

# Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy



SPRING 2023

VOLUME 22 | NUMBER 2

## FROM THE EDITOR

Lori Gallegos

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

## ARTICLES

Paula Landerreche Cardillo

*2022 APA Essay Prize in Latin American Thought: The Theater of Knowledge at the Zero-Point as a Colonial Enterprise*

Juan Garcia Torres

*2022 APA Essay Prize Honorable Mention: Decolonizing the Mind and Authentic Self-Creation a la Jorge Portilla*

## AUTHOR BIOS



APA STUDIES ON

# Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy

---

LORI GALLEGOS, EDITOR

VOLUME 22 | NUMBER 2 | SPRING 2023

---

---

## FROM THE EDITOR

Lori Gallegos  
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Given Latin America's history of struggle with colonial and post-colonial domination, a distinguishing feature of Latin American philosophy has been a concern for freedom from oppression. The body of scholarly work known as decolonial theory examines and aims to challenge the ways in which the patterns of power established as a result of colonialism persist in multiple forms to this day. The two essays in this issue of *APA Studies* contribute to this area of research. The first provides a deeper understanding of epistemology as a central channel for coloniality, while the second explores the possibility of an authentic, decolonial identity for Latin Americans.

We begin with the winner of the 2022 Essay Prize in Latin American Thought—an essay titled “The Theater of Knowledge at the Zero-Point as a Colonial Enterprise.” In this award-winning essay, Paula Landerreche Cardillo takes up Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez's engagement with Kant. Her essay traces the way in which a certain kind of epistemology, exemplified by Kant, becomes a tool of the coloniality of power. Through Castro-Gómez's notion of the “zero-point hubris” Landerreche Cardillo identifies the problems of setting up a universal knower, as European modern thinkers do. She argues that Kant's epistemology is a mode of colonization, one that makes possible the extraction of other knowledges and resources for the establishment of a ruling class.

Our second essay received an Honorable Mention in the Essay Prize in Latin American Thought. In “Decolonizing the Mind and Authentic Self-Creation *a la* Jorge Portilla,” author Juan Garcia Torres poses the question: Can a person from Latin America be a Catholic, a feminist, or a democratic socialist in an *authentic* way, given the colonial origins of these identities? Building on the work of twentieth century Mexican philosopher Jorge Portilla, Garcia Torres argues that authentic decolonization of the mind need not involve a blanket rejection of identities originating from the colonizers; instead, it can be understood as a kind of authentic self-creation that is appropriately sensitive to the colonial history of the identities freely chosen by the agent.

---

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

*APA Studies on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy* is accepting contributions for the Fall 2023 issue. Our readers are encouraged to submit original work on any topic related to Hispanic/Latinx thought, broadly construed. We publish original, scholarly treatments, as well as meditaciones, book reviews, and interviews. Please prepare articles for anonymous review.

### SPECIAL CLUSTER ON THE TOPIC OF STYLE

We invite the submission of articles on *style* in Latin American/Latinx philosophy. Possible topics include but are not limited to the following:

- The value of style
- Styles in/of living
- Pedagogical style
- History in/of style
- The use of non-traditional or innovative style(s)
- Stylistic pluralism/formalism
- Language and style
- Aesthetics and style

In addition to articles, we will also be accepting the submission of the following:

- Poetry, artistic analysis, or fictional narratives
- Interviews with exemplars of style in Latin American/Latinx philosophy
- Reviews of Latin American/Latinx philosophy that thematize or display unique style(s)

### ARTICLES

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

### BOOK REVIEWS

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

---

## DEADLINES

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

Please send all articles, book reviews, queries, comments, or suggestions electronically to the editor, Lori Gallegos, at [LoriGallegos@txstate.edu](mailto:LoriGallegos@txstate.edu), Department of Philosophy, Comal Building 102, Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666.

## FORMATTING GUIDELINES

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

---

## ARTICLES

### *The Theater of Knowledge at the Zero-Point as a Colonial Enterprise: Santiago Castro-Gómez’s Engagement with Kant*

Winner, 2022 APA Essay Prize in Latin American Thought

Paula Landerreche Cardillo

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

In his early works, mainly *Critique of Latin American Reason* and *The Zero-Point Hubris*, Santiago Castro-Gómez ultimately aims to answer, in a very Kantian fashion, what makes possible that the Enlightenment can exist in the Americas and can simultaneously carry within itself anti-Enlightenment racial politics. He concentrates on epistemology because it becomes an important tool of the coloniality of power: a certain kind of epistemology (exemplified by Kant) becomes the only legitimate form of knowledge for the Enlightenment. Additionally, this epistemological model becomes the model that makes possible the extraction of other knowledges and also of resources for the establishment of a ruling class that is also the capitalist class, one that, as Andrés Bello did, can write of the happy time when the Americas “[return] to Europe with interest the stream of the Enlightenment.”<sup>1</sup>

In what follows, I concentrate on Kant’s epistemology and highlight the importance of looking at the European Enlightenment through the lense of Latin American decolonial thought. I look at Castro-Gómez’s notion of the “zero-point hubris” to explore the problems of setting up a universal knower, as European modern thinkers do in relation to questions of the situation of the knower and the apparatus of enunciation. I argue that Kant’s epistemology

is in itself a mode of colonization. Finally, I briefly present a decolonial conception of modernity in relation to Kant’s epistemology in order to highlight virtues and limitations in Kant’s apparatus of knowledge in light of decolonial thought.

