

NOTES

1. This community would include those who crossed the US border and those whom the US border crossed.
2. Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Hispanic/Latino Identity: A Philosophical Perspective* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).
3. Linda Martín Alcoff, "Latino vs. Hispanic: The Politics of Ethnic Names," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 31, no. 4 (2005): 395–407.
4. Christine Garcia, "In Defense of Latinx," *Composition Studies* 45, no. 2 (2017): 210–211.
5. Robert Brandom, *Articulating Reasons: An Introduction to Inferentialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).
6. "So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name." Genesis 2:19 (New Revised Standard Version).
7. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S Hacker, Joachim Schulte (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishings Ltd., 2009), 54.
8. Brandom, *Articulating Reasons*, 80.
9. *Ibid.*, 81.
10. *Ibid.*, 82–84.
11. *Ibid.*, 84. (Emphasis added)
12. *Ibid.*, 85.
13. *Ibid.*, 52.
14. José Medina, *Speaking from Elsewhere: A New Contextualist Perspective on Meaning, Identity, and Discursive Agency* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), 179.
15. For Gracia's impact in the field of philosophy of race, see *Hispanics/Latinos in the United States: Ethnicity, Race, and Rights* (New York: Routledge Press, 2000); *Race or Ethnicity: On Black and Latino Identity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007); and *Debating Race, Ethnicity and Latino Identity: Jorge J. E. Gracia and His Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
16. Gracia, *Hispanic/Latino Identity*, 26, 42–43.
17. *Ibid.*, 49.
18. *Ibid.*, 50.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, 190.
21. *Ibid.*, 33.
22. *Ibid.*, 50.
23. Alcoff, "Latino vs. Hispanic," 395–407. For her most comprehensive account of a Latino/a identity, see "Latino/a Particularity," in *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 227–64.
24. *Ibid.*, 400.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*, 402.
27. *Ibid.*, 403.
28. See Google Trends for further details in popularity in internet word searches. Accessed May 3, 2019. <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&q=Latinx>.
29. In the field of Biblical studies, see Efraín Agosto and Jacqueline Hidalgo, *Latinxs, the Bible, and Migration* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); For history, see Paul Ortiz, *An African and Latinx History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018); in education, see Vasti Torres, *Understanding the Latinx Experience: Developmental and Contextual Influences* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2019); for philosophy, see Robert Eli Sanchez Jr., ed., *Latin American and Latinx Philosophy: A Collaborative Introduction* (New York: Routledge Press, 2019); practical and systematic theology have yet to release an edited volume or monograph with Latinx in its title.

30. Garcia, "In Defense of Latinx," 210-11.

31. *Ibid.*, 210.

32. *Ibid.*, 211.

33. *Ibid.*

The Foundations of a Mexican Humanism in Emilio Uranga's Análisis del Ser del Mexicano

Sergio Armando Gallegos Ordorica
JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, proposals that aim to defend humanism, such as that of Jean-Paul Sartre in *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, emphasize the importance of the view that all human beings are not ends-in-themselves, but rather that they are constantly out of themselves and that it is through the constant transcendence (*dépassement*) and the projection of their selves beyond themselves that they can exist. Though this conception of humanism defended by Sartre is prima facie appealing, it is potentially problematic insofar as it can be interpreted, in virtue of the universalistic and egalitarian ambitions that accompany it, as inadvertently supporting and legitimizing a Western colonialist project in which Europeans aimed to project themselves over the world and shape it in accordance with their ambitions in a way that flattened differences and homogenized experiences. In light of this concern, the main goal of this paper is, parallel to the work that Kathryn T. Gines¹ and Robert Bernasconi² have done developing a critical reading of Sartre's position on humanism (particularly, of Sartre's engagement with Frantz Fanon's views in "Black Orpheus"), to argue that we can find conceptual resources in the work of Mexican philosopher Emilio Uranga (1921–1988) to develop a form of humanism that partially transcends some of the problematic consequences of the universalizing and egalitarian ambitions of Sartre's conception of humanism.

