

Modernity as an Intercultural Network: Uncertainty and new Challenges in a Global Latin America

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The conference speech served as the inauguration event of academic activities in the Centre of Latin American Studies at Cambridge University for the period 2017-2018. The text is a historical and theoretical reflection about the modernity in the region, built in relationship with the different ways of thought that the European illustration had. We, the Latin Americans, are similar but also different. The main idea is that Latin American modernity experiences are Baroque and anti-colonial, as well as intercultural. The analysis places emphasis on a number of social and aesthetic productions and on some sociological experiences. Finally, the text argues that the “historical mirror” the region had with the European modernity projects is broken now and this is associated with the global crisis: “kamanchaka” times, as I named it. For Latin America, the challenge is to re built a new modernity project with a global-horizon perspective.

Mirrors and hollowness

If Habermas says the word modernity, possibly, people will immediately think that he refers to the world. However, if I mention the word modernity, people will think at once that I refer to Cochabamba or Latin America. But why is this so?

I believe that there is a mirrored game in our intellectual interactivity: We have evolved in relation to Europe since colonial times, but there is also this idea that we are different. They, on the other side, in general have never looked at themselves in our mirror, which has rendered them a feeling of emptiness, where more life and ideas could have developed.

We have grown up with them but at the same time we are different. Besides, that construction has been baroque. We have been influenced by three great illustrations and we have often combined them creating or recreating a weird intellectual being. We have been influenced by the German, French and especially the English. And particularly the Jesuits in the area of educa-

tion. Moreover, what is more significant, is that we have done it from our multicultural network; Indian, African, European, Asiatic, and Arabian Latin American, as Carlos Fuentes liked to highlight. Sometimes we have also temporarily buried mirrors as Fuentes said.

Such construction is at the same time particular and accumulative. Particular because it has varied according to national or international historical circumstances requiring crucial cultural and political changes. Accumulative, because it has a certain continuity with time. In Latin America not everything that finishes is over. That's the way we are.

As Simón Bolívar rode on horseback through the continent, he carried his 'Emilio de Rousseau' in his saddlebag. He surely pondered on how to create a citizen without altering the primitive soul of the native peoples and build a free society. But he also negotiated economic possibilities with the English to achieve economical autonomy from the Spanish, as well as hiring Scottish Rebels for their high military command.

Bolivia means a great yearn for freedom, a mandate that even nowadays the Bolivians and the Latin Americans dream to achieve. Bolivia looked forward to being an autonomous, sovereign continental country, to express with reality its libertarian dreams. However, as their dreams didn't come true, at the end of his life he stated that he had ploughed in the sea. Zavaleta Mercado used to say with sarcasm that Bolívar was such a great politician, that from his mistakes five republics were born.

But in spite of this, he left the idea of Latin American integration as a utopia of what is possible, an idea to carry out, an idea that is rooted in our future and that makes us think what we are and what is possible to be done.

The best Latin American baroque creation, which developed especially in the XVIII century, is an act of anticolonial modernity, since it condemns colonial power and combines the best of our lands' vernacular tradition with the best of European renaissance, and creates a social and aesthetic product that has transcended its own circumstances.

Anticolonial Baroque

There are two acts that I would like to highlight in this sense: The Guraní Jesuit baroque and the façade of San Lorenzo in the city of Potosí. Both of them refer to the continuity of historical time as legacy and as utopia, established by Guarani and Andean communities. From their primitive experiences, they lay down the idea that a better world is possible.

The Guarani communities, praised for example in the volumes of *General History of French Socialism* coordinated by Jacques Droz, place this experience

as a socialist utopia at the same level as Tomas More Utopia or the egalitarian utopias of the East. Carlos Hugo Molina, in a didactic way, showed us how the Chiquitanos poets already discussed the eternity of nature as a source of life that they later outlined together with the Jesuits to create a Christian communism, surely inspired by the cataros as regards the Jesuits, but above all to hinder the destruction of the new power of land owning. Verb missing? Each of them, according to their work, avoiding private property, starting from the assumption that the development of selfish interests would lead to a religious and social decline in the community. And with all this they created music in which merged the Zipoli of Italian Baroque with its marvellous voices together with the tunes of the Chiquitana rainforest. Doesn't this mark the need to find a new ethical way of life against the greed of financial global power?

