup>24</sup> Gutiérrez was clear that the only way Chicano/as would be liberated from the hands of the gringo was not by espousing an integrationist or assimilationist ethics, but by eliminating the foundation of the system altogether.<sup>25</sup>

At all points in the gringo system, as José Angel Gutiérrez precisely articulates, Chicano/a existence, his/her very ontology, is always under physical and psychological threat.<sup>26</sup> As long as Chicano/as aim to live within gringo Institutions, they will always be foreigners and threats. This is not an error, ignorance, or a mistake in reasoning that can be corrected by a white supremacist anti-Chicano/a US education system, but a sound and valid conclusion where logic is always under the control and manipulation of the gringo. For example, despite the fact that the gringo is, and will always be illegal in the US, through manipulation of laws, logic, education, history, power, and reason, the illegal gringo became legal<sup>27</sup> and as Gutiérrez notes in *The Making of a Chicano Militant*, "[t]hese "white" Anglo

people also began to reverse the definition of “illegal aliens.” Illegal aliens now became the Anglo term to refer to Mexicans who ventured into “their” lands without their permissions. They made us, as Mexicans, foreigners; they made my ancestors illegal in their own homeland.”<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, leader of the Crusades for Justice and author of *I Am Joaquín/Yo Soy Joaquín*,<sup>29</sup> “argued that Anglo-Americans had attempted cultural genocide of Chicanos.”<sup>30</sup> Not only was the gringo producing anti-Chicano/a theory, but grounding American institutions in its genocidal anti-Chicano/a logics:

By destroying the self-image of Chicanos, Anglo-Americans were able to rewrite history, demeaning hundreds of years of Chicano experience. Chicanos were caught up in a social reality where they had no past; their leaders were co-opted, their lands confiscated, and their culture demeaned. They were confused in that their anger and frustration were often directed against each other in gang violence and domestic conflicts.<sup>31</sup>

Gonzales’s Crusade for Justice took a militant stance against American white supremacist institutions and “rejected white America in its entirety.”<sup>32</sup> Moreover, “It searched within the Chicano community for the answer to problems. To get rid of drugs and gangs from the barrio, Gonzales proposed barrio defense committees. These would also keep watch on police activity . . . [t]o develop La Raza’s self-esteem, Gonzales called upon the school system to teach Mexican American history, language, and culture.”<sup>33</sup> In Gonzales’s speech, “El Plan del Barrio,” he was clear that the US education system, at all levels, was a direct threat to the existence of the Chicano/a people.

The curriculum, facilities, resources, educators, and philosophies of the gringo have always been and continue to be central components in the construction and preservation of America’s white supremacist anti-Chicano/a education system. Gonzales knew the US education system was nothing more than a racist institution dedicated to forcing Chicano/a students to assimilate to a gringo anti-Chicano/a ethics. As he noted at the Poor People’s March in his 1968 speech “El Plan del barrio”:<sup>34</sup>

We demand that our schools be built in the same communal fashions as our neighborhoods . . . that they be warm and inviting facilities and not jails. We demand a completely free education from kindergarten to college, with no fees, no lunch charge, no supplies charges, no tuition, no dues. We demand that all teachers live within walking distance of the schools. We demand that from kindergarten through college, Spanish be the first language and English the second language and the textbooks to be rewritten to emphasize the heritage and the contributions of the Mexican American or Indio-Hispano in the building of the Southwest. We also demand the teaching of the contributions and history of other minorities which have also helped build this country. We also feel that each neighborhood school complex should

have its own school board made up of members who live in the community the school serves.<sup>35</sup>

Gonzales was adamant that Chicano/as needed to turn away from looking for gringo approval, ideas, education, and philosophies. Similarly, as founder of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) and La Raza Unida Party,<sup>36</sup> José Angel Gutiérrez sought to organize Chicano/a activists and Chicano/a youth to unwaveringly fight against white supremacist liberal and conservative US institutions. According to Gutiérrez in *The Making of the Chicano Militant: Lessons from Cristal*, other pivotal organizations, such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the American G.I. Forum, were “wanting to become assimilated into the Anglo world, thus leaving behind their Mexican roots and culture. The thought of these organizations dividing our community on the basis of assimilation, culture, citizenship, and class status in addition to age and gender for membership was abhorrent.”<sup>37</sup>

Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales and José Angel Gutiérrez understood that a new type of logic/reason needed to be developed to undergird Chicano/a institutions, grounded in the relationship between Chicano/a history, culture, power, resiliency, and gringo racist anti-Chicano/a institutions. As Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales noted in his “Arizona State University Speech,”

When we start to think on those levels, when we start to teach in the barrio how we are colonized people, then we’re able to understand how we live in this country and how this economy is based on the farm workers’ struggle and the farm workers’ production. Our people still use their hands in a society that is the most advanced technologically in the whole world.<sup>38</sup>

Gonzales knew that revolutionary action, philosophies, and institution building did not begin with Chicano/as in America, but was tied to deeper historical roots and traditions in Mexico. As Ignacio García notes, revolutionaries such as Emiliano Zapata, Francisco “Pancho” Villa, La Adelita, and La Corregidora<sup>39</sup> were important figures “who had taken on the gringo or other oppressors and had held their own. These new heroes, as much as anything else, signaled a rejection of American political culture. No longer were young Chicanos to be taught to admire the Founding Fathers, American military heroes, or civilian elder statesmen.”<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, as Alfredo Mirandé articulates in *Gringo Justice*, Chicanos such as Tiburcio Vásquez and Joaquín Murieta,<sup>41</sup> “were subject to the double standard of justice and were . . . victims of injustice, rebelled against the dominant order, took the law into their own hands, and were admired and respected by the Mexican population.”<sup>42</sup> They knew they could not rely on a gringo legal system where justice is nothing more than the maintenance of a white supremacy ethos and the criminality of the Chicano/a. While Chicano/as continue to be creators of history, they must also continue to recover a history that has been rewritten and stolen from them by the gringo. This is a necessary step in the rupture of pathological epistemologies that categorize the

Chicano/a as a permanent nonhuman and in the creation of new forms of knowledge grounded in the culturalogics of the Chicano/a.

Anti-Chicano/a epistemologies are upheld by a violent gringo legal system that a priori and necessarily constructs the Chicano/a as a permanent threat to its civilized and rational institutions.<sup>43</sup> It is one of the most indispensable tools of dominance over the Chicano/a. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, for example, has been pivotal in the construction and maintenance of the Chicano/a as a nonhuman, threat, and alien. As eminent scholar Rodolfo F. Acuña highlights in *Occupied America*, “[a]rticles VIII, IX, and X specifically referred to the rights of Mexicans in what became the United States. Under the treaty, they had one year to choose whether to return to Mexico or remain in “occupied Mexico.” About 2000, elected to leave; most remained in what they considered *their* land.”<sup>44</sup> The construction of the Mexican as nonhuman is critical because it means they are permanently excluded from human benefits, rights, and protection. As such, the gringo/human never has any obligation or responsibility to uphold their laws, policies, treaties, or promises with Mexicans or Chicano/as.

