The Concept of Other in Latin American Liberation: Fusing Emancipatory Philosophic Thought and Social Revolt

Latin American Philosophic Thought: Philosophies of Identity, History, and Liberation in Relation to the Hegelian Dialectic

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For the construction of a philosophy of liberation there is nothing more important than to recognize that many times what is new, what truly shows man’s historicity and his struggle to make his otherness explicit in its context, is not to be found in academic philosophies, but in the ‘political discourse’ of marginal and exploited elements and that through it proceeds precisely a thought that would have had to have been adopted in the formally philosophical task. —Arturo Andrés Roig

In the decades since the Second World War, rich and spirited debates on interweaving themes—Identity and Culture, the existence and/or need of a specifically Latin American philosophy of history, the relation of liberation and philosophy growing out of Latin American tierra—have been occurring. Thinkers throughout Latin America have been engaged in various aspects of this ongoing dialogue. These discussions have occurred not only in academic circles. The contested terrain of Latin America, particularly in the last half of the twentieth century, has seen the debate spill out to, and indeed, often emanate from, Indigenous communities, Christian base communities and guerrilla encampments, among other places. Within Latin America’s revolutions and revolutionary movements these ideas are not seen as foreign; instead, they are undergoing continual indigenous development within these various movements.

It has certainly been the extreme difficulties of life and labor (including torture and oppression, mass unemployment and misery), and the determined human response to such conditions—Bolivia and Guatemala, and then the Cuban Revolution’s crucial divide in the 1950s, the mass struggles in so much of Latin America in the 1960s, Central America’s new beginnings in the 1970s and 1980s—that have deepened these discussions and transformed them into acts having a life and death immediacy and concreteness.

Here, our task is not to provide an introductory view of this vast panorama of Latin American thought. Others have begun important work in this area. Rather, we wish to examine some themes raised by Latin American thinkers as they impact, and are impacted by, the Hegelian dialectic, by Hegel’s concept of the Other. In a sense, we are trying to look in two directions simultaneously: (1) a view of Hegel with Latin American eyes; (2) a view of Latin America with the eyes of the Hegelian dialectic.

We need to begin with note on what we do not propose to discuss: Hegel’s Eurocentric and at times deeply racist view on much of what has come to be called the Third World, including his dismissive comments on whole continents—Africa and the
East. If those views represented all of “Hegelianism,” and Hegel’s dialectic, there would be little need to discuss Hegel at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The Hegelian scholar H. S. Harris has written emphatically on the sharp division needed in discussing Hegel’s writings:

There are some strong indications in Hegel’s Philosophy of World History that he was willing to countenance a ‘speculative faith.’ He not only presents world history as the movement of ‘Providence’ (as if a superhuman agent were really involved), but also employs the myth of a ‘March of the Spirit’ from the Sunrise towards the Sunset to support a ‘substantial’ interpretation of the great Asian cultures as logically primitive.

Every aspect of this concept of history as the work of a real ‘Divine Providence’ is superstitious and reactionary. What we now know about the cultural movement of religious ideas (and especially about the spread of Buddhism) shows that the March of the Spirit is an unhistorical fiction; and Hegel’s interpretation of non-Christian cultures shows clear signs of the nascent cultural and economic imperialism of Western Europe in his time (and in the ensuing century).

Hence, the position adopted here is that we should interpret Hegel’s philosophy strictly as a Science and ignore all of the religious’ extensions of it made by Hegel or others. In this perspective, the ‘Science of experience,’ being the speculatively integrated version of Kant’s Critical Philosophy, provides the true criterion of what is genuinely scientific in Hegel. The Philosophy of World History shows us the weak side of Hegel’s philosophy—it is ‘speculative’ in the bad sense. The Phenomenology is the book that contains Hegel’s genuine theory of historical knowledge. Our present object is to discover in it the interpretation of Hegel’s system that remains ‘eternally’ valid.

Thus, a view of Latin America with the eyes of the Hegelian dialectic refers to probing Latin America’s reality, its masses’ passion for freedom, its thinkers’ philosophic labors in relation to Hegelian philosophic categories. The categories of Other, of the dialectics of recognition beginning in “Lordship and Bondage,” of “Spirit in Self-Estrangement, the Discipline of Culture,” and of Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Idea, and Absolute Mind from within Hegel’s principle philosophic works remain our subject matter. These particular sections were taken up in and of themselves in chapter 1. We believe they speak to the problematic of Latin American liberation today. The current chapter examines these categories in relation to Latin American philosophic thought.

In turn, a view of Hegel with Latin American eyes, refers to a number of Latin American thinkers who have written under the impact of, or in response to Hegel, and whom we will examine. Within the themes of identity, culture, philosophies of history, and liberation in Latin America, we will again limit ourselves to only a few of the many thinkers who have written in relation to these themes.

We will take up the essayist and poet Octavio Paz, the philosopher of Latin American history Leopoldo Zea, the philosophers Augusto Salazar Bondy and Arturo Andrés Roig, the Peruvian historian and sociologist Anibal Quijano, as well as a proponent of what has been termed a “Philosophy of Liberation” for Latin America, Enrique Dussel. Our commentary on these thinkers will also be selective, given the vast range of their works.

Prologue—Frantz Fanon: The Dialectics of Recognition as a Dialectics of Liberation

On the opening page of Fanon’s first book, Black Skin, White Masks, (first published in French in 1952), he begins his explanation of why he is writing with the words, “Towards a new humanism.” It is, in fact, this expression that captures Fanon’s revolutionary vision, birthed in 1952 and developed and enriched in a multiplicity of ways over the next nine years, reaching its culmination in The Wretched of the Earth, (first published in French in 1961, the year of Fanon’s death at thirty-six). We propose to explore this “new humanism” as developed in Fanon’s thought from a dialectics of recognition toward a dialectics of liberation. The transcendence had its fullest expression in The Wretched of the Earth. However, here we will be
examining its development with a focus on *Black Skin, White Masks*, centering on Fanon’s discussion of “Hegel and the Negro.”

For Fanon, the dialectics of recognition in *Black Skin, White Masks* is three-fold: (1) a psychological question—“I propose nothing short of the liberation of the man of color from himself. . . . The analysis that I am undertaking is psychological,” (2) a historical question—that of colonized Black people by white rulers under different and changing circumstances, the French Antilles, primarily, but encompassing as well Africa and Black America; (3) a philosophical question—“The Negro and Hegel,” a commentary on “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness, Lordship and Bondage,” from *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Part of the originality of Fanon is his interweaving of these three strands.

Thus, the psychological is not in a hermetically sealed box: “it is apparent to me that the effective disalienation of the black man entails an immediate recognition of social and economic realities. If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process—primarily, economic—subsequently the internalization—or better, the epidermalization—of this inferiority.” One commentary notes, “In this early work, Fanon had grasped that colonial domination of Third World peoples meant not only economic domination, but also the destruction of the spirit and the personality of the oppressed people.”

The historic for Fanon is no static unchanging condition that only acts upon Black humanity, but a humanity that confronts its conditions of life: “The prognosis is in the hands of those who are willing to get rid of the worm-eaten roots of the structure.” “In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself.”

The philosophic in Fanon’s ideas means a re-creation/re-location of the pathway from Hegel’s dialectic of recognition to a dialectic of liberation in the historic moment of the beginning of the African revolutions. It means a searing critique of the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre’s reduction of “my Blackness to only a minor term” in the dialectic.

Here we propose to concentrate on the philosophic moment within Fanon, as inseparable from the historic framework Fanon is within. Fanon begins the section on “The Negro and Hegel” by quoting the opening sentence of “Lordship and Bondage”: “Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized.” He then gives his reading:

Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, that other will remain the theme of his actions. It is on that other being, on recognition by the other being, that his own human worth and reality depend. It is that other being in whom the meaning of his life is condensed.

Fanon makes this concrete by writing of the specific historical circumstances of the French Antilles, where the “White Master, without conflict, recognized the Negro slave.” The former slave has not made himself recognized, and thus the absolute reciprocity within Hegel’s dialectic of recognition is lacking. There is no “mutually recognizing each other” as Hegel speaks of it. In this situation, there is no risking of life through which freedom is obtained, which Hegel develops as one of the early stages of a dialectic of recognition. In speaking of the Antilles, Fanon writes, “Historically, the Negro steeped in the inessentiaality of servitude was set free by his master. He did not fight for his freedom.”

Thus, there was no genuine recognition, no reciprocity, rather: “The white man is a master who has allowed his slaves to eat as his table. . . . The upheaval reached the Negroes from without. The black man was acted upon.” It is crucial to keep in mind that the historic circumstance of which Fanon is speaking is no grand generalization. Rather, Fanon is speaking of “the French Negro” of the Antilles in 1952: “The Antileans . . . are always contingent on the presence of The Other.” At the same time, he makes reference to a different Black circumstance: “the American Negro is cast in a different play. In the United States, the Negro battles and is battled.” For Fanon, “Negro experience is not a whole, for this is not merely one Negro, there are Negroes.”

Most crucially, Fanon is saying that when there is a white master and a Black slave, the dialectic of recognition is different from that described by Hegel. “For Hegel there is reciprocity; here (white/black) the master laughs at the consciousness of the slave. What he wants from the slave is not recognition but work. In the same way, the slave here is in no way identified with the slave who loses himself in the object and finds in his work the source of his liberation.”

Fanon is critical of those who simply want to apply Hegel without taking into consideration the concrete historic circumstances: “There is of course the moment of ‘being for others’ of which Hegel speaks, but every ontology is made unattainable in a colonized and civilized society. It would seem that this fact has not been given sufficient attention by those who has discussed the question.”
We have already seen in chapter 1 how it is only after the historic stage of “trial by death,” the life and death struggle, that Hegel enters into another historic stage with the categories of lord and bondsman. Only then do we have Hegel’s description of the bondsman working on an object and therein becoming an independent consciousness.