The façade of San Lorenzo was built between 1728 and 1744, that is to say, at the beginning of the best colonial art and at the beginning of the decline of the silver economy. The first native rebellions were also starting and the legitimacy of forced labour was also discussed. Let me make a stop in this act.

The church of San Lorenzo was a parish for natives, asked for and demanded by natives to natives: to learned natives, or even better, to natives worried about the Enlightenment. It is supposed that the principal sculptor, according to Diego Arzans, was 'Luis Niño', a Ladino native, according to Ceuxis, Apeles or Timantes and it is worth pointing out, - continues Arzans - that drunk paints and sculpts skilfully.

The issue is that a native or a group of native sculptors are worried because of the renaissance and illustration, and because they are appreciated and accepted as equals in their skill; and even more because they are appreciated as critical creators and reformers of the same illustration, from a genuine project that transcended its circumstance and converted into a really classical act.

The principal door to the house of God, -to the representation of eternity- the temple for natives- is an entrance hall flanked by the god Hermes in its hermaphrodite shape, situated at both sides of the door. The whole façade lies on two caryatids that, as main central columns, hold the whole monument. Thanks to them and to the wonderful baroque art we can appreciate the mermaids, musician angels and the gods of the sun and the moon, San Lorenzo the burned martyr, Saint Michael archangel, the *mestizo* that with his drawn sword, and with a furious expression protects the building as he face the mountain Rico in Potosí.

The cosmology is crucial and the anthropomorphous features that organize the façade are evident, as maybe is also the musical representation portrayed in the façade: the mermaids with their *charangos*, San Lorenzo and the

angels with their harps, the Hermes and the Andean caryatids in dancing positions in the middle of a baroque voluptuousness that fills up any single space. It gives the impression that we are in front of a wonderful spectacle created by a kind of Andean Plato, or rather by peoples of the Andes that think of the Greek Plato, of the Republic or of the Timenon, from their own perspective. Then it isn't a copy of the European renaissance, as some may imagine, where a lord or a clergyman asks a master of the time to paint two mermaids, one on the right under the moon and another on the left under the sun, but a creative interpretation and a particular cultural synthesis with elements of cunning and imagination.

I say Plato because this author, using music, figures and symbols as the mermaids, deals with the themes of movement of the spheres of the universe, of the force of the cosmos and the chaos, that is to say, of the degenerative and regenerative forces in space. In this case, one could interpret that the caryatids, that represent the natives that work in Potosí and suffer like San Lorenzo, are holding one of Plato's spheres: the world.

Although it is an extraordinary work of art, it is not unique. A series of baroque façades and paintings, as Leopoldo Castedo describes in his *Ibero-American History of Art*, depicts as well Greek-Roman renaissance figures and symbols. Likewise, although many chroniclers shows us the importance of Aristotle's thought in that period, it is not strange to think that they have also read Plato, a prohibited but more flexible writer, more similar to the Andean cosmology. And it could also be thought that that second reading of Plato was part of a resistance, not without contradictions, to accept the institutionalized ideology of the Church and the colonial power of the Empire.

In the XX century there is a group of essayists and historians that strongly state under another historical context the idea or the possibility of an anticolonial modernity. The cases of Tamayo in Bolivia and of Vasconcelos in Mexico place the possibility of having a universality of their vernacular cultures. Tamayo, from his Andean origin and his academic training in German and French illustrations, wondered about the possibility of an Aymara modernity. In a more iconoclastic and universal way, Vasconcelos did the same as regards Mexico and he even regarded India.

Marxism, aesthetics and youths

All along the XX century intellectuals and political ideological streams have debated about these topics. From ultra conservative versions but illustrated as Arguedas' in his controversial book *Pueblo Enfermo*, to sensible historical stud-

ies, such as Valery Fyfer's, who argued empirically and geographically that Bolivia was scarcely viable.

Warizata's notable educational experience combines the Andean community with the national pedagogy and produces a notable act of Aimara modernity, which is incomparable. He also analyses the Aztec architecture and reproduces it in the middle of the high plateau. But in Bolívar's Bolivia, it is also important to take into account controversies before the revolution of 1952, such as the Trotskyist thesis of Pulacayo, the nationalist of Ayopaya or Carlos Montenegro's essay *Nationalism and the colonial period*. Even nowadays, at the beginning of the XXI century, this controversy started by Tamayo, still continues; it is a controversy regarding the viability of an indigenous modernity or of a Bolivian state consisting of many nationalities.

