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Current Problems and Debates in Latin American Philosophy

Dante Ramaglia  

National University of Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina

National Scientific and Technical Research Council, Buenos Aires, Argentina

 ramaglia@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar

Abstract. Latin American philosophical thought is a field of study with a long history, consolidated from the middle of the last century to the present. A series of theoretical proposals originating from various controversies are fundamental to its constitution and contemporary developments. In general terms, it could be said that these discussions revolve around the directions adopted regarding the significance assigned to Latin American philosophy: on the one hand, the conceptual delimitations about the possibility and meaning of this philosophical orientation; on the other hand, the projections regarding the particular reality it must address as critical thought. This study attempts to show the main orientations assumed by Latin American thought. Among the topics with a significant presence, the following issues stand out: first, the discussion about the legitimacy and unique characteristics of Latin American philosophy, which is related to the formation of a critical history of ideas; second, the orientation toward a social and political philosophy assumed with a liberating sense, which has a prominent influence on some contemporary developments and contains in its proposals a worldwide projection.

Keywords: contemporary Latin American philosophy, social and political thought, philosophy of liberation, critical history of ideas

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Актуальные проблемы и дебаты в латиноамериканской философии

Д. Рамалья  

Национальный университет Куйо, Мендоса, Аргентина

Национальный совет по научно-техническим исследованиям, Буэнос-Айрес, Аргентина

 ramaglia@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar

Аннотация. Латиноамериканская философская мысль – это область исследований с долгой историей, которая началась в середине прошлого века и продолжается по настоящее время. Ряд теоретических предложений, возникших в результате различных разногласий, являются основополагающими для ее создания и современного развития. В общих чертах можно сказать, что эти дискуссии вращаются вокруг направлений, принятых в отношении значения, придаваемого латиноамериканской философии: с одной стороны, концептуальных разграничений относительно возможности и смысла этой философской ориентации; с другой стороны, проекций относительно конкретной реальности, к которой она должна обращаться как критическая мысль. Цель этого исследования – выявить основные направления, сформировавшие латиноамериканскую мысль. Среди значимых тем выделяются следующие: во-первых, дискуссия о легитимности и уникальных характеристиках латиноамериканской философии, которая связана с формированием критической истории идей; во-вторых, ориентация на социальную и политическую философию, которая воспринимается с освободительным смыслом, которая оказывает заметное влияние на некоторые современные события и содержит в своих предложениях всемирную проекцию.

Ключевые слова: современная латиноамериканская философия, социально-политическая мысль, философия освобождения, критическая история идей

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The research presents an interpretive perspective on the significance of Latin American philosophy in its most recent theoretical expressions. Regarding the perspective adopted, some preliminary clarifications are necessary. One of them is that this is not intended to offer a historical overview of the specific development of this philosophical tradition, which covers an extensive period dating back to the concepts emanating from ancient Indigenous peoples, then passes through the three centuries of colonial domination, and acquires other characteristics from the movements promoting the political independence of the new Latin American nations in the 19th century to the various philosophical manifestations existing today. Undoubtedly, considerable progress has been made in the historical

reconstruction of the intellectual currents corresponding to the different periods linked to the social and political processes that occurred in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean¹.

From the perspective adopted in this study, it is important to consider the debates that have taken place since the last century, examining their implications for current theoretical positions, which are mediated by personal interpretation. First, the discussion regarding the possibility of a philosophy specific to Latin America is reviewed. Through a critical evaluation of the various arguments presented, this paper demonstrates how this debate has contributed to a more precise understanding of the particular characteristics found in the themes and modes of thought originating in Latin American countries. This reassessment of Latin American philosophy stems particularly from its examination within the history of ideas, which helps delimit the criteria used for its conceptual reconstruction. Second, the practical dimension of Latin American critical thought is highlighted – namely, its implications in the social and political spheres – entailing consideration of the contributions made, especially in formulating specific theoretical categories and approaches. Although this practical orientation is present in most historical ideas and intellectual currents, the presentation will focus on its most recent manifestations, which tend to incorporate propositions arising from other critical strands of the social and human sciences, the emergence and consolidation of philosophy with a liberating meaning, and the dialogue established from an intercultural perspective as a contribution to the renewal of criticism on a global scale.