But it is precisely in Fanon’s transformation of this section that his re-creation lies. For Fanon, in the historic specificity of white/black colonization it is not the labor of the colonized, the master-slave as a production relation, that is key in the movement toward a dialectics of liberation. To be sure, the white colonizer is interested in labor. But at this moment, it is not the dialectic of labor whereby the Black servant develops a “mind of his own.” There is no recognition in this particular production relation, which has the addition of color. Instead, Fanon is arguing that the dialectics of liberation is centered in a life and death fight. As he will note later, “The natives’ challenge to the colonial world . . . is not a treatise on the universal, but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute.”

The leap here reaches beyond “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness.” We are in the realm of the absolute.

In Black Skin, White Masks, we are witnessing the beginnings of the dialectic being re-created under the specificity of a new historic moment. It is the unfolding of concrete circumstances rather than any predetermined philosophic scheme that determines the flow of the dialectic. This has nothing to do with action versus philosophy. It is rather that dialectics is not an applied science but a re-created one. There is no one-to-one relationship that can be established a priori between the movement of the stages of historical development and the movement of categories of philosophic thought forged in a different historic moment.

Fanon leaps from a dialectics of recognition to a dialectics of liberation through both a continuity and a discontinuity within the Hegelian dialectic. Or more precisely, through a discontinuity that establishes a new continuity there is the re-creation of the dialectic for a new historic moment.

Fanon’s philosophic labor on the Black dimension stands in sharp contrast to Sartre’s view of the particularity of Blackness in the dialectic. The difference between a re-creation of the dialectic and an application of the dialectic can be seen in the confrontation between Fanon and Sartre. For Sartre in Orphee Noir blackness was only a term in the dialectic: “negritude ‘passes,’ as Hegel puts it, into the objective, positive, exact idea of proletariat,” as Fanon quotes from Sartre. For Sartre, race is “concrete and particular,” while class is “universal and abstract.” “Negritude appears at the minor term of a dialectical progression.”

Fanon hits out against this mechanical application:

Orphee Noir is a date in the intellectualization of the experience of being black. And Sartre’s mistake was not only to seek the source of the source but in a certain sense to block that source. . . . Jean-Paul Sartre, in this work, has destroyed black zeal. . . . He was reminding me that my blackness was only a minor term. In all truth, in all truth, I tell you, my shoulders slipped out of the framework of the world. My feet could no longer feel the touch of the ground.

Fanon expresses Blackness in a completely different manner, striving to work out its meaning from actuality and philosophy:

The dialectic that brings necessity into the foundation of my freedom drives me out of myself. It shatters my unreflected position. Still in terms of consciousness black consciousness is immanent in its own eyes. I am not a potentiality of something, I am wholly what I am. I do not have to look for the universal. No probability has any place inside me. My Negro consciousness does not hold itself out as a lack. It is. It is its own follower.

Fanon is seeking to present the self-determination of the Idea as it flows from Black experience and thought. He is re-creating dialectical philosophy at specific historic moments. Fanon is not seeking to create a philosophy of history for the Antilles or Africa. History enters, but not by substituting a philosophy of history for a re-creating dialectic philosophy. Rather, history—living human beings making history—becomes a motivating force for a new forging of dialectic philosophy itself.

In Fanon’s thought, Hegel’s dialectic as a philosophy of recognition, and the actual conditions of Fanon’s own historic moment and place, become the ground to work out a new dialectical movement. His labors are a manifestation of Marx’s expression, “Time is the space of human development.”

Listen to Fanon on time and the present moment:
The architecture of this work is rooted in the temporal. Every human problem must be considered from the standpoint of time. Ideally, the present will always contribute to the building of the future. And this future is not the future of the cosmos but rather the future of my century, my country, my existence. In no fashion should I undertake to prepare the world that will come later. I belong irreducible to my time. And it is for my own time that I should live. The future should be an edifice supported by living men. This structure is connected to the present to the extent that I consider the present in terms of something to be exceeded.\footnote{Within \textit{Black Skin, White Masks}, and even more powerfully in \textit{The Wretched of the Earth}, one sees the contemporary focus of Fanon’s labor. The years between the two were years of the rising African revolutions, and one feels their presence through Fanon’s eyes as a powerful force—as revolutions full of deep contradictions that threaten the struggle for liberation from within. Fanon refuses to present any easy generalizations regarding the revolutionary movement. There is only history and its process, the history of the precise moment in which he was living and striving to meet its challenges in action and thought. Fanon’s concept of liberation presupposes no separation between the individual and society. “The black man must wage his war on both levels: Since historically they influence each other, any unilateral liberation is incomplete, and the gravest mistake would be to believe in their automatic interdependence.”\footnote{Fanon refuses to present any easy generalizations regarding the revolutionary movement. There is only history and its process, the history of the precise moment in which he was living and striving to meet its challenges in action and thought.}

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To be within his time means, for Fanon, having sensitivity to the subjectivity from below—those human forces whose muscles and brains create a new humanism. He notes that there is a gap between the “doctor of medicine born in Guadeloupe,” whose alienation is almost of intellectual character, and the conditions faced by the “Negro laborer building the port facilities in Abidjan,” for whom “it is a question of a victim of a system based on the exploitation of a given race by another, on the contempt in which a given branch of humanity is held by a form of civilization that pretends superiority.”\footnote{Yet despite these differences, Fanon writes “It would never occur to me to ask these Negroes to change their conception of history. I am convinced, however, that without even knowing it they share my views, accustomed as they are to speaking and thinking in terms of the present.”\footnote{Yet despite these differences, Fanon writes “It would never occur to me to ask these Negroes to change their conception of history. I am convinced, however, that without even knowing it they share my views, accustomed as they are to speaking and thinking in terms of the present.”}

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All of this is not to say so why do we need theory? Why should we strive toward a philosophy of liberation? Precisely the opposite transpires: Dialectic philosophy, when re-created in unity out of historic circumstances and previous philosophic moments, can sum up the present moment so profoundly that it literally allows one to reach for the future.

At one and the same time, one “belong[s] irreducible to my time”\footnote{At one and the same time, one “belong[s] irreducible to my time”} and is also reaching for the future. In this is Fanon’s drive for a postcolonial moment that would not just “postcolonial” but “a new humanism.”

Fanon ends \textit{Black Skin, White Masks} as he began it—toward “a new humanism:” “I find myself suddenly in the world and I recognize that I have one right alone: That of demanding human behavior from the other. One duty alone: That of not renouncing my freedom through my choices. . . . I should constantly remind myself that the real leap consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself. . . . No attempt must be made to encase man, for it is his destiny to be set free.”

\section*{A. Octavio Paz—The Complex Weave of Otherness}

Paz’s magisterial \textit{Labyrinth of Solitude} together with his \textit{The Other Mexico} are complex weavings on Otherness that speak to strands of Hegel’s concept of recognition.\footnote{Out of the Spanish Civil War, the dream “broken and defiled later not because it was Spanish but because it was universal and, at the same time, concrete,” came “a revelation of ‘the other man.’ . . . In every man there is the possibility of his being—or to be more exact, of his becoming once again—another man.”\footnote{Out of the Spanish Civil War, the dream “broken and defiled later not because it was Spanish but because it was universal and, at the same time, concrete,” came “a revelation of ‘the other man.’ . . . In every man there is the possibility of his being—or to be more exact, of his becoming once again—another man.”}} The frontispiece of \textit{Labyrinth} is a quote from the writer Antonio Machado which reads in part: “The other does not exist: this is rational faith, the incurable belief of human reason. Identity = reality, as if, in the end, everything must necessarily and absolutely be one and the same. But the other refuses to disappear; it subsists, it persists; it is the hard bone on which reason breaks its teeth.”

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Hegel’s concept of Other in a Latin American context. It is not that Paz explicitly discusses Hegel. Rather, we are speaking about the ability of Hegel’s philosophic concept of Other to reach beyond its moment of construction and find new moments of concretization. We also wish to explore Paz’s work on and sensitivity to Mexican/Latin American history/experience to express dimensions of Other, which resonate with Hegel’s dialectics of recognition.

Paz writes of the penalty to be paid when there is no recognition of the Other:

[W]e also pretend that our fellow-man does not exist . . . we change him some somebody into nobody, into nothingness. And this nothingness takes on its own individuality, with a recognizable face and figure and suddenly becomes Nobody . . . the person who creates Nobody, by denying Somebody’s existence, is also changed into Nobody . . . The circle is closed and the shadow of Nobody spreads out over our land . . . covering everything. Silence . . . comes back to rule over Mexico.31

If there is no recognition of the Other, the others of Mexico—the Indigenous, the woman, the fellow Mexican—then all one has is silence, non-communication, trapped in Otherness and thus a labyrinth of solitude. Perhaps the solitude here may have had its beginning in part as a protection from the decimation and destruction of the Conquest. But there needs to be a search for a way out of the labyrinth. Otherwise there is the great danger of imposing from within what Hegel called “attitudes of bondage,” including that of a “Spirit in Self-Estrangement.”

The power of Paz lies in both his description of the labyrinth, the twists and turns whereby the Other is covered over, and in The Other Mexico (written after the massacre of students at Tlateloco, October 2, 1968) which depicts the function of criticism, critique, as a way of helping to find a pathway out of the labyrinth. But as we shall see, they are also the source of his weakness.