Marxism was introduced in Latin America in a Leninist way. Social organisations juxtaposed and inherited lands based on a landowning regime, capitalist mining economy, historically exporters of natural resources to the dominant economies, limited industrial experiences associated with social stratifications of colonial origin and limited urban processes, in all *A Hundred years of Loneliness*, were, among others, the favourable conditions for a language and Leninist ideology to flourish. This Leninist ideology has as reference the people, more than the social class as political subject and above all tried to identify the State with the Nation and the development.

The State, the revolution and the imperialism: previous stage of capitalism, among others, were texts that inspired rebellious ideologies all throughout the XX century. The same Trotskyist language and Trotsky's stay in Mexico and his various talks with revolutionaries from different countries in the continent strengthened this Leninist ideology. Even in Allende's Chile, if they didn't have a good cultural knowledge of the time of the revolution of October, it was hard to talk about the political future of that country.

It is just from the 50s onwards and particularly with the contributions from the publishing house of *Fondo de Cultura Económica* of Mexico and the Group *Pasado y Presente* of Córdoba, Argentina, that Marxism reinstalls itself in the region and besides, it does it in a very sophisticated way. José Aricó, one of the intellectuals that most and best contributed to foster this history, introduced a fascinating reading of Gramsci and of Mariátegui as regards social problems connected with the role of culture in politics. In Perú, the controversies about Haya de la Torre and Mariátegui, concerning the nature of the revolution, are still paradigmatic to the whole region.

In this perspective there outstands two controversial acts of modernity related to a political and cultural transformation. The muralist movement, started by the Mexican revolution that flourished all throughout the region,

and the Reform in Córdoba, carried out by young people in Córdoba in 1918, with the achievement of university autonomy had a notable political and modernizing impact on the continent.

In the modern aesthetic tradition as well as in the socio-historical analysis, it sounds impossible to understand the Latin American dynamics without taking into account the revolutionary experience in Mexico and the three great Mexican painters: David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco. These muralists' influence in the Latin American painting expands from Mexico to Chile. However, it is in Bolivia where, due to the revolutionary event of the XX century, the Mexican muralists have their most impact.

The three great Mexican muralists relate themselves, on the other hand, with the North American painting. There exists, for instance, a very interesting literature that explains the influence that Siqueiros, Rivera and Orozco had in the history of North American art.

As it is well known, the aesthetic fact that outstands most beyond the history of the murals censored in the Rockefeller centre in New York, is the influence that the Mexican muralism had on the great North American painter Jackson Pollock, who innovated materials and techniques from the teaching of David Alfaro Siqueiros. Besides, the European surrealism travelled to New York in the suitcases of the Cuban, Chinese, African and Picasso's supporter, Wilfredo Lam and the Chilean painter Matta.

In the Bolivian case, the influence of the 'Get out' Mexican, takes place above all with the direct and permanent relation between Alandía Pantoja and Diego Rivera. The Mexican was visiting the murals in La Paz, particularly those in the Government and Legislative Palaces, which were later destroyed. In relation to these events, Elena Poniatowska says that Miguel Alandía Pantoja knew how to transcend his masters and synthesize the aesthetics of the three Mexican muralists. Symbolically, it is also very important to acknowledge that Rivera as well as Siqueiros, when Pantoja and Romero were Trotskyist, Stalinist and obviously Leninist.

Following the mirror theory, it is worth outlining that it is Octavio Paz who says that the Mexican muralism can only discover its vernacular origin from the 'outside'. Following this theory, it can be confirmed that the 'inside' of the Mexican muralism can only be explained thanks to the connection with the European modernist movement. There is no way of separating, for example, Diego Rivera from Gauguin. In other words, it is interesting to analyse the thesis by Octavio Paz, that so as to discover the 'inside' a journey from the 'outside' has to be made, and this was only achieved by the revolution, which by the way, was born from the 'inside' against the neo-colonial power of the time.