Review of different propositions about the sense and legitimacy of Latin American philosophy

In a first approach to the controversies that have arisen from the definitions proposed regarding the significance of the development of philosophy in the Latin American context, the question of the possibility of supporting its existence occupies a prominent place. Although I consider this debate to be concluded at the present time, it is necessary to highlight the motives and assumptions that led to arguments for or against the validity of maintaining this possibility, by means of a critical review of the positions held, which have evolved over time.

Initially, we will refer to the various proposals presented in the contemporary period, from the last century to the present, while also noting that the question of the possibility of independent thought already had antecedents in the proposals for

¹ As will be seen later, when we refer in particular to the relevance of the history of ideas in relation to Latin American philosophy, we will especially consider the clarifications and discussions that arise from this historiographical task, which has been developing since the last century until today. An overview of the different periods, currents, and representative authors of Latin American philosophical thought can be found in the collective volume edited by Dussel, Mendieta, and Bohórquez [1].

achieving cultural autonomy that emerged after emancipation from colonial rule in the 19th century. As anticipated, its specific modalities are also established through a historical investigation of philosophical ideas in periods prior to independence itself.

It is also important to note that the question of the existence of a Latin American philosophy was raised again when the process of institutionalization of philosophical studies in Latin American countries began, which presented local variations from the early decades of the 20th century. It should be noted that this does not mean that the teaching and writing of this type of knowledge were an absolute novelty at that time. Already in the colonial period, the first institutionalization of philosophical knowledge was observed, with the creation of colleges and universities in the territories annexed mainly by the empires of Spain and Portugal. However, this discipline was cultivated almost exclusively as a subsidiary form of theological training and as professional preparation in the legal field, regardless of the intellectual contributions that could be recognized at that stage—some of which exceeded the institutional scope.

Otherwise, the new contemporary moment presented various phenomena associated with the creation of specific programs dedicated to philosophy in several countries in the region, including the dissemination of this type of knowledge in our societies, both within and outside the academy. As part of the historical context, it can be noted that this period was marked by a modernization project that was implemented after the consolidation of most nation-states. This led to a series of profound transformations that impacted society, politics, culture, and the economy, particularly in the latter sense, resulting in subordinate incorporation into a globally expanding capitalist economy.

Returning to the question of the possibility of affirming the existence of a philosophy of its own, it is significant that it arises in association with the institutionalization of philosophy and within a certain historical and cultural context, which has been changing since the beginning of the last century to the present, when this question is posed in terms that imply a series of consensuses that have been reached, as well as some disagreements that persist.

It is worth clarifying that the main issue under discussion concerns the possibility of affirmatively supporting the existence of a way of thinking with its own characteristics. This means that it is not simply a matter of confirming the fact that the study and research of different philosophical disciplines are promoted based on the institutional development taking place in our countries. The central question presented as a topic of debate is the particular significance acquired by thinking from a specific situation in our region. To demonstrate how this discussion is framed, it is possible to resort to a concise description of the historical journey, which can be characterized through its different conceptual inflections.

From the beginning of the institutionalization of philosophy at the university level, it is possible to observe the adoption of a certain model, which operates implicitly or explicitly in those who are trained in this knowledge. Basically, this

model assumes a way of understanding and practicing philosophy that reproduces the idea of an already established canon, oriented according to the Western European tradition and responding to the parameters of philosophical discourse in the strictest sense. In certain extreme cases, this canon is considered to be removed from its political implications related to a local context in order to remain exclusively within the realm of universality. Consequently, the answer to the question of the existence of a specific way of thinking is negative from this position; that is, it only makes sense to approach an already established way of doing philosophy according to a model derived from certain hegemonic centers of knowledge production. This characterization, which has been summarized in a general way—although it adopts different conceptual and ideological forms that contain particular variants – could be said to remain in force to a certain extent, even though it is necessary to note that it has been successively questioned until it has definitively entered into crisis today².