In the specificity of Mexican society, and at times stretching to industrial society as a whole, Paz describes the covering over and reduction of each human individuality to an abstraction, an object, an Other.

The Indigenous person: “The Indian blends into the landscape until he is an indistinguishable part of the white wall against which he leans at twilight . . . He disguises his human singularity to such an extent that he finally annihilates it and turns into a stone, a tree, a wall, silence, and space.”32

The worker:

Capitalism deprives him of his human nature by reducing him to an element in the work process, i.e., to an object. And like any object in the business world, he can be bought and sold. Because of his social condition he quickly loses any concrete and human relation to the world . . . Actually he is not a worker at all, because he does not create individual works or is so occupied with one aspect of production that he is not conscious of those he does create. He is a laborer, which is an abstract noun designating a mere function rather than a specific job. . . . The abstraction that characterizes him—work measured by time—does not separate him from other abstractions.33

The woman:

Like almost all other people, the Mexican considers woman to be an instrument, sometimes of masculine desires, sometimes of the ends assigned to her by morality, society and the law . . . She has never been asked to consent to these ends and . . . participates in their realization only passively, as a ‘repository’ for certain values. . . . In a world made in man’s image, woman is only a reflection of masculine will and desire . . . She is an undifferentiated manifestation of life, a channel for the universal appetite. In this sense she has no desires of her own.34

But the power of Paz’s description is also its limitation, precisely because in a certain sense, it does not reach beyond a description of the reification of humanity that existing society strives to impose. One does not get a sense of the Other as self-actualizing subject, only as object. The Indigenous person, the woman, the worker, are here not seen as those who can and do refuse to be treated as, reduced to, or categorized as objects. One could say that Paz is writing of an earlier period, where the specificity or revolt, of movements for liberation, could not be seen with as much clarity as today. But is that really the case if one looks historically, and digs deeply? Has the Indian continually “disguised” and “annihilated” his/her human singularity in history since the Conquest? Has the woman “passively” accepted being a repository for certain values? Has the worker quiescently accepted the loss of “any concrete and human relationship to the world” since the rise of industrial capitalism with its commodification of the worker? We are here not trying to romanticize the question of revolt and the long difficult road
to obtain deeply rooted social change, only to point out the need to have all of one’s senses attuned to the emergence of human subjects of revolt, even if they are sporadic and incomplete emergings. Without that attentiveness to their appearances as a crucial pathway forward, the labyrinth seems endless.

Paz himself realizes what can happen at moments of revolt and revolution: “Marx wrote that all radicalism is a form of humanism, since man is the root of both reason and society. Thus every revolution tries to create a world in which man, free at last from the trammels of the regime, can express himself truly and fulfill his human condition. Man is a being who can realize himself, can be himself, only in a revolutionary society.”

Paz saw this in the particular of the Mexico Revolution at the beginning of the twentieth century: “The revolutionary movement, as a search for—and momentary finding of—our own selves, transformed Mexico and made her “other.”

However, these seem to appear to Paz as all too brief moments of light in a more obscure landscape. Brief though they may be, can they not send a powerful illumination toward the future?

In The Other Mexico: Critique of the Pyramid, the concept of criticism is key for Paz: “Criticism unfolds the possibility of freedom and is thus an invitation to action.” He uses such criticism as a powerful tool, here against both the United States and Latin America: “Can the United States carry on a dialogue with us?” My answer would be yes—on condition that first they learn to speak with themselves, with their own otherness: their Blacks, their Chicanos, their young people. And something similar must be said to Latin Americans: criticism of others begins with criticism of oneself.

Paz continues to look at dimensions of Otherness:

The other Mexico is poor and in misery; it also is really other. This otherness eludes the notions of poverty and wealth, development or backwardness: it is a complex of unconscious attitudes and structures which, far from being survivals from an extinct world, are vital, constituent parts of our contemporary culture. The other Mexico, the submerged and repressed, reappears in the modern Mexico: when we talk with ourselves, we talk with it; when we talk with it, we talk with ourselves.

Two things appear crucial here: (1) that Otherness is not some immutable ancient mysticism or static entity, but is within the present, the contemporary fight to survive and be liberated; (2) that Otherness is not something only external, an oppression imposed by foreign factors, foreign powers. To be sure it is this; but there is also an internal otherness that Hegel spoke of as “attitudes of bondage” after throwing off the lord, or what William Blake wrote of as “mind-forged manacles.” Paz expresses this as “when we talk with ourselves, we talk with it [the other Mexico]; when we talk with it, we talk with ourselves.” He adds:

[T]here is an other Mexico. I am in no way referring to an ahistorical, atemporal entelechy, nor to an archetype. . . . It is possible that the expression ‘the other Mexico’ lacks precision, but the truth is that I have not been able to find a more appropriate one. By it, I mean that gaseous reality formed by the beliefs, fragments of beliefs, images, and concepts which history deposits in the subsoil of the social psyche, that cave or cellar in continuous somnolence and likewise in perpetual fermentation. It is a notion that derives from both Freud’s concept of the sub-conscious (individual) and the ideology (social) of Marx.

Whether or not one wishes to accept Paz’s particular construction of the concept and its origins, there is no doubt of the richness of its use in his viewpoint.

Later, in The Other Mexico, he continues on the theme of the Other:

Otherness is what constitutes us. I am not saying by this that the character of Mexico—or of any other people—is unique; I maintain that those realities we call cultures and civilizations are elusive. It is not that Mexico escapes definitions: We ourselves escape them each time to try to define ourselves, to grasp ourselves. Mexico’s character, like that of other people, is an illusion, a mask; at the same time it is a real face. It is never the same and always the same. It is a perpetual contradiction: each time we affirm one part of us, we deny another. That which occurred on October 2, 1968, was simultaneously a negation of what we have wanted to be since the revolution and an affirmation of what we have been since the Conquest and earlier. It could be said that it was a manifestation of the other Mexico, or more, of one of its aspects. I hardly need to repeat that the other Mexico is not outside of but within us: we could not extirpate it without mutilating ourselves.

Criticism, both in Labyrinth of Solitude and The Other Mexico is used by Paz with great power. Thus, he critiques Russia’s so-called socialism while identifying the ideas of Marx as vastly different:
Capital after all, is simply accumulated human labor, and the extraordinary development of the Soviet Union is nothing but an application of this formula. The methods of ‘socialist accumulation’ to use Stalin’s phrase, have turned out to be much more cruel than the systems of ‘primitive accumulation’ which aroused the justified anger of Marx and Engels. No one doubts that totalitarian ‘socialism’ can change the economy of a nation: what is doubtful is whether it can give man freedom. And this last is all that interests us, and all that can justify a revolution. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union hardly resembles what Marx and Engels thought a workers’ state should be.

Paz recognizes the need for Marx’s concept of history and its process: “Freedom and equality were—are—empty concepts, ideas with no other concrete historical content than that given them by social relationships, as Marx has demonstrated.” The fact that the later Paz unfortunately seemed to have accepted the conflation of Marx and the practice of so-called “Marxism,” (totalitarian state-capitalism), which has been the great myth and outright lie of the twentieth century, does not negate his earlier, more perceptive view.

Paz uses criticism to fight against expressing Mexico simply as a series of images:

We must oppose the Mexico of the Zocalo, Tlatelolco, and the Museum of Anthropology, not with another image—all images have a fatal tendency to become petrified—but with criticism, the acid that dissolves images. In this case criticism is but one of the imagination’s ways of working, one of its manifestations. In our age the imagination operates critically. True, criticism is not what we dream of, but it teaches us to distinguish between the specters out of our nightmares and our true visions. Criticism tells us that we should learn to dissolve the idols, should learn to dissolve them with our own selves. We must learn to be like the air a liberated dream.

But again criticism, while a powerful tool in Paz’s work, also seems to be incomplete. Critique is only the first negation, the first posing of what one is against, the initial steps to find one’s way out of the labyrinth. Yes, critique is needed to give up illusions. But is it enough to get us to that liberated dream? It is necessary to liberate the dream, but the dream—the utopia rooted in a dissatisfaction with the present and a reaching toward the future, the vision of a new society as a new way of becoming and living—is itself still needed. Critique is not the dream, critique is a means to liberate the dream.

For the dream, we need the dreamers, the women and men, the Other, who in Otherness construct the new, the dream. We are in need of that which expresses the dream in its becoming, its movement, its process. At the same time, as a praxis of idea and act, the dream has the form of a pathway from the Individual through the Particular to the Universal, and the reverse journey from Universal through Specificity to the Individual as well. Is this not what philosophy—if it is a philosophy of revolution and human liberation—strives to be? The ground to create such a philosophy, the point of departure as a rootedness in Hegel and in Marx, becomes not a return to a bygone era, but the manner whereby the present can reach toward the future.

B. Leopoldo Zea—Questions of Identity, Construction of a Latin American Philosophy of History and an Incomplete Conception of Aufheben

Leopoldo Zea’s passionate involvement in philosophy as a human social project that strives to transcend the reality of unfreedom has been a pole of attraction within Latin American thought for close to half a century. In an article from the late 1980s, “Identity: A Latin American Philosophic Problem,” he writes of his view of the philosophic project: “Philosophy has not emerged in enclaves of prosperity and freedom but in situations of social inequality. Lack of freedom presents problems that philosophy has been obligated to face in order to solve them. It has been so since Plato, through Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Marx and up to the present.”

In the case of Latin America, he sees the problem of Identity arising from the Conquest: “[T]he question of the concrete Being of men occupying a vast region of Earth and subjected to the manipulations of others. They are the victims of a gigantic cover-up over identity begun on October 12, 1492.”

