

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY
LATIN AMERICAN CRITICISM AND THEORY:

FROM HIGH CULTURE, DISCIPLINARY, HUMANISTIC
AND OBJECTIVE, TO POPULAR CULTURE,
INTERDISCIPLINARY AND SUBJECTIVE

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Rethinking traditional debates and establishing new ones, Latin American criticism and theory have shown an impressive vitality during the first quarter of the twenty-first century. In this essay, I will first list what I see as the five main critical approaches dominating the field in the last two decades, which, I believe, reflect what the primary scholarly concerns have been during this period.¹ I will then highlight seven critical and theoretical approaches that, I believe, are gaining attention and may become even more preeminent over the next twenty-five years. Finally, I will point out one book among those published over the last two decades that, in my opinion, has contributed most solidly to establishing the main concerns by unifying both the old and new critical and theoretical directions in Latin American literary and cultural studies.

As suggested in the title of this essay, I argue that Latin American literary and cultural studies in the twenty-first century have progressively steered away from the philological or humanistic emphasis on high culture and away from a disciplinary perspective to a cross-disciplinary emphasis that delivers a more holistic analysis of cultural phenomena. As a result, there is a renewed interest in media, popular culture, and cultural artifacts and practices beyond print culture, which, in line with Cultural Studies, challenge power relations in Latin America. Lastly, as suggested by Beatriz Sarlo in *Tiempo pasado: cultura de la memoria y giro subjetivo, una discusión* (2005),² I believe that the “subjective turn” that currently affects the academic study of history and that, owing to the influence of Affect Theory, incorporates emotions as a way to produce knowledge, will soon be prevalent and extended to other disciplines.

The Main Approaches in the Last Two Decades

1. The Marxist Tradition

An academic critical approach that continues to be key to our field is the Marxist tradition, together with associated approaches such as subaltern stud-

ies or critical Latin Americanism. This Marxist literary and cultural criticism analyzes how Latin American societies are portrayed in cultural products, focusing on class and ethnic struggle, hegemony, ideology, imperialism, economic and power disparities, and social inequalities. As Alberto Moreiras has explained, these approaches are complemented by contemporary thinkers such as the late Argentine post-Marxist philosopher and political theorist Ernesto Laclau and the European thinkers Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek, Antonio Negri, and Michael Hardt.³

To trace the origins of Latin American Marxist thought, one must look back to *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality, 1928) by José Carlos Mariátegui, founder of the Peruvian Socialist Party in 1928 and one of the great scholars of socialism in Latin America.⁴ In this foundational text of Latin American Marxism, he condemns the abuse of Indigenous and peasant populations (whom he considered the true proletariat of Latin America) in the Peruvian highlands, combining socialist doctrines with attention to Latin American racism since the time of the Spanish conquest. This innovation based on the Latin American experience would later open the door to the decolonial approach studied below. Influenced by Lenin's Marxism and George Sorel's radical syndicalism, many of Mariátegui's ideas coincide with those of Antonio Gramsci. Juan E. de Castro has studied Mariátegui's influence on Hispanic American decolonial thought:

The well-known concept of “coloniality of power” also belongs to this critical Mariáteguian tradition. . . According to him [Aníbal Quijano], “All other determinations and criteria for the social classification of the world's population, and their positioning in power relations, have since acted in interrelation with racism and ethnocentrism, especially, but not exclusively, between Europeans and non-Europeans.”⁵ (4)

De Castro goes on to note: “[t]hrough the mediation of Argentine critic Walter Dignolo, the concept of the coloniality of power has become the cornerstone of the so-called decolonial critique” (21-22).⁶ The ongoing interest in Mariátegui's Peruvian Marxist thought is evident in the numerous publications on his work in the last two decades.

Regarding Laclau, two of his most cited texts are *Hegemonía y estrategia socialista* (*Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, 1987),⁷ co-written with his partner, the Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe, and *La razón populista* (*On Populist Reason*, 2005).⁸ In *Hegemonía y estrategia socialista*, considered one of the foundational texts of post-Marxism, the authors, influenced by the ideas of Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and other philosophers, conduct a deconstruction of Marxist thought. They

establish the genealogy of the concept of hegemony and propose a new meaning for the term. Laclau and Mouffe also reject the essentialism of Marxist economic determinism and the view of class struggle as the crucial antagonism of society.

Bruno Bosteels, in his *The Actuality of Communism* (2011),⁹ studies the relevance that communism still holds in current critical thought. From a critical perspective on current “speculative leftism,” he reviews the thinking of contemporary radical intellectuals such as Jacques Rancière, Badiou, and Žižek, who have promoted the resurgence of communist thought within today’s critical discourse. Through the concept of speculative leftism, Bosteels criticizes the “ontological turn” in leftist analysis, that is, the tendency toward theoretical abstraction and reformulations of philosophical themes (emphasis on the “event,” the “act”) isolated from today’s material struggles. In his view, this causes the aforementioned thinkers to abstain from fully analyzing critical categories, such as masses, social classes, and the state. According to Bosteels, these radical ontologies paralyze the development of revolutionary theory and practice with constant warnings and precautions. Criticizing the fact that Marxist debates are more Western than global, Bosteels examines the thought and activist political praxis of Bolivian Álvaro García Linera, former guerrilla and political prisoner who became the vice president of Bolivia under Evo Morales’s government. Specifically, he focuses on the relationship between the development of socialism and pre-capitalist forms of community, aiming to rehistoricize communist practices beyond Europe and the Soviet Union.