Along with the establishment and consolidation of philosophy in the university setting, concern arose about whether it was possible to sustain a line of thought that could be classified as corresponding to a specific nationality or that encompassed the whole of Latin America. As a significant example, we can mention the case of Mexico, which, beginning with its revolutionary process after the first decade of the 20th century, focused on the reaffirmation of a national culture. Under this same impetus, the concern arose to define a philosophy of the Mexican, with members of the Youth Athenaeum, such as Antonio Caso, Alfonso Reyes, and José Vasconcelos, among its precursors. It continued with the reflections of Samuel Ramos and acquired notable development and Latin American projection in the work of Leopoldo Zea, later to be taken up by numerous philosophers who pursued this line of inquiry. Regarding the case of Argentina, the enunciations of this theme by José Ingenieros and Alejandro Korn, which appeared precisely around the 1910s on the occasion of the centennial commemoration of the independence revolutions, were fundamental. These authors promoted different ideas regarding the question of the existence of an Argentine philosophy, along with the initial creation of a history that recorded its national antecedents. It is worth mentioning that Ingenieros also participated in the creation of the Latin American Union, an initiative that brought together a group of prominent intellectuals of the time who championed the need to strengthen Latin American integration and spoke out against imperialism, especially in the face of the growing advance of the United States of America in Latin America and the Caribbean. This geopolitical issue undoubtedly continues to impact various positions defended by contemporary Latin American thought, particularly fostering a differentiation and reaffirmation of identity that overlaps with the complex relationship historically maintained with European and Western civilization.

² Regarding the critical investigation of this problem in its contemporary approaches, the following study by Arturo Roig can be consulted: “La cuestión del modelo del filosofar en la llamada filosofía latinoamericana” [2. P. 141–179].

One of the main ways to show the existence of different philosophical expressions in Latin America derives precisely from the historical reconstruction that began with the initial work of that time and continues to the present. Of course, this implies not only carrying out a task oriented toward the investigation, discovery, and rescue of that philosophical past, but also presupposes the discussion of historiographical and methodological criteria for advancing its assessment, which constitutes the fundamental problem raised. Without being able to develop in this brief text an exhaustive examination of the proposals and changing modalities in which this articulation between Latin American philosophy and its historiography is presented³, I mention below some of its consequences with respect to the affirmation of a distinct thought.

Among the aspects that can be highlighted regarding the perspectives adopted to carry out a historical approach to Latin American philosophical expressions is the expansion of what constitutes its object of study. In this sense, the notion of philosophy is understood in a broader sense as “thought,” in accordance with the proposal made by the Spanish exile José Gaos and later adopted by other authors. This term is intended to indicate a more immanent nature of philosophical reflection in our countries, as verified in the case of the ideas advanced in response to the need for emancipation and the constitution of our nationalities from the period of political independence to the present. This orientation represents one of the principal contemporary manifestations of our philosophy, also identified under the term *thought*, which emphasizes its practical dimension. It is necessary to clarify that we are limiting the significance of what is more properly characterized as Latin American thought or philosophy to the extent that this orientation is especially concerned with accounting for our social, political, and cultural reality.

This expansion is also reflected in the preference for approaching our philosophical past from the perspective of the history of ideas. A series of theoretical and methodological guidelines are successively proposed around this historical discipline, which uniquely characterize it in our region⁴. While the history of ideas as a discipline must be distinguished from the specific significance of philosophical reflection, it provides a complementary perspective to approaches

³ I have developed a detailed interpretation of the links between the configuration of Latin American philosophy and the history of ideas in the following paper: “La cuestión de la filosofía latinoamericana” [1. P. 377–389].

⁴ The history of ideas has followed a unique trajectory in Latin America, especially in connection with philosophical studies. This is evident in a series of initiatives that have promoted historical work in different countries of the region since the middle of the last century, while also defining the theoretical and methodological criteria that continue to guide this work today.

One of the authors who has played a prominent role in coordinating and disseminating the incorporation of this historiographical approach at the continental level is Leopoldo Zea, who ultimately proposes a philosophical reflection based on the history of ideas [3].

Regarding the methodological inflections experienced by the history of ideas in relation to Latin American thought, the reconstruction carried out by Arturo Roig [4] stands out. This includes the proposals developed by Roig himself, incorporating from the outset a renewal derived from the linguistic turn.

initially made within the theoretical framework of contemporary historicism. It is worth mentioning some of the representatives who initiated the history of Latin American ideas, including Leopoldo Zea (Mexico), Arturo Ardao (Uruguay), João Cruz Costa (Brazil), Augusto Salazar Bondy and Francisco Miró Quesada (Peru), José Luis Romero and Arturo Roig (Argentina), Guillermo Francovich (Bolivia), and Jaime Jaramillo Uribe (Colombia), who were later joined by Darcy Ribeiro (Brazil), Abelardo Villegas (Mexico), Ricaurte Soler (Panama), Ernesto Mayz Vallenilla (Venezuela), Carlos Real de Azúa, Ángel Rama, and Carlos Rama (Uruguay), José Antonio Portuondo and Roberto Fernández Retamar (Cuba), among others. These initial philosophical and historiographical formulations were continued, subjected to criticism, and renewed by an extensive list of authors who dedicated themselves to Latin American studies⁵.