## THE SPATIALITY AND TEMPORALITY OF THE ZERO-POINT HUBRIS

Castro-Gómez analyzes the conditions of reasoning that led to what he calls the “zero-point hubris”: “[The] absolute point of departure, where the observer reduces all previously learned knowledge to a tabula rasa.”<sup>2</sup> He traces the possibility of inhabiting the zero-point through three radically different thinkers of the beginning of the Enlightenment: Descartes, Hume, and Smith. Although they differ in the methodological presuppositions that establish the condition of knowledge as an absolute point of departure, they arrive at an “observational zero-point capable of guaranteeing its objectivity.”<sup>3</sup> The goal, Castro-Gómez explains, is “to convert science into an unobserved observation platform from which an impartial observer is able to establish the laws governing both the cosmos and the polis.”<sup>4</sup> Be it by the suspension of ordinary thinking, by empirical observation, or by studying economic activity, these three thinkers agree on the presupposition that society must be understood through a set of impersonal rules mirroring the rules of the physical world.<sup>5</sup> These thinkers establish a “plane of transcendence”<sup>6</sup> that assumes—or rather claims as a consequence of reason—that “human nature is a transcendental sphere valid for all people on earth that functions independently of all cultural or subjective variables.”<sup>7</sup>

But in asking how taking such a position—that of the zero-point, or the absolute place of observation for knowledge—is possible, Castro-Gómez uncovers a temporal structure that must accompany this project. This temporal structure must first assume a linear historical evolution and it must also deny the simultaneity of different geographical regions, that is, it must declare that not all geographical regions are on a simultaneous plane. The epistemological rupture that is possible for Descartes, Hume, and Smith is not yet possible for the rest of the world under this model.

The denial of simultaneity assumes that spatially everyone is on the same plane, but temporally, “the West” is the only region that has reached Enlightenment. Enlightenment, in turn, allows the European to establish a spatio-temporal plane of knowledge that gives him<sup>8</sup> the possibility “to name the world for the first time; to draw a border between legitimate and illegitimate knowledge, and moreover to define which behaviors are normal and which are pathological”<sup>9</sup> and thus have the ability to name time and space anew, rendering invisible the very structure of temporal difference that allows for the plane to establish itself as the absolute point of departure.

But in order to establish the transcendental plane of a new beginning, and with it a spatio-temporal structure that is abstracted from the world, it was necessary for the Enlightenment to assume a temporal position of superiority in relation to the “Orient” and the “Americas.” Castro-

Gómez turns to Edward Said's discussion of Orientalism as the establishment of the West and the Orient as temporally different regions and expands this discussion to the Americas. Ultimately, he concludes, this operation was necessary for the moment of rupture that makes the zero-point possible. Moreover, the creation of the West, and therefore also that of the Orient and the Americas, is established to maintain the hegemony of Europe and the subordination of the rest of the world to the European order.

I argue with Castro-Gómez that modernity-coloniality not only establishes the center-periphery model, but rather conceals the operation of coloniality such that: (1) The world-order must be established with Europe as center and the rest of the world as periphery; (2) this world-order must create a hierarchy of knowledge along with a temporal model of non-simultaneity; and (3) Europe becomes, as a consequence of (1) and (2), the center of knowledge and the culmination of a rationality that is ruptured from the time-space that made it possible. This in turn establishes a new time-space of knowledge on a transcendental plane that comes to invisibilize the conditions that made it possible in the first place.

Assuming the zero-point means assuming an absolute epistemological beginning. Descartes's project, Castro-Gómez claims, eliminates all possible uncertainties to find a solid starting point for knowledge. In this account,

To begin everything anew means having the power to name the world for the first time; to draw a border between legitimate and illegitimate knowledge . . . to situate oneself at the zero-point is to have the power to institute, to represent, to construct a vision of the social and natural world that is recognized as legitimate and underwritten by the state.<sup>10</sup>

This means that the institution of the zero-point as the non-place for knowledge is directly linked to the power, and therefore the place of power, of the institutor.

Kant makes a similar move to Descartes in the task of determining grounds, aims, and limitations of knowledge. Kant defines his system of knowledge as an architectonic, a systematic unity not given technically or empirically but through an idea and according to the ends of reason. It provides its ends a priori.<sup>11</sup> In this sense, the architectonic of pure reason is not learnt but given, not from its parts, but as a whole. In contrast to Descartes, Kant does not find the ground for knowledge and build on it, but points to knowledge as a systematic unity. Descartes places himself in the zero-point to build and place the border of legitimate knowledge while Kant's architectonic is—a priori, unplaced—the zero-point. Walter Mignolo claims that the problem is that Kant's architectonic positions itself as the only architectonic of knowledge possible.<sup>12</sup> In this sense, operating under the zero-point hubris blinds you to the fact that other people (their existence and knowledges) do not share your problems until you impose your system of knowledge upon them and tell them they are inferior and ignorant, their reasoning is defective, and their sense of the beautiful inexistent.<sup>13</sup>

In other words, a single world is established where Europe and its colonies belong to the same spatial plane, but the forms of knowledge that do not correspond to the European model are deemed defective or less advanced. This, Mignolo and Castro-Gómez explain, becomes the justification for the exploitation of the natural resources of the colonized and their subjugation.<sup>14</sup> Mignolo states that Kant saw the accumulation of knowledge as an "avid enterprise, parallel to the anxiety to accumulate money and wealth."<sup>15</sup> But what do the accumulation of knowledge and the epistemic possession of the world entail?

First, it is important to note that in Kant we can see the crystallization of what the structure of modernity/coloniality made possible. Although he clearly participated in the erasure of other knowledges and the exploitation of the colonized, he is not singularly responsible for it. Rather, Castro-Gómez's discussion of Descartes, Hume, and Smith shows that the structures that rendered European Enlightenment thinking as the epistemological beginning, rendered all other kinds of knowledge illegitimate. In a way, these four thinkers share the desire to establish limits to knowledge to then determine which knowledges are legitimate and which are deficient and/or less advanced. Yet, putting limits to knowledge seems at odds with colonial expansion and the accumulation of knowledge, not to mention the notion of an all-knowing subject or impartial knower that defines the zero-point.<sup>16</sup> But, as I mentioned earlier, the zero-point must have limits as it operates under an apparatus of whiteness. It must appear as an absolute epistemological beginning while establishing epistemological limits such that it can subjugate and expropriate the resources and peoples. Thus, the operation of universalization is carried out by placing limits. This apparatus of knowledge production establishes the limits of what is properly knowledge, and thus whoever properly inhabits the place of the knower (and by properly here I mean following the rules and limits of the system of knowledge that establishes itself as legitimate) that can obtain all possible knowledge by subsuming it under this model.