For his part, Alberto Moreiras, in his book *Línea de sombra. El no sujeto de lo político* (Line of Shadow. The Non-Subject of the Political),¹⁰ also engages in dialogue with European Marxist thought, proposing infrapolitics (rather than biopolitics) and the concept of the “non-subject.” As César Barrosa notes in his review of the book: “the political non-subject would be ‘a visitor and not a guest . . . who may or may not produce interpellation, but whose condition of possibility, whose immanence, is precisely a displacement of interpellation, an excess with respect to interpellation’” (86).¹¹ A special issue of the journal *Transmodernity* (vol. 5 no.1, 2015), with Jaime Rodríguez Matos as guest editor, was entirely dedicated to infrapolitics and posthegemony, including articles by Rodríguez Matos, Alberto Moreiras, Ronald Mendoza de Jesús, Maddalena Cerrato, Sergio Villalobos-Ruminott, and Ángel Octavio Álvarez Solís.¹²

Among the criticisms received by the Marxist tradition is the fact that it may be less integrated with non-*criollo* movements in the region. Decolonialists, for example, accuse them of Eurocentrism and primarily citing European thinkers. The following are a few examples of the presence of Marxist thought in Latin American criticism: John Beverley and Marc Zimmerman’s *Literature and Politics in the Central American Revolutions* (1990), Malcolm K. Read’s *Marxist Critique of Latin American Colonial Studies* (2019), and Juan

E. De Castro's *Writing Revolution in Latin America: From Martí to García Márquez to Bolaño* (2019).¹³

2. Gender and Sexuality Studies

Feminist and LGBTQ+ or queer approaches continue to be transcendental in our field. Latin Americanist feminist critics study gender inequality, revealing the economic, sociopolitical, or sociological iterations of patriarchy and the resistance presented by women to it. They pay particular attention to the way in which Latin American female characters are portrayed (sexual objectification, stereotyping, etc.), their social roles, and how gender is characterized in the historical period in which the literary action takes place. Along these lines, intersectional approaches analyze the combination of different types of oppression or marginalization as it relates to the blending of gender and sexuality on the one hand, and race, social class, citizenship and other factors on the other, in order to study how they affect sociocultural artifacts and practices. Critics explore either patriarchal or feminist agendas in Latin American literary and cultural texts, or whether they present an ideological conflict with respect to gender. They also recover cultural production by Latin American women who have been ignored by the canon in the past and study the reception it has received over time. Black and other alternative, postcolonial feminist approaches (Third-World feminism, Indigenous feminism) led by Latin American women of color have questioned the Eurocentrism of middle-class feminist movements.

In turn, LGBTQ+ approaches address the nature and representation of sexual orientations and identities, destabilize binary oppositions, and explore gender performativity, the socially-constructed nature of sexual identity, and compulsory heterosexuality. They focus on Latin American queer characters and how they are perceived, always trying to prevent perverse presentism, that is, considering contemporary perspectives through anachronisms. As an approach that was born academically in Western countries, Latin American critics also question the Eurocentrism in Western queer studies. David W. Foster was one of the pioneers of this subfield in Latin American Studies, with books such as *Gay and Lesbian Themes in Latin American Writing* (1991), *Sexual Textualities: Essays on Queer/ing Latin American Writing* (1997), and *Queer Issues in Contemporary Latin American Cinema* (2003).¹⁴

A related interdisciplinary subfield that has also been gaining ground in recent years is masculinity studies, which commend alternative masculinities and male experiences, and analyze the damaging effects of patriarchy on men (and women) as reflected on male characters in Latin American literature. To mention only a few of the many works in these fields, we have Amy K. Kaminsky's *Reading the Body Politic: Feminist Criticism and Latin American*

Women Writers (1993); *Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean* (2017), edited by Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez; *Masculine/Feminine: Practices of Difference(s)* (2014) and *Abismos temporales: Feminismo, estéticas travestis y teoría queer* (2018), both by Nelly Richard; *¿Entiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* (1995), edited by Emily L. Bergmann and Paul Julian Smith; *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America* (1997), edited by Daniel Balderston and Donna J. Guy; Héctor Domínguez-Ruvalcaba's *Latinoamérica queer: cuerpo y política queer en América Latina* (2019); and Vinodh Venkatesh's *The Body as Capital: Masculinities in Contemporary Latin American Fiction* (2015).¹⁵

3. The Decolonial Project and Indigenous Studies

Another leading critical and theoretical approach in Latin American studies is the Decolonial Project. Although influenced by Marxist thinking, decolonial thinkers have tended to separate from what they consider a Eurocentric bias in traditional Marxist thinking to focus, instead, mainly on the mark left by colonialism and coloniality (the lingering effects of colonialism and imperialism in Latin America), as well as on the influence of race and ethnicity in these processes. It studies, among other issues, the relationship between coloniality and modernity, and proposes ways to delink the region from these Eurocentric knowledge systems, axiology, and epistemic legacies. Thinkers such as Walter D. Mignolo, Enrique Dussel, Aníbal Quijano, Linda Alcoff, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Ramón Grosfoguel, Santiago Castro-Gómez, and Catherine Walsh hold a prominent place. Decolonial thought tries to present Indigenous and Afro-descendant epistemologies in equal terms with Western ones and, among their main interlocutors, are precisely intellectuals linked to Indigenous and Afro-Latin American movements. In my interview with Walter Mignolo in 2014,¹⁶ the Argentine intellectual noted that more than just “studies,” decolonial thought is a way of being in the world; that is, it is not so much about studying something as it is about activism in favor of decolonization, a type of liberation. This aspect, according to decolonial thinkers, defines their approach more as a form of engaged scholarship and separates them from postcolonial and subaltern studies (Ranjit Guha, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak), which, according to Mignolo, are more academic, scholarly, and take place solely within academia. Among Mignolo's most cited books are *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, Colonization* (2003) and *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options (Latin America Otherwise)* (2011).¹⁷

Decolonial thinkers believe that there is no modernity without coloniality and see the concept of “transmodernity” as something to aspire to in the future. In their view, after the Renaissance and the European conquest of the

Americas, modernity has always been necessarily intertwined with what Mignolo calls “the colonial matrix of power.” All twentieth-century attempts at independent national development in the postcolonial world have remained intellectually imprisoned within that matrix.