The problem of Identity in Latin America has thus been a 500-year-long struggle. How to create an authentic concept of a Latin American identity has been a major strand of Zea’s thought. Zea critiques the reliance on European philosophy and calls
for the creation of a Latin American philosophy, not ab novo, but one in which the specificity of Latin America comes to the fore, particularly in the form of a Latin American philosophy of history.

In an early work, America como conciencia, Zea writes of the need for a Latin American philosophy:

Latin’ Americans as well as Europeans find themselves with a ground that supports them. In a fully problematical situation, both have a need to continue developing a culture. Now, at this time, the [Latin] American [individual] cannot continue taking shelter in [a] European culture . . . because such a shelter no longer exists . . . From this it follows that the [Latin] American [individual] . . . will have to find new solutions, new foundations, and he will have to do this on his own. [Latin] America, until yesterday an echo and shadow of Europe, will have to find a steady ground for itself. It will have to resolve, on its own account, then, this attaining of a steady ground, this search for solutions to particular problems, giving birth to a discipline that is natural for man in every problematical situation; philosophy. [Latin] America needs a philosophy; it needs an original [practice of] meditation on and solution to its problems.46

How to create that philosophy forms the core of Zea’s work in the ensuing decades. It involves him in a well-known debate with Augusto Salazar Bondy, whose Existe una filosofia de nuestra America? poses a negative answer, and is responded to by Zea’s La filosofia americana como filosofia sin mas, which relates the particular of Latin American history to the universal philosophy of history. We shall touch upon the debate briefly as we take up these two thinkers.

For Zea, even a Latin American imitation of European philosophy contains originality: “Even in imitation, there was creation and re-creation. The philosophizing adopted took thus another sense which, compared to the models, resulted in ‘bad copies of the original’ but were originals with respect to the problems that they tried to solve, thus resulting in different philosophical utterances than those of the adopted models.”47

But is this really true? Can one genuinely create something original within such a context, or does the question of starting from the wrong philosophic ground make impossible a philosophic contribution that is more than a poor photocopy, when what is needed is a full re-creation? The answer is complex and involves two additional questions. First, what philosophic ground does one use as one’s point of departure? Second, what is involved in any re-creation, in particular with an Hegelian aufheben, that might allow for a transcendence that becomes a new creation?

Because the history of Latin America since the Conquest has been so concealed, so dominated economically, politically, militarily, and socially, first by Europe and then by the United States, there is the necessary task of rediscovery, a reconceptualization of that history. For some, that project has meant deconstructing and throwing out much of European philosophy and European views of history, and beginning anew on the Latin American continent.

Zea’s approach is different. He sees philosophy as a universal world subject, and seeks to integrate a Latin American philosophy of history into a universal philosophy of history. The great difficulty here is that existing universal philosophies of history, and in particular Hegel’s philosophy of world history, is not a viable point of departure for such a project. As we noted in the beginning of this chapter quoting from H. S. Harris: “The Philosophy of World History shows us the weak side of Hegel’s philosophy—it is ‘speculative’ in the bad sense. The Phenomenology is the book that contains Hegel’s genuine theory of historical knowledge.”48

Yet aside from the “Lordship and Bondage” section of the Phenomenology, Zea’s conception focuses on recasting Hegel’s Philosophy of History to include the neglected, dismissed, Latin American philosophy of history that Zea and others are seeking to trace. This can be seen especially in his Filosofía de la historia americana. Some commentators use Hegel’s Eurocentric concepts of a Philosophy of World History as a battering ram against Hegel, and thus evade the necessary immersion into the Hegelian dialectic in and of itself. Zea’s point of departure seems to center on required additions and corrections to Hegel’s philosophy of history with regard to Latin America and other parts of the Third World. The question we want to ask is whether diving directly and deeply in the fullness of Hegel’s philosophic ‘voyage of discovery,’” Phenomenology of Spirit, might be of greater assistance in creating that philosophy of liberation for Latin America that Zea has labored so creatively upon? A philosophy of history for Latin America, as urgently needed as it is, is not a substitute for a concretization of the dialectic in and of itself.

The second problem we want to examine briefly with regard to Zea’s relation to the Hegelian dialectic is the concept of aufheben. As we noted in chapter 1, Hegel’s use of this concept is a particularly rich one, involving transcending, annihilation, and preservation. Zea, in his essay on identity and in his Filosofía de la historia americana, has a conception of aufheben that considerably narrows its scope from Hegel’s usage. For Zea it is “the assimilation or assumption of history,” and since Latin American history is absent and dismissed from Hegel, the difficulties are considerable. If one grasps the
C. Augusto Salazar Bondy—Relating
Dependency to Philosophic Expression

Bondy sums up the “The Meaning and Problem of Hispanic American Philosophic Thought” as follows: “[T]he process of Hispanic American philosophy is to relate the passing of Western philosophy through our countries, or to narrate European philosophy in Hispanic America. It is not to tell the history a natural philosophy of Hispanic America . . . European ‘isms’ . . . no . . . native philosophic isms.” To buttress this view he paraphrases Hegel that to make a kind of transfer from one mode of thinking to another is “simply translations, not original creations; and the spirit only finds satisfaction in the knowledge of its own and genuine originality.”

He has now set the premise of his argument on whether Existe una filosofía de nuestra América? He argues that Hegel underscores a crucial fact in the life of thought: “[P]hilosophy as such expresses the life of the community but it can fail in this function, and, instead of manifesting its uniqueness, it can detract from it or conceal it. Accordingly, an unauthentic philosophy, or mystified thought may develop.”

The originality of Salazar Bondy’s position does not lie so much in his view of whether there exists an authentic philosophy of “nuestra América” vs. Zea’s position. Rather, it is where he seeks the cause for what he views as a lack of original Latin American philosophic thought: “Philosophy, which in an integral culture is the highest form of consciousness, cannot help but be an artificial and insubstantial expression in a defective culture.”

He argues that the non-authenticity of Latin American philosophic expression is one with the condition of “other communities and regional groups of nations, belonging to what today is called the Third World. . . . We must utilize the concept of underdevelopment, with the correlative concept of domination . . . as dependents of Spain, England, or the United States, we have been and continue to be underdeveloped . . . under these powers, and, consequently, countries with a culture of domination.” The havoc wreaked by the external domination of a community and its consequences for philosophic thought is of deep concern to Bondy. Earlier he had written in regard to Peru: “I want to insist on this thesis: [T]he frustration of the historical subject in Peruvian life has been especially serious for [the development of] philosophy until our times. . . . [For] an alienated existence cannot overcome the mystification of philosophy; a divided community cannot generate a genuine and productive type of reflection.”

This argument as the basis for the lack of an authentic Latin American philosophy needs to be drawn very carefully. There is a certain danger of a mechanical interpretation that a theory of underdevelopment in the economic sphere, which certainly has its ramifications in the cultural sphere, can lead to a thesis of an “underdevelopment of thought” in the dominated countries and regions. Such a view could lead to treating the dominated peoples as objects, as an Otherness incapable of original thought and which continues to need to obtain its ideas from outside itself.

Here the concept that Zea raised earlier—that “philosophy has not emerged in enclaves of prosperity and freedom but in situations of social inequality. Lack of freedom presents problems that philosophers have been obligated to face”—needs to be kept in mind.

That within dominated regions there could occur the philosophic labors of a Frantz Fanon taken up earlier, of a Steven Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa (halted by his murder as a young man) seems to verify Zea’s words. In Latin America, the creative thought of José Carlos Mariátegui also reinforces this position. All were surely created under conditions of domination and extreme social inequality, and in periods of revolt.

Bondy himself writes of this, referring to Mariátegui in his America Latina: filosofía y liberación: “[I]t is not possible to think of a philosophy that is about to produce liberation as long as there isn’t a process that destroys the [structural] elements of colonialism and domination. It is important that we can go back to the 1920s and to follow these concerns.”

For his part, Salazar Bondy seeks a way out of the labyrinth of domination and its impact on the culture of Latin America:
Our thought is defective and unauthentic owing to our society and our culture. Must it necessarily remain so? Is there an alternative to this prospect? That is to say, is there no way of giving it originality and authenticity? Indeed there is, because man, in certain circumstances rises above his present condition, and transcends in reality toward new forms of life, toward unheard-of-manifestation. These will endure or will bear fruit to the degree that the initiated movement can expand and provoke a general dialectic and totalization of development. In the socio-political field that is what constitutes revolutions.\footnote{56}

In working out the philosophic responsibility for such a project, Bondy poses a role for philosophy which brings him in concert with Marx’s concept of a philosophy of revolution. This extends philosophy beyond Hegel’s view of the owl of Minerva taking flight at dusk, thus giving philosophy the character of a theory that elucidates the meaning of facts already accomplished. In distinction Bondy writes: “It is not always so. Contrary to what Hegel thought, we feel that philosophy can be, and on more than one historical occasion has had to be, the messenger of the dawn, the beginning of historical change through a radical awareness of existence projected toward the future.”\footnote{57}

This commitment among a number of Latin American thinkers to create a philosophy of the dawn is what compels one to dive into the project of Latin American thought. It makes Latin American philosophy such an exciting, authentic, creative possibility. I would add here that despite Hegel’s expression of philosophy spreading its wings only at dusk, a true tracing of Hegel’s philosophic creation itself would reveal to us how much the Hegelian dialectic is a philosophy of the dawn.