To make this argument, I offer in my paper a brief exposition and analysis of one of the most important works of Uranga, *Análisis del Ser del Mexicano*,³ which was strongly influenced by French existentialism, but also by Heidegger's thought. I proceed in the following fashion. After presenting in Section Two of the paper a more detailed review of the conception of humanism as Sartre characterizes it in *Existentialism Is a Humanism* and highlighting some of the main problems and shortcomings that it exhibits in my view, I move on in Section Three of the paper to present and discuss Uranga's proposal. In particular, I introduce first in this section the gist of his proposal, which involves offering an ontological analysis of Mexican being, or Mexicanness (*lo mexicano*), and pointing out that what distinguishes the ontology of Mexicanness from the ontology of Europeanness is that while Europeans view themselves as substances, Mexicans conceive of themselves as accidents. Therefore, since the being of Mexicans is accidental (and, in virtue of this, eminently contingent and fragile), Uranga then claims that this very state of affairs constitutes the basis of developing a new form of humanism to the extent that

the realization and the embracing of this contingency and fragility leads Mexicans to adopt a certain “lucidity.” This “lucidity” of Mexicans vis-à-vis their condition is for Uranga the basis of a humanism since it is “the original model to open oneself to the human condition.” Thus, for Uranga, the state of being Mexican provides the groundwork for a new form of humanism insofar as Mexicans, because of their self-awareness of their accidental being, value each other and other human beings in virtue of their accidental and contingent characters. In Section Four, I argue that the proposal that Uranga presents concerning the development of a new form of humanism based on the notion of accident is valuable since it offers the conceptual resources needed to develop a type of humanism that is not underscored by the problems and shortcomings that afflict Sartre’s proposal. Finally, in Section Five, I offer a brief conclusion.

2. SARTRE’S HUMANISM IN EXISTENTIALISM IS A HUMANISM

Let me present briefly some of the central characteristics of Sartre’s humanism as it is presented in *Existentialism Is a Humanism*.⁴ After characterizing in the first part of the essay the notion of existentialism and highlighting the core features that are common to the main strands (in particular, the religious strand of Kierkegaard and Marcel and the atheist strand articulated by Heidegger and himself), Sartre proceeds in the second part of the essay (where he considers some potential objections to his view) to examine in what sense his existentialism constitutes a humanism. To do this, Sartre distinguishes two ways in which an existentialist view can be characterized as a humanism by differentiating two notions of humanism in the following passage:

Actually, the word “humanism” has two very different meanings. By “humanism” we might mean a theory that takes man as an end and as the supreme value. For example, in his story *Around the World in 80 Hours* Cocteau gives expression to this idea when one of his characters, flying over some mountains in an airplane, proclaims “Man is amazing!” (. . .) But there is another meaning to the word “humanism.” It is basically this: Man is always outside of himself, and it is in projecting and losing himself beyond himself that man is realized; and, on the other hand, it is in pursuing transcendent goals that he is able to exist. Since man is this transcendence (*dépassement*) and grasps objects only in relation to such transcendence, he is himself the core and focus of his transcendence.⁵

After distinguishing these two conceptions of humanism, Sartre maintains that the existentialism that he adopts is a humanism in the second sense, and he takes such a humanism to be a good attitude since its adoption enables us to bear in mind that we are self-creating entities and that we can only fully realize our humanity by constantly striving to transcend or surpass ourselves:

This is humanism because we remind man that there is no legislator other than himself and that he must, in his abandoned state, make his own

choices; and also because we show that it is not by turning inward, but by constantly seeking a goal outside of himself in the form of liberation, or of some special achievement, that man will realize himself as truly human.⁶

Though this is *prima facie* a quite attractive conception of humanism, a thorough examination of Sartre’s words reveals some potential problems. Indeed, when we consider how the notion of “transcendence” might have been understood by Sartre’s European readers at the time, one possible interpretation of Sartre’s words is that the humanist drive to “transcend” is primarily or paradigmatically manifested in the Western colonial enterprise through which Europeans aimed to project themselves over the rest of the world in order to shape it in their image.⁷ Now, though Sartre would probably have rejected this interpretation of his words insofar as he sympathized deeply with anti-colonial movements and advocated on their behalf, it is important to notice that some passages in Sartre’s work involve some troublesome undertones:

And, as diverse as man’s projects may be, at least none of them seem wholly foreign to me, since each presents itself as an attempt to surpass such limitations, to postpone, deny or to come to terms with them. Consequently, every project, however individual, is of universal value. Every project—even one belonging to a Chinese, an Indian, or an African—can be understood by a European. To say it can be understood means that the European of 1945, though his situation is different, must deal with his own limitations in the same way, and so can reinvent within himself the project undertaken by the Chinese, of the Indian or the black African. There is universality in every project, inasmuch as any man is capable of understanding any human project.⁸

This passage is problematic because, though Sartre claims that the humanism that he subscribes to is one in which “every project, however individual, is of universal value,” he also contends that “every project—even one belonging to a Chinese, an Indian or an African—can be understood by a European” and that “any man is capable of understanding any human project.” These claims are troubling in two respects. First, Sartre manifests here, in spite of his vigorous denunciation of anti-Black racism and white supremacy in other places, a trait common to many European thinkers, which is, in Charles W. Mills’s words, “the centering of the Euro and later Euro-American reference group as constitutive norm.”⁹ Indeed, as the passage suggests, some projects seem to be more remote or foreign than others vis-à-vis a particular standard, which is provided by Europeans of 1945. Second, the claim that “any man is capable of understanding any human project” is also unsettling because, given the prior context (which stresses the possibility that Europeans may reinvent themselves in the projects undertaken by others), it strongly suggests that Europeans can easily understand (and, thus, potentially take over and carry out) any other human project. This involves re-inscribing in the humanism that Sartre articulates a white epistemic normativity as a kind

of benchmark, which partially undermines the claim about the universal value of each human project. Considering this, it is then patent that the humanism advocated by Sartre is partially shaped by certain Eurocentric biases and assumptions. These biases and assumptions are also at work in Sartre's examination of *négritude* in "Black Orpheus," where he writes the following:

In fact, *négritude* appears as the minor moment of a dialectical progression; the theoretical and practical assertion of white supremacy is the thesis; the position of *négritude*, as an antithetic value, is the moment of negativity. But this negative moment is not sufficient in itself and these blacks who make use of it know this perfectly well; they know it aims at preparing the synthesis or realization of the human in raceless society. Thus, *négritude* is for destroying itself, it is a passage, and not an outcome, a means and not an ultimate end.¹⁰

Thus, in light of the fact that Sartre's humanism is one which conceives certain anti-colonialist projects (such as the one advocated by *négritude* proponents such as Senghor) as "moments of negativity," one can then appreciate that it exhibits a clear failure to understand the nature and the importance of the lived Black experience since Sartre advocates for its eventual elimination.¹¹ Given the existence of these problems that are created by Sartre's ignorance of the suffering of Black people (and of the practical knowledge derived from this suffering),¹² one should then examine if other philosophical projects within the existentialist tradition are better positioned to articulate a more inclusive framework. In the next couple of sections, I turn to examine the humanism articulated by Emilio Uranga, and I argue that it provides, in some respects, a better alternative than the humanism of Sartre since it does not fall prey to the same objections.

3. URANGA'S HUMANISM IN ANÁLISIS DEL SER DEL MEXICANO

The best exposition of Uranga's humanism is offered in his most important work, *Análisis del Ser del Mexicano*. In this work, Uranga's main goal is to offer an ontological analysis of Mexican being (*lo mexicano*). For Uranga, this analysis should not be considered as a philosopher's abstract intellectual exercise, but rather a key social task to accomplish to the extent that, as he stresses in the Introduction, it is aimed to ultimately transform the moral and social condition of Mexicans:

To clarify what is the mode of being of the Mexican is just a step—a necessary one—to operate subsequently a reform and a conversion. Rather than a sterile rigorous meditation about the being of the Mexican, *what drives us to this type of studies is the project of operating moral, social and religious transformations on this being*.¹³