Returning to the topic of the consequences derived from this historical approach, it is possible to highlight some of its contributions to the redefinition of what is understood by Latin American philosophy. One of these concerns a more comprehensive understanding of the discursive forms in which thought is expressed, which allows for the appreciation of other ways of practicing philosophy. From this perspective, the importance of the essay, for example, is recognized, as it demonstrates theoretical depth in our intellectual tradition. This can also be extended to the philosophical ideas contained in poetry and novels, which present interesting approaches to understanding our reality. To these mentions, we must add the importance of sources such as journalism in revealing the thought of certain periods, as well as philosophical, aesthetic, and political manifestos, which present disruptive ideas that have marked a new direction, among other alternative forms.

This expansion does not mean ignoring the presence of the most widespread forms of philosophical discourse, both in the past and in the present of our thought, with a marked orientation toward offering a foundation, conceptual clarification, and argumentative development of the topics addressed. However, it is possible to indicate the validity of carrying out a critical review of the centrality given to the features contained in a usual representation of philosophy that tends to result in a reductionism in which there is no room for narrativity, the appeal to the symbolic, or even the subjectivity of the knower, insofar as it seeks an impersonal knowledge that privileges the logical-rational over other functions of human intelligence, or where a predominant aspiration is to universality understood in an abstract way and opposed to the concrete, without taking into account the necessary reference to situationality as the starting point of thought.

⁵ Among the authors who dedicate themselves to the history of ideas to reflect on Latin American philosophy, we can highlight the figure of Augusto Salazar Bondy, who raised a controversy at the end of the sixties when he denied the existence and authenticity of our institutionalized philosophy for not responding to the real demands of our societies and for being strongly conditioned by the structural phenomena of dependence and domination [5].

This last allusion to the situation from which all philosophical elaboration begins constitutes a fundamental question, reflected in the significance of thinking from Latin America. It should be clarified that the mention of this “from” does not merely represent a geographical location but rather implies a place of enunciation of the philosophical discourse itself, which presupposes the contextualization of that thought and its insertion within the framework of a specific cultural horizon. Considered from a long-term historical perspective, it is necessary to point out the consequences of phenomena such as the experience of rupture provoked by the period inaugurated with conquest and colonization, not only with respect to the forms of imposition that occur in the political sphere but also in relation to the cultural sphere, and, consequently, its impact on the development of philosophy itself⁶.

It can be argued that the consequences of this event are an unavoidable aspect reviewed in current trends in Latin American philosophy. In fact, there is a series of precedents with respect to the thematization of the difficulties and structural problems brought about by the historical conformation of Latin America, which reinforces the emancipatory sense adopted by critical thinking. Hence, we find a set of reflections that address issues related to the enormous social inequality suffered by the countries of the region, the forms of subjugation and discrimination established against indigenous populations, the economic conditions stemming from dependency and the expansion of capitalism in the peripheries, and the complex cultural formations resulting from a particular historical experience, among other topics that constitute unavoidable aspects to consider, along with the appreciation of numerous alternative social, political, and cultural manifestations emerging from our countries that are taken up in their philosophical implications.

In relation to the understanding of long-term processes, the different interpretative proposals regarding the significance of the period that begins with modernity and continues to the present can be highlighted, especially considering its impact on our region. Among the theses put forward on this subject, Enrique Dussel’s review of the Eurocentric perspective that predominates when referring to the origin and development of modernity stands out, as it does not adequately consider the way in which it influences the formation of a world-system under the implementation of a colonial order and the expansion of capitalism. As an overcoming of the modern civilizing project, which causes the subordination of different peoples and cultures, he postulates the notion of “transmodernity”, which implies the construction of a new historical stage based on those diverse cultural traditions where a set of knowledge containing transformative potential is recognized [7].

For his part, Bolívar Echeverría analyzes the relationship between modernity and capitalism to highlight the fundamental contradiction that is established in the

⁶ Julio Cabrera proposes a review of the question about the existence of our philosophy, in which he critically investigates the meaning that a perspective considering the historical-existential situation that characterizes us should have [6].

way in which social relations and the realization of human life itself are organized. In view of this, he suggests that a series of resistance strategies are recorded, giving rise to different historical ethos, one of which is characterized as the “baroque ethos,” which has a particular expression in the case of our cultural configuration derived from the miscegenation of indigenous, Black, and European components [8]. Likewise, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui proposes the existence of a properly indigenous modernity located in the Andean world, based on the participation of indigenous populations in maintaining circuits of production and economic circulation, as well as revaluing the conceptions and ways of thinking specific to these cultures that can contribute to building a more inclusive society [9].