Bondy is arguing that philosophy in Hispanic America can become authentic, “in the midst of the unauthenticity that surrounds and consumes.” To do so, “it must be a mediation about our anthropological status and from our own negative status, with a view to its cancellation.”\footnote{58}

He attacks any false division of philosophy whereby Hispanic American thought would be a “practical, applied or sociological philosophy” as opposed to Europe being the source of theory. This would be “merely another way of condemning ourselves to dependency and subjection.” Instead, “philosophy [should] be elaborated by us as theory according to our own standards and applied in accord with our own ends.”\footnote{59}

Bondy refuses to accept any condition of domination, or underdevelopment as a permanent status: “But there is still the possibility of liberation. While this is so, we are obligated to choose a line of action that will materialize this possibility. Philosophy also has this option.”\footnote{60}

Bondy insists on the integrality of the act of liberation and the creation of a philosophy of liberation. Attempts to create philosophy outside the context of liberation are doomed to non-authenticity:

If we want to look at things truthfully, the only possibility of liberation is opened for the first time in history with the Third World, the world of the oppressed and underdeveloped, who are liberating themselves and at the same time liberating the other, the oppressor. Then, for the first time, there can be a philosophy of liberation. In the concrete struggle of classes, of groups, and of nations, there is another who oppresses me, whom unfortunately I must displace from the machinery of domination. Philosophy must be involved in this struggle, for otherwise it [only] constructs an abstract thought, and then, on the pretext that we are going to liberate ourselves as philosophers, we do not liberate anyone, not even ourselves.\footnote{61}

Augusto Salizar Bondy did not live long enough to fully develop the ideas he was posing in the mid- and late 1950s. So we cannot know where he might have gone if he had a chance to fully develop his view of the relation of liberation and philosophy. But he left an important legacy for the relation of dependence and philosophic creativity to be built upon.

D. Anibal Quijano—Questions of Identity, Modernity, and Utopia

A Critique and an Alternative

In a series of important, provocative articles published in the early 1980s, the Peruvian sociologist and historian Anibal Quijano posed an analysis and critique of modernity from the viewpoint of Latin America. He also traced the beginnings of a possible pathway out of the “blind alley into which the instrumental rational leads . . . the conflict between private and state
ownership of productive resources,” by “recovering utopia” in the organization of daily life one still finds in the Andean collective community found of barriadas—neighborhoods of the urban poor—found in many Latin American cities.

He, as well as a number of other Latin American thinkers, argues that modernity was not simply a European project initially separated from the rest of the world. The “co-presence of Latin America in the production of modernity” was not only true at the initial phase but as well during “the crystallization of modernity in the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries.”

Quijano writes that the characteristics of the Enlightenment—science, critique of existing social reality, opposition to despotism and obscurantism—could be found in colonial America as well as Europe during the eighteenth century. All of this coincided with “the apogee of the mercantilism of the 17th and 18th century.” While in Europe mercantilism began to transform itself into industrial capitalism in the last third of the eighteenth century, in Latin America “the parallel transformation was halted. . . . Modernity ceased to be produced and co-produced from Latin American soil.”

 Quijano argues that the European Enlightenment “contained an unbridgeable split” between tendencies that “saw reason as the highest promise of the liberation of humanity,” and those who saw “rationality in instrumental terms, as a mechanism of power and domination.” With the ascendance of British industrial capitalism, the concept “of reason primarily in instrumental terms” grew dominant. Quijano writes, “the age of ‘modernization,’ instead of modernity, had begun . . . the domination of capital for any purpose other than accumulation.” He notes that for Latin America this was “catastrophic,” now that modern rationality had been stripped of “liberation.”

Quijano and Wallerstein see the Americas as essential in the development of capitalism as a world system—providing both a vast expansion of geography and a range of labor control, “invented as part of Americanity: slavery for the Black Africans, various forms of coerced cash-crop labour (repartimiento, vita, peonage) for Native Americans, indentured labour (engaches) for the European working class.” Quijano argues that the victory of instrumental reason meant that “the original liberatory promises of modernity” succumbed “to the force of an instrumental reason,” and that this has deep repercussions in the twentieth century: “Socialism did not manage to be anything other than ‘actual existing socialism,’ that is, Stalinism in any of its local variants.”

Most of postmodernity is “precisely dedicated to destroying what little remains of the original association between reason and social liberation.” For them, “the technology of power is the only aspect of modernity that is worth defending.” Of our post–Cold War era he writes, “Social and political forces equivalent to those that, like nazism and stalinism, produced the weakening—in truth, almost the eclipse of historical reason—emerge again in search of the definitive destruction of all projects to liberate society from the present holders of power. This, in essence, is the nature of the present crisis of modernity.”

However, he does not see the struggle as only one between instrumental reason and historical reason. Instead, he argues that within modern rationality itself there were “elements that not only weakened the liberating force of rationality, but also made it possible to disguise and to substitute this force.” Thus, the project of the Enlightenment was itself flawed. “Modern rationality is connected from its Enlightenment origin,” argues Quijano, “on to the relations of power between Europe and the rest of the world.”

Against the deep crisis on European modernity, Quijano poses what he calls “the tensile character of Latin America subjectivity” in “a permanent note of dualism.” He expresses this dualism in a number of ways. He writes of Mariátegui as perhaps the greatest Latin American Marxist who was at the same time, in Quijano’s view, not a Marxist (he openly believed in God).

The relation between history and time is completely different in Latin America than in Europe or the United States: “In Latin America, what is a sequence in other countries is a simultaneity. It is also a sequence, but in the first place, it is a simultaneity.” The example Quijano uses is capital: Where what in Europe were stages of the history of capital constitute in Latin America “both historical stages of and the present structural grounds for capital.” Thus primitive accumulation, competitive capitalism, and monopoly capitalism—all tied to national imperialism and transnational capitalism—are levels of domination rather than stages in a sequence. “Time in this history is simultaneity and sequence at the same time.” All this, Quijano argues “could not be explained apart from the history of domination of Latin America by Europe, the copresence of Latin America in the initial production of modernity, the split between liberatory and instrumental rationality, and the eventual hegemony of instrumental rationality . . . the uninterrupted reproduction of our dependence.”

Against this history and reality, Quijano wishes to pose a rationality and utopia in Latin America—a way in which “the basic elements of our universe of subjectivity become original again.” He writes of the presence of a resistance: “a new utopia is beginning to be formed, a new historical meaning, a proposal of an alternative rationality.” In this article and in his “Recovering Utopia,” he briefly develops this concept. He refuses to make a division between the private and the state. He
exposes “actually existing socialism,” as no real alternative: “One blind alley into which the instrumental rationale leads is the conflict between private and state ownership of productive resource. . . . It has become clear that ‘neoliberalism’ and what could be called ‘neodevelopmentalism’ are two sides of a dead-end street.”

Instead, Quijano looks to a “‘socially oriented’ form of private activity, differentiated from self-seeking types of private endeavor . . . let’s take the Andean community as an example.” He mentions its environment as one characterized by reciprocity, solidarity, and democracy. But, “I am in no way proposing a return to an agrarian communal life.” Rather, he says that especially in Peru, but in other Latin American countries as well, there are barriadas—neighborhoods of the urban poor. In these barriadas there is an alternative form of social and cultural experience, socially oriented private activities that coexist with the predominant form of capitalist private enterprise. Quijano contends that while capitalism alters these forms, they, in turn, as part of “a capital-dominated sea . . . alter its [capitalism’s] logic.”

In “Modernity, Identity, and Utopia in Latin America,” he poses the Latin American utopia “as the proposal for an alternative rationality.” He adds, “A new utopia is, after all, a project for the reconstitution of the historical meaning of society.”

He concludes “Recovering Utopia”:

After 500 years of false modernization, the question before Latin America is not to choose between statism and control, on the one hand, and the freedom of the market and of profit-making, on the other. In the final analysis, both paths lead to the same thing: vertical corporate structures which become, or are closely linked to, the state. The private state dichotomy is no more than a distinction between two aspects of the same instrumental rationale, whose ascendance has brought us an extremely protracted crisis, disorder and confusion.

The socially-oriented private sector and its non-state public sphere shows us a way out of the blind alley into which the ideologues of capital and power have led us. The liberation of society is more than an enlightened vision of utopia; in Latin America, its weft is already apparent in the threads of our daily life. The tapestry may be unraveled, perhaps even destroyed, but new hands will return to the ancient loom.

Reconsideration of Historical Complexity, Enlightenment’s Rootedness in Hegel’s ‘Spirit in Self-Estrangement,’ the Problematic of the New Beginnings as Subject and as Philosophy

Two reconsiderations and a further digging into the problem of the meaning of a new beginning, would, I believe, considerably strengthen Quijano’s important contributions.

The first reconsideration is the conceptualization of European history from the Enlightenment to the present moment. Quijano’s tracing seems to bend the stick in a deterministic manner, almost as if the course of history had been fixed unilinearly. However, certain historic moments within European history, in both the nineteenth and twentieth century, posed a distinct alternative to instrumentalist reason, even while being a product/victim of it. Europe gave birth to the rise of a new revolutionary subject, the working class discovered itself as a class. The strand of the 1848 Revolutions, which sought to go beyond bourgeois rule, the 1871 Paris Commune whose greatness was, in Marx’s words, “its own working existence,” were both paths for this new birth.

In the twentieth century, Quijano has correctly discerned that Stalinism was no alternative, but merely different version of the instrumental reason, one I would call state-capitalist. But that cannot allow us to skip over the greatness of the Russian Revolution, which not only stood against modernity in its instrumentalist form, but was a Great Divide in Marxism itself. That revolution became transformed into its opposite from within, but this cannot take away from the fact that it was part of the history and reality of an “Other Europe,” which, at stages of capitalism’s instrumentalist logic, had arisen in opposition.