As Armando Rendon notes in *Chicano Manifesto*, “[f]ull American citizenship and protection were offered to the Mexican people captured behind the new boundary lines established by the treaty. Their culture, language, and religion as well as property and other civil rights were guaranteed to them.”<sup>45</sup> Despite this, Mexican and Native American land rights were not protected.<sup>46</sup>

Moreover, “[w]hat actually ensued after the conclusion of the treaty is remarkably the same as what happened to the American Indians. Lands and property were stolen, rights were denied, language and culture suppressed, opportunities for employment, education, and political representation were thwarted.”<sup>47</sup> Displaying its white supremacist morality, the United States violated the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and legally, rationally, and logically solidified the criminality and illegality of the Chicano/a. The United States’ system of law, logic, and reason is not broken, but operates just as it should, as an irreversible white supremacist institution where the Chicano/a is a permanent nonhuman, criminal, and illegal. If Chicano/as want their complete freedom and liberation, they must create institutions grounded in their own axioms, logics, philosophies, and epistemologies.

Reies Tijerina organized the Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres in 1962 to fight for the land rights that were legally guaranteed to Mexicans and Indians.<sup>48</sup> As Juan Gómez-Quíñones notes in *Chicano Politics: Reality & Promise, 1940–1990*, “the Alianza was formed to reclaim for descendants of land grantees, both Mexican and Indian, hundreds of thousands of acres of Spanish and Mexican government land grants dating from before the takeover by the United States.”<sup>49</sup> Tijerina knew the gringo legal system survived on its axiomatic logics that injustice is justice as it is applied to Chicano/as. As such, “[t]hese grants had been taken by governmental agencies or by wealthy Anglo individuals or corporations.”<sup>50</sup> Provided the anti-Chicano/a nature of

the US legal and political system, Tijerina and members of the Alianza resorted to fighting the system directly.<sup>51</sup> “[t]he most publicized of these incidents occurred on June 5, 1967, with the Tierra Amarilla Court House raid involving both the citizens and the local district attorney. This incident culminated with a shootout between authorities and Alianza members, which became a part of the legacy of deeds stimulating the Chicano movement.”<sup>52</sup> As Tijerina articulates in *They Called Me “King Tiger”: My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, “[t]his Alianza of communities and land grantees would become the terror of those who had stolen our land and destroyed our culture.”<sup>53</sup>

Chicano/a philosophy, at its most axiomatic foundation, must continue Alianza’s commitment to self-defense against gringo terror. Utilizing nonviolence and civil disobedience<sup>54</sup> as a tactic “to actively refuse to obey unjust laws and injunctions,”<sup>55</sup> César Chávez, “who in 1965 headed the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in California . . . called his first *huelga* (strike) against California growers. Citing the *Grito de Dolores*, or “Cry of Dolores,” which launched Mexico’s independence movement, Chávez proclaimed a struggle to liberate the Mexican American farmworker.”<sup>56</sup> Along with Dolores Huerta’s leadership and commitment to fighting gringo injustice, Chávez and the farmworkers “had taken it upon themselves to change their condition, and they were doing it despite harassment from law enforcement agencies. This audacity to challenge agribusiness and its allies in state government galvanized a whole generation of Chicano youth to join the struggle for Mexican American civil rights.”<sup>57</sup>

A complete rejection of an integrationist and assimilationist logics, anti-Chicano/a gringo ethics, and philosophies centered on the need for gringo recognition, Chicanismo as a twenty-first-century axiom must seek to build on a Chicano/a logics that centers Chicano/as as creators of reason, knowledge, history, and philosophy in relationship to, as Tommy Curry articulates in his revolutionary and paradigm-shifting book *The Man-Not*, “the grammar of racism, its discursive logics, that legitimates and subtly produces the logics of (genocide)/violence.”<sup>58</sup> Curry argues for the creation of new liberatory institutions, such as Black Male Studies, where Black male existence is the “bridge between the reality of the world and failure of the theory/thought/reason to capture the world due to its own obsession.”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, as Curry asserts:

To be seen as he truly is, the Black male must be configured within a new history that tells of his complexity, his embracing of the mother right, his anti-imperialism, his anticolonialism, his Black socialism, his Pan-Africanism—simply put, his struggles to realize himself within his own experiences, meanings, and formulations. He must be thought of as a traveler of as reflective and deliberate but flawed—as a kind of human, not perfect, but not condemnable. He is not the perfect subject but a worthwhile subject/*subject* of study and theory.<sup>60</sup>

Similarly, Chicano/a philosophy must be a discipline in which Chicano/as can study and theorize about themselves

“to construct new concepts that can support the meanings of the actualities set before”<sup>61</sup> them.

### III. CHICANO/A PHILOSOPHY FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: BUILDING NEW CHICANO/A PARADIGMS WITH CRITICAL RACE THEORY AND RICHARD DELGADO’S RUPTURE OF GRINGO KNOWLEDGE, REASON, AND LAW

As a pioneer of Chicano/a intellectual thought and a founder of critical race theory (CRT), Richard Delgado’s ideas have been paramount to creating new concepts and epistemologies grounded in Chicano/a paradigms and logic. Injecting storytelling as a tool to dismantle the gringo legal system, Delgado’s *The Rodrigo Chronicles*<sup>62</sup> brings to light the stories of the outgroup.<sup>63</sup> As Delgado eloquently notes, “stories create their own bonds, represent cohesion, shared understandings, and meanings. The cohesiveness that stories bring is part of the strength of the outgroup. An outgroup creates its own stories, which circulate within the group as a kind of counter-reality.”<sup>64</sup> Delgado’s stories subvert gringo anti-Chicano/a logics and ruptures the “bundle of presuppositions, received wisdoms, and shared understandings against a background of which legal and political discourse takes place.”<sup>65</sup> *The Rodrigo Chronicles* shed light on the anti-Chicano/a nature of legal reasoning and its impact on creating and sustaining anti-Chicano/a institutions.

In Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic’s article “Norms and Narrative: Can Judges Avoid Serious Moral Error?” they detail how the gringo legal system is limited in avoiding errors of logic, reason, and morality. Since most law practitioners have been trained to think about law from the perspective, norms, and logic of the gringo, “[o]ne obvious explanation for these mistakes is judicial inability to identify, imaginatively, with the persons whose fate is being decided.”<sup>66</sup> Since judges construct their logic and norms within an already prescribed anti-Chicano/a social reality, to exist as Chicano necessarily entails existing as a threat, criminal, and machismo:

We decide what is, and almost simultaneously, what ought to be. Narrative habits, patterns of seeing, shape what we see and that to which we aspire. These patterns of perception become habitual, tempting us to believe that the way things are is inevitable, or the best that can be in an imperfect world. Alternative versions of reality are not explored, or, if they are, rejected as extreme or implausible.<sup>67</sup>

Within a white supremacist American social reality/paradigm where Chicano/as are conceptually, logically, and institutionally constructed and categorized as necessarily nonhuman, there is no alternative version of reality that can be envisioned or constructed for them.