These are some of the interpretations that show a problematization of the meaning that the progressive realization of the modern project acquires in the case of Latin America, in which the criticisms elaborated from our thinking reveal aspects that are not sufficiently noticed and highlight the gravity of the current crisis, reflected in the inequity of today’s societies due to economic concentration at a global level and the growing deterioration in the ecological field⁷.

Reconstruction of the main contemporary philosophical trends: the practical dimension of critical thinking in Latin America and the Caribbean

If we consider the set of philosophical expressions and intellectual currents that have a significant presence during the period under consideration – in particular, from the beginning of the last century to the present – it is possible to observe that they are related to a successive series of historical processes taking place in the Latin American context. Thus, in the first decades of the 20th century, we find the decline of the orientations corresponding to positivism, and more broadly to scientism, which achieved strong hegemony in the construction of most nation-states, as observed, for example, in the cases of Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina. Positivist doctrines provided theoretical support for modernization processes based on doctrines tending toward social intervention through the application of specific scientific knowledge and under a series of ideological assumptions that especially included the general belief in progress. Based on these theoretical and ideological guidelines, a neocolonial model was implemented, associated with the reproduction of different forms of dependency in Latin American countries in their international links with the central powers, as well as

⁷ A review of various propositions about modernity undertaken by contemporary philosophy – especially considering, comparatively, the reflections emerging from critical theory worldwide and Latin American thought – is presented in a collective book of which I am the coordinator [10]. An assessment of the impact of the realization of this modern civilizing project, and of the critical propositions developed by Latin American thought, can be found in the work of Juan José Bautista [11].

justifying forms of subordination, discipline, and discrimination within the societies of the region during this period of transition⁸.

This scientific current was replaced by new tendencies that were grouped under the name of the antipositivist reaction, which included a heterogeneous set of ideas related to neo-idealism, vitalism, spiritualism, and other concepts that promoted the differentiation between philosophy and science, the rethinking of human freedom in the face of determinism, the redefinition of ethics, and the revaluation of metaphysics, among other issues that were raised at that time of change⁹. While this renewal was linked to the same institutionalization experienced by the teaching and dissemination of philosophy, it also responded to a series of historical changes that required the incorporation of other theoretical and ideological frameworks. In this sense, it is possible to recognize the influence of events such as the Mexican and Russian revolutions, the university reform movement that swept through our countries around 1918, the emergence of different social sectors based on the union organization of the emerging working class, and peasant and indigenous revolts, the geopolitical realignments related to the war between European nations, and the rise of United States influence in Latin America and the Caribbean, among other processes that occurred in the first half of the last century.

Subsequently, the incorporation and dissemination of concepts from various philosophical currents can be observed. The renewal derived from phenomenology and existentialism, which offered a set of analytical categories and new methodologies, had a broad impact at the time. Their reception occurred within the framework of the university philosophy that was consolidating in the region, where numerous writings inspired by these orientations were published, and some of the main works of Husserl, Heidegger, Scheler, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty, among other authors, were translated into Spanish and circulated widely toward the middle of the 20th century, all driven by the growth of the publishing industry¹⁰. The contributions of phenomenological and existentialist trends, combined with the influence of historicism and hermeneutics, undoubtedly contributed to the professionalization of philosophical studies in Latin American countries. This was also influenced by the increased intellectual exchange of that period, related to the diaspora of European thinkers that resulted from successive wars, which was especially significant in the case of the Spanish exile. In particular, it is worth highlighting the appropriation of conceptualizations linked to these relevant contemporary philosophical currents by local intellectuals who proposed different theoretical approaches to ground Latin American thought. This can be seen, for

⁸ Among the numerous existing studies on Latin American positivism, one can consult the anthology compiled by Oscar Terán, who provides an overall interpretation in his introductory study [12].

⁹ A comprehensive synthesis of the various main manifestations that correspond to antipositivism has been prepared by Adriana Arpini [13].