The coloniality of power, a cornerstone concept, is the discriminatory discourse of the colony that continues to be reflected in the socioeconomic structure of modern postcolonial societies. Reflected in social orders and forms of knowledge, it is the living legacy of colonialism (racial and sociopolitical orders) in contemporary societies, with social and racial discrimination. The concept of coloniality emerges from Latin American social thought related to dependency theory, liberation theology, and liberation philosophy, but also from Mariátegui, because dependency theory initially ignored the importance of colonialism and race. In contrast, Mariátegui, as mentioned earlier, focused on colonialism, racism, land appropriation, labor exploitation, and realized that the Indigenous issue is the land issue (i.e., he gave more importance to race than to social class) and thus managed to combine Marxism with the local history of colonialism—something that Marxists had not understood until then. For this same reason, Aníbal Quijano ended up breaking with Marxists over differences regarding the concept of race.

For his part, Enrique Dussel, in his book *Postmodernidad, transmodernidad* (*Postmodernity, Transmodernity*, 1999),¹⁸ develops the concept of “transmodernity” in the context of Liberation Philosophy to claim a place of its own from Latin America and the Global South in the face of Western modernity, by incorporating the perspective of the postcolonial subaltern other. Among other key terms used in decolonial thought is the “geopolitics of knowledge,” which was introduced to contradict the idea that knowledge is universal, that it has no location, that Kant and Marx are universal. The geopolitics of knowledge refers, therefore, to the fact that not only is all knowledge located in a certain place, but it is also situated within the colonial matrix of power, according to racial, sexual, and gender classifications.

The geopolitics of knowledge was followed by the concept of the body politics of knowledge, which emerged with the Civil Rights Movement (gender studies, African American studies, women’s studies, etc.) and reflects the resistance of the population against what Foucault called biopower or biopolitics. These are arguments against the control of bodies that do not want to be controlled. For example, with the Martiniquais psychiatrist and philosopher Franz Fanon, one finds both the geopolitics of knowledge (for being from the Third World) and the body politics of knowledge (for being Black).

It is also worth highlighting the postcolonial feminist discourse of Indigenous thinkers such as the Bolivian activist and subaltern theorist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui and the so-called *conocimientos otros* (other knowledges) of Latin American Indigenous intellectuals. Rivera Cusicanqui has explored both anar-

chist theory and Quechua and Aymara cosmologies. In 1983, she founded and co-directed the Andean Oral History Workshop to question Western epistemologies and study, through oral history and from a decolonial perspective, Indigenous participation in rebellions during the colonial period. The goal was also to empower Indigenous identity and reconstruct the ayllus. She currently leads the Ch'ixi Collective, an Aymara term in response to “mestizaje” and “multiculturalism” to refer to the coexistence of cultural differences that antagonize and complement each other simultaneously. Among her best-known studies are the books *Oppressed but Not Defeated: Peasant Struggles Among the Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia, 1900-1980* (1984) and *Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores* [Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: A Reflection on Decolonizing Practices and Discourses] (2012).¹⁹ In this latter text, the author questions the benefits of applying a Western worldview to Indigenous societies: “The indigenous world does not conceive of history linearly, and the past-future is contained in the present: regression or progression, repetition or overcoming of the past are at play in each juncture and depend on our actions more than on our words” (54-55).²⁰

For decades, many other scholars, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have been trying to recover the practices, knowledge, spiritualities, and cultural productions of the peoples of Abya Yala as part of a decolonizing impetus that empowers these indigenous peoples' identities. The struggle against Eurocentrism and the revaluation of Amerindian worldviews and epistemologies also help to increase the agency of these communities. The discourse of Colombian Indigenous people such as Quintín Lame, Antonio Joaquín López-Briscol, Estercia Simanca, Vicenta Siosi, or Fredy Chikangana, for example, is beginning to receive more critical attention. Noteworthy, for instance, are the studies on Colombian Indigenous “oraliture” by the Colombian researcher Miguel Rocha Vivas, in his books *El héroe de nuestra imagen: Visión del héroe en las literaturas indígenas de América* [The Hero of Our Image: The Vision of the Hero in Indigenous Literatures of America] (2004), *Palabras mayores, palabras vivas. Tradiciones mítico-literarias y escritores indígenas en Colombia* [Great Words, Living Words: Mythico-Literary Traditions and Indigenous Writers in Colombia] (2012), and *Mingas de la palabra. Textualidades oralitegráficas y visiones de cabeza en las oralituras y literaturas indígenas contemporáneas* [Word Mingas: Oraligraphic Textualities and Head Visions in Contemporary Indigenous Oralitures and Literatures] (2018).²¹ Also notable are the studies by Guatemalan Arturo Arias *The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy* (2001), *Taking Their Word: Literature and the Signs of Central America* (2007), and the two volumes of *Recovering Lost Footprints: Contemporary Maya Narratives* (2017 and 2018).²² All in all, Latin Americanists have realized that Indigenous cultural production and epistemologies in Latin America, just like those of Afro-descendants and Asian-Latin Americans, among other minori-

ties, open new windows for the interpretation of Latin American realities from the margins that challenge hegemonic or official narratives of the nation.

4. *Ecocriticism, New Materialism, Posthumanities, and Animality Studies*

As a result of current environmental concerns, Latin American literary and cultural studies—as well as the humanities in general—explore the connections between cultural artifacts and environmental concerns in connection with social justice in order to look for possible solutions to present and potential ecological dooms. Regarding neo-materialist theory, Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, in the introduction to their 2010 collection of essays *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, propose recognizing the agency of things: “[It is necessary] to conceive of matter as possessing its own modes of self-transformation, self-organization, and direction, which means it is no longer passive or inert. This disrupts the conventional sense that agents are exclusively human and that humans alone possess the cognitive abilities, intentionality, and freedom to make autonomous decisions, along with the corollary that humans have the right or capacity to dominate nature” (10).²³ New Materialism, therefore, assumes that, alongside humans (and independently of humans), things also have agency and can offer resistance. In fact, these theorists argue that it is precisely the Western division between humans as agents and things as objects (or instruments) that has served as a covert justification for the ecological destruction of the planet for centuries. From this perspective, neo-materialists explore the potential role of materiality in political constitution.