This system is institutionally, legally, and morally fixed within the permanency of gringo anti-Chicano/a logic. As such, “an unfamiliar narrative invariably generates resistance; despite our best efforts, counterstories are

likely to effect at most small, incremental changes in the listener or reader.”<sup>68</sup> Since equality, morality, justice, and fairness is the antithesis of the Chicano/a, complete freedom and liberation from gringo wrath is permanently illusory. As Richard Delgado highlights in his article “The Social Construction of *Brown v. Board of Education*: Law Reform and the Reconstructive Paradox,” “[b]ecause every social practice is part of an interlocking system of other practices, meanings, and interpretations, changing just one element (for example, school assignment rules) leaves the rest unchanged . . . [i]t is as though legal decisions take place against a gravitational field, with the pull being toward the familiar, toward stasis.”<sup>69</sup>

Said differently, since the criminality and illegality of the Chicano/a is a priori logically and institutionally axiomatic in all aspects of America’s social reality, simply changing one aspect of it, e.g., through legal, education, or economic reform, does nothing to change the overall reality of the Chicano/a. His/her illegality and criminality is permanently upheld within an anti-Chicano/a logics that undergirds America’s white supremacist institutions. Utilizing *Brown v. Board of Education* as an example, Richard Delgado highlights the control and manipulative power gringo logic/legal reasoning has over legal reform in the United States:

Any text, including a legal one, is interpreted against a background of meanings, presumptions, and preexisting understandings. If a parent tells a child “Clean up your room,” the terms “clean” and “room” have relatively well agree-upon meanings: The child knows he or she is not expected to launder the drapes or vacuum that attic space above the room. If an adolescent tells the parent, “I’ll be back by midnight,” both understand that “midnight” means tonight, not next week, and that “back” means inside the house. The same is true of legal commands. Thus, when *Brown* ordered school districts to desegregate “with all deliberate speed,” southern officials interpreted the decree in terms of their common sense. In hundreds of close cases, they constructed *Brown* to mean the only thing it could mean, consistent with their experience: integration . . . that left the school system as intact as possible.<sup>70</sup>

Reform, of any kind in America, will always seek the recognition and approval of the gringo. Delgado’s work provides Chicano/as with a treasure trove of insight. His ideas not only detail the limitations of an anti-Chicano/a US legal system, but also, much like the Chicano/a intellectuals and activists before him, provides readers with a blueprint to build Chicano/a logics and Chicano/a philosophy.

Several contemporary philosophers are working on issues that are centered around Chicano/a thought. In 2015, the Society for Mexican American Philosophy (SMAP) was officially established to examine issues and themes that pertain to the Chicano/a condition. As a founding member of SMAP and central figure of Mexican American philosophy, Carlos Alberto Sánchez, has played a pivotal role in changing the landscape of professional philosophy by leading the surge of Mexican and Mexican American

philosophy. In his article, "On Documents and Subjectivity: The Formation and De-Formation of the Immigrant Identity," he discusses the phenomenological relationship between having *papeles* and "the possibility of assuming a stand-taking subjectivity."<sup>71</sup> As he notes:

When these formative documents are challenged . . . one's identity or stand-taking subjectivity is also challenged . . . this is the case with legislative acts like Arizona Senate Bill 1070 which challenges the force of those documents by targeting *all* individuals who are reasonably suspected of *not having them*, such legislation directly puts into question the identity and subjectivity of those who, in fact, have the documentation that authorizes their trespass.<sup>72</sup>

Sánchez shows that being Chicano/a necessarily entails being questioned about one's own existence and legality. Despite having one's *papeles*, a Chicano/a may still be legally condemned to exist in a space of nonexistence.<sup>73</sup>

Utilizing "Edmund Husserl's prescriptions for the phenomenological method,"<sup>74</sup> Carlos Sánchez shows there is a relationship between being conscious of an object, e.g., green cards, and the value one places on it. Said differently, "the value of the document depends on the consciousness that perceives it."<sup>75</sup> As he notes, "[t]heir value resided in what they represent. In its textual configuration, a green card represents the legal and, ultimately, the authentication of the person to whom it belongs. Having a green card in hand is socially, culturally, politically, and existentially significant."<sup>76</sup> Possessing a green card, Sánchez believes, is significant because it authorizes one to operate within the sphere of American law and offers security.<sup>77</sup> Provided this, "having a green card means that one is *not a criminal*. The others, who cannot present proof of this absolute, continue to exist as criminals—they are "illegal" "aliens," external to the space of law or the space of intelligibility. Outside of this space, the document-less exist as incomprehensible."<sup>78</sup>

The concept of the racialized legal immigrant is critical to Carlos Sánchez's analysis. In other words, even those who possess their papers live a life of contingency. As long as one looks undocumented or possesses gringo-defined undocumented characteristics, then his/her existence is contingent upon gringo institutions. Utilizing Martin Heidegger's concept/logics of equipment, Sánchez in "Illegal' Immigrants: Law, Fantasy, and Guts" underscores how Mexican immigrants ultimately become obtrusive to gringo society and targets of gringo violence.<sup>79</sup> As he posits, "The 'illegal' immigrant thus finds herself paradoxically outside the space of law but inside the realm of capitalist production, as equipment. She is both in and outside the space of life and culture while always outside the space of rights—she is both value and reified."<sup>80</sup> Laws, policies, treaties, US programs, and bills that both exploit the use of "illegal" immigrants and Chicano/as, while simultaneously constructing them as nonhuman, indicates their bodies are "objectified so as to complement other household appliances; it becomes an extension of the vacuum cleaner, the lawn mower, or the hoe."<sup>81</sup>

"Illegal" immigrants and Chicano/as are thingified and denied as *Dasein*/human beings.<sup>82</sup> Carlos Sánchez contends they become equipment, and as such, their dispensability is at the hands of the gringo. Sánchez observes, "when the equipment does not meet our needs, it suddenly shows up everywhere; we see it every time we are set to engage in our tasks. It will frustrate us, as it is there, unable to help us with our project . . . equipment may also become obtrusive and obstinate when it fails to meet our demands."<sup>83</sup> Like equipment that is no longer needed, the US rids "illegal" immigrants and Chicano/as at their discretion. Gringo institutions, "'thingifies' the 'illegal' immigrant, simultaneously values and devalues the very being of persons. It devalues a person by turning her into a tool; it values her by emphasizing her irreplaceable importance in the American economy, one in which her absence would be immediately felt."<sup>84</sup>

Carlos Alberto Sánchez's work is a must read, including his monumental texts, *Contingency and Commitment: Mexican Existentialism and the Place of Philosophy, The Suspension of Seriousness: On the Phenomenology of Jorge Portilla*, and his most recent book co-edited with fellow SMAP founding member Robert Sánchez, Jr., *Mexican Philosophy in the 20th Century: Essential Readings*.<sup>85</sup> Chicano/a philosophy must not stand alone in its relationship to the gringo world, but must also be grounded in its historical relationship to Mexican and Indigenous philosophy. Sánchez's work is vital to uncovering and revealing these relationships. Despite Sánchez's impact and influence, much of his work, such as "On Documents and Subjectivity: The Formation and De-Formation of the Immigrant Identity" and "'Illegal' Immigrants: Law, Fantasy, and Guts," relies on the use of gringo theory to analyze the condition of people of color. In *Contingency and Commitment: Mexican Existentialism and the Place of Philosophy*, Sánchez notes the use of gringo ideas/theory is an act of appropriation.<sup>86</sup> As he explains, "[a]ppropriation is not assimilation, or mimicry, but a simultaneous taking and altering for the sake of some end. But the end of the taking possession-of of appropriation is not to preserve, it is not an embalming of what is possessed; rather, the end is transformation, of world or one's place in it."<sup>87</sup> Appropriating a system of logic that is axiomatically anti-Chicano/a and controlled by the gringo is not transformative, but the creation of a stronger system of anti-Chicano/a knowledge and reason that is legitimized by people of colors' appropriation of it. Contrary to Sánchez's approach, the gringo system in its entirety must be rejected for transformation to take place.