Kant's critical project lends itself quite well to this endeavor. In the first place, he is concerned with placing the limits of knowledge. Yet, one of Kant's conditions for knowledge is that it adds something new. This is why he rejects analytic truths and praises scientific knowledges such as mathematics and physics. This gives us clues about the ambition for the accumulation of knowledge in Kant's epistemology. I will now take a closer look at Kant's system of knowledge to understand the notion of "possession of the world" following Mignolo.

### KANT'S THEATER OF KNOWLEDGE

In "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," Mignolo studies the transformation of cartography of the sixteenth century. He focuses on Abraham Orteluis's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, the first modern atlas of the world. Mignolo attends to the choice of the term "theatrum." He traces the origin of the word to the Greek family of "theorein," theory, showing a relation between the conception of theory and theater. He traces the use of the two terms in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe and finds a notable similarity

in the use. Both words refer to contemplation, a place for viewing, beholding, and spectating.<sup>17</sup> Starting from the suggestion that there is a relationship between theater and theory in the modern world, I relate it to the notion of a place of viewing to look at the subject of knowledge and the place of enunciation in Kant.

I mentioned that Kant's system of knowledge is an architectonic conceived as a whole edifice. Following Mignolo, I suggest that we look at this system of knowledge as a theater. The knower is placed in the theater, and, according to Kant, any subject can be placed there. The theater Kant sets up is the zero-point. It has no geographical location or particular temporality; it is set up as a transcendental plane. The subject is not racialized or gendered. This is already problematic, but for the time being I will set aside those problems to look at the apparatus of knowledge as Kant sets it up.

Let us picture Kant's theater. To begin with, the theater must be a unity and have limits. According to Kant, the knower will inevitably try to go beyond the limits of the theater. It is in the nature of reason that he does. However, he must understand the limitations of the apparatus of knowledge in order to speculate beyond them. That is, the knower must understand the principles upon which the theater is built. Kant will look at these principles and determine that, to experience objects in the theater, there must be a structure of the theater. He explores this in the "Transcendental Aesthetic."

We can assume that if we asked Kant to describe the theater, he would describe it thus: There is a stage at the front which is most likely elevated and surrounded/concealed by curtains. On the other side, there are seats, all facing the stage. There must be a distance between the stage and the seats.

Kant writes at the beginning of the "Transcendental Aesthetic," "The capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations through the way in which we are affected by objects is called sensibility."<sup>18</sup> In this way, objects affect us but we have a capacity for receptivity, which is necessary for the acquisition of representations of these objects. He continues: "I call that in the appearance which corresponds to sensations its matter, but that which allows the manifold of appearance to be intuited as ordered in certain relations I call the form of appearance . . . the matter of all appearance is only given to us a posteriori, but its form must all lie ready for it in the mind a priori."<sup>19</sup> The appearance must have a form and this form must be a priori. Later he will argue that the form is in the knower as space/time.

For Kant, therefore, "We can accordingly speak of space, extended beings and so on from the human<sup>20</sup> standpoint."<sup>21</sup> Going back to Kant's theater, we cannot say that it exists as something extended. But we can say that the theater is the form of appearance of objects to the knowing subject. The theater is necessary for knowledge, sensibility is necessary for representation. There must be a separation between the subject of knowledge and the object. In fact, Kant writes that "sensibility is a necessary condition of all the relations within which objects can be intuited as outside of us, and,

if one abstracts from these objects, it is a pure intuition that bears the name of space."<sup>22</sup>

The structure of the theater looks remarkably similar to the structure of sensibility. In order for there to be theater or knowledge, there must be a place of spectating that is at the same time a non-place or any place, a sit in the theater, all theaters, any theater since they are all the same. There must be a separation between the spectator and the object of theater (say, the play) or the object of knowledge. Space is a necessary condition for both theater and sensibility, and therefore knowledge, to happen and the structure must function as a whole.

I claim that we can assume that Kant would describe the theater similarly to how I described it above because this is the basic structure of a theater in the seventeenth century. If we were to describe a theater with a different structure, Kant would deny that the structure could be called a theater because a theater must have this particular structure to function as a whole. Theater, in this sense is the theater, just as in Kant, the architectonic is the architectonic. That is the basis of transcendental philosophy: It assumes universality by situating the knower at the zero-point, and the system of knowledge as the only possible system of knowledge.

Kant's "theater of knowledge" is not only problematic because it assumes that it is the only possible system of knowledge (or the only legitimate one), but the way the theater is set up is problematic in its own way. As I suggested at the beginning of this section, Kant's presupposition of what knowledge must be carries his own ambitions to possess the world through understanding.

It could be said that for Kant, to know the object is to colonize it. Mignolo writes that "knowledge itself is an integral part of imperial processes of appropriation."<sup>23</sup> Kant's theory of knowledge, by situating the knowledge in the subject and conceiving it in terms of subject and object, is a praxis of colonization. Kant is not concerned with revealing the things in themselves but rather the things as they can be known, since for him, it is not possible to reveal things in themselves. For this reason, the metaphor of the theater of the world is particularly useful since it assumes an edifice of knowledge that is not found in "nature" but rather set up by the knower(s). The process of knowledge consists of the subject imposing categories on things to understand them and conceive them as objects. It is the subject who judges and creates knowledge, and the knower is assumed to be universal. I have already questioned the universality of the subject and criticized the conception of the zero-point. The problem is that if the theoretician of knowledge assumes that his conception of knowledge is the only possible conception of knowledge and his conception of knowledge implies imposing categories onto things in order to cognize them, he is blind to any other possible knowledge unless it can be translated into his system.

The model of spectatorship, exemplified clearly by Ortelius's map and Kant's theater of knowledge, becomes the only legitimate way of experiencing the world. It is important to remember that the possibility of occupying the place of spectatorship as a spectator of the world is brought about



by an operation that erases the material conditions of possibility of an absolute epistemological beginning that, in turn, brings about a position of knowledge that can be displaced. Thus, Kant's theater or the place of spectatorship is displaceable. It no longer stands in Europe as its center but rather can inhabit the Americas, invisibilizing what made the displacement possible.