For Uranga, the project of undertaking a moral and social transformation of the Mexican is justified by the fact that, in spite of the fact that Mexico achieved its independence in

1821 and it that underwent a civil war in the second decade of the twentieth century (i.e., the Mexican Revolution) that undid many of the colonial structures that had endured during the nineteenth century, the Mexican society of the late 1940s and early 1950s remained in various respects very dependent on foreign economic and cultural forces and internally torn apart by different competing aspirations. Thus, in order to undertake a viable project to transform Mexican society in order to address its problems and shortcomings, Uranga then proposed as a first step to analyze in detail Mexican being. And this analysis, for Uranga, had to be *ontological* rather than historical or sociological. The central reason to undertake this type of analysis is laid out by Uranga in the following passage:

The ontological analysis is, then, of a very particular kind. Its categories, or most general concepts, are the broadest possible designations of the kinds, types, or modes of being. It is only when we stick to these categories that the analysis is correct. If the analysis is not done in these terms, it takes the form of an image or a metaphor.¹⁴

After justifying in the Introduction the need to perform an ontological analysis of the Mexican, Uranga then proceeds to put forth his proposal. To do this, he first reminds his readers that one of the crucial ontological categories discussed within the Western tradition is that of *accident*. In fact, to be more specific, Uranga maintains that the notion of accident has been traditionally studied in opposition or contrast with the notion of substance along the following lines: While the notion of substance has been understood as a primary or fundamental mode of being (i.e., as providing "the bedrock of reality"), the notion of accident has been understood as a mode of being that is dependent on substance (and, in light of this, as a mode of being that is secondary, fragile, or transitory). On this issue, Uranga writes this:

The accident is always projected, or projects itself from or towards the outside, and it is never exhausted in the present thing, but it constitutes itself in the horizon and the halo that surrounds things, in the out-of-focus of their presence. Pushing in this vein, the accident is primarily that which is leftover, the remainder, the excedent (super-esse). In another respect, the accident is that which is fragile and brittle, that which is equally rooted in the being and in the non-being.¹⁵

On the basis of this characterization of accident, Uranga moves on to argue that the notion is of paramount importance to his project since "the accident, defined in accordance to these abovementioned notes, will help us to explain or account for the Mexican." The reason that he gives to deploy the notion of accident as a key ontological category in the analysis of Mexican being is that, in virtue of the long history of colonization by Spaniards, Mexicans have not been traditionally seen as fully human, but rather as exhibiting humanity in a partial, incomplete, or accidental way. In virtue of this, since Spaniards traditionally considered themselves as fully and substantially human (in contrast to the original Amerindian inhabitants of Mexico

and to the different racially mixed groups that emerged during the colonial period), Uranga writes that the notion of accident is of central importance in his ontological analysis of Mexican being because the notion of “substance” is tied to an explicit attempt to devalue non-Europeans as less than human:

Every interpretation of “man” as a substantial creature seems inhuman to us. In the origins of our history, we had to precisely endure a devaluing in virtue of our dissimilarity to the European “man.” In the same spirit, we return this qualification and disavow as “human” the construction of the European that grounds human dignity on some substance.¹⁶

Given the problematic undertones attached to the notion of substance, Uranga forcefully advocates using the notion of accident to develop an ontological analysis of Mexican being for two reasons. It not only reflects the historical conditions in which Mexicans emerged as a group, but it also mirrors core features of the human condition, which are our mortality and our contingency:

The being of man is perishable, mortal, doomed to die and to end. Being a man involves having an “obligation,” a “duty,” an ontological “imperative” to die or end. The same thing happens with the accidental being. In this case, we deal with a being that must turn himself in into an accident, that must put himself in a radical situation where he does not know what to expect, marked by insecurity and unpreparedness.¹⁷