In "'Illegal' Immigrants: Law, Fantasy, and Guts," Carlos Sánchez's thesis relies heavily on the Heideggerian concept of *Dasein*/human being. Sánchez appropriates this concept to explain the recognition and value the "illegal" immigrant receives as equipment in the gringo world. As Sánchez notes, "[t]he 'illegal' immigrant thus finds herself paradoxically outside the space of law but inside the realm of capitalist production, as equipment. She is both in and outside the space of life and culture while always outside the space of rights—she is both valued and reified."<sup>88</sup> Chicano/a philosophy axiomatically rejects the logic that the Chicano/a can ever be recognized/valued in gringo society, even as equipment. The Chicano/a in gringo

society is always/permanently denied his/her *Dasein*. *Dasein* and gringo ethics should not be understood as Chicano/a possibility, but rather, Chicano/a impossibility. Said differently, in the gringo world, the Chicano/a is always an impossibility, always outside the space of life. Applying gringo theory, as Sánchez has, provides the "illegal" immigrant with an illusion, the possibility to be valued and recognized as equipment. Always the nonhuman, the Chicano/a has no value and possibility within the gringo world. Chicano/a value emerges, not by working within or with anti-Chicano/a gringo institutions, but by the creation of Chicano/a institutions, reason, knowledge, and logic that axiomatically grounds their culture, history, and existence as necessarily possible.

Similarly, in "On Documents and Subjectivity: The Formation and De-Formation of the Immigrant Identity" and "'Illegal' Immigrants: Law, Fantasy, and Guts," Sánchez relies on a Hegelian logics to develop a "phenomenology of documents."<sup>89</sup> Ultimately, this leads him to conclude there is a level of recognition that is achieved by people of color who have their documents.<sup>90</sup> In other words, once the "illegal" immigrant or one who shares similar characteristic has documents, he/she becomes visible.<sup>91</sup> As Sánchez posits, "[c]odified in this way, the legal immigrant is the most visible (opposed to the invisibility of the "illegal" immigrant), and as such, subject to the most scrutiny, surveillance, and harassment when the necessarily racial prerogatives of anti-immigration law are set loose."<sup>92</sup> Turning away from Hegelian logic and toward Chicano/a logic, it is clear the "illegal" immigrant and Chicano/a is never visible or recognized as an actual human in the gringo world, but as permanently invisible, "constrained/castrated within the existing taxonomies/categories built on the assumptions of a white Western man."<sup>93</sup> Theorizing from Chicano/a philosophy as a starting point allows Chicano/as to create in their reality and intersubjectivity as opposed to being constructed from anti-Chicano/a logic, epistemology, and white violence.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Keeping in mind the logic and principles that have already been set in place by Chicano/a intellectuals before me, a twenty-first-century Chicano/a philosophy must be grounded in the following axioms: 1) gringo theory, logic, and paradigms are psychological and physical threats to the Chicano/a people; 2) Chicano/as create their own axioms, paradigms, logic, and epistemologies independent of contamination from the gringo world; 3) Chicano/a philosophy is a complete rejection of gringo recognition, norms, humanity, logic, and reason; 4) Chicano/a philosophy must be constructed from the histories, logics, and epistemologies of the Chicano/a people, not from the axioms of their gringo nonhuman construction; 5) Chicano/as are permanent threats and foreigners in the gringo world; and 6) the gringo world is not broken or ignorant, but operates as the racist and violent institution it was created to be.<sup>94</sup> As Chicano/a philosophy moves forward, it must turn away from seeking gringo recognition and validation. It must be a complete rejection of gringo institutions, norms, reason, logic, and morality. Chicano/a philosophy is unapologetically and unwaveringly a discipline for the study and theorization of Chicano/as and for the construction of

Chicano/a institutions grounded in a Chicano/a logics that necessarily entails Chicano/a possibility and existence.

#### NOTES

1. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V, "Social Science, Objectivity, and the Chicanos," in *Voices: Readings from El Grito, a Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought, 1967–1973*, 2nd ed., ed. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publication, Inc., 1973), 40.
2. *Ibid.*, 30–42; Nick Vaca, "The Mexican-American in the Social Sciences: 1912–1970. Part I: 1912–1935," in *El Grito* 3.3, *Open Door Archive*, eds. Octavio I. Romano-V, Nick C. Vaca, and Andres Ybarra (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., 1970a), 3–24, accessed December 15, 2019, <https://opendoor.northwestern.edu/archive/items/show/365>; Nick Vaca, "The Mexican-American in the Social Sciences: 1912–1970. Part II: 1936–1970," in *El Grito* 4.1, *Open Door Archives*, eds. Octavio I. Romano-V and Herminio Ríos (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., 1970b), 17–51, accessed December 15, 2019, <https://opendoor.northwestern.edu/archive/items/show/367>; Miguel Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family," in *Voices: Readings from El Grito, a Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought, 1967–1973*, 2nd ed., ed. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., 1973), 57–64; Alfredo Mirandé, *The Chicano Experience: An Alternative Perspective* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985); Deluvina Hernandez, *Mexican American Challenge to a Sacred Crow* (Los Angeles: Mexican-American Cultural Center, 1970).
3. Mirandé, *The Chicano Experience*, 1–2.
4. *Ibid.*, 2.
5. Romano-V, "Social Science, Objectivity, and the Chicanos," 30–31.
6. *Ibid.*, 31.
7. *Ibid.*, 30.
8. Octavio Romano-V, "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans," in *Voices: Readings from El Grito, a Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought, 1967–1973*, 2nd ed., ed. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publication, Inc., 1973), 49.
9. Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family," 57.
10. See Samuel Ramos, *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico*, trans. Peter G. Earle (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962).
11. See Leopoldo Zea, *The Latin-American Mind*, trans. James H. Abbot and Lowell Dunham (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963).
12. See Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, trans. Lysander Kemp (New York: Grove Press, 1962).
13. Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family," 58.
14. Alfred Adler, "Individual Psychology," in *Theories of Personality, Primary Sources and Research* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1965), 99. Quoted in Miguel Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family," in *Voices: Readings from El Grito, a Journal of Contemporary Mexican American Thought, 1967–1973*, 2nd ed., ed. Octavio Ignacio Romano-V (Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, Inc., 1973), 58.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican-American Family," 58.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Alfredo Mirandé, *Hombres Y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 36.
19. *Ibid.*, 66.
20. Octavio Romano-V, "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans," 53.
21. *Ibid.*, 54.