Taking into account this figure for the Bolivian case, we could say that the universal view of modern art that brings the Mexican muralism is the one that enables our painters explore the vernacular tradition, guided by another great Bolivian, Cecilio Guzmán de Rojas. We could also add that many of the figures of the other great muralist, Walter Solón Romero, have something to do with Velázquez' painting. Those skinny faces, of beautiful reflexions and with such an attractive brightness are the brightness of the edges. And if this is so, our painters are also classical painters because they make portraits of themselves from a critical journey towards a universal past. In this sense it is possible to state a hypothesis that what is modern in Bolivia renovates and innovates itself with the revolution but can only be discovered thanks to the European modernity that goes through Mexico and its own national Revolution.

However, the inner part is more important. We cannot separate muralism from mining. Alandia Pantoja and Walter Solon Romero are not self explained. Their universe is that of the mine, of the mining camp, of the inner part of the mine and their relationship with the external world. This relation means a whole world of communication and of cultural interchange. The mine was the socializing place for the modern industrial world, but it is also the place where the god Tunupa, known as *el Tío (the uncle)* resides. The interaction between native culture, work, sport, machinery and the idea of progress, build the mining culture. The same notion of progress is ambiguous because it relates the bourgeoisie with the proletariat idea that associates progress with freedom. The mining ethic is incredible, that ethic that fosters rebellion against exploitation but that values their work as construction of their own dignity.

That's why I believe that the aesthetic act of muralism has its grounds in the mining sociability. It cannot be understood without the power of the trade unions, without the tradition of the fight of the miners, definitely rational and modern.

As regards universalism and the continuity of these projects of modernity, a last socio-aesthetic event in Buenos Aires was frankly wonderful. The government removed a great statue of Colón situated opposite the Pink House, and was transferred to another place apparently facing the river Río de la Plata. This generated protests on the part of the Italian community. In its place a new statue was installed, a statue of Juana Azurduy de Padilla, a Bolivian guerilla fighter for the independence of Argentina. When the work of art was inaugurated, thousands of Bolivian and Argentine migrants mingled dancing and singing anthems. That happened above the ground, below is the museum of the fifth Century, whose principal piece of art is an erotic mural of Siqueiros painted together with the Argentine artists Lino Enea Spilimbergo,

Antonio Berni and Juan Carlos Castagnino, and the Uruguayan scenographer Enrique Lázaro. It is a beautiful mural with a spooky story, and it was recently discovered and moved to this place some years ago. Nowadays, it seems that this symbolic recognition is going to change once more. This is the way we are in these areas.

The reform movement in Córdoba, Argentina, initiated the appearance of a democratic idea of Latin American integration. A movement that was launched by urban middle class youths, that intended to democratize the university, question the oligarchies and launched a Latin American unifying thought. The cultural criticism towards the oligarchies was a criticism to cosmopolitanism eradicated from the cultural life of their own countries. This criticism towards the European idea of civilization, as Enzo Faletto argued, cast doubt on the results of pain and chaos of the First World War. In this way, facing this crisis, the students demanded

A new civilizing cycle, whose headquarters should reside in America, as unquestionable historical factors determine it, demands a total change of human values and a different orientation of spiritual forces, in agreement with an ample democracy, without dogmas or prejudices.

This Latin American idea spread through many countries in America, as a democratic idea and as an integrating destiny in an emancipating project. It reappears, in this way, the idea of integration started in the independence. It is a cultural phenomenon, by the way, as Faletto stated, driven by the literature of: Haya de la Torre, Vasconcelos, Gabriela Mistral, Rodó, etc. The literary experience was key to the construction of that imaginary young Latin American that transcended and combined itself with the revolutionary forces and reforms, the muralism and other diverse cultural and political movements throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Sociology

If modernity seen from sociology's point of view is at the same time a substantive, historical and critic reflection of modernization and of the proposals for political and social reforms, there are two classic authors who tried to combine a Latin American historical- cultural view and empiric phenomena of contingent reality with the classics of European sociology and at a lower scale North American. We are talking about two exiled, or even better "transterados", Gino Germani and José Medina Echavarría, expelled to America by

the Italian Fascism and by the Spanish Francoism. Experiences, by the way, that marked them for ever. Both of them worked on the relation between modernization and democracy and also on the explanation of the populist or national-popular phenomenon in the region.

For Germani, in his text *Latin America*, essays on a socio political interpretation, the national popular movements were a

a peculiar way of intervention in the national political life of the traditional strata in progress in the countries of late industrialization' and 'they have appeared or are appearing precisely in all Latin America countries, since in all of them the -degree of movilization in the popular class in the marginal areas in each country overflows or threatens to overflow the means of expression and the participation that the social structure is able to offer.