¹⁰ The analysis of the developments that these contemporary philosophical expressions follow in Latin American countries is addressed in the study by Clara Jalif de Bertranou: "*La fenomenología y la filosofía existencial*" [1. P. 278–318].

example, in the postulation of different historical and social ontologies that provided a description of our reality based on premises related to existentialist philosophy¹¹.

Another significant theoretical orientation for Latin American thought is related to the circulation achieved by ideas relating to socialism and Marxism, which have antecedents referring to their reception since the 19th century but acquire a strong presence in different critical approaches that developed throughout the 20th century in the humanities and social sciences, including the theoretical reformulation they promote in the field of philosophy, with evident projections in different social and political processes. As highlighted by some comprehensive studies on the trajectory followed by Marxist theories in Latin America¹², it is possible to recognize the uniqueness of Marxism and socialism in prominent intellectual representatives dedicated to proposing interpretive theses and transformative alternatives for our societies from this critical perspective.

Among the recreations of Latin American Marxism, one that stands out is the way in which José Carlos Mariátegui proposed in 1928 that the indigenous problems, approached from an economic and social point of view, were central to promoting social change in the case of Peru, a diagnosis that could be extended as valid for other peoples of our region [18]. The spread of socialist and Marxist doctrines gained strong momentum with the Cuban Revolution that began in 1959, especially through the positions supported by its main leaders, Fidel Castro and Ernesto “Che” Guevara. The notable scope of this leftist thought regarding the processes of social and national liberation that took place in those decades had its counterpart in the incorporation and discussion of philosophy that occurred in the university sphere. In this sense, one could mention a long list of representative intellectuals, among whom the following stand out as precursors: Carlos Astrada, who offered an interpretation of the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic to contribute to its university introduction in Argentina [19]; and Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez, whose work promoted the study of this orientation in Mexico [20]. Certainly, it would be necessary to add a series of recent authors and works that have continued this task of critical and creative recovery of socialist and Marxist theses, such as Franz Hinkelammert [21], Enrique Dussel [22], Bolívar Echeverría [23], Pablo Guadarrama González [24], and Gabriel Vargas Lozano [25]. As examples of the propositions put forward, one can mention: the characterization of dependent

¹¹ Arturo Roig, in his book *Teoría y crítica del pensamiento latinoamericano*, devotes a chapter to contemporary ontologies developed by thinkers and essayists to address the historicity of Latin America. In general, he distinguishes two lines of interpretation: one that affirms a kind of ontological flaw by which our reality is presented as deficient, which he identifies as the “ontology of being”; and another that has a constructive conception of history, addressing the question of otherness implied in social emergence, which he defines as the “ontology of entities” [14. P. 138–169].

¹² Among the interpretations that pay special attention to the philosophical development of Marxism in Latin America, we can mention the works of Raúl Fornet-Betancourt [15; 16] and Pablo Guadarrama González [17].

capitalism in Latin America, popular participation in processes of change, the relationship between Marxism and religion, the vindication of practical humanism, the revaluation of utopia, and the various analyses of the impact of the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and the restructuring of socialism in the face of the advance of neoliberal globalization, among other topics.

A relevant trend is the so-called “liberation philosophy,” which began in the 1970s and continues to develop, with variations, to the present¹³. Although this philosophical movement contains different lines of development, it is possible to recognize its impact on the redefinition of our thinking by incorporating certain categories, such as dependency/liberation, oppressor/oppressed, center/periphery, alienation, otherness, and utopia. Based on the emancipatory sense claimed for Latin American philosophy, approaches from other currents are incorporated, such as Marxism, phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutics, critical theory, and even analytic philosophy. These different formulations have a common ground in the relationship they maintain between theory and praxis, which constitutes a presupposition of the conceptions derived from the philosophy of praxis or, in other cases, a “politicization” that some of them experience. While this philosophical approach is initially valid for Latin America and peripheral countries, its universal implications continue to expand as it critically dismantles the mechanisms that underpin the proliferation of social inequalities through the hegemony exercised by the capitalist system in its neoliberal phase¹⁴.

It is also necessary to clarify that not all current developments in Latin American philosophical thought are identified with liberation philosophy. In this sense, the term “Latin American philosophy” continues to be used as a specific expression, as its meaning has been defined based on a place of enunciation situated within the context itself, and whose object of reflection refers primarily to various specific aspects that shape the reality of our region. Consequently, this critical thought also responds to an emancipatory sense and incorporates different philosophical currents in its extensive historical development, in addition to its interrelation with theoretical contributions from other fields of knowledge. Among its distinctive characteristics is its constitutive practical dimension, evident in the emphasis placed on certain philosophical subdisciplines, especially theoretical approaches related to social and political philosophy, ethics, anthropology, and the thematization of culture.