22. Maxine Baca Zinn, "Sociological Theory in Emergent Chicano Perspectives," *The Pacific Sociological Review* 24, no. 2 (1981): 255-72, accessed December 16, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1388707>; Alfredo Mirandé, "A Reinterpretation of Male Dominance in the Chicano Family," *The Family Coordinator* 28, no. 4 (1979): 473-79, accessed December 16, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/583507>; Alfredo Mirandé, "Chicano Sociology: A New Paradigm for Social Science," *The Pacific Sociological Review* 21, no. 3 (1978): 293-312, accessed December 16, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1388849>; Alfredo Mirandé, "Rascuache Lawyering: A Chicana/o Vision of Rebellious Law Practice, Pedagogy, and Clients," *Clinical Law Review* 23, no. 1 (2016): 217-49, accessed December 16, 2019, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=119351730&site=eds-live>.
23. Ignacio García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997), 28.
24. Henry Ramos, foreword to *A Chicano Manual on How to Handle Gringos*, by José Angel Gutiérrez (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2003), viii.
25. García, *Chicanismo*, 37.
26. Ibid.
27. José Gutiérrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant: Lessons from Cristal* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 16.
28. Ibid.
29. García, *Chicanismo*, 34-35.
30. Ibid., 35.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Gómez-Quíñones, *Chicano Politics*, 114.
35. Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, "El Plan Del Barrio," in *Message to Aztlán: Selected Writing of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales*, ed. Antonio Esquibel (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2001), 32-33, <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.hartnell.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=577862&site=eds-live>.
36. Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 7th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2011), 290.
37. Gutiérrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant*, 100.
38. Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, "Arizona State University Speech," in *Message to Aztlán: Selected Writing of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales*, ed. Antonio Esquibel (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2001), 39, <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.hartnell.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=577862&site=eds-live>.
39. García, *Chicanismo*, 36.
40. Ibid.
41. Alfredo Mirandé, *Gringo Justice* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 77; see also García, *Chicanismo*, 50.
42. Mirandé, *Gringo Justice*, 77.
43. It is important to understand that I am claiming that US institutions are indeed constructed to be civilized and rational. It is not the case that these institutions are broken or in need of rehabilitation. Said differently, to be civilized and rational within Western logics is to necessarily be gringo. Whereas, to be Chicano/a within Western logics and the US necessarily entails existing as a permanent nonhuman. Another way to highlight this: concepts such as reason, rationality, and knowledge are constructed within Western logics and the US to necessarily entail the construction of the Chicano/a as criminal, irrational, deviant, and alien.
44. Acuña, *Occupied America*, 51.
45. Armando Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), 71.
46. Acuña, *Occupied America*, 53.
47. Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto*, 72.
48. Gómez-Quíñones, *Chicano Politics*, 115.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid., 116.
52. Ibid.
53. Reies Tijerina, *They Called Me "King Tiger": My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, trans. José Angel Gutiérrez (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000), 48.
54. Acuña, *Occupied America*, 297.
55. Ibid.
56. García, *Chicanismo*, 30.
57. Ibid., 30-31.
58. Tommy Curry, *The Man-Not: Race, Class, Genre, and the Dilemmas of Black Manhood* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2017), 188.
59. Ibid., 225.
60. Ibid., 226.
61. Ibid., 222.
62. Richard Delgado, *The Rodrigo Chronicles: Conversations about America and Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).
63. Richard Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative," in *The Law Unbound! A Richard Delgado Reader*, eds. Adrien Katherine Wing and Jean Stefancic (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 3.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, "Norms and Narrative: Can Judges Avoid Serious Moral Error?" *Texas Law Review* 69 (1991): 1930, accessed December 16, 2019, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2097931>.
67. Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others," 5.
68. Delgado and Stefancic, "Norms and Narratives," 1933.
69. Richard Delgado, "The Social Construction of *Brown v. Board of Education*: Law Reform and the Reconstructive Paradox," in *The Law Unbound! A Richard Delgado Reader*, eds. Adrien Katherine Wing and Jean Stefancic (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 244.
70. Ibid., 246.
71. Carlos Sánchez, "On Documents and Subjectivity: The Formation and De-Formation of the Immigrant Identity," *Radical Philosophy Review* 14, no. 2 (2011): 198.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid., 204.
74. Ibid., 200.
75. Ibid., 201.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Carlos Sánchez, "'Illegal' Immigrants: Law, Fantasy, and Guts," *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 21, no. 1 (2014): 1.
80. Ibid., 6.
81. Ibid., 5.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
85. Carlos Sánchez, *Contingency and Commitment: Mexican Existentialism and the Place of Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016); Carlos Sánchez, *The*

*Suspension of Seriousness: On the Phenomenology of Jorge Portilla* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012); Carlos Sánchez and Robert Eli Sanchez, Jr., eds., *Mexican Philosophy in the 20th Century: Essential Readings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

86. Sánchez, *Contingency and Commitment*, 4.
87. *Ibid.*
88. Sánchez, "‘Illegal’ Immigrants," 6.
89. Sánchez, "On Documents and Subjectivity," 198.
90. *Ibid.*, 204.
91. *Ibid.*
92. *Ibid.*, 204-205.
93. Curry, *The Man-Not*, 193.
94. See Romano, "Social Science, Objectivity, and the Chicanos," 30-42; Mirandé, *The Chicano Experience*, 12-13; Mirandé, *Gringo Justice*, 24-26; Mirandé, "Chicano Sociology," 306-308.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Coloniality of the U-S///Mexico Border: Power, Violence, and the Decolonial Imperative*

Roberto D. Hernández (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2018) Paperback \$35.95. ISBN 978-0-816-54039-6.

Reviewed by Manuel Chávez  
MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

The title of Hernández's book itself is an intentional subversion of the common label of "US-Mexico border," which reflects his critique of the border between Mexico and the United States as an inevitable feature of nationhood and territory. The history of the border has long been studied, but Hernández argues there is a logic of power that predates and shapes this history of the border and continues to frame how it is perceived today. Although he situates his book "at the interdisciplinary crossroads of urban studies, border studies, and ethnic studies," Hernández's work can be read as a post-Occidentalist philosophy of history (27).<sup>1</sup> His main concern, however, is the causes and effects of violence among those who live at or near the border between Mexico and the United States. The origin of Hernández's study can be found in his childhood experiences growing up in San Ysidro; particularly the 1984 massacre at a local McDonald's restaurant sowed the seeds for his thinking. While his work is an analysis of the historical power dynamics that construct the current border, it also is a call for the decolonial imperative as a way to resist the logic of violence that underlies it.

Relying on the concept of coloniality articulated by Aníbal Quijano and María Lugones, Hernández identifies the historical logic of power that operates through the conflated social identities of class, race, ethnicity, and gender/sex identity, and is both obscured and reproduced by the nation-state centered ideology of modernity. Modernity/coloniality is a "matrix of power" that is rooted in colonialism, but endures in society—at the level of social ontology and epistemology—after the end of formal

political independence. While recognizing the political and economic changes over time, Hernández applies the coloniality framework to foreground the evolution of a persistent domination manifested through the mutually constitutive ideological, territorial, corporeal/racial, and cultural/symbolic practices of violence (23). The concept of coloniality operates as a critique of modernity, while also inferring the decolonial imperative.