Castro-Gómez's ultimate aim is to show about what makes possible that the Enlightenment both existed in the Americas while carrying with itself what is often thought as anti-Enlightenment racial politics. He concentrates on epistemology because it becomes an important tool of the coloniality of power: A certain kind of epistemology becomes the only legitimate form of knowledge for the Enlightenment. Additionally, this epistemological model becomes the model that makes possible the extraction of other knowledges.

It also becomes a tool for the whitening of the blood in the colonial Americas: Those who adopt the Kantian system of knowledge inhabit a place of whiteness and with it they take part in the ruling class which is also the capitalist class. This apparatus of knowledge is used to extract resources and becomes currency such that, in 1826, Andrés Bello could write that a "happy time" in the future will come "when America returns to Europe with interest the stream of Enlightenment which today she borrows."<sup>24</sup>

NOTES

1. Andrés Bello, "Prospectus to *El Repertorio Americano*," *Selected Writings of Andrés Bello*, trans. Francés M López-Morillas, ed. Ivan Jaksic (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 6.
2. Santiago Castro-Gómez, *Zero-Point Hubris: Science, Race, and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Latin America*, trans. Don Thomas Deere and George Ciccarilello-Maher (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2021), 13.
3. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 13.
4. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 13.
5. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 17.
6. In Hardt and Negri's terms, cited in Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 17.
7. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 18. Emphasis is Castro-Gómez's.
8. I use the masculine pronoun throughout the paper because I refer to the European subject that inhabits the zero-point as necessarily masculine (that takes himself as neutral and unsexed). I discuss why this is the case in a longer version of this paper.
9. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 13.
10. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 13.
11. CPR A833/B862. In Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer, Allen W. Wood, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.)
12. Walter Mignolo, "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," in *Reading Kant's Geography*, (Albany: SUNY University Press, 2011), 339. Emphasis mine.
13. Mignolo, "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," 329.
14. Castro-Gómez, *The Zero-Point Hubris*, 13.
15. Mignolo, "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," 324.
16. I want to thank Julián Ríos-Acuña for pushing me on this point. In fact, the seeming contradiction between an absolute

epistemological beginning that can be inhabited by everyone everywhere and the apparatus of whiteness as a condition of possibility for the zero-point is an important aspect of Castro-Gómez's work in *The Zero-Point Hubris* and one that must be explained in detail.

17. Mignolo, "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," 323.
18. CPR A19/B33.
19. CPR A20/B34.
20. Kant replaces the term "human" with "subjective condition" in the following sentence. I will refer to the subjective condition since there are discussions (such as Charles Mills's and Santiago Castro-Gómez's) that question the notion of human in Kant.
21. CPR A26/B42.
22. CPR A27/B43.
23. Walter Mignolo, "The Darker Side of the Enlightenment," 338.
24. Bello, "Prospectus," 6.

*Decolonizing the Mind and Authentic Self-Creation a la Jorge Portilla*

Honorable Mention, 2022 APA Essay Prize in Latin American Thought

Juan Garcia Torres  
WINGATE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I sketch an answer to questions like the following: Can someone from Latin America be a Catholic, a feminist, or a democratic socialist, in an *authentic* way? It may appear that the answer is straightforward: "Of course; people from Latin America can authentically adopt these identities, just like anyone else." This natural answer is a bit facile, however. One's historical particularities play a central role in one's abilities to adopt identities. The three identities highlighted—"Catholic," "feminist," and "democratic socialist"—are all imported from Europe. This fact matters. Social reality in Latin America has been significantly shaped by European colonization. In fact, during the colonization period, the Catholic identity, for example, played a central role in the process of cementing an oppressive power structure that systematically privileged Europeans and their descendants over native Americans and their descendants. These considerations make it initially reasonable to think that a condition for authenticity, for Latin Americans, is precisely that they remove the yoke of their colonial past; that is, it seems reasonable to think that decolonization of the Latin American mind is a condition for its authenticity. Further, decolonization itself seems to require extirpating ideas and identities originating from the colonizers, especially those used to establish the colonial order.<sup>1</sup>

This raises important questions. To what extent is the Latin American mind a fruit of its colonial genesis? What elements of the Latin American mind are inauthentic internalizations of roles infused or projected onto them by the colonizers? How can a Latin American mind be successfully decolonized? How do the projects of authenticity and decolonization relate? As a Latin American myself, I find these questions both fascinating and existentially pressing.

Adequately answering them is an enormous project; my goal in this paper is merely to argue that the thought of Mexican philosopher Jorge Portilla provides important theoretical tools to make advances in answering these kinds of questions. I argue that Portilla's notion of authentic self-creation allows for a kind of decolonization that makes it conceptually possible for Latin Americans to be Catholics, feminists, or democratic socialists *authentically*. That is, authentic decolonization of the mind, I argue, need not involve a blanket rejection of identities originating from the colonizers; instead, it can be understood as a particular kind of authentic self-creation: one that is appropriately sensitive to the colonial history of the identities freely chosen by the agent.

Here is the plan. In section one, I present a standard strategy for understanding the nature of decolonization. This strategy helps situate the account of decolonization I sketch in section two.

## SECTION ONE: DECOLONIZING THE LATIN AMERICAN MIND

There is a substantial body of literature engaging in topics like decoloniality, decolonizing knowledge, or decolonizing the mind. Authors writing on these topics engage in interrelated but often distinct projects.<sup>2</sup> My goal here is not to survey this complex body of literature, but to isolate a standard way of understanding decolonization and its connection to authenticity.

This standard strategy for understanding decolonization I label the "building-*anew*" strategy. This strategy stresses both the need to extirpate ideas originating from the colonizers and the need to rebuild the Latin American mind *anew* from its own sources. The latter element of this strategy is central to the project of this paper.