His classical text, *Politics and society* in a time of transition was central pose an complex vision from tradition to modernization. The curious and fantastic thing about this author is that at the end of his career, in the traditional strata of the democratic transition of 1978, he wrote a catastrophic thesis about the relation between modernization and democracy. He believed that such relationship intrinsically led to an anti-democratic totalitarianism. This text is one of the few sociological writings that generated a rich controversy in the developed countries as well as in the intellectuals in Russia and the East. Bobbio ends his comment about Germani's text with the phrase: «We are doomed to believe only in reason. Perhaps that's why we have so little faith». They had both ploughed the sea.

The contribution of the Spanish republicans to the Arts and Science in Latin America in the second half of the XX century has been fundamental. Without doubt, Latin America wouldn't have been what is now, without the enlightened thought and it would not be much if we don't think about its future from these important contributions and these experiences of life. Among them, in the social science field, outstands José Medina Echavarría.

As it evolved, Medina's thought produced a conceptual network associating the Weberian rationalism with the history of Latin America and the so called 'ECLACS' development'. Here there is a particularly important aspect to highlight and that is the thought about the development by CEPAL and particularly by the Argentine economist Raul Prebisch from a Keynesist thought adjusted to Latin America, it connects and interacts with the sociological Weberian view that Medina posed. In this way, one of the richest and creative thoughts about the development is a kind of 'English, German and Latin American baroque', which in many aspects is similar to the ideas, stated

from their Asiatic experiences by Amartya Sen and Mabub UI Haq in their approach of human development many years later.

Nevertheless, from my point of view, Medina's text called 'The social problem in the economic development of Bolivia', creates the first socio-historical approximation of such approach. That is to say, the Bolivian Revolution was an object of empiric, historical and critical analysis that enabled a leap in the author's theory.

In my view, this text anticipates what then became Medina's most refined thought about development in Latin America. Small challenge for a rationalist intellectual as Medina to try to understand a 'chenkoso' country, a complex country in the middle of one of the most important land holding revolution in the continent in XX century. A country where the land holding and tin economy had structural limits to reproduce itself, a country with rooted native cultures, a mining and peasant movement highly radicalized, associated with the middle class strongly politicized and with a strong essayist tradition. A dramatic country that had rediscovered itself in the Chaco War. And a country where old phantoms of the Lords and the patriarchal order tended to recycle in the emerging political culture.

From his sociological perspective, Medina accepted the challenge and wrote one of the most important analytical works that shows the social modern drama of the Bolivians in the times of the revolution. Crisis and change, on the other hand, not only constituted the pillars of life that shaped in Europe and America Medina's thought, but also a fundamental ethos in the sociological thought of modernity.

Bolivia of the year 1952 wasn't the Bolivia of the past, but it was a Bolivia that so as to project itself in time it looked at its own memory and tried to answer questions about its future. In *Sociological Considerations to the economic development*, Medina states very well the problem of this type of moment of historical inflection:

First, which are the basis to the new structure which is succeeding the previous one and that already carried in its core from the beginning of its decomposition? Second, where is the last foundation of 'prise de conscience', which opens with the new economic cycle the physiognomy of the immediate future?

The relation between past and present is a tension without any solution, since there isn't a continual mechanical narration of all the social diversity throughout the passing of time. It is fundamental to keep the idea of historical continuity and also to introduce the notion of rupture, which in this case was the Revolution. The ideology of the Revolution tried to build this conscience

of a time of change without being able to solve such tension, which, in the best of the cases, caused surprise in such thinkers. The developmental proposal of the Revolution was associated with an industrial development, an educational modernization, an integration of the rural world and the constitution of a modern and autonomous State. That is to say, he tried to show the possibilities of a rational change, as well as acknowledge the presence and force of tradition in that same change. But once more, not everything that ends, finishes.

That's why, in due time, the same Revolution appears as a come-back to the past, an idealised past that in fact never existed. He tried to found the tradition of the new but he failed, and not surprisingly since the same crisis was understood as a confusing feeling composed by disconnections between the new and the old, the vernacular and the universal, to sum up, between the thought and the action. Definitely, in this field, Medina's text is particularly clarifying.