As social theory, Hernández claims coloniality is best understood as what Kryiakos M. Kontopoulos names a "heterarchical theory," that is, one that overcomes the "macro-micro divide," by recognizing "a multiplicity of overlapping mechanisms at various levels—what geographers would see as multiscale analyses" (23). Consequently, modernity/coloniality does not refer to a single deterministic system, but rather the "totalizing" conditions of the historical relations of power. These conditions include boundaries of social identities as well as nation-states (10-11). The border, as a construct of modernity/coloniality, serves to separate the "the modern" and the nonmodern, "the presumably backward, traditional, or primitive" (26).

Violence at the border, Hernández contends, is an effect and cause of modernity/coloniality. While the border region is portrayed in the media as an area of natural lawlessness, he argues recognition of the coloniality of the border reveals "the utility of violence as a tool wielded by many in variegated pursuits of power and domination, both physical and symbolic" (12). Coloniality reveals "a continuum of violence" from the colonial period to the present. Consequently, he claims the border region "is politically and materially marked by different forms of racial/colonial violence, particularly for Mexican@s, Chican@s, and Latin@s who live near or on the both sides of, or who cross, the U-S///Mexico border" (186). The significance of the decolonial imperative is that it considers, to borrow a term from Alicia Gaspar de Alba, an "alter-Native" world without borders.<sup>2</sup>

In the first chapter, Hernández explores how coloniality of power frames the immigration debate. He traces how the modern notion of nationhood, conceived through the metaphors of home and family, is based on the distinction between "insiders" and "outsiders." It is embedded in the "gendered discourses of home and nation [that] function to reproduce Eurocentric and heteronormative narratives of nation, property, citizenship, and belonging" (39). He contends anti-immigrant nativists invoke this colonial logic in their political ideology: "Mexican migrants appears as heir to the role of the Indigenous 'savages' of yesteryear" (28). However, he argues "insider" critics of border vigilantes, while rejecting their "extremist" political ideology, nevertheless accept the colonial logic of the nation-state (e.g., contemplating "immigration" instead of "migration"). "The result is an effective legitimating of a kinder, gentler racism on the 'inside,' including the mainstreaming of anti-migrant politics/legislation" (39). In contrast, the decolonial imperative implies the need to question "the premises, the logics, and the episteme that underpin boundaries" (65).

In chapter two, Hernández examines how the coloniality of power operates at the local, regional, and global level

simultaneously and interactively. In his examination of the local history of annexation of San Ysidro under San Diego, Hernandez not only highlights its relation to expanding capitalist globalization and its proximity to the border, but also the racialization of geography and the marginalization of communities of color, primarily Mexican but also Black, Filipino, and Muslim. The “metropolitan colonial” situation of San Ysidro serves as the backdrop of his examination, in chapter three, of the mass shooting that took place at a local McDonalds in 1984. While mainstream media accounts individualized the attack, Hernandez brings to bear a structural analysis that takes into account the factors of globalization and race which led an unemployed white Anglo male from a deindustrialized town in Ohio to shoot up a restaurant near the border. He argues “the shooter’s actions were a manifestation of recurrent colonial logic in which Indian-hating on the frontier is sublated into its heir: Mexican-hating on the border” (30). The coloniality of power is not only revealed in this violent event, but just as significantly, also in its aftermath, in the struggle to memorialize the massacre.

The debates over the monument to the nineteen victims of the shooting point to the coloniality of memory and knowledge. In chapter four, Hernandez extends this argument by bringing attention to the phenomena of femicide in Ciudad Juárez. He contrasts the official dominant discourses surrounding the deaths of women at the border with opposing subaltern viewpoints represented in music and literature. Cultural texts, such as the corrido “Los Crímenes de Juárez” by Los Marineros del Norte and the novel *Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders* by Alicia Gaspar de Alba, offer counter decolonial perspectives on making sense of the violence against women along the border. In chapter five, he further elaborates his argument for escaping the “the epistemic/cartographic prison of modernity/coloniality” (167). He criticizes the “borderlands academic complex” that reproduces epistemologies abstracted from the “embodied understandings and the intersections of violence and colonization” (157). Echoing Alejandro Vallega’s “decolonial aesthetic turn,” Hernandez’s close examination of the “sonic geography” expressed in songs by Tijuana No! featuring Kid Frost, Los Tigres del Norte, and Aztlán Underground suggests a resistant conceptualization grounded in the materiality of the borderlands which disrupt the logic of modernity/coloniality.<sup>3</sup> The decolonial imperative entails an “epistemic and cartographic disobedience” that shifts to a different way of knowing.

What Hernandez offers is a philosophically provocative way to rethink the hegemonic discourses about the politics of the border. The problematic he puts forward allows us to take into account the links between the legacy of colonialism and the 1984 McDonald’s shooting as well as the 2019 Walmart shooting, family detention centers, and family separation policies. He makes clear the decolonial imperative does not imply a type of cosmopolitanism or “open border” politics. In order to challenge modernity/coloniality, it is the demand to shift “differentially” between ethics and meta-ethics by way of taking indigenous social ontologies as an epistemic starting point.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, Hernandez provides a political and moral “philosophy born

of colonial struggle” that can help us imagine and create resistant possibilities together.<sup>5</sup>

#### NOTES

1. See Fernando Coronil, “Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories,” *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (1996): 51–87.
2. See Alicia Gaspar de Alba, “The Alter-Native Grain: Theorizing Chicano/a Popular Culture,” in *Cultural and Difference: Critical Perspectives on the Bicultural Experience in the United States*, ed. Antonia Darder (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1995), 103–22.
3. See Alejandro A. Vallega, *Latin American Philosophy from Identity to Radical Exteriority* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 196–217.
4. See Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
5. See Grant J. Silva, “Why the Struggle Against Coloniality Is Paramount to Latin American Philosophy,” *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy* 15, no. 1 (2015): 8–12.

### *Lessons in Exile*

Carlos Pereda. Translated by Sean Manning (Lanham: Brill Rodopi, 2019). 133 pages. \$52.89 ISBN: 978-9004385146.

Reviewed by Roy Ben-Shai

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When I first saw Pereda’s book, I thought, “Oh, that’s nice. It’s a short book.” I was excited to read it and have a conversation about it. But I’ve been deceived. This is not a short book; it’s a journey. I understand better now why the Prelude to the book is called “A Map for the Road.” While it is common, of course, that good philosophy books should have a developmental aspect, it is rare to find a philosophy book with so many twists, turns, and surprises. I mean, radical surprises.

As I began reading the book, I was already aware that I was going to come here and present it for you. So, while reading, I was already thinking about a way of presenting the book. At some point, two or three chapters in, I felt like I found it. Yes, I believed to understand the essence of the project and the manner by which it was unfolding and came up with an angle for sharing it with you as well. But then, as my reading progressed beyond the first few chapters, I could feel my face taking on the expression of someone who is thinking to himself: “No, this is not going according to plan . . . [and to the author:] What are you doing?”