### 1.1 THE BUILDING-ANEW STRATEGY

Aníbal Quijano, a theoretical founder of "decoloniality" as a critical concept, is a proponent of the building-*anew* strategy. Quijano distinguishes between "colonialism" (*colonialismo*), as State-driven economic and political domination, from "coloniality" (*colonialidad*), as a pervasive colonial order that generates ways of representing the world and ways of being-in-the-world that justify and perpetuate structures of domination between different races or ethnicities: whites/European as naturally superior and thus entitled to greater portions of wealth and power than non-whites/non-Europeans.<sup>3</sup> A major triumph of the colonial order, Quijano notes, is the colonization of the imagination and ways of representing the world of the colonized;<sup>4</sup> coloniality is established when the colonized *internalize* the colonial order. Coloniality involves, for example, the *aspiration* of the colonized to *improve themselves* by becoming *whiter/more European*.<sup>5</sup> As Frantz Fanon poignantly notes, "However painful it may be for me to accept this conclusion, I am obliged to state it: for the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white."<sup>6</sup>

For Quijano, part of the success of coloniality relies on an epistemically pernicious element: the colonial order makes a claim to being *total* or an exhaustive representation of

the way the world truly is.<sup>7</sup> Non-European cultures, and their ways of representing or being-in-the-world, are included in the colonial order as less developed, or less civilized, ways of representing or being-in-the-world whose culmination and maturation is the European culture. This claim to totality is epistemically pernicious partly because it makes the colonial order *invisible* to those that inhabit it.<sup>8</sup> This is so because dissenting opinions are not permitted any legitimacy; they are, in an epistemically real sense, *beyond* the total representation of the world and as such *unintelligible*.<sup>9</sup> At best, these seemingly dissenting opinions are themselves represented in the colonial order as mere clumsy thoughts of inferior minds stuck in underdeveloped or under-civilized conditions.

As Quijano sees it, then, essential to the success of decoloniality is undergoing a kind of epistemic decoloniality. This epistemic decoloniality involves (i) the rejection of the categories used in the epistemic framework of the colonial order; and (ii) the creation of new epistemologies, or new rationalities and new productions of knowledge, originating *from outside* the epistemic framework of the colonial order.<sup>10</sup> Authentic decolonization of the Latin American mind, then, requires that it be constructed from epistemic sources *other-than* those operating within the representation of the world in the colonial order.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.2 MODEST BUILDING-ANEW STRATEGY

In several respects, Quijano's picture is radical. *All* ideas or categories originating from within the colonial order are to be seen with suspicion by Latin Americans. Quijano's conception of decolonization leaves little conceptual room for Latin Americans to be Catholic, feminist, or democratic socialist *authentically*; at best, Latin Americans must construct analogue versions of these identities from non-European sources.<sup>12</sup>

The literature also includes a more modest version of the building-*anew* strategy. We encounter this strategy, for example, in Sánchez's article on Uranga's *Análisis del ser del mexicano*.<sup>13</sup> Sánchez argues that Uranga's *Análisis* should be read as an attempt to decolonize Mexican philosophy. Sánchez hints at what decolonization amounts to: "to decolonize philosophy" is in part "to rip it from its colonial roots and build it up again from one's ground."<sup>14</sup> Sánchez sees Mexican philosopher Emilio Uranga as doing precisely this. Uranga abandons some Eurocentric philosophical categories and returns to the pre-Columbian notion of *nepantla* (in-betweenness) to ground the ontology of the Mexican, or the Mexican way-of-being.

Uranga's attempt to decolonize Mexican philosophy is grounded in a modest version of the building-*anew* strategy. This is so because Uranga does not reject all ideas originating from Europe to carve his philosophical account of the mode of being Mexican. In fact, Uranga, like Sánchez himself, is comfortable using some of the theoretical tools and methods developed by existentialist phenomenologists like Heidegger. That is, Uranga and Sánchez seem to think that Mexican philosophy can be *authentic* and *adequately decolonized* even when it permits and actively deploys some philosophical currents originating in Europe.<sup>15</sup>

The account of decolonization I sketch in the next section is a version of a modest building-anew strategy more akin to that of Sánchez and Uranga than that of Quijano.

## SECTION TWO: JORGE PORTILLA AND DECOLONIZATION

### 2.1 PORTILLA AND AUTHENTIC SELF-CREATION

Portilla thinks that there is an important sense in which human freedom creates value<sup>16</sup> in the world. As he sees it, value presents itself to human consciousness in its “pure ideality” and demands its realization in “the objective realm of lived experiences”;<sup>17</sup> put differently, “value solicits its realization,” and, in fact, the mere act of grasping a given value is in part “the fulfillment of that demand” to be realized.<sup>18</sup> Grasping a value and recognizing the value’s demand for its realization is a condition for the central movement of authentic freedom. Authentic freedom is the act of creating value as “an intimate movement of loyalty and commitment” and an “affirmation” towards value and its demands;<sup>19</sup> this creative act is “pure spontaneity” in which “I am alone with myself before the value.”<sup>20</sup>

For Portilla, then, authentic freedom is manifested in creating values in the world. Free acts that create value are also, in an important sense, acts of self-constitution or self-creation.<sup>21</sup> Portilla insists: “Value can also appear as a demand, as a need to fill a void in the very center of my existence. It appears then as a norm of my self-constitution, as the perpetually elusive and evanescent indication of what *my* being ought to be.”<sup>22</sup> For Portilla, to say that value is a norm for self-creation is not to say that in creating value the agent can herself *become* a value, but rather the value is a “guide” or “direction and limit” for the agent’s “valued self-constitution” and as such a value “is but the ideal unity of all my actions geared towards” the value.<sup>23</sup> Thus, in freely choosing to create a value, the agent commits to the value and its demands and, further, the agent creates herself as a value-creating self.

Additionally, this kind of self-creation unifies the self across time. Portilla writes: “When I give an adequate response to the demand for actualization inherent to the value, I tacitly commit myself to a behavior, I mortgage my future behavior. . . . I make a pledge with myself in order to maintain a value within existence” in the future.<sup>24</sup> Put differently, in affirming a value and its demands an agent thereby commits herself to its actualization for some future time and thereby commits herself to being the kind of value-creating self that continues creating this value for this future time.