This also implied facing the tension between the national and the universal, and although there was a search for universal truths, what was mostly found were problems of, an atavistic past not yet solved and least of all with an ideological burden usually confusing as that of various ideologists and analysts of 1952. The merit, of especially those like Montenegro and Almaraz, was not to propose national projects clearly established, but to pose the problems of a complex, backwards, and deeply unjust society, to the new emerging power and modernity. Perhaps one of the few exceptions to the ideologization of the time, was the working spirit and the agency of people as the 'barefooted engineer', as Gumucio was known, that understood that the revolution was measured by the rational concretion of its results.

That was the Bolivia that Medina Echavarría had to describe. And he did it with a group of modern sociologists: Weber, Mannheim, Durkheim, Mills, Dahrendorf and Parsons, and their own experience of life in Spain, Germany, Poland, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

It seems that Medina's rule was to start from a historical speciality, taking into account that by only accumulating theory, sociology evolves more. If this is so, he contemplated Bolivia with all that knowledge.

Medina started with the thesis of rational expansion in all its senses, but he also asked himself and Weber if reason could be an emancipating force. His method of paradoxes still surprises: only the miners, the most modern group in Bolivia, could institutionalize the Revolution and promote the development, but its excessive ideologization prevented them from doing it.

Medina was principally worried about the social conditions of the economic development. In his view it could be understood as an expression of the general process of rationalization of modern society. He understood the

economic development as a permanent process of accumulation that implies the reiterated investment of the surplus associated with a constant expansion of production. Consequently, what should be studied are the conditions to make this expansion plausible. And this is what he tried to do with this study: detect the obstacles that the Bolivian social structure posed to the economic development from a rationalist code.

To pose the problem of development from that perspective in a country with a dense historicity, where inconclusive cultural times of pre-modernity and modernity juxtapose, makes the rationalist way more difficult. It is important to do it, but assuming that by only recognizing these problems we could start to recognize ourselves in a genuine modernity.

From the ECLAC theory of modernization in the 60s the critics and theories about the relation between dependence and development was born. However, both theories, the developmentalist and the dependent, in their variations they share a way of analysis although they have different canons. On one hand, they are not just different theoretical visions but their orientations in values are usually different. Some are more structural-historicist and others are related to the Marxist tradition. However, in the variety of interpretations and political orientations, it is possible to find a common feature in the similar use of the concept of structure, which appears to be, from my point of view, too abstract and partial. This comes together with an absence of synthesis of significant realities impoverishing the same idea of meaning of social facts. The synchronic analysis doesn't offer more than a skeleton and the social reality is not just a structure.

Perhaps only Cardoso and Faletto, in their book *Dependence and Development* made a syncretism between the historic structural method and a neo-Marxism *sui generis* through his analysis of dependence situations where they categorized the diverse national experiences and where politics played a significant role, but even in them their emphasis was centred in the structural analysis of the historical processes.

The analysis of the social-historical conflicts, the actors and movements were very limited and subordinated to the logic of development or politics. The relation between actor and structure in the analysis was limited.

In this sense Alain Touraine, summarizes a position that he includes throughout the Latin American work, above all in his book *La Parole et la sang*. But also in the theory when he states:

Modernity does not rest in a unique principle, and even less in the simple destruction of the obstacles that oppose Reason; modernity is the dialogue between reason and the subject. Without Reason, the subject locks himself up

in his obsession of identity; without the subject, Reason becomes the instrument of power.

Touraine is one of the few authors that say that it is impossible to comprehend the modern world without understanding Latin America.

Manuel Castells, who Anthony Giddens said was the Weber of the XXI century, not only set the Latin American problem in various aspects in his famous trilogy: *The Era of Information*, but he also talked and discussed his most outstanding thesis with the academy and politicians of the region, and besides he linked the Latin American themes with a wider discussion about the different ways of development and the crisis in the globalization.

I believe that Manuel Castells is a fundamental intellectual to comprehend the processes and new phenomena of a globalized and informational world. Throughout his intellectual life he has been able to combine a global thought and a local one, on one hand, and a vision of continuity and the historical rupture with a theory (in constant mutation) and with empiric data on the other hand. I have shared his intellectual work for more than forty years and what has always surprised me is his capacity of self-criticism and to innovate his own ideas.