Uranga proceeds to use the notion of accident to offer an analysis of Mexican being given that the notion appears to be an appropriate tool for this task in light of the previously mentioned remarks. In particular, one of the uses that Uranga gives to it consists in articulating a different notion of humanism. Now, as we saw previously in Section Two, the humanism that Sartre develops is one that is grounded in the constant drive to transcend and that also has universalistic and egalitarian aspirations for all projects (although these are partially thwarted by the fact that Sartre seems to assume that certain projects are more transcendent than others or more foreign than others vis-à-vis a particular European standard). In stark contrast, the Mexican humanism that Uranga proposes is not grounded on the drive to be outside of oneself or transcend, but rather on the feelings brought about by the visceral realization that there are certain features (e.g., vulnerability and finitude) that are impossible to transcend:

The “feelings” of abandonment, needlessness, fragility, oscillation, and embarrassment among others, which are familiar to the Mexican as the fabric or “matter” of his being, offer a unique basis upon which humanism can be grounded. At the most extreme limit, the Mexican views himself as “accidental and anguished,” which entails that he opens himself to the human condition at its deepest level.¹⁸

In virtue of this, the humanism that Uranga proposes is one which is rooted in certain distinctive psychological features of the Mexican. These features make him, according to Uranga, open to the human condition precisely because the human condition is one which is crucially marked by mortality, finitude, and accidentality. In virtue of this, Mexican being provides a basis for a type of inclusive, compassionate humanism since it offers Mexicans a way to relate to and understand other human experiences in a way that connects with their fragility and anguish:

The Mexican understands other humans by transposing the meaning of his own life. The compassion of which he makes such a frequent use in all the expressions of his conduct . . . is the visible expression of this continuous operation through which he transfers the meaning of his own life to other things.¹⁹

Consequently, the humanism that Uranga proposes appears to be different from the one proposed by Sartre insofar as it involves, not an attempt to transcend or surpass by projecting oneself outside of oneself, but rather an attempt to humanize others by relating them to one’s condition of accidentality and anguish (*zozobra*). What I want to show in the next section is that, precisely because of these features, Uranga’s humanism is not subject to the same type of problems that arise in the case of Sartre’s.

4. SOME ADVANTAGES OF URANGA’S MEXICAN HUMANISM

As I mentioned above, I want now to briefly examine how Uranga’s proposal is able to escape some of the limitations or drawbacks that affect Sartre’s proposal. To do this, it is important to remember that the humanism that Sartre advocates for is one that is crucially shaped by egalitarian and universalistic aspirations in which “every project, however individual, is of universal value.” However, it is precisely because of this ambition that Sartre fails to realize that we are always situated, that our respective situatedness makes our projects incapable to be fully understood and carried out by others (and, conversely, that makes the projects of others unable to be fully understood and carried out by us) and that, consequently, the egalitarian and universalistic ambitions of his humanism threaten to flatten differences and homogenize experiences.

In contrast to Sartre, Uranga acknowledges that, even though “the openness to everything that is human, the mixing and tangling without fear or reservation seem to create between the Mexican and other men an unlimited communication wherein equality stands out as a supreme aspiration,” he also maintains that “despite this undeniable communicability, there is an insuperable limit.”²⁰ Because of this barrier, our projects cannot be fully understood and carried out by others (and we cannot expect to fully understand and carry out the projects of others). Considering this, Uranga proposes a humanism that does not aspire to an ideal of universal equality in which any human being can understand any project, but to an ideal of “coupling” (*emparejamiento*), as he makes clear in the following passage:

Rather than a feeling of equality with respect to others, there is in us a feeling of “coupling” and in the nationalist one of “difference.” Not every humanism is built upon the structure that we have highlighted. Generally, one believes that humanism presupposes the affirmation of equality and that, without it, there is no possibility of humanism. But this is nothing but a prejudice.²¹

After stressing this point, Uranga then maintains that it is possible to articulate a humanism that bypasses the egalitarian demand and substitutes it with a “coupling” that he describes in the following terms when he analyzes how Mexicans conceive the relation between life and death:

One usually thinks that the “difference” between life and death is the indispensable premise for every theory of life and death. But we have seen that this is not the case. The Mexican “couples” them highlighting their similarities until they reach “equality.” The same thing happens with humanism. The human is familiar to the Mexican because it follows him throughout life as the other pole with which it establishes a communication of meaning . . . a transference of meaning that allows him to explain his own life as human and, at the same time, the human as Mexican.²²

As this passage shows, Uranga’s humanism avoids the shortcomings of Sartre’s to the extent that it does not emphasize the equality of all projects (or even equality as a regulative ideal), but rather articulates an alternative based on the notion of “coupling,” which involves pairing or juxtaposing what seem to initially be entirely different phenomena (e.g., life and death) and highlighting progressively their resemblances and similarities through a process of transference of meaning until they become mixed or entangled while remaining distinct. In other terms, the humanism of Uranga is characterized by being rooted in a particular existential condition that is paradigmatically manifested in the Mexican, which he labels *nepantla*. Considering that, as Carlos Sánchez points out in his commentary of Uranga, “*Nepantla* refers to an ambivalent middle ground that is neither and both extremes”²³ and that “it rests in the conjunction that ties together the extremes as a logical glue,”²⁴ this mixing or entanglement of different phenomena is not equality for Uranga. Indeed, as Uranga stresses, the coupling always involves at the end of the day an insuperable barrier or difference, but it is precisely in virtue of this that it enables a transfer of meaning that makes possible connecting the experience of *zozobra* (i.e., the Mexican particularity) to the universal (e.g., the human condition). And it also allows grasping the universal human condition (which is marked by accidentality and fragility) as reflecting a personal, Mexican experience of *zozobra*.

5. CONCLUSION

Let me conclude. I have argued that Uranga’s conception of humanism is able to avoid some of the problems and shortcomings that Sartre’s exhibits. This is due to the fact that, though Sartre’s conception of humanism has egalitarian and universalistic aspirations, it is partially shaped by certain Eurocentric biases. In contrast, insofar as

the humanism defended by Uranga is rooted in “feelings” of abandonment, needlessness, and fragility (which, according to him, are constitutive of the Mexican), it allows Mexicans to open themselves to the human condition and to understand others as human while preserving a limit or difference that prevents Mexicans from being able to “equalize” or “substitute” themselves with them (and vice versa). In light of this, the notion of humanism proposed by Uranga appears to be better suited than Sartre’s to develop a more inclusive approach to all human projects that genuinely respects them and does not flatten or homogenize them as Sartre’s does in virtue of its universalistic and egalitarian aspirations. This raises a central question: Is Uranga’s humanism also better suited in the respects previously mentioned in contrast to the humanisms of other European figures such as Jaspers, Heidegger, and Beauvoir? I intend to examine this issue in future work.

NOTES

1. Kathryn T. Gines, “Fanon and Sartre 50 Years Later: To Retain or Reject the Concept of Race,” *Sartre Studies International* 9, no. 2 (2003): 55–67, <https://doi.org/10.3167/135715503781800213>. Kathryn T. Gines is now Kathryn Sophia Belle.
2. Robert Bernasconi, “On Needing Not to Know and Forgetting That One Knew: The Epistemology of Ignorance in Fanon’s Critique of Sartre,” in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, eds. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), 231–39.
3. Emilio Uranga, *Análisis del ser del mexicano y otros escritos sobre la filosofía de lo mexicano (1949–1952)* (México, DF: Bonilla Artigas, 2013). Though the book was originally published in 1952, I cite here the 2013 reprinted version, which is more widely available.
4. Some scholars such have pointed out that *Existentialism Is a Humanism* is not the most consummate exposition of Sartre’s thought but rather a circumstantial piece that he wrote in a specific political context. In particular, see Edward Baring, “Humanist Pretensions: Catholics, Communists and Sartre’s Struggle for Existentialism in Postwar France,” *Modern Intellectual History* 7, no. 3 (2001): 581–609, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244310000247>. In light of this, some readers might wonder why I focus on this book rather than on later works such as *Search for a Method or Critique of Dialectical Reason*. The reason for this is that, while Sartre does indeed offer more developed discussions of humanism in these later works (in particular, a critical discussion of European humanism, which was built on the dehumanization of Amerindians, Africans and Asians), he does not offer an explicit critical assessment of *Existentialism Is a Humanism* in these later works. Part of what I want to do here is to offer such an assessment using the conceptual tools developed by Uranga.
5. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 51–52.
6. *Ibid.*, 53.
7. Such an interpretation by European readers at the time is not implausible given the fact that, at the time Sartre wrote *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, Descartes’s way of doing philosophy was considered as a model to be emulated and Sartre was deeply critical of this approach as some commentators have observed. See, in particular, Stuart Hampshire, “Sartre the Philosopher,” in *Sartre: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Mary Warnock (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1971), 59–62. In particular: “Sartre accuses Descartes of representing men as metaphysical Robinson Crusoes, outside the world of things which their consciousness partially reconstructs,” *ibid.*, 60.
8. Sartre, *Existentialism*, 42–43.
9. Charles W. Mills, “White Ignorance,” in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, eds. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 13–38, here 25.

10. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Black Orpheus," in *Race*, ed. Robert Bernasconi, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 115–42, here 137.
11. When Gines considers Sartre's efforts to defend the complete eradication of race in the name of the egalitarian and universalistic ideals of his humanism, she worries about some potential serious drawbacks of Sartre's proposal. See, in particular, Gines, "Fanon and Sartre 50 years later," 67: "What would come of the 'collective memory' of black people in a society that erases race? This collective memory, a source of heritage and even resistance and empowerment, becomes endangered."
12. On this issue, the analysis that Bernasconi offers of Sartre's ignorance vis-à-vis Fanon is remarkable. See, in particular, Bernasconi, "On Needing Not to Know," 236–337: "If Sartre had not been white then he could not have forgotten how the black suffers in his or her body. A black person could not forget it. Sartre's knowledge of this suffering is a memory of what he has been told, but the black person's knowledge is like *phronesis* in this regard; *phronesis*, as Aristotle explains, is not learned nor can it be forgotten."
13. Uranga, *Análisis*, 34: "Poner en claro cuál es el modo de ser del mexicano es tan solo una premisa—eso sí, necesaria—para operar a continuación una reforma y una conversión. Más que una limpia meditación rigurosa sobre el ser del mexicano, lo que nos lleva a este tipo de estudios es el proyecto de operar transformaciones morales, sociales y religiosas con ese ser." All translations of Uranga from the original Spanish text are mine.
14. *Ibid.*, 34: "El análisis ontológico es, pues, de índole muy peculiar. Sus categorías, o conceptos más generales, son designaciones las más amplias de clases, tipos o modos de ser. Sólo cuando se habla ateniéndose a estas categorías el análisis es propio. Si no se hace en estos términos, todo toma el aspecto de metáfora e imagen."
15. *Ibid.*, 53: "El accidente está lanzado siempre, o se lanza siempre, desde o hacia un más allá, y nunca se agota en la cosa presente, sino más bien se constituye en el horizonte y halo que rodea a las cosas, en lo desafocado de su presencia. Extremando en esta dirección el accidente es lo que está de sobra, lo que está de más, el excedente (super-esse). Por otra de sus dimensiones, el accidente es lo que es frágil y quebradizo, lo que con igual originalidad es en el ser y no es en él."
16. *Ibid.*, 45: "Toda interpretación del hombre como criatura sustancial nos parece inhumana. En los orígenes de nuestra historia tuvimos que sufrir justamente una desvalorización por no asemejarnos al 'hombre' europeo. Con ese mismo de espíritu devolvemos hoy esa calificación y desconocemos como humana toda esa construcción del europeo que finca en la sustancialidad a la 'dignidad' humana."
17. *Ibid.*, 45: "El ser del hombre es perecedero, mortal, está avocado a la muerte, al acabamiento. Ese ser se asume como 'obligación,' 'deber,' 'imperativo' ontológicos de morir o acabar. Lo mismo sucede con el ser para el accidente. Se trata en este caso de un ser que tiene que accidentalizarse, que ponerse en la situación radical de un 'no saber a que atenerse,' inseguridad e imprevisión."
18. *Ibid.*, 60: "Los 'sentimientos' de abandono, gratuidad, fragilidad, oscilación, pena entre otros, que son familiares al mexicano como el tramado o 'materia' de su propio ser, ofrecen la única base en que asentar al humanismo. En su punto más extremo y radical, el mexicano se concibe 'accidental y zozobante,' lo que quiere decir que se abre a la condición humana en su estrato más profundo."
19. *Ibid.*, 60-61: "El mexicano comprende lo humano ajeno por transposición del sentido de su propia vida. La compasión de que hace uso tan frecuente en todas las manifestaciones de su conducta...es la expresión visible de esta continua operación por la cual se está transfiriendo el sentido de la propia vida al ajeno."
20. *Ibid.*, 62: "La apertura a todo lo humano, el mezclarse y revolverse sin temor y sin escrúpulo parecen crear entre el mexicano y los demás hombres una comunicación ilimitada en la que la igualdad luce como ideal supremo. Pero, a pesar de esta innegable comunicabilidad, hay un límite infranqueable."
21. *Ibid.*, 63: "Más bien, pues, que un sentimiento de igualdad frente a los demás hay en nosotros un sentido de 'emparejamiento' y en el nacionalista de 'diferencia'. No todo humanismo se