In sum, for Portilla, authentic freedom is manifested in creating values in the world, and in creating values an agent also creates herself as a value-creating self. Authentic freedom is commitment to a value and in committing to a value an agent commits herself to a future continuation of the creation of this value and to herself as a unified-across-time value-creating self.

### 2.2 LIBERATION

Decolonization is a kind of liberation—a liberation from the yoke of the colonial past. For Portilla, a central role

of philosophical inquiry is to make explicit or present to consciousness what is tacit or concealed in order to *liberate* the mind from it. Portilla writes: “Philosophy, to the extent that it is a ‘logos’ on humankind, performs an educating and a liberating function. Through it, what is concealed and tacit becomes present and explicit, and something can be transformed by its enlightened action.”<sup>25</sup>

Portilla uses the following example to illustrate the liberating function of philosophy:

I cannot be the same person before and after knowing that, in a sense, the designation “petit bourgeois” applies to me. The word situates me; it creates me like a “fiat” pronounced by others which makes me emerge before myself with a new appearance that I barely recognize . . .

But, just as the word integrates me into a whole that overwhelms and alienates me, it can also put me at that ideal distance from myself that is freedom . . . it allows me to adopt different attitudes in relation to myself, and it hands me over to my own decision: it allows me to choose, with full consciousness . . . in a direction opposite to that of psychological habit, tradition, class interest, and so on, the truth sets me free.<sup>26</sup>

Philosophical inquiry can help a person understand and bring to consciousness aspects of identities or ways of relating to the world, like being a *petite bourgeoisie*, that have not previously been transparent or fully conscious to the agent herself. In bringing these tacit or opaque identities to consciousness, philosophical inquiry helps an agent liberate herself by allowing her “to adopt different attitudes in relation” to herself, or different ways of authentically creating herself.<sup>27</sup> I call these “internal acts of liberation.”

### 2.3 AUTHENTIC DECOLONIZATION A LA PORTILLA

My suggestion is that Portilla’s thought enables us to understand authentic decolonization as a particular kind of internal act of liberation. Philosophical inquiry can allow Latin Americans to come to recognize in themselves identities, or aspects of some of their identities, as internalizations or products of the colonial order. In coming to see a particular identity, say that of being Catholic, as the product of colonization, this self-understanding can overwhelm and alienate the agent from herself, and “it can also put [her] at that ideal distance from [herself] that is freedom” and thereby “hand [her] over to [her] own decision” and “adopt different attitudes in relation to [herself].”<sup>28</sup> Being appropriately sensitive to the colonial origin of one’s identities “sets [one] free” to authentically construct oneself anew from one’s own sources. Importantly, *one’s own sources* are nothing other than expressions of one’s authentic freedom. Authentic decolonization demands internal acts of liberation which permit authentic self-creation but need not demand abandonment of all identities or ideas originating from the colonizers.



## 2.4 OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

Before concluding, I would like to briefly address two potential objections. One can be articulated from Quijano's perspective and the other from Sánchez's.

One objection is that my proposal fails to come to terms with the epistemic claim to *totality* inherent in the colonial order. To recognize a particular identity, say being Catholic, as originating from the colonial order is not merely to understand its genesis from which it can be cleanly separated. Instead, the very *meaning* of identities originating from within the colonial order are inexorably intertwined within the *epistemic framework* of the colonial order; they cannot be neatly separated from it. Accepting those identities is akin to a previously enslaved person accepting the servile morality used by their enslavers to justify slavery.<sup>29</sup> Given this, the only *authentic* response for Latin Americans is to abandon those identities and to build new identities from other sources.

I have no space to do justice to an objection of this magnitude. I just want to flag it and to point out that Portilla himself, as I read him, is committed to a conception of freedom as a kind of transcendence that commits him to deny important assumptions undergirding this objection. For Portilla, authentic freedom has the capacity to transcend the limitations imposed by the circumstances in which the agent finds herself.<sup>30</sup> Without defending the claim, I suggest that part of this transcendence capacity of freedom requires the agent's ability to grasp a given value in a way that is not exhausted by the particular social contexts in which the value has been previously realized. Put differently, for an agent to be able to truly transcend the limits of her circumstance, and to be authentically free *a la* Portilla, the agent's grasp of the value in its "pure ideality" must include grasping possible ways of realizing the value in *new* social arrangements. If so, the *intelligibility* of a given value is not exhausted solely by its previous social context, including its previous *colonial* social context. As I read Portilla, that is part of what it is to say that in acts of authentic freedom "I am alone with myself before the value."<sup>31</sup> If so, the values constitutive of identities, like being Catholic, can in principle be separated from social frameworks in which they are realized.

The second objection comes from Sánchez's interesting book on Portilla.<sup>32</sup> Sánchez notes that Portilla's accounts of subjectivity and freedom rest upon an Enlightenment notion of rationality as a human capacity to attain universality and a kind of objectivity that transcends the circumstances of the historical agent.<sup>33</sup> Sánchez sees this conception of rationality with skepticism and notes that it was one of the colonizer's tools used to establish the colonial order. Sánchez thus dismisses Portilla's accounts of subjectivity and freedom as ultimately expressions of the colonized imagination of Portilla himself.<sup>34</sup> This worry naturally extends to my account of decoloniality built on Portilla's thought.

I cannot do justice to this objection here, but I would like to gesture towards a response. It does seem like Portilla uncritically relied upon some theoretical tools originating from the colonizers in his philosophizing. However, this

need not be a sufficient ground for rejecting the fruits of his philosophizing in the name of authenticity and decolonization. Instead, my suggestion is that Portilla himself could have applied the account of decolonization presented here not only to social identities like being Catholic or feminist but to the very theoretical machinery he is deploying in philosophizing. Put differently, Portilla could have come to be appropriately sensitive to the fact that the notion of rationality he was employing itself originated from the colonizers,<sup>35</sup> and this realization would put him at "that ideal distance from [himself] that is freedom" to choose whether to endorse that conception of rationality in his philosophizing. If the account works for social identities, it can work for theoretical tools too. If so, Portilla could have freely and *authentically* accepted both social identities like being Catholic and feminist and theoretical tools like the Enlightenment notion of rationality.<sup>36</sup> The same holds for contemporary Latin American thinkers.