In a way, this theory is reminiscent of traditional Indigenous worldviews in the Americas, in which humans are conceived, without exceptionalism, as part of the natural world rather than as the owners of nature, who can use its resources at will. The organic and inorganic, human and non-human are thus placed on equal footing in terms of political agency.²⁴ According to Coole, the new materialists’ conceptualization of materialization is not anthropocentric, nor does it privilege human bodies. Neo-materialist thinkers believe that all bodies, including those of animals (and perhaps also some machines), exhibit a certain capacity for agency. Things not only show evidence of agency but also political agency, as Frost and Coole suggest that they can affect the structure of political life. Similarly, Stacy Alaimo, in her essay “States of Suspension: Trans-corporeality at Sea,” uses the concept of trans-corporeality in relation to ocean life:

I argue for a conception of trans-corporeality that traces the material interchanges across human bodies, animal bodies, and the wider material world. As the material self cannot be

disentangled from networks that are simultaneously economic, political, cultural, scientific, and substantial, what was once the ostensibly bounded human subject finds herself in a swirling landscape of uncertainty where practices and actions that were once not even remotely ethical or political matters suddenly become so.²⁵ (476)

In the collection of essays *Hydrohumanities: Water Discourse and Environmental Futures*, which I co-edited along with Kim De Wolf and Rina Faletti, we discuss decentering the human in the humanities and incorporating the physical properties of water into research beyond the domain of the natural sciences.²⁶ Our essay collection takes an ecocritical approach within transdisciplinary humanities, reflecting the sense of urgency in the humanities regarding the phenomenon of climate change. Instead of viewing water as a commodity to be controlled or manipulated—which can have negative consequences for society and the environment—it is conceived in the context of gender and race relations, the relations between water and power, and decolonial analyses of aquatic practices. We envision the ecocritical approach in the humanities beyond human experiences and relationships.

An example of literary criticism and theory from the perspective of new materialism is Héctor Hoyos's *Things with a History: Transcultural Materialism and the Literatures of Extraction in Contemporary Latin America* (2019).²⁷ For the analysis of what he calls the “[h]uman-nonhuman continuum” (74), and given that the agency of objects affects humans, he proposes that “[t]he task is to think of the past through the prism of things” (65). In his view, “[n]onhumans give and they receive; they domesticate us, we them—intention is beside the point. Thus, a desire for sweetness informs our relationship with apples; for beauty, with tulips; and for intoxication, with marijuana” (47). Among the many other works on this topic, we find Gisela Heffes's *Políticas de la destrucción/Poéticas de la preservación. Apuntes para una lectura (eco) crítica del medio ambiente en América Latina* (2013), *Ecological Crisis and Cultural Representation in Latin America: Ecocritical Perspectives on Art, Film, and Literature* (2016), edited by Mark Anderson and Zélia M. Bora, *Liquid Ecologies in Latin American and Caribbean Art* (2020), edited by Lisa Blackmore and Liliana Gómez, and Edward King and Joanna Page's *Posthumanism and the Graphic Novel in Latin America* (2017).²⁸

Animality studies is another important approach within ecocriticism and the environmental humanities. The interdisciplinary study of animals, animal sentience, the history of animality, and the evolving, historical relationship between human and non-human animals is also receiving more attention in Latin American studies. Deviating from anthropocentric worldviews, the analysis of the representation of animals in Latin American cultural production is

carried out from sociocultural, philosophical, and ethical perspectives, often taking into consideration non-Western or Indigenous epistemologies. Studies explore, for example, Indigenous spiritual, symbolic, mythical, or ecological understandings of animality in contrast with Western outlooks in Latin America or, from a postcolonial perspective, the effect of the introduction of European animals for Indigenous cultures of Latin America. As could be expected, the impact of human activities, climate change, and the Anthropocene on animal wellbeing is often examined as well. More recently, the role of animals in socio-political contexts has become more prominent. Such is the case, for instance, of the so-called *Negro Matapacos* (Black Cop-Killer), a Chilean black dog that became famous during the protests that took place in Santiago de Chile in 2011, and later became a symbol of the resistance to police brutality and a source of inspiration for graffiti and statues. Among these types of studies, we find, for example, *Centering Animals in Latin American History* (2013), edited by Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici, Gabriel Giorgi's *Formas communes: animalidad, cultura y biopolítica* (2014), Scott M. DeVries's *Creature Discomfort: Fauna-criticism, Ethics, and the Representation of Animals in Spanish American Fiction and Poetry* (2016), and Liliana Colanzi's *Of Animals, Monsters, and Cyborgs: Alternative Bodies in Latin American Fiction (1961-2012)* (2017).²⁹

5. Affect Theory

As mentioned in the introduction, in recent years, the so-called “affective turn” has been one of the theories that has gained the most ground in both the Latin American humanities and social sciences. This type of theory seeks to categorize affects, that is, the biological portion of emotion or non-linguistic forces, sometimes preprogrammed or genetically transmitted, that can trigger a known pattern of biological events. Affects, bodily experiences connected to our animality, are not under our conscious control and are only sometimes captured in language. Therefore, Affect Theory looks at a bodily, preconscious, and pre-individual phenomenon that does not depend on human consciousness or linguistic or discursive communication. The human body, with its non-intentional emotions and affects as well as its capacity to affect, becomes a site of knowledge production and reception.