The second reconsideration we would like to pose is that of the Enlightenment itself: how a philosophic framework can help us greatly to comprehend its limitations, and allow an important vantage point for Latin American thought today. In order to reach that philosophic vantage point, we need to again return to the Hegelian dialectic as taken up in chapter 1.

It can be no accident that Hegel traces Enlightenment’s struggle with faith in the form of superstition, and Enlightenment’s development in the sphere of utility, within his section on “Spirit in Self-Estrangement.” Baillie, in his introduction to this section of the *Phenomenology of Mind*, points to part of the historical material present as “the rationalistic movement of the eighteenth century, the so-called ‘Enlightenment’ which proceeded and culminated in the French Revolution, the supreme outburst of spiritual emancipation known in European history.”
As we have earlier seen, in opposition to a world of faith and superstition, “Enlightenment upsets the household arrangements, which spirit carries out in the house of faith, by bringing in the goods and furnishings belonging to the world of here and Now.” But Enlightenment, in this negative task, “brings to light its own proper object, the ‘unknowable absolute Being’ and utility.” Hegel proceeds to follow Enlightenment in more detail.

Enlightenment’s war on what it sees as the errors of faith turns out to be wars on itself. “Pure insight (Enlightenment) and intention, operating negatively, can only be . . . the negative of itself. As insight, therefore, it passes into the negative of pure intention, becomes a lie and sordid impurity of purpose.”

Enlightenment’s own logic prevents it from bringing together faith and reason. They are an unbridgeable gulf of Enlightenment’s dialectic, even at its highest moment—the French Revolution. As Quentin Lauer notes, “What Enlightenment has done, in the last analysis, is to isolate interiority of consciousness from the exteriority of actuality, making reconciliation impossible.”

In “‘The Truth of the Enlightenment’” Hegel shows that the Enlightenment “falls out with itself in the same way as it did formerly with belief and is divided between the views of two parties.” It both looks into itself and looks outward. Inwardly its object is thought, pure being. Outwardly it looks only to an “absolute matter,” another abstraction. We arrive at “thinking” identified with “thingness” or a “thingness” identified with “thinking.”

Again as Lauer notes: “Man is free not because he determines himself interiorly but because he has determined everything else to be for himself. The ‘truth’ which the enlightenment (‘enlightened self-interest’) will bring to self-consciousness is a freedom little better than that which skepticism achieved—with this difference—reality need no longer be neglected; it can be used.”

We have now arrived at what Hegel calls “The Sphere of Utility.” Lauer writes “the topic of usefulness the dead-end street of Enlightenment.” Hyppolite writes of “platitudinous utilitarianism.”

Enlightenment equates history with a succession of facts, and the human spirit becomes only a collection of those facts. The dialectic here is the perception of a thing where the sphere of spirit becomes reduced to mere utility. Enlightenment’s worldview is one of humanity being in the world of nature as opposed to being in the world of religion. This narrow materialism prevents any movement of humans as spiritual beings not alone in a religious sense, and opens the door to throwing out spirit as a liberatory process of the drive toward freedom. Enlightenment may have won its war against faith reduced to superstition by bringing in the world of science and nature. But in so doing it has reduced reason to the spiritual work in the form of utility. This becomes its blind alley and sets the stage philosophically for the crisis in modernity.

Even the French Revolution, the culmination of the Enlightenment, the place where heaven comes down to earth, where the dialectic was to resolve the duality of the modern world of spirit and reality, cannot accomplish its task.

We are now entering the section of “Spirit in Self-Estrangement” entitled “Absolute freedom and terror.” Hegel did not believe the French Revolution failed because its principle was false but rather because it claimed that that principle could be realized immediately and therefore abstractly.

The human problem that the Revolution claimed to solve, the interrelation of self-consciousness and substance, was not resolved. The French Revolution itself had to undergo second negation. It was not able to do so in fullness at that historic moment, and instead led to the Terror. It would not be until a new Subject arose, the proletariat, that one could found an entire philosophy of revolution—Marx’s Humanism—by reconceptualizing the Hegelian dialectic in this new sphere of human existence and revolt.

As for Enlightenment’s reduction to utility, it only raised the questions of: useful for whom, and in what sense? The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have answered with the negation of humanity’s liberatory process, the dominance of instrumental reason as the juggernaut of capitalist development, not only in Europe, but globally.

We have returned to Hegel’s discussion of the Enlightenment in Spirit in Self-Estrangement in relation to Quijano’s important discussion of modernity’s crisis and Latin America. We would argue that his discussion of the domination of instrumental reason would be further enriched by a return to Hegel’s critique of Enlightenment within the disclosure of Spirit in the Phenomenology. Such a philosophic reconsideration can expand our comprehension of the historic trajectory of modernity in relation to both Europe and Latin America.

Finally, we want to return to Quijano’s pinpointing of the collective Andean community, particularly as reconstituted in the barriadas of Latin America’s large cities. It is an important singling out of new, revolutionary subjectivity. But a note of caution needs to be added. When Marx searched globally for new revolutionary subjects in the last decade of his life, and wrote of the peasant commune the mir in Russia as a possible form that could move directly toward a collective new society
without going through all the vicissitudes of capitalism, he did so by noting that, in order to save the Russian peasant commune from being destroyed by capitalism’s encroachment, a revolution was needed.

While Quijano writes of not having illusions that the original Andean community form can be the basis by itself for a new society, and looks toward the reconstitution of such community of collectivity, solidarity, reciprocity, in the urban poor neighborhoods of Latin American cities, he seems to suggest that its presence within a capitalist behemoth, can continue. He indicates that though it is altered by capitalism, it in turn, can alter capitalism. There is no mention of a needed social uprooting, the revolution Marx had written of earlier in relation to the possible continued existence of the Russian mir as the basis for a socialist society.

Instead, one could interpret Quijano as saying one can construct a world in opposition to existing reality, and coexist with it. But precisely because it is built in opposition to, it is in some ways defined, by that oppressive world, and can certainly be destroyed by it. To construct a parallel world, in opposition to, but not in confrontation, to the dominant reality is to sow illusions.

Hegel spoke to this point in the section on Spirit in Self-Estrangement. As I noted in chapter 1: “Self-Estrangement seeks to construct a separate world in opposition and contrast to the actual world, but in constructing it ‘in the ether of pure consciousness,’ Spirit has not posed a challenge to the existing world in its totality. It cannot become a Spirit that freely self-develops. It remains within the orbit of that existing world. It generates ‘a world of its own creation’ but it cannot gain ‘freedom from it and in it.’”

How to gain ‘freedom from it and in it,’ remains the challenge, whether in barriadas in Latin American cities, or in the other important social/class forms I will take up in part 3 of this study. I certainly am not posing an “answer” to this exceedingly difficult problem. Instead, in framing the question and collectively searching out answers, I see the need to include the crucial philosophic foundations that Hegel and Marx created, which remain key points of departure for any efforts to reconceptualize the liberatory process for today.

E. Enrique Dussel—Spirit in Self-Estrangement Continued

Reading and Misreading Hegel

In the appendix to the English edition of Philosophy of Liberation, Dussel reprints an address given to the American Catholic Philosophical Associate, April 1980. He states,

[P]hilosophy of liberation gives particular importance to the analectic moments of the dialectical process. In its essence, the dialectics of the dialectical method consist in the rational movement that passes from the part to the whole, or from a whole to a more extensive whole that includes it. But the possibility for such passage . . . does not rest only on the negation of negation in totality (moment of negativity) and not even on the affirmation of totality (which would not ‘surpass’ it with a radical metaphysical—not merely an ontological—surpassing (aufhebung). It is possible because of the affirmation of exteriority, which is more than is negation for a philosophy of the oppressed as an originating and a liberating fulfillment. . . In the final analysis, it can be affirmed that the analectic moment of dialectics is founded on the absolute anteriority of exteriority over totality, even to affirming the priority of the Absolute Other as creative origin over creation as a work, a finite and therefore perfectible totality.

Within this passage lies the core of Dussel’s misreading of Hegel. He pulls apart what the vast, profound journey of Phenomenology of Spirit has shown to be an integral unity: Spirit and Other. His reading transforms Spirit into a totality that supposedly annihilates exteriority, the Other. He imposes an opposition between negation of the negation and an affirmation of exteriority, which, I have argued, is not present in Hegel’s philosophic works when the Other encompasses the human drive toward liberation. His interpretation of negation of the negation reduces the revolutionary nature of absolute negativity, Hegel’s Absolute Method, to some kind of “totality” that absorbs any opposition.

I have extensively discussed in chapter 1 how, in his major philosophic works, Hegel provides us with “A Liberating, Negating power of Other” in the dialectic. Dussel does not dive fully into that dialectic. Instead he follows the reading of Hegel that other interpreters have posed as an annihilation of exteriority (Otherness) by a totalizing Spirit. He equates/translate aufheben with “negation of exteriority, incorporation in totality” Dussel compounds this misreading by an interpretation of negation of negation as not being about second negativity, the positive in the negative, the creation of a new
society. In contrast, Marx had written of “The greatness of Hegel’s Phenomenology, and of its final result—the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle.”

For Dussel, Hegel becomes the representative of the failed project of modernity, the philosopher of the “Eclipse of ‘the Other’ and the Myth of Modernity.” (The subtitle to Dussel’s The Invention of the Americas) In the first chapter of The Invention of the Americas, he proceeds to marshall a series of Hegel’s Eurocentric and racist quotes to support this view.

It is not that we need to “cover over” these views of Hegel, far from it. It is that, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, those views need to be rejected, but should not stop us from the necessary return into Hegel’s philosophic labors. Investigation of Hegel’s political-historical writings may help us as exposé and show the limitations of the bourgeois thought of the time, some of which is still unexamined critically today. But this must not also stop us from the digging into the Hegelian dialectic in and of itself.