## CONCLUSION

Can a person from Latin America be a Catholic, a feminist, or a democratic socialist authentically? Given the history of European colonialization, it may seem that authenticity demands that Latin Americans abandon these, and all other, identities originating from the colonizers. In this paper, I have provided some reasons for thinking that this initial appearance need not be correct. Relying on the thought of Mexican philosopher Jorge Portilla, I have sketched an account of decolonization as authentic self-creation that permits, at least in principle, that Latin Americans adopt identities originating from Europe *authentically*.

## REFERENCES

- F Portilla, Jorge. *Fenomenología del relajo* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1984). Cited by page number.
- MS Portilla, Jorge. *Fenomenología del relajo*. Translated by Eleanor Marsh and Carlos Alberto Sanchez. Appendix to Sanchez, C. Alberto. *The Suspension of Seriousness: On the Phenomenology of Jorge Portilla* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012). Cited by page number.

## NOTES

1. This thought is in several respects analogous to one of Simone de Beauvoir's main claims in her important work *The Second Sex*. The claim is that for women to be authentic they must do away with their status as Other, projected onto them by men. Authenticity requires that women assert their subjectivity and demand recognition and reciprocity from men, which would in effect do away with their status as Other and reclaim their status as Subject. Simone De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. C. Borde and S. Malovany-Chevallier, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. (Originally published in 1949.)
2. Some writers see themselves and their work as natural extensions of the complex and multi-layered philosophy of liberation movement. See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept," *Cultural Studies*, 21, no. 2-3 (2007): 240-70; Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Duke University Press, 2008); Enrique Dussel, *Filosofía del Sur y Descolonización* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Docencia, 2014); and Jake M. Bartholomew, "Decoloniality as an Ethical Challenge," *Transmodernity* 9, no. 5 (2020): 84-106. Others are influenced by, and see themselves as responding to, intellectual currents coming from Critical Theory and Habermas in particular. See Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* (Duke University Press, 2011); Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience and the Decolonial Option: A Manifesto," *Transmodernity* 1, no. 2 (2011): 44-66; and Bartholomew, "Decoloniality and Decolonizing Critical Theory," *Wiley Constellations* 25 (2018):

- 629–40. Other authors see themselves as engaging in a particular topic within politics (Charles W. Mills, "Decolonizing Western Political Philosophy," *New Political Science* 37, no. 1, [2015]: 1–24), sociology (Z. Waghid Z. and L. Hibbert, "Advancing Border Thinking through Defamiliarization in Uncovering the Darker Side of Coloniality and Modernity in South African Higher Education," *South African Journal of Higher Education* 32, no. 4 [2018]: 263–83, and Aditya Mukherjee, "Decolonizing the Mind: Response to Gurminder Bhambra," *British Journal of Sociology* 73 [2022]: 16–22), or cultural anthropology (John Clammer, "Decolonizing the Mind: Schwimmer, Habermas and the Anthropology of Postcolonialism," *Anthropologica* 50, no. 1 [2008]: 157–68); and more.
3. Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 (2007): 171f. See also Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," *Nepantla* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533–80, especially 542f.
  4. Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 169.
  5. Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 171f.
  6. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 1986), 12.
  7. Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 173f.
  8. Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 173f.
  9. Enrique Dussel in his classic *Filosofía de la Liberación* makes a similar point over a decade earlier (Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* [Mexico: EDICOL, 1977], 1.1.4.1).
  10. Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 176f.
  11. Quijano's views are quite influential. Several scholars are engaging with his works (for example, José David Saldívar, "Unsettling Race, Coloniality, and Caste," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 [2007]: 339–67; Sebastián Espinosa, "Identidad y otredad en la teoría descolonial de Aníbal Quijano," *Ciencia Política* 10, no. 20 [2015]: 107–30; Salgado Gandarilla, Jose Guadalupe, Garcia-Bravo, Maria Haydee, and Benzi, Daniele, "Two Decades of Anibal Quijano's Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America," *Contexto Internacional* 43, no. 1 [2021]: 199–221; and José Clemente Carreño Medina, "La Descolonización Epistémica del Otro: Cuatro Viñetas Negras en Tres Lindas Cubanitas de Gonzalo Celorio," *Chasqui* 47, no. 2 [2018]: 113–23). Other prominent thinkers endorse versions of the building-anew strategy that are similar to, and often explicitly influenced by, Quijano's version (for example, Dussel, *Filosofía del Sur y Descolonización* [2014]; Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* [2011]; Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience and the Decolonial Option: A Manifesto," [2011]; Bartholomew, "Decoloniality as an Ethical Challenge," [2020]; Arturo Escobar, "Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 [2007]: 179–210; and Ramon Grosfoguel, "The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political-Economic Paradigms," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2-3 [2007]: 211–23).
  12. Quijano suggests how this positive construction of identities might be attainable. It must begin, he insists, by destroying or undermining the epistemic claim to totality inherent in the colonial order. He suggests that such an epistemic claim can be undermined only by abandoning the Enlightenment's notion of rationality as universality and by engaging in a multicultural dialogue between competing notions of rationality that do not make a claim to totality or universality. He writes, "Epistemological decolonization, as decoloniality, is needed to clear the way for new intercultural communication, for an interchange of experiences and meanings. . . . Nothing is less rational, finally, than the pretension that the specific cosmic vision of a particular ethnic should be taken as universal rationality" ("Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," 177).
  13. Carlos A. Sánchez, "Emilio Uranga's *Análisis del ser del Mexicano*: De-Colonizing Pretensions, Re-Colonizing Critiques," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy, Spindel Supplement* 57 (2019): 63–89.
  14. Sánchez, "Emilio Uranga's *Análisis del ser del Mexicano*," 65.
  15. Sánchez notes that part of what makes Uranga's work an exercise in *decolonizing* Mexican philosophy is that it abandons the European "metanarrative" of true philosophy as "pure and abstract universality" ("Emilio Uranga's *Análisis del ser del Mexicano*," 64). Sánchez also insists that Uranga's work is *authentic* Mexican philosophy: "In a broad sense, the *Análisis* is a philosophical consideration of a way of life *from the point of view of that life*, not from an anonymous view from nowhere, and, as such, the clearest example of *authentic Mexican philosophy*" ("Emilio Uranga's *Análisis del ser del Mexicano*," 65, emphasis added). For Sánchez, then, Mexican philosophy can be *authentically decolonized* even when it permits and actively employs philosophical methodologies originating from Europe, like existentialist phenomenology.
  16. What exactly "value" amounts to for Portilla is a controversial matter. Sometimes Portilla sounds like a Platonist by describing value in "its pure ideality," which is contrasted with "the world of reality" (F 18/MS 129). Other times he explicitly describes value as a kind of Kantian idea that is "simply a direction and limit of my transcendence" (F 33/MS 142). Portilla's commitment to existentialist phenomenology leads him to understand ontological questions about the nature of value as secondary to, and dependent upon, a phenomenological description of value as it presents itself to human consciousness in daily life: "What matters is to find out the way in which a value manifests itself in spontaneous consciousness, independently from its ontological or metaphysical quality . . . it interests us little to know whether values are entities that float beyond being. . . . Such problems can only emerge with regard to philosophical reflection directed toward such entities" (F 31/MS 140); instead: "What interests us is to clarify the way in which value gives itself in daily life, before any speculation about its essence, its hierarchy, or its polarity" (F 31-2/MS 140). Using this methodology, it can be noted that value presents itself to human consciousness in two different ways: (i) value as "constitutive elements of the things themselves" like "The coolness of water or the delicate flavor of a fruit" which do not require freedom to support them in existence (F 36/MS 144); and (ii) value as a demand upon one's freedom for its realization in the realm of lived experience, like "Justice" as "justice that is to be realized in the community" (F 32/MS 141). It is this latter way in which value presents itself to human consciousness that matters most for Portilla, and that matters most for this paper.
  17. F 18/MS 129.
  18. F 18/MS 129.
  19. F 19/MS 129.
  20. F 18/MS 129.
  21. Portilla tends to use the term "self-constitution" (*autoconstitución*) with more frequency; but at least on one occasion (F 34/MS 142) he uses it synonymously with "self-creation" (*autocreación*). I will thus be using these terms interchangeably.
  22. F 32/MS 141.
  23. F 33/MS 142.
  24. F 19/MS 129.
  25. F 16/MS 126-27.
  26. F 16/MS 127.
  27. For Portilla internal acts of liberation "are possibilities of freedom . . . that do not require the creation of a new real order of the world but that are free variations of attitude within pure interiority" (F 62-3/MS 168). These internal acts, "the free variations of my subjectivity, the changes of attitudes in pure interiority—some of which can be characterized as *liberations* and that produce a concomitant change in the appearance of the world" (F 63/MS 169, emphasis added). These internal acts of liberation are thus themselves acts of authentic self-creation.
  28. F 63/MS 169.
  29. Audre Lorde's famous warning that "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House" resonates well with this objection (*Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* [Trumansburg, New York: The Crossing Press, 1984], 110–13). There is something to this warning. That is, there are some colonizer's tools that will never undo the colonial order (say, the idea that what is white/European is superior by default or simply because it is white/European). The main point of this paper is to provide some reasons for thinking that not all tools used by the colonizers are on a par; some of these tools can be used outside of the colonial order.
  30. Portilla writes, for example: "Humans are beings of such a nature that, even if by their corporality they participate in the way of