From this perspective, it is possible to recognize the existence of different lines of inquiry currently pursued by Latin American philosophy. The articulation with the history of ideas in its founding approaches has already been mentioned, and

¹³ One of the most recognized representatives who support this philosophical position is Enrique Dussel, who has proposed its foundation mainly from an ethics [26] and a politics of liberation [27; 28].

¹⁴ A comprehensive study dedicated to Latin American thought, in which the importance and originality of the philosophy of liberation is especially analyzed, was conducted by Edward Demenchonok when he belonged to the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow [29].

these are continued in numerous studies dedicated to the historicization of the thought of each nationality or specific region, as well as in comprehensive overviews of Latin America as a whole. Although it would be impossible to cite the extensive existing bibliography, it is possible to provide some references regarding the connection between the practical dimension of Latin American philosophy and its historiography, as presented in works published by Hugo Biagini [30; 31], María Luisa Rivara de Tuesta [32], Horacio Cerutti Guldberg [33; 34], Yamandú Acosta [35; 36], and Adriana Arpini [37], among others, who are part of the broad register relating to this interdisciplinary field of study.

From a convergent perspective, philosophical reflections that consider the relationship with the cultural context are presented. One approach that has a significant presence is linked to the theme of interculturality, which proposes a review of the ways in which philosophy is understood and practiced in our region, especially in opening its reproduction beyond the university sphere to establish a dialogue with subalternized cultures, such as those of the multiple Indigenous and Afro-Latin American populations. Raúl Fornet-Betancourt plays a prominent role in the promotion of intercultural philosophy, having fostered publications and meetings on this topic, in addition to offering his theoretical and methodological guidelines [38; 39]. The intercultural perspective implies the complementation and critical interpellation of the most consolidated traditions of Latin American philosophy, including its liberationist variant and the history of ideas¹⁵. In relation to this last historiographical field, the reference to the philosophy of the Native peoples, both from the past and in its validity in the present, has been strengthened¹⁶.

Likewise, studies approached from the perspective of feminist theory are gaining increasing significance. In this regard, a series of recent works has opened a field of reflection that highlights prominent figures of women intellectuals and activists, political practices and advocacy movements, and relevant moments and periodizations regarding the development of feminism in Latin America. The gender perspective, associated with the class, ethnic, and ideological conditions interwoven in women's daily and public lives, constitutes the reflective core for a philosophical critique assumed from a feminist perspective. Hence also the need to promote a reconstruction of the history of ideas that recovers memory and contributes to the recognition of women in the constitution of their subjectivity in the face of the various forms of imposition of patriarchal ideology¹⁷.

¹⁵ The interrelation, as well as the specific developments, that occur between the philosophy of liberation, interculturality, and the history of ideas are addressed in the collective book compiled by José Santos Herceg, who offers in his text an exhaustive review of the criteria and methodological guidelines used in a broad corpus referring to the histories of Latin American philosophy [40. P. 225–241].

¹⁶ Works devoted to the thought of different indigenous cultures have increased significantly in recent decades. One example is their inclusion in a recent work cited above [1. P. 21–51].

¹⁷ Among the numerous texts developing a feminist perspective in our thought, the theoretical and historiographical review proposed by Francesca Gargallo [41], as well as her recovery of the

A series of critical positions converged in the group that formed at the beginning of the 21st century linked to the modernity/coloniality project. This latter orientation finds support in theorizations inscribed in the so-called “decolonial turn”, as its main lines of research are presented in a book compiled by Santiago Castro Gómez and Ramón Grosfoguel [43]. Among other aspects, these authors point out that the decolonial perspective tends to develop a new language that attempts to account for complex phenomena related to the situation characterized as the formation of the capitalist/patriarchal, modern/colonial world-system. This perspective takes special consideration of the role that culture plays in various processes, since it starts from the idea that language overdetermines social reality as a whole. But unlike Anglo-Saxon cultural and postcolonial studies, which overvalue the cultural factor – just as, in the opposite case, they can fall into economic reductionism – the direction followed by the modernity/coloniality group alludes to a second decolonization that completes the one carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries in the Latin American context. To this end, they consider what they designate as the heterarchy of multiple racial, ethnic, sexual, epistemic, economic, and gender relations. Although this group as such eventually dissolved, the decolonial perspective continues to enjoy widespread diffusion in various areas of knowledge and practices that go beyond philosophy¹⁸.