This theory—which studies affects (bodily, material, preconscious), emotions (objective and organic processes), and feelings (subjective experience of that emotion)—aims to typify the physiological, social, interpersonal, and internalized manifestations. It attempts to relate bodily experiences to social processes and considers classic themes, such as group dynamics, social influence, conflicts, and persuasion. Psychologist Silvan Tomkins identified, in his various volumes titled *Affect Imagery Consciousness*,³⁰ nine primary affects, accord-

ing to their level of intensity and their physiological expression or non-verbal form of expressing feelings: joy/enjoyment; interest/enthusiasm; surprise/startle; anger/rage; disgust/revulsion; distress/anguish; fear/terror; and shame/humiliation.

These ideas about affect theory have been applied to critical theory in disciplines such as literary criticism, philosophy, gender studies, art theory, neuroscience, medicine, psychology, and psychoanalytic theory. Among other theorists are Sara Ahmed, Eve Sedgwick, Lauren Berlant, Elizabeth Povinelli, Marxists like Franco Berardi, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri, and Marxist feminists Selma James and Silvia Federici. The affective turn also analyzes the emotionalization of public life and its institutions, including the media, health, and the legal sphere. Two articles that opened the doors to the Affective Turn were Brian Massumi's "The Autonomy of Affect" (1995),³¹ where, drawing on Gilles Deleuze, he criticized what he saw as the limitations of the discursive orientation of social constructionism, advocating instead for affect and its autonomy from discourse, and Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank's "Shame in the Cybernetic Fold" (1995),³² which incorporates Silvan Tomkins's theory into cultural studies of affect. Massumi later wrote the book *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (2002) and Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003).³³ Other critics, such as Patricia Clough (2008),³⁴ believe that affect is infra-empirical, meaning that it goes beyond human perception. Consequently, the study, instead of being based on data analysis, leans towards philosophical reflection on the ontology of affect and even towards the hard sciences.

Among the books dealing with Latin American cultural production, we can find Jerónimo Arellano's *Magical Realism and the History of the Emotions in Latin America* (2015), *Affect, Gender and Sexuality in Latin America* (2021), edited by Cecilia Macón, Mariela Solana and Nayla Luz Vacarezza, and *The Feeling Child: Affect and Politics in Latin American Literature and Film* (2018), edited by Philippa Page, Inela Selimovic, and Camilla Sutherland.³⁵

Additional Twenty-First Century Critical and Theoretical Approaches

In the following pages I will point out some of the main scholarly concerns in the present and coming years, as reflected in the more popular, newer critical and theoretical approaches. These approaches reflect the fact that, since cultural studies were added to literary studies, the analysis of cultural artifacts beyond print culture, including digital texts, audiobooks, photo albums, postcards, graffiti, and songs, was legitimized. They also demonstrate that Latin American literary and cultural studies are becoming even more cross-disciplinary and intermingled with other disciplines, genres, and media.

1. *Transpacific Studies*

Contemporary Latin American literary and cultural criticism looks at transnational and global networks and relations to consider how the movement of people and commodities affect local identities. Within the context of Global South Studies and South-South exchanges, Transpacific studies, one of my main specialties, have also gained significant momentum in recent years in both Latin America and the United States. Research on Asian immigration to Latin America and the communities of Latin Americans of Asian descent (of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino origin) is attracting interest among researchers and publishers. Regarding the field of criticism of the cultural production of Latin American authors of Asian descent, from the arrival of Chinese “coolies” in Cuba in 1847 to the renewed role of Sino-Latin American communities in trade with the People’s Republic of China, to the role of Korean immigrants in the South American textile industry, the topics to be addressed are numerous. And the same can be said about the study of Filipino cultural production in Spanish (Filipinos were the first Asian group to arrive in Latin America, owing to the Manila Galleon).

The more traditional transatlantic focus of Latin American studies has been giving way to the transpacific for years now. As a case in point, many books have recently been published in the field of history on Asians in Mexico alone in both English and Spanish. And there are also over a hundred books on the study of immigration of the Japanese and Nikkei presence in Brazil, including Jeffrey Lesser’s *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980* (2007).³⁶ In some cases, the cultural production of Latin Americans of Asian descent can be interpreted as a call for acceptance into the imaginary of their respective nations. Their discourse sometimes constitutes an ethnic space that inscribes them not only into the present of the nation but also into its future history. For example, Alberto Fujimori, during the 1990 presidential elections in Peru, positioned the Nikkei community and, by extension, the economic miracle of postwar Japan as a model for a future Peru. The Brazilian Nikkei community has also presented itself, for similar reasons, as a model to follow for majority Brazilians. In this sense, Asian-Latin American texts reflect the processes of racial formation and the evolution of the public image of these communities, from the negative “yellow peril” to the more recent idea of a “model minority,” which can pave the way to a better future for the country.

In literature and cinema, one can observe the evolution of these social groups from an initial insular mentality, with tightly integrated organizations and institutions, to newer generations that are much more open to integration and interracial marriage, and whose choice of ethnic self-identification is less

rigid. On the one hand, several critical studies expose the sometimes-insurmountable obstacle that their Asian phenotype represents in the quest for integration into the dominant societies of Latin America and the Caribbean. On the other hand, it is noted that nowadays this physical appearance may carry positive connotations of honesty and diligence throughout the region, a stereotype that, combined with Japan's international prestige and China's emergence as a geopolitical and economic superpower, is being used in some cases to their advantage.

Alongside the many cases of nativism, xenophobia, Japanophobia, Sino-phobia, and racism, some studies show the often-painful process of transculturation and intercultural hybridization that has taken place in Latin America since the arrival of the first Asian immigrants and "coolies." Additionally, they reveal a negotiation of national loyalties and cultural identities that exposes the fluidity of identity layers. This process can allow the social group, character, or writer to enjoy multiple public and private identities or to strategically enter and exit "Chineseness" or "Japaneseness," depending on what strategy is politically advisable in each case.