construye a partir de esa peculiar estructura que hemos puesto de relieve. Generalmente se cree que el humanismo supone la afirmación de la igualdad y que, sin ella, no hay posibilidad de humanismo. Pero esto no pasa de ser un prejuicio."

22. *Ibid.*, 63: "Lo mismo se piensa relativamente a la vida y la muerte que la 'diferencia' entre los dos fenómenos es la premisa indispensable de toda teoría sobre la vida y la muerte. Pero hemos visto que no es así. El mexicano la 'empareja' extremando su semejanza hasta una 'igualdad.' Lo mismo acontece con el humanismo. Lo humano le es familiar al mexicano porque va acompañándolo en su vida como el otro polo con que establece una comunicación de sentido... una transferencia de significado que le permite explicar su propia vida como humana y, a la vez, lo humano como mexicano."
23. Carlos Alberto Sanchez, *Contingency and Commitment. Mexican Existentialism and the Place of Philosophy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2016), 69.
24. *Ibid.*

BOOK REVIEW

Socially Undocumented: Identity and Immigration Justice

Amy Reed-Sandoval (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020). Paperback \$36.88. ISBN 9780190619817.

Reviewed by Luis Rubén Díaz-Cepeda
UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CIUDAD JUÁREZ

There are so many great aspects to *Socially Undocumented: Identity and Immigration Justice* that it was hard for me to decide which ones to talk about, given the limited space. Acknowledging, then, that some merits will be left out, I start by giving a very brief description of the structure of the book. It seems to me that *Socially Undocumented: Identity and Immigration Justice* is divided into two parts. In the first part, Reed-Sandoval aims to understand from an egalitarian point of view the injustice of undocumented migrant oppression. In order to prove her point, she first distinguishes between the legally and the socially undocumented. She then presents and defends a political understanding of a social group and discusses how this understanding bears upon what it means to be socially undocumented. In the second part, she introduces strategies to resist this oppression. Among them are the attentiveness of non-state actors, a focus on the perspectives of socially undocumented people themselves, and strategies of everyday resistance by migrants.

I want to draw your attention to Reed-Sandoval's main theoretical contribution, the category of socially undocumented, which Reed-Sandoval defines as people that "are presumed to be undocumented on the mere basis of their appearance [and in consequence] are subjected to what I call 'demeaning immigration-related constraints' or 'illegalizing forces' (that is, they are 'socially illegalized') on that very basis" (14). As a Mexican national who has lived, studied, and worked lawfully for twelve years in the United States, I completely identified with the description from Reed-Sandoval. For example, when I drove a car with Mexican license plates, the police continually stopped me. But once I got a car with Texas license plates, I magically