As final reflections on this review of the main contemporary expressions of Latin American thought, it is possible to point out a few issues. In principle, the debate about their existence or nonexistence has become meaningless, undoubtedly due to the significant trajectory of our philosophy noted above. This is also a result of the reconstruction carried out on the basis of a critical history of ideas, which has shown the particular development followed in each Latin American country and the region as a whole, as well as the philosophical production observed for several decades with distinctive characteristics and a global reach in its most significant propositions¹⁹.

Precisely another aspect worth highlighting as a contribution of Latin American philosophy to current global debates relates to the necessary construction of a critical geopolitical perspective. In general, it is possible to observe that our thought has frequently referred to its connections with other philosophical traditions, either to define a position regarding the policies of the hegemonic European-North American-Western culture – which demonstrates a complex

knowledge and practices of indigenous women from various communities in our region [42], stand out.

¹⁸ As an example of the decolonial perspective applied to the particular case of Latin American philosophy, we can mention a recent compilation of works focused on key concepts and current debates [44].

¹⁹ If one considers that one of the main tasks of philosophy is directed both at the critical understanding of reality and at the production of categorical frameworks that allow for the interpretation and transformation of that reality, it is possible to affirm that Latin American thought has already demonstrated its contribution in this regard. As an example, it is worth mentioning the compilation of fundamental concepts in a collective work coordinated by Ricardo Salas Astrain [45].

relationship that includes forms of resistance, assimilation, and recreation of that philosophical culture – or to promote an intercultural dialogue with other modes of critical thought in what is known today as the Global South, which includes its own agenda related to the philosophies developed in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and some European regions²⁰.

In this joint task, which requires a radical revision of the meaning that should guide the philosophical reflection of our time, it is possible to highlight the significant contribution that Latin American thought has been making, together with theoretical-critical propositions developed from other sources, to explore possible alternatives supporting the struggles for the recognition of dignity undertaken by various social and political actors and movements seeking to promote processes of democratic participation and greater justice at the global level.

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²⁰ It is possible to recognize that there are a number of precedents for this tendency to consolidate a South-South philosophical dialogue, which certainly does not exclude the ongoing dialogue with the propositions of critical thought that respond to the North-South dialogue. In this sense, it is necessary to promote greater exchange of what can be redefined as “critical theories” to confront the multidimensional crisis of the present [46].

A comprehensive overview of the manifestations of what is also called “peripheral thought,” corresponding to Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Eurasia, is presented in a book by Eduardo Devés [47].

In a text from a few decades ago, dated precisely February 1989, the Polish thinker Eugeniusz Górski proposes the possibility of comparing and incorporating the theses upheld by Latin American philosophy of liberation in relation to the historical vicissitudes and situation facing Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, this arises from the need to develop a reflection on the problem of the dependence of peripheral countries under the imposition of a global capitalist system that reproduces forms of oppression and social inequality affecting the majority of humanity – a situation that has been worsening today. This documented and suggestive work includes, in addition to the interpretation of texts corresponding to representative stages and authors of philosophy in Latin America, extensive reference to a significant bibliographic repertoire of studies carried out by foreign thinkers and historians, especially from Eastern European countries [48].

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About the author:

Ramaglia Dante – PhD in Philosophy, Full Professor of the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, National University of Cuyo, Centro Universitario Parque Gral. San Martín, Mendoza, M5500, Argentina; Independent Researcher, Institute of Human, Social, and Environmental Sciences, National Scientific and Technical Research Council, 2290 Godoy Cruz St., Buenos Aires, C1425FQB, Argentina. ORCID: 0000-0001-5739-6331. E-mail: ramaglia@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar

Сведения об авторе:

Рамалья Данте – доктор философии, профессор кафедры философии, факультет философии и литературы, Национальный университет Куёо, Аргентина, М5500, Мендоса, Университетский центр Грал Парк Сан-Мартин; независимый исследователь, институт гуманитарных, социальных и экологических наук, Национальный совет по научно-техническим исследованиям, Аргентина, C1425FQB, Буэнос-Айрес, ул. Годой Круз, д. 2290. ORCID: 0000-0001-5739-6331. E-mail: ramaglia@mendoza-conicet.gob.ar