While some books focus on the presence of Asian groups in Latin America or border areas, as well as their cultural production, others take a hemispheric approach, comparing the experiences of different Asian populations across the Americas. Other analyses delve into the Asian presence in art, cinema, or mass media. Broadly speaking, most of these studies challenge the *criollo*/Indigenous dichotomies in the Andes or White/Black in Brazil and the Caribbean, thus revealing heterogeneity within Latin American and Caribbean countries, as well as within the Asian communities themselves. Studies on the cultural production of Latin Americans of Asian ancestry explore, among many other issues, the long history of Chinese indentured labor in Cuba and Peru or Chinese immigration to Mexico and Panama, as well as the impact of Japanese immigration in Peru and Brazil; Sinophobia and Japanophobia, as well as the resistance of these communities to such discrimination; orientalism and self-orientalization in Latin American literature and culture; the eroticization and exoticization of Chinese, mixed-race, and Japanese women; as well as religious syncretism and transculturation. In many cases, one observes an apparently contradictory discourse in which authors demand their right to belong to the national imaginary (for themselves and for their community), while at the same time celebrating ethnic cultural difference.

Several works have studied the cultural production of Latin Americans of Asian descent, including Debbie Lee-DiStefano's *Three Asian-Hispanic Writers from Peru: Doris Moromisato, José Watanabe, Siu Kam Wen* (2008), Rebecca Riger Tsurumi's *The Closed Hand: Images of the Japanese in Modern Peruvian Literature* (2012), and Koichi Hagimoto's *Samurai in the Land of the Gaucho: Transpacific Modernity and Nikkei Literature in Argentina* (2023),

and my own *Imaging the Chinese in Cuban Literature and Culture* (2008), *The Affinity of the Eye: Writing Nikkei in Peru* (2013), *Dragons in the Land of the Condor: Writing Tusán in Peru* (2014), *Japanese Brazilian Saudades: Diasporic Identities and Cultural Production* (2019), and *The Mexican Transpacific: Nikkei Writing, Visual Arts, and Performance* (2022).³⁷ Others explore the image of the Asian in Latin American cultural production and the use of Asian thought and culture for nation building in Latin America, such as Julia Kushigian's *Orientalism in the Hispanic Literary Tradition: In Dialogue with Borges, Paz, and Sarduy* (1991), Araceli Tinajero's *Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano* (2003), Axel Gasquet's *Oriente al Sur. el orientalismo literario argentino de Esteban Echeverría a Roberto Arlt* (2007), Ana Paulina Lee's *Mandarin Brazil: Race, Representation, and Memory* (2018), and Laura Torres Rodríguez's *Orientaciones transpacificas: la modernidad mexicana y el espectro de Asia* (2019), and and Rosario Hubert's *Disoriented Disciplines: China, Latin America, and the Shape of World Literature* (2024).³⁸

2. Infrastructure Studies

Infrastructure studies blend the analysis of Latin American cultural production with disciplines such as architecture, engineering, environmental science, urban planning, and public policy, looking, from different perspectives (including sociopolitical and postcolonial, economic and environmental ones), at how the planning, design, construction, use, maintenance, and impact of infrastructure systems are reflected in these cultural artifacts. The idea is to examine the function, in our culture and daily lives, of technology, transportation grids, communication systems, energy networks, water resources and their allocation, among many other key services in our societies. Often conceived from the viewpoint of social justice, this approach also considers institutional regulations, the historical context and significance, and the socioeconomic and environmental costs of infrastructure development. Recently, for example, the environmental and human impacts of freeway and railway construction in South America (the transoceanic freeway agreement signed in 2014 by China, Brazil, and Peru to build a route that unites the Atlantic with the Pacific Oceans), and the Tren Maya (Mayan Train), a 948-miles railway project, crossing the jungle of the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico, have caught the attention of several critics. Among the social science and economics books informing approaches in cultural and literary analysis, we can find *Accounting for Poverty in Infrastructure Reform: Learning from Latin America's Experience* (2002), by Antonio Estache, Vivien Foster, and Quentin Wodon, and *The Limits of Stabilization: Infrastructure, Public Deficits, and Growth in Latin America* (2003), edited by William Easterly and Luis Servén.³⁹ We see the interests of infrastructure studies developed in books like *The Social and Political Life*

of *Latin American Infrastructures* (2022), edited by Jonathan Alderman and Geoff Goodwin.⁴⁰ An entire issue of the journal *Social Text* (Vol. 40, no. 4, 2022), co-edited by Adriana Johnson and Daniel Nemser, is dedicated to infrastructure studies.⁴¹ Nemser's book, *Infrastructures of Race: Concentration and Biopolitics in Colonial Mexico* (2017), and Brian Whitener's *Crisis Cultures: The Rise of Finance in Mexico and Brazil* (2019) are both examples of infrastructure studies at work in the field.⁴²

3. Sound Studies

Another interdisciplinary field that has been gaining ground in Latin American literary and cultural studies is Sound Studies, which explore the role of sound in our life, including sociocultural, historical, or technological aspects of sound. They also consider its reproduction, recording and manipulating technologies, soundscapes (the effect of natural or urban sounds on humans), listening and hearing, acoustics in architecture, and related topics, often in connection with race, gender, and colonialism. Sound studies have helped explore, for example, the role of popular music and the transculturation of ethnic heritages in Latin American national cultures, the connection between music and identity or social movements, as well as storytelling and other oral traditions (including Indigenous ones such as *oralitura*), among other topics and fields. Among the publications on this topic, we find *Media, Sound, and Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2012), edited by Alejandra Bronfman and Andrew Grant Wood; *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (2014), by Ana María Ochoa Gautier; and *Audible Geographies in Latin America: Sounds of Race and Place* (2019), by Dylan Lamar Robbins.⁴³