Hegel’s dialectic can speak powerfully to a central problematic of Latin America today—the self-liberation of the Other—because of his profound tracing of Spirit’s relationship to Other at each stage of the dialectic. Hegel shows us the barriers that impede that dialectic and, when we arrive at his Absolutes, we find not a closed ontological totality, but rather a pathway of Absolute Negativity that manifests revolutionary New Beginnings. Here, we have sought to reconceptualize/concretize this creation for Latin America by looking at Latin America through Hegel’s eyes in the sense we discussed earlier, and also by looking at Hegel through Latin American thinkers’ eyes. This is what brings the Hegelian dialectic to the here and now of Latin America, including the category of Spirit in Self-Estrangement.

To expose the political-historic roots of Hegel’s Eurocentrism, but at the same time to present a flawed reading of his philosophic foundations, sets up a self-imposed barrier that cuts us off from catching all the strands involved in Marx’s relationship to Hegel, and from exploring in fullness the revolutionary subjectivity of the Other in our era. It is here wherein lies the trap of Spirit in Self-Estrangement. Let’s follow this further.

A Rediscovery of Marx

Dussel’s three major studies on Marx—La producción teorica de Marx—Un comentario a los Grundrisse; Hacia un Marx desconocido—Un comentario de los Manuscritos del 61-63; and El ultimo Marx (1863-1882) y la liberación latinoamericana—are important contributions for a number of reasons: (1) his willingness to return to Marx when so many wish to attack and abandon him, (2) his detailed tracing of what he calls the four editings of Capital between 1857 and 1882, (3) his appreciation of the relevance of Marx’s thought, particularly of his final decade, for Latin American liberation.

Nonetheless, there are difficulties in certain aspects of his interpretations. Here I want to limit my comments to Dussel’s view of the relation of Hegel and Marx. In two chapters of El ultimo Marx [The Final Marx]: “Marx against Hegel. The ‘rational nucleus’ and the ‘generative matrix,’ and “The Hegelism of Marx. The dialectic of Capital,” Dussel presents his conception of the relation of Marx and Hegel. The “rational nucleus” refers to Marx’s desire to take the dialectic, which has been put on its head in the hands of Hegel, and “to uncover (disclose) the rational nucleus that is hidden beneath the mystical covering.” Although Marx’s words quoted by Dussel are from 1870, it is a thought Marx expressed a number of times earlier in his life.

The difficulty comes, not out of Marx’s project, but from Dussel’s view of the transformation Marx is undertaking. Dussel starts with the view that Hegel’s philosophy is an “ontology” whose reference points are “totality,” “being,” the “fundamental,” ones, he is said to have in common with the philosophies of Aristotle and Heidegger. “Identity” is added as specific to Hegel. This is contrasted with Marx for whom the categories, according to Dussel, are not being but “actual reality” expressed as the Other, the poor, and living Labor.

In chapter 3, I will show that Marx’s critique of the Hegelian dialectic is rooted in Hegel’s dehumanization of the Idea. For Marx, stripping the mystical veil off of Hegel meant capturing the rational kernel of movement and self-movement, the dialectic of negativity and infusing it with the living human subjectivity, the “new passions and new forces” arising in “the bosom of society.” That was Marx’s inversion, his transformation of Hegel’s revolution in philosophy to a philosophy of revolution.

However, Dussel wants to present us with Marx rejecting a “closed ontology as a totality without the priority of a creative fountain (force).” Dussel is thereby seeking to impose his own reading of Hegel’s philosophy—closed ontology, totality, being—onto Marx. But it is neither Marx’s view, nor in my view, a viable reading of Hegel. Dussel is missing the fullness of Marx’s relation to Hegel. This is not to say that Dussel does not seek out and present, as opposed to other interpreters of the
Hegel-Marx relation, many relevant quotes from Marx where Marx speaks of his own indebtedness to Hegel. Dussel also presents us with important ways in which Marx’s *Capital* incorporates, inverts, and concretizes aspects of the Hegelian dialectic. In the economic field, this is what Dussel means by the “generative matrix” in Marx.

But Dussel so concentrates on Hegel’s lack of recognition of the “Other” as a living historical subject, particularly outside Europe, that it has blinded him to Hegel’s profound discussion of Other and Otherness within the dialectic of negativity. Instead, Dussel wishes to reduce Hegel to Being (Ser) vs. Marx as taking up non-being (No-Ser) and seeing/aiding those “non-beings” as creators of a new society. What is missing in this interpretation is the recognition that despite Hegel’s dehumanization of the idea, it is only through the rational nucleus of Hegel’s dialectic that Marx can place humanity at the center of his own dialectic. The Hegelian dialectic is what helps to form Marx’s concentration on the “Other(s)”—whether as living labor, or as other forces of revolution—as the human creators of a new, liberated society.

**Interpretations of the Other**

Dussel, like Quijano, presents a discussion of modernity not only as a European occurrence, but “it also originates in a dialectical relation with non-Europe. Modernity appears when Europe organizes the initial world system and places itself at the center of world history over and against a periphery equally constitutive of modernity.”

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First, Europe itself is not an undifferentiated whole. By this we are not referring to differences between various European countries and different historic periods in the 500 years since the Conquest. Rather, we refer to the fact that within Europe, there is an “Other Europe.” There are Others who have resisted. We briefly took this subject up in our discussion of Quijano. Here we would only mention further that whether one speaks of workers, i.e., living labor, or the Jewish Question in the twentieth century, or the East European Revolts of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, or numerous other dimensions of the Other, it cannot simply be posed as Europe and Latin America as simply Other to one another. There have always been two worlds within each country—often, more than two worlds.

This is not to say that the ruling powers have not treated the non-European world as an Other to be exploited, “modernized,” “civilized,” that is, practiced barbarity in relation to Latin America. They certainly have. And this is no doubt the dominant theme between Latin America and Europe, as it has been between the United States and Latin America. But we need also to recognize that no category is undifferentiated. This is true in its own way within Latin America, which has its own two worlds of oppressed and oppressors, as Dussel undoubtedly recognizes, though he does not present in any sustained manner.

Perhaps most crucial to a discussion of the Other in Latin America is to give it a corporeal presence. One aspect that often seems to be missing in Dussel’s discussion is the Other speaking for her/him/themselves. Any creation of a philosophy of liberation for today needs to break down the division between mental and manual that Marx characterized as the hallmark of a class society, particularly a capitalist class society. The “organic” intellectual, whether in how Gramsci raised the category, or whether the more current use of the term among intellectuals seeking a relationship with human forces of social change, has to involve not only a situating oneself within and a speaking “for” the Other, but a very new way of seeing, of listening, hearing, and helping to make a category for the ideas, thoughts, actions of Other.

This failure to authentically see and listen to a living Other is analogous to lack of a dialectical framework for much of the discussion of Other by those commentators who proclaim their adherence to the Other. From the side of theory and practice the centrality of the Other is not authentically grasped.

Because of the way in which Hegel has been misread, the subsequent lack of completeness in viewing the relation of Hegel and Marx, and the questions about the corporeal presence of the Other within what is called Philosophy of Liberation, I would argue that this project of liberation stands in danger of falling into what Hegel wrote of as “Spirit in Self-Estrangement—The Discipline of Culture.” A “Philosophy of Liberation” that presents itself in too hermetically sealed a box can fall into the trap of creating its own world, striving to be in opposition to the exploitative society we live in, but not truly
confronting it in an uprooting way that projects a new human future. If we end up in a philosophy based on “pure ego” we can have, as Hegel notes in *Phenomenology of Spirit*: “pure Insight. . . . It takes nothing but the self . . . it comprehends everything, extinguishes all objectiveness.”

In place of revolt appears arrogance.

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**F. Arturo Andrés Roig: The Function of Philosophy in Latin America**

One important contribution to the expression of Latin American philosophy as a liberatory project has been that of the Argentine philosopher Arturo Andrés Roig. Both in his *La filosofía actual en América Latina* (1976) and in *Teoría y crítica del pensamiento latinoamericano* (1983) he has raised questions of the function of philosophy in Latin America today, including its relation to the Hegelian dialectic.

Roig writes of “the very concrete reality of our peoples . . . social structures, considered in themselves, are unjust insofar as they are based on the dominating-dominated relationship—a fact that becomes more acute because of our dependent cultural state.” Under these circumstances, Roig’s central theme, the one to which he has made crucial contributions, is that of exploring “the actual function of philosophy in Latin America.”

To have a commitment in this way, is to have “philosophies of denunciation . . . principally Marxism and Freudianism.” And at the same time “the philosopher’s mission” has for Roig “a new meaning,” one that revolves around an “integration of the Latin American peoples,” and not only “the exclusive work of the intelligentsia.” For Roig, “From the postulation of the forays and modes of integration, understood as a condition of liberation, depends likewise the whole of philosophy.”

He warns that it is necessary to have an integration that provides conceptual tools for joining, without treason, “the cause that is the cause of the people.” Such conceptual tools need the factual, but cannot be reduced to mere facticity. Rather, there needs to be “an enveloping facticity within which are given simultaneously the thinking subject and the object of thought.” For this there needs to be “a certain historical a priori,” an a priori that is at the same time historical: “It is a determinate and determining historical structure in which social conscience plays . . . a preponderant causality.”

From the point of view of Latin American philosophy today, it must examine that a priori of previous discourse, which means a “denouncing,” re-examining, the thought of “our ‘founders’ from our present perspective.”