being of things, they are capable of transcending them. . . . Humans are capable of setting goals that can go beyond their own situation and the present state of the world, taken as a whole. By virtue of the form of his or her being itself, a human, each human, is beyond him- or herself and his or her physical boundaries, beyond his or her body and situation" (F 60/MS 166).

31. F 19/MS 129.
32. Carlos A. Sánchez, *The Suspension of Seriousness: On the Phenomenology of Jorge Portilla* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012).
33. Sánchez, *The Suspension of Seriousness*, 92ff.
34. Sánchez, *The Suspension of Seriousness*, 109–10.
35. In fact, this notion of rationality was used by the colonizers to establish the colonial order (see Santiago Castro-Gómez, *La Hybris del punto cero: ciencia, raza e ilustración en la Nueva Granada [1750–1816]* (Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2010).
36. There is something peculiar about this response that I want to highlight: namely, it presupposes the very account of decoloniality it uses to decolonize the mind of the theorizer building the account of decoloniality. That seems problematic, but I want to suggest it need not be. A comparison to a response to Hume's problem of induction can help here. Hume notoriously argued that inductive reasoning is unwarranted because it must presuppose the very thing it is trying to prove, namely that the future will resemble the past. An interesting reply to Hume is to provide an *inductive argument* for the epistemic validity of inductive reasoning. That is, it is reasonable to think that the future will resemble the past because in the past the future has resembled the past. This response will, of course, not convince Hume, for this inductive argument for the epistemic validity of inductive reasoning presupposes what it is trying to prove, namely the epistemic validity of inductive reasoning; and that was Hume's original criticism. However, this need not be a problem for *the proponent* of the reasonableness of inductive reasoning herself. Likewise, I want to suggest, utilizing an account of decolonization to decolonize the theoretical tools used to build the account of decolonization need not be a problem for *the proponent* of this decolonization account, even if it does not move those that find the account problematic.

---

## AUTHOR BIOS

**Juan Garcia Torres** is an assistant professor of philosophy at Wingate University in North Carolina. He specializes in early modern European philosophy and Latin American philosophy. His research tends to revolve around issues of freedom and moral responsibility, metaphysics of modality, and authenticity and liberation.

**Paula Landerreche Cardillo** received her PhD in philosophy from DePaul University in Chicago. She received her MA in philosophy with a minor in psychoanalytic theory from The New School for Social Research, as well as a Graduate Certificate in Gender and Sexuality Studies. She is originally from Mexico City, where she completed her Bachelor's degree in philosophy at Universidad Iberoamericana. Her research focuses on a feminist and decolonial critique of philosophical discourse as well as the relation between aesthetics and politics in the exclusion of certain forms of art from philosophical and political discourse.