And a few pages later, the dawning of renewed understanding: “Oh, now I see, this is the plan. This *has* been the plan.” But this did not last very long either. To the very last pages I had to go on reassessing the nature of this work.

So, I now have a problem. It is very difficult to discuss this book while doing justice to what I think is the most essential and distinctive aspect of it: that you don’t know where it’s going until you get there. So, the first thing to say is that you should buy the book and read it from cover to cover. Because that’s how it works. In the meantime, what I’ll do

is share my process of revelation. To do this, I will start from my initial insight: what I was planning to say when I thought I knew what the book was about. And then I'll describe how things changed and unfolded. So, here is my initial angle:

Let's begin with the title: *Lessons in Exile*. Break it down: "lessons" in "exile." The word "lessons" is already suggestive. It is an interesting term. Surprisingly, perhaps, it is not often used in titles of philosophy books. There is a difference between a *theory* of exile and *lessons* in exile. And the difference can be construed as that between a top-down approach—an umbrella definition of what exile is—and a bottom-up learning from exile, about exile. The latter approach is the kind that Kant called "reflective judgment": We begin from experience and generalize from it.

Exile, then, is a form of experience, which brings us to the second term in the title. What kind of experience is "exile"? Already in the most general and ordinary understanding of the word, we can say that exile is an experience that is out of the norm, that breaks with what is customary and accustomed. Etymologically, all the word means is this: "wondering out." And when you think about it, if any experience could teach us a lesson, it goes to reason that *this* kind of experience would have a special place. After all, regarding our customary and habitual mode of experience we perhaps don't have that much to learn, because we are already well-versed in it.

But exile is always something unexpected, breaking with expectation and habit. In that respect, exile can even be thought of as a paradigm for lived experience as such. And indeed, the word "experience" is very similar to the word "exile." It literally means "trying out." The "ex-" factor is there in both of them. To experience, like exile, is to go out.

Well, I was thinking, initially, that I should probably be cautious about saying that exile can be a paradigm for experience in general, because that's a very broad statement for someone who has not yet learned the kind of lessons exile has to teach. I did not anticipate, in fact, just how far Pereda's book would end up going in advancing this claim.

The title aside, another impression I got is that there is a certain note of lamentation, almost nostalgia, as Pereda recalls the existence of an old and illustrious tradition of lessons in exile. He finds it in the Hebrew Bible, and in Greek and Roman poetry and philosophy. And the concern that seems to me to animate the book from its inception is that we have lost this tradition.

In the first chapter, "Words, Words, Words," Pereda distinguishes between "exile" and related words like "refugees" and "emigrants." And he warns us, "not to overlook a . . . maxim, often repeated yet seldom heeded: *Be careful with words!*" (4). Pereda's point is that words *resonate* in a certain way. They appear within a certain discursive context. Specifically, the word "refugee," is one of the main items of political discourse in our time. Now, here, I take some liberty, and I may be mistaken in my interpretation, but this is what the distinction between the resonances of the words "exile" and "refugee" made me think about, and in relation to what I take to be

Pereda's lament. The manner by which "refugees" are invoked and discussed in our mass media is always by way of *massification*. There are thousands, millions of refugees; faceless, nameless, crowding refugees. And this massification of the phenomenon (which is, indeed, massive) goes together with a certain type of *sensationalism* about the horror of destitution.

The horrifying aspects of the refugee condition notwithstanding, one thing we simply cannot do with it is *learn*. There is little lesson to be had. And part of the problem is that, insofar as we think about it this way, talk about it this way, there is no *subject* to such massified condition either. And, for Pereda, the existence of a subject is very, very important. Where there is no subject, there is no experience, let alone reflection or judgment.

So, the word refugee, as it is most often invoked, resonates with massification, and I would add to this that, on the opposite extreme, we have the equally discursive tendency for radical *individualization* and *emotionalization* of experiences of victimization; an *over-subjectification* of experience: "This is *my* experience, and *you* cannot have it. You have no right to it, no access to it. You are too privileged and would not understand." All we have left is to be shocked, but no lessons, nothing to learn.

And so, in a somewhat "Peredaesque" fashion, I would formulate this into a principle: two conditions must hold for there to be something like *lessons* in exile, or in any kind of experience: one is that there must be a subject. And the other is that it cannot be simply *about* this subject. The experience, and the subject's testimony and reflection about it, is but the ground for learning and teaching. It must go *out*.

I should note that one of the central methodological principles that Pereda postulates, right at the opening of the book, is, and I quote: "Strive to rid social phenomena of their own inner barriers and strive to do this again and again" (1). What I understand this to mean is that, yes, experiences, especially those involving victimization, can be very, very difficult; very singular, and almost impossible to share. They have these inner boundaries, and yet we have to strive not to break these boundaries but to *expand* them from within, to press out against them. And we must do this not once and for all, but, rather, again and again. And I think that is what the book keeps doing, again and again, expanding those boundaries of experience.

Much later in the book, in Chapter 6, "Words Say, Words Resonate," Pereda returns to the theme of words to advance what appears to be a theory of resonance and resonation. Resonance is akin to such expanding. We begin from a particular experience. We expand it to certain *types* of experience. And then we expand it to a certain *perspective* on experience in general. But we cannot grasp experience, especially such exceptional experience, from the top down or in abstraction. We have to work from within and to push out like that. Again and again.

This sense of resonance can help to understand a fascinating distinction. In the second chapter, Pereda

draws a distinction between “testimonies” and “meta-testimonies.” The idea that, if a testimony is the account of a particular experience, meta-testimony—which is a form of writing Pereda essentially associates with *poetry*—is one that already takes a step beyond the particular. And why poetry? I take it that it is because poetry is art. There is, let us say, an element of *stylization* about it. We make an art of the experience, and that is no longer a straight-up testimony but something more, something beyond. I am almost tempted to say that this notion of meta-testimony harbors a potential critique of the Adornian dictum (or at least the superficial reception of it) that there can be no poetry after Auschwitz. Well, there *must* be poetry after Auschwitz, if we are to have something like a meta-testimony. And the kind of meta-testimonies that Pereda is particularly interested in are those poetic accounts of exile where the first person becomes third person, where the poet suddenly rises beyond herself and her experience.

Later in the book, it becomes clear that there’s a certain idea of how an experience that is had by *someone* becomes an experience that is had, or can be had, by *anyone*. This “anyone,” like the poet’s third person, does not symbolize an abstract universality, like a transcendental subjectivity available to all. It is, rather, an expansion, a resonance, a reaching out and rising past.

And now comes the point where surprises begin to amass, where, for a minute, I had lost the thread of the book, or what I thought the thread was. The first surprise occurred as I was reading through Pereda’s truly masterful literary analyses of meta-testimonies, which occupy Chapters 3 to 5, the epicenter of the book. It gradually dawned on me that through these poetic accounts, Pereda was conducting something like a *critique* of the experience of exile, and even of the testimonies themselves. “What are you doing?” I was asking him in my mind. Isn’t the whole point that we should learn from *them*? Isn’t the point that we should learn from the testimonies what it means to be in exile?