I have been lucky enough to share with Touraine, Castells and Faletto many intellectual adventures throughout my intellectual life. They honoured me not only with their pedagogy and friendship, but above all with their caring ethics and their commitment with the human rights in the harsher and most difficult moments that many Latin American intellectuals had to undergo in the times of dictatorships. In this opportunity I want remember the great solidarity by the Professor Andrew Pearse with us.

Kamanchaka and the global Latin America

At the beginning of the XXI century Latin America was able to reach significant advances of democracy and social integration. For the first time in its history the region experimented, not without problems, more than thirty years of democratic life but also a significant decrease of poverty, above all of the so called extreme poverty, and it also experimented an important revaluation of a regional integration more political-ideological than of development.

However, its forms of integration in the era of information were limited to a notable expansion of consumption of information and communication technology and to new experiences of informational change of an extractivism of natural resources that renewed his membership in the global market,

but that didn't permit a genuine productive transformation with equity. All this with important costs and environmental resistances, above all of those called native peoples.

We, the Latin American, as Albert Hirschman described, still haven't learned 'to sail against the wind', to combine genuine competitiveness with equity and environmental sustainability. We have not even been able to live together with a political and cultural pluralism institutionalized as the best way to solve conflicts and options. Sometimes it seems that the old feudal/lordly legacy of landholding live on in the imaginaries of political culture out live in the political culture and the development in the social and political elites in the region.

And all this in the middle of a change and multi-dimensional global crisis that makes more necessary new practical and analytical skills and that reorganizes with uncertain destinies and with enormous risks the new global geopolitics. Risks where the actors of power have multiplied themselves and made more complex in new and still vague structures of domain. The truth is that globalization redefines itself, and this has already got important consequences for all the region and for each country. In the end, what is national is each time less important, and there are still national development tasks pending, and above all a practice of integration to have a better position and vision in today's world.

The thought needs to be historical, baroque-anticolonial, national and local, but if it isn't global and universal as well, it becomes insufficient and the navigation charts and maps of thought obsolete. We should stop repeating what the modern thinker said, or the old obsolete ideological discourses, or even worse, the empiric not historic narrations without analytical or theoretical contents that sustain them. The globalization crisis is a new field of power and of conflict. The Latin American intellectuals are becoming conscious that there is an epistemological rupture and that to live and look at a global world more mirrors are needed, otherwise we won't understand, for instance, that a finance crisis in China will affect people's daily life. And if a movement for dignity of human rights doesn't work and live in the network, it has very harsh limits. The theoretical path isn't made only with memory; its renovation related to the uncertainty and the global change is essential. The emergence of new actors with renewed capacities of agency towards an informational development that will enable sail against the wind is fundamental although it is still limited.

We live the time of *Kamanchaka*, as the Andean miners say when a terrible fog appears and penetrates their lives, work and spirit. It is risky if you move or if you don't. The only thing that remains to do is to resist and be patient. The interesting thing is that this figure is not typical of the Andean cul-

ture; in Germany, for example, there is a wind called Fohn, which has similar effects; and although science has already studied the physical and geological characteristics of the phenomenon, the German get depressed and are afraid of schizophrenia and suicide. On the Canary islands there is also a strange mist and the Canarian citizens lock themselves up in their houses to pray. These winds blow everywhere.

The Kulturpessimismus shows that the vision of a progressive history of a rise time is over. The social progress, as Steinner says, ‘implies a dialect of the concomitant harm that progress destroys an irreparable equilibrium between society and nature’ and besides ‘indecent commodities of developed societies coexist with what seems to be the endemic death by hunger in most parts of the world. The social disparities not only rise but become complex.

From the perspective that I propose in this essay, the priority is in the life that doesn’t imply leaving aside the rational part in man. Only as life, as we were saying years ago with Cristina Micielli, the real embodies itself with a sense of participation, identity, difference, finitude and an authentic social change. Only from it faith is built, and an economic and socially liberating transformation can be built.

The democratic order is essentially conflictive and knowing this, we aim an order that, in its own dynamic, supports and projects at the same time a dignified life.

Nowadays the principal wealth that the region possess for itself and the world in its varied and complex intercultural network and the conviction what is needed to face the change is both memory and criticism of our own history. Bolívar’s integrationist dreams are necessary and today they are redefined in the light of a new globalization.

The great question is still the sense of change.

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