4. Cosmopolitan and World Literature

Latin American literature and culture are also being studied more and more frequently from the perspective of World Literature (mostly referring to the circulation and reception of literary works outside national borders and in translation), as well as of cosmopolitanism (the aspiration of Latin American writers to have cosmopolitan or European outlooks or recognition in metropolitan centers). Initially spearheaded in studies by David Damrosch, Pascale Casanova and Franco Moretti, the World Literature approach has now been used by several Latin Americanists, including the following books: Mariano Siskind's *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (2014), Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado's *Strategic Occidentalism: On Mexican Fiction, the Neoliberal Book Market, and the Question of World Literature* (2018), Ana Gallego Cuiñas's *Cultura literaria y políticas de*

mercado: Editoriales, ferias y festivales (2022), and Rosario Hubert's *Disoriented Disciplines: China, Latin America, and the Shape of World Literature* (2024).⁴⁴ They have additionally been deployed in a variety of edited volumes including *World Literature, Cosmopolitanism, Globality: Beyond, Against, Post, Otherwise* (2019), edited by Gesine Müller and Mariano Siskind; *Mexican Literature as World Literature* (2021), edited by Ignacio M. Sánchez Prado; and *Central American Literatures as World Literature*, edited by Sophie Esch (2023).⁴⁵ Some of these studies take on a sociological approach to literature, often inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's theories, looking at global literary institutions, publication networks, canonization through literary prizes and universities, worldwide distribution, and other factors that allow a work to belong to world literature. Other studies also analyze how a literary work increases its symbolic capital through book reviews, consumer reviews, bestseller lists, book fairs, and other outlets.

5. *The Digital Turn and the Digital Humanities*

The digital turn in literature has brought the study of experimental literary forms resulting from the interface between new technologies and literature, including digital literature or e-lit (electronic literature), hypermedia narratives, flash fiction, hypertext, media convergence, and literature connected to blogs and social media. This fluid type of literary production often bypasses literary genres and national identity, problematizing concepts such as author or novel and other literary genres. Among all the digital literary genres, in Latin America poetry has been the most popular and recurrent. The multisensorial and intersubjective nature of this literature opens new cognitive conduits that are being tackled by critics. They pay attention, for example, to the accessibility of this experimental literature, the nature of "robopoetics" (robots composing and reciting poetry), or other art and literature created by Artificial Intelligence. Overall, these new digital technologies, including the digitalization of archives, have opened new paths for both the creation and the interpretation of Latin American literary and cultural production. Among many other titles, one can find *Latin American Cyberculture and Cyberliterature* (2007), edited by Thea Pitman and Claire Taylor, Thea Pitman and Claire Taylor's *Latin American Identity and Online Cultural Production* (2013), Luis Correa-Díaz and Scott Weintraub's *Poesía y poéticas digitales/electrónicas/tecnos/New-Media en América Latina: definiciones y exploraciones* (2016), Eduardo Ledesma's *Radical Poetry: Aesthetics, Politics, Technology, and the Ibero-American Avant-Gardes, 1900-2015* (2016), Scott Weintraub's *Latin American Technopoetics: Scientific Explorations in New Media* (2018), and Claire Taylor's *Electronic Literature in Latin America: From Text to Hypertext* (2019).⁴⁶

6. *Memory and Trauma Studies*

Finally, although it is not a new approach, I suspect that memory and trauma studies will continue to have amplified relevance in Latin American studies, given the region's record of human rights abuses, political violence, civil wars, state violence, terrorism and sociopolitical instability, and its long history of (neo)colonialism, imperialism, dictatorships, revolution, social injustice, neoliberal market fundamentalism, disappearances, slavery, and genocide. Latin Americanists examine how literary and cultural production responds to historical memory and reconciliation, as well as to collective trauma, which may reflect how collective identities respond to remembering these traumatic events and the subsequent healing. *Testimonios*, oral histories, fiction, and all kinds of cultural artifacts address how Latin American societies remember and historicize past and present trauma as well as truth and reconciliation efforts. Recent studies are also exploring transgenerational trauma in post-dictatorial literature written by children of Latin Americans who had to endure harsh dictatorial regimes, the Chinese Cultural Revolution (children of Latin American leftist immigrants during 1966-1977), or who were disappeared by military dictatorships. These works (sometimes called *Literatura de hijos* or the "postmemory generation") reveal how traumatic memories are affectively transmitted from generation to generation. Through the stories of collective trauma told by their parents, new postdictatorial generations "remember" (or not) the traumatic past over time, even if they themselves did not have to endure it. They tend to playfully mix fact and fiction in autofictions that reflect the transfer of affect in the narration of historic trauma, and to express the difficulties of narrating events that one has not lived. A few examples of books on trauma and memory are Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003), Beatriz Sarlo's *Tiempo pasado: cultura de la memoria y giro subjetivo, una discusión* (2005), Víctor Vich's *Poéticas del duelo: ensayos sobre arte, memoria y violencia en el Perú* (2015), and Elizabeth Jelin's *La lucha por el pasado. Cómo construimos la memoria social* (2017).⁴⁷

Altogether, these critical and theoretical concerns reflect the vitality and dynamism of Latin American criticism and theory in the twenty-first century, which cross national boundaries and disciplines, and amplify both our methodologies and objects of study. They also offer a roadmap forward for Latin Americanists seeking to participate in the most significant academic dialogues in our field today. As seen over the past two decades, our field has become less monolithic, veering, instead, toward a rich amalgam of subfields that will be further consolidated in the near future. The subfields highlighted in this essay can, of course, be organized and reconfigured in different ways from the ones I present here. For instance, one may easily associate sound studies with per-

formance studies, cinema studies, or studies of intermediality. Likewise, there are also obvious connections between Transpacific Studies, Border Studies, Cosmopolitanism, and World Literature. This amalgam model, in fact, invites researchers to persistently redraw the field and its subfields as their interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary work cuts across different areas of study.