But, no, I was mistaken; perhaps I was still not sufficiently “careful with words.” Slowly, I remembered that third word, the middle word, in Pereda’s title: the word “in.” It became clear to me that what he was aiming at is, quite literally, lessons *in* exile, not *about* it. The question is how to be in exile (the book’s title in Spanish, *Los aprendizajes del exilio*, makes the point even stronger, as it suggests an *apprenticeship*, which is, indeed, a kind of learning from and through experience, through *practice*). But why, I am still asking, are we to learn about how to be in exile, if we are not in exile? What kind of lesson is this, and why should we heed to it?

Let me first give you a brief overview of Pereda’s analysis of the meta-testimonies. Focusing his analyses on a “few meta-testimonies that . . . belong to an immediately *present past*, a memory that is still living” (29), namely, the exile during and following the Spanish Civil War, and the even more recent exiles of the Latin American Southern Cone, he divides them into three groups, thus forming a typology of sorts of characteristic experiences, or perhaps dispositions, in exile: exile experienced or regarded as loss, exile as resistance, and exile as a new beginning. Each of them, as

it turns out, is animated by a dominant affect: melancholy (loss), anger (resistance), and elation (new beginning).

Reading past these daunting sections of the book, entering the last third of it, a new realization lights up. This is not simply a critique of exile; it is a critique of *reason*. It is a critique of the relationship between affect and reason. And there is something much bigger that is happening, because the concern for Pereda is the sort of thing that Kant calls “pathology,” which is a certain form of reasoning or rationalization that stems from, is fed by, and enslaved to dominant passions—melancholy, or anger, or elation—which simply reiterate, and reiterate, and reiterate. By Chapter 6, where he concludes his reading of the poems, Pereda names this form of reasoning “*arrogant reasoning*” (78) as an antidote to which he promotes, throughout the book, an “art of self-interruption” (25).

In light of this, I find his critique of the three types of exile reminiscent of Nietzsche’s early essay on “The Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life.” There, too, Nietzsche distinguishes between three attitudes towards history and historiography (monumental, antiquarian, and critical), and there, too, rather than making a choice or drawing up a hierarchy between them, he points out what is truthful about each of them, and at what point they become excessive, losing sight of why and how history matters at all. Similarly, for Pereda, there is a truth to this experience of loss and of resistance and of new beginning, but it cannot go too far. And here we find the lessons, the *actual* lessons, that Pereda articulates in the form of principles: “There is a time to be involved,” that is, for dwelling in loss, “and a time for stepping away,” that is, for moving on (40). “There is a time to resist and a time to break with the situation being resisted as well as with resistance itself” (54). “There is a time to welcome, even encourage, large and small discontinuities in our experience and a time to carry on with already proven plans and deep-seated routines” (71).

Lessons in exile. Whose exile is it? For whom these lessons, and by whom?

I will give you a taste of what happens in the book’s final chapter (“Nomadic Cultures and Personhood”). Pereda refers to it as a theoretical section of the book, but in my view, this is something of an understatement: this section is in effect a crescendo. At this point, it occurred to me that the book could have been titled differently. Not “Lessons in Exile,” but “A Critique of Nomadic Reason.”

For in this chapter, Pereda embarks upon an interpretation of Kant’s *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*. He re-envisions this book as if it had been written by an exile. And this is pretty astonishing. Let me read it to you in Pereda’s own words:

I will avoid engaging with Kant’s technical, powerful and perspicacious arguments, and I will try to read him as if he were an exile who, terrified and in a rush to leave, had left the manuscript at home. I will also imagine the exile Kant as retaining some rather vague idea of the norms he proposed in his famous book, and reworking, even

transforming, them from this new heartrending situation. So, instead of a “close reading” like the one I proposed for exile poetry, I recommend now a “distant reading.”... (94)

So, what is the point here, of this innovative and indeed distant, if not irreverent, rereading of Kant? If Kant is known for one thing, it is for the rigid separation between transcendental and empirical subjectivity, and for his unflinching grounding of practical reason and the critique of practical reason in the transcendental. What is Pereda telling us, then? What if the ground for practical reason were *nomadic*? What if practical reason went on exile, forced into exile, and out of its element of native stability? Pereda’s exilic, nomadic Kant, however, is still very much Kant. He does not leave himself behind. He still needs to find certain normative principles by which to judge the passions that arise out of new situations. But he has to contend with this now moving ground.

And thus, the figure of the exile, merged with the person of Immanuel Kant, finally does become a paradigm for subjectivity (Pereda calls it “personhood”). But this new paradigm means that subjectivity is neither purely transcendental, for it is nomadic and by no means self-grounding or even grounded, nor merely empirical, for it has ventured out of itself, exiled, beyond the boundaries of its inner experience. This personhood is somewhere in-between the transcendental and the empirical. The practical reasoning that ensues from this nomadic reflection—the lessons in exile—also offers a hybrid of Aristotelian (prudential), and a Kantian (principled), ethics.

By the end of the book it all becomes clearer: this was the plan all along; the “theoretical section” represents nothing short of a dialectical reversal; it is the *telos* of the book which informs its beginning, shedding light also on the significance of that old and illustrious tradition of lessons in exile, which dates as far back as history and the written word itself.

As is perhaps fitting, I will conclude my presentation by reading a couple of passages from the end of the book. First, “So, if I am not mistaken, the experiences of exile and of friendship” (friendship also plays an important role in Pereda’s lessons in exile) “can also be used not to solve, but to dissolve the dilemma of personhood.”

Successfully realizing that solution would allow us to claim that a person is that animal who fashions itself out of its own actions and narrations using both biological and social concepts. Yet even while in the midst of acting or narrating, *a person is capable of stepping back and reasoning in normative terms* as if they were “any” human being. A person making the most out of the opportunity can negotiate and examine their desires, emotions, social systems of belonging and even their most intimate imaginings. (106, italics added)

And, yes, “The lesson is difficult, but [it is also] necessary.” For, Pereda writes (perhaps with an eye to Kant and the Kantian),

if we do not give ourselves permission to destabilize our routines (including our theoretical routines), welcoming uncertainty and puzzlement so that later we can work our way through each situation towards a reflective solution, then we will almost certainly lose everything that matters most. (108)

And the very last paragraph of the book, in a brief concluding section bearing the understated title “Clarification,” reads, “One might object, considering my intentions to be too wildly ambitious;”

Not only did I attempt to outline certain approaches to these problems by not avoiding the relevance of all stories, metaphors, analogies, fragments of poems read as metatimonies and even reflections on culture and people, I also did not shy away from a desire for generality. Of course, without subsequent reasoning—that is, without arguments that are expounded one premise after another—approaches of this type can often dissipate into thin air. But if we refuse to allow ourselves to participate in a little disorder from time to time, especially with certain investigations, we run the risk of being condemned to tasks that, out of routine, are guided by nothing more than centripetal movement, when not by repetitive and hollow paraphrase. (110)

And with these words, the journey ends.

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