This brings Roig to an examination of how previous Latin American philosophy, particularly that of José Enrique Rodó, had “identified” Latin America with Ariel, the winged spirit in Shakespeare’s “The Tempest.” But today, it is Caliban who is held up: “Caliban, who is not an abject being, is our most direct symbol in the way that we stopped believing in the ‘Civilization’ that the liberal bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century placed in opposition to the ‘barbarism,’ which is the name Caliban is given.” Today there is a call for the creation of a “philosophy of the Calibans.”

Roig sums up the philosophic task: “The mission of current Latin American philosophy essentially lies, then, in the search for new integrating concepts.” The risk is one of developing philosophy as “the oppression of life as exercised from the objective totality of the concept and orchestrated by the will to power,” as against “a strong preeminence of entity, captured in its otherness and in its novelty” and thus “able to develop an open dialectical thought.” Thus, “the principle undertaking of a philosophy of liberation” is “the unmasking of the objective, oppressive totalities and the elaboration of the integrating categories that allow man ‘to re-integrate himself with himself.’” One cannot escape the form of alienation faced in “everydayness.” One must ask of Latin American humanity: “from where” and “to where,” “the historical a priori.”

Roig notes that many Latin American intellectuals seem to have a “fear” of “the revolt of the masses,” ‘social revolution,’ ‘loss of order and hierarchies,’ ‘social decomposition,’” etcetera. But for Roig, we must move from the “theory of freedom” of the founders of Latin American philosophy to a “theory of liberation,” that “should have as its fundamental task the elaboration of new integrating categories beginning with a redemption of the historical sense of man.”

He sees the historical sense of man as presupposing “a self-making, a self-happening, an act of freedom.” Opposing history as tautology, “a repetition of the same,” Roig poses “an otherness that, by its single presence, breaks the successive dialectic totalities with which the attempt was made to put a brake on the historical process of man’s liberation.” Roig is here posing philosophically new beginnings emerging from Otherness instead of any system of closed totalization: “the humanizing mission of imposing otherness as an essential condition of man.”
The humanizing mission cannot be an abstraction, but must take in “the problem of technology.” For Roig, this problem “will find its adequate answer when the relation between man and production is formulated correctly, in other words, when labor is a function in which and through which man is able to make his humanity by himself.” For this to happen the “philosophical discourse” and the “political discourse” need to be examined from a common structure, from the historical a priori from which both arise. This is not a matter of reducing the philosophical to the ideological, but a realization that philosophy both contains the ideological and transcends it.

Roig resists utilizing any “ontologies of the national being” as a discourse that can hide a real heterogeneity. That is, one cannot ignore “diverse modes of otherness,” without running the risk of a Caliban “newly shackled and bound.” Even the posing of utopia needs to be examined critically. Utopia is not rejected, but viewed with “risks and benefits” and “open to the future as the place for what is new.”

In Teoria y critica del pensamiento latinoamericano, Roig continues developing themes raised in his earlier work. Here he centers on how to make a philosophic beginning. He sees it rooted in an “anthropological a priori,” one in which:

The subject that affirms itself as valuable . . . is not a singular but a plural subject, insofar as the categories of ‘world’ and ‘people’ properly refer to a universality that is only possible within a plurality. This is the reason why we can enunciate the anthropological a priori referred to by Hegel as a wanting ourselves as valuable and consequently as a holding the knowing of ourselves as valuable even when it may be this or that particular man who puts into play this point of departure.

Ofelia Schutte comments, “Roig transforms the notion of the subject (either in its singular form, ‘I,’ or in its abstract form, ‘Spirit’) to a ‘We’ (nosotros), a plural, culturally rooted subject whose reflexive form as a ‘for itself’ would therefore be a ‘for us.’”

The movement from “for itself” to “for us” is at the heart of the emancipatory project among a number of Latin American thinkers. The concept of a collective subject places masses of women and men, “the Others,” as the driving force of a philosophy of liberation. Whether having its roots in such social forms as the Andean pre-Conquest community, which finds new forms of continued existence, or in the collectivity of being regarded contemporarily as “Other” by Europe, the United States, and Latin America’s own rulers, the fact is that such collectivities reject any designation as Other, and move to reclaim a revolutionary subjectivity as against any reification/objectification.

I want to look briefly at the relation between Roig’s use of Other and the concept of Other in Hegel. Does Roig see Hegel’s dialectic speaking to Latin America? The answer for Roig begins with a yes, but ends with a no. He recognizes that the categories taken up—the historical a priori, the anthropological a priori, the movement from “for itself” to “for us”—are categories that either have their origins, or important developments within Hegel. Certainly, Hegel is the one philosopher who strove under the impact of the French Revolution to bring history into philosophy. And in his Phenomenology, the core of self-consciousness is the human struggle for recognition. When that becomes Spirit, we are witnesses, at one and the same time, to the bringing forth of collective spirit of a people, and the origins of what, as we discussed earlier, Marx calls the “dehumanization of the Idea” by Hegel.

Roig does not follow Hegel in Phenomenology of Spirit beyond the struggle for recognition, but chooses to concentrate on Hegel’s political writing, Philosophy of Right, and on his lectures on the philosophy of universal history, commenting that “the entire Hegelian concept and its function of integration is thus empty” and is takes him “to unavoidable contradictions.” He calls Hegel’s Philosophy of Right, “a key text to comprehend Hegelianism and, in general, all ‘philosophy of the subject.’” Here Roig tries to make a unity of the philosophic with the political/ideological, when what is needed is a sharp separation of philosophic creation from political conclusions. Marx profoundly critiqued Hegel’s Philosophy of Right and its apology for the role of the state. This did not stop Marx from probing philosophically into Hegel’s dialectic.

However, when Roig returns to Hegel’s philosophic concept of Spirit, his reading is one of a closed ontology, a totalizing Spirit. He interprets Hegel as developing “a moment of totalization,” which obscures the truth and lacks a consciousness of alterity. Contrary to such totality, he argues for the “moment of particularity”:

A different understanding of dialectics emerges . . . deriving from the place where the accent falls. The moment of totalization . . . is not underscored, but rather the prior moment of particularity from where it (totality) is achieved. Its legitimacy derives from the capacity for reconstruction and reconstruction of the successive totalizations. . . . The truth is not found primarily in the
totality, but in determinate forms of particularity with power to create and re-create totalities from a place outside the later, as alterity.\(^\text{112}\)

Roig argues that the historical, which Hegel brings into philosophy, becomes swallowed by Absolute Spirit as an ontology: “In the end, the anthropological a priori loses its own ontological weight and the subjectivity that is constituted from it runs the constant risk of being annulled and absorbed.”\(^\text{113}\) Roig’s reading of Hegel here is part of a long legacy of philosophers, stretching from Kierkegaard to post-Modernism, who see in Hegel a totalization that, in their views, subsumes Other.

However, as we saw in chapter 1, the central categories of “The Doctrine of the Notion” in Hegel’s *Science of Logic*—Universal, Particular, Individual—are at once a totality and singularities. That is, within Hegel’s dialectic they can neither be collapsed one into another, nor expressed completely independently, without relation to one another. It is in fact the movement from Universal through Particular to Individual, and the reverse, that is the core of dialectics. It is a movement through negation, double negation, whose fullest expression is Absolute Negativity. Thus, as we have argued in chapter 1, within Hegel one finds Other, alterity that is not simply subsumed. It is within an *aufheben*, which determines Spirit in the form of the Absolute as much as Spirit shapes the Other.

When Roig writes, “The truth is not found primarily in the totality, but in determinate forms of particularity with power to create and re-create totalities from a place outside the latter, as alterity,” he has a key insight to the truth of totalities, the Universal, as continually being created and re-created. But that creation and re-creation is what Hegel himself is striving to express as the truth of dialectics, particularly when we reach the Absolutes of Knowledge, Idea, and Mind.

In Hegel, the opposition between totality and alterity is not, I would argue, an all-embracing Spirit absorbing each Other it encounters. Rather, a liberating, negating power of the Other shapes Spirit, re-creating totality, as much as it is being shaped by Spirit. The “lie in his principle,” to use Marx’s expression critiquing Hegel, isn’t the opposition of totality and alterity, but the dehumanization of the Idea, one that impacts Spirit as much as it does the Other. The revolutionary drive to reposit humanity within the Idea allows for the integrity of Spirit and Other. I see this not so much as a reconciliation, particularly in a religious context of Christianity, but as in a radical uprooting, that opens the door to humanity’s “absolute movement of becoming,” an end to the “pre-history” in social formations that constantly constricts and stunts humanity’s development along lines of class, race, ethnicity, and sex, and in its place a posing of new human beginnings.

To the extent that Roig, and others who pose the need for a Latin American Philosophy of Liberation, insist on the living Other as a crucial, essential, central dimension of such a philosophy, they are posing a crucial problem for the creation of a philosophy of liberation. At the same time, for such an emancipatory construction to arise in fullness, we need absolute negativity as Hegel discerned it philosophically. We disregard it at our peril.

Notes

2. Two important Latin American thinkers whom I am not able to take up should be mentioned: José Aricó (See his *Marx y América Latina* (Mexico: Alianza Editorial Mexicana, 1982); and Silvio Frondizi of Argentina.
5. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 8, 10.
13. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 211.
14. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 221.
16. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 221.
25. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 224.
27. Fanon, *Black Skin*, 224.
37. Paz, *The Other Mexico*, xii.
38. Paz, *The Other Mexico*, 73.
40. Paz, *The Other Mexico*, 77-78.


64. Quijano, “Modernity.” 144, 145.


73. Quijano, “Modernity.” 151, 152.


78. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, 508.


83. Hegel,*Phenomenology*, 591.