A Key Book

Precisely because of the aforementioned amalgam model, I have chosen as a key book an edited volume, which I see as emblematic of the development of this productive approach within our field in recent decades. In my view, one of the most impactful books in establishing the main critical and theoretical approaches and developing these academic concerns in twenty-first-century Latin American studies is *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literary and Cultural Forms* (2022), edited by Guillermina De Ferrari and Mariano Siskind.⁴⁸ Through its short chapters, it gives the reader a comprehensive idea of potential future directions, “turns,” and paradigm shifts. It reflects our discursive field’s tensions and disagreements (I consider this instability, complexity, and heterogeneity as a positive sign), by reviewing recent trends in the study of the relationship between literature and different fields and topics. A particular focus is on the applicability of the most significant, cutting-edge trends and theoretical approaches to the Latin American literature and culture produced in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The editors, Guillermina De Ferrari and Mariano Siskind, argue in their introduction that the main paradigms through which Latin American literature and culture were analyzed in the twentieth century (i.e., cultural production’s relationship with nation-formation and modernization processes) have now become obsolete; instead, they propose to envision Latin American studies as an interdisciplinary (blending literature with the arts, film, dance, mass and digital media, and the social sciences) and cosmopolitan field.

Within this reconsideration of Latin America as a porous region in perpetual flux, the focus of the book is precisely how authors, texts, and readers move beyond their respective national borders and literary traditions. Along these lines, in this collection of essays, the written literary text loses its privilege as an autonomous entity, becoming just one of the different cultural texts or sites where social tensions meet aesthetic forms. In the coeditors’ own words, their book “considers cultural production, circulation, and reception in frameworks created by the emergence of narco-states and narco-economics, new technologies, and mutating forms of socialism and neoliberalism; by the revitalization of Indigenous rights, environmental and social justice, ethics, and

human rights; and by the circulation of people, images, and cultural artifacts, whether or not that involves physical displacement” (3). The different chapters go on to study the relationship between literature and revolution, ecology, animality, the economy, biopolitics, infrastructure, and new media, among many others. Interestingly, the editors point out an important epistemic shift: now cultural artifacts (not just literary ones) not only represent but also construct realities. Overall, *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literary and Cultural Forms* offers useful heuristic tools and astute inroads into different and variegated literary and cultural theories, critical approaches, and literary traditions. It also provides ample evidence of the exciting vitality and intellectual diversity that populates the field of Latin American literary and cultural studies today.

NOTES

¹I have previously discussed these preponderant critical and theoretical approaches in the essay “Cinco tendencias críticas en el latinoamericanismo académico,” from which I translate into English here. See: Ignacio López-Calvo, “Cinco tendencias críticas en el latinoamericanismo académico,” *Cultura de Guatemala, cuarta época* 1.41 (2022): 3-26.

²Beatriz Sarlo, *Tiempo pasado: cultura de la memoria y giro subjetivo, una discusión*. (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno, 2005).

³Moreiras explained these points in an academic Facebook group. See Alberto Moreiras, Facebook post, *Crítica y Teoría*, March 17, 2013.

⁴José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* (Lima: Amauta, 1981).

⁵“También el conocido concepto de ‘colonialidad del poder’ pertenece a esta tradición crítica mariateguiana . . . Según él, ‘Todas las otras determinaciones y criterios de clasificación social de la población del mundo, y su ubicación en las relaciones de poder, desde entonces actúan en interrelación con el racismo y el etnicismo, especialmente, aunque no solo, entre europeos y no-europeos’”. See Juan de Castro, “Amauta y el Amauta: La ensayística de José Carlos Mariátegui”. In *Contrapunto Ideológico y perspectivas dramaturgicas en el Perú contemporáneo*. Vol. 6., Coordinated by Juan E. de Castro and Leticia Robles-Moreno (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2018), p. 4, <https://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra/contrapunto-ideologico-y-perspectivas-dramaturgicas-en-el-peru-contemporaneo-vol-6-937791/>.

⁶“A través de la mediación del crítico argentino Walter Mignolo, el concepto de la colonialidad del poder se ha convertido en la piedra angular de la llamada crítica decolonial”. See de Castro, “Amauta,” 21-22.

⁷Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemonía y estrategia socialista. Hacia una radicalización de la democracia* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1987).

⁸Ernesto Laclau, *La razón populista* (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005).

⁹Bruno Bosteels, *The Actuality of Communism* (London, New York: Verso 2011).

¹⁰Alberto Moreiras, *Línea de sombra. El no sujeto de lo político* (Santiago de Chile: Palinodia, 2006).

¹¹“el no sujeto de lo político sería “un visitante y no un invitado... que puede o no

producir interpelación, pero cuya condición de posibilidad, cuya inmanencia, es precisamente un desplazamiento de la interpelación, un exceso con respecto de la interpelación” (86). See César Barrosa, Review of *Línea de sombra. El no sujeto de lo político* by Alberto Moreiras, *Nómadas* (Colombia) 26 (2007): 251-53.

¹² Jaime Rodríguez Matos, Ed., *Infrapolitics and Posthegemony*, Special Issue of *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 5.1 (2015), <https://escholarship.org/uc/transmodernity/5/1>.

¹³ See: John Beverley and Marc Zimmerman, *Literature and Politics in the Central American Revolutions* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Malcolm K. Read, *Marxist Critique of Latin American Colonial Studies* (Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019); Juan E. De Castro, *Writing Revolution in Latin America: from Martí to García Márquez to Bolaño* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2019).

¹⁴ See David W. Foster, *Gay and Lesbian Themes in Latin American Writing* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1991); *Queer Issues in Contemporary Latin American Cinema* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003); and *Sexual Textualities: Essays on Queer/ing Latin American Writing* (University of Texas Press, 1997).

¹⁵ See: Amy K. Kaminsky, *Reading the Body Politic: Feminist Criticism and Latin American Women Writers* (Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Emily L. Bergmann and Paul Julian Smith, Eds. *¿Entiendes? Queer Readings, Hispanic Writings* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); Daniel Balderston and Donna J. Guy, Eds. *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Nelly Richard, *Masculine/Feminine: Practices of Difference(s)*, Translated by Silvia Tandeciarz and Alice A. Nelson (Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Vinodh Venkatesh, *The Body as Capital: Masculinities in Contemporary Latin American Fiction* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2015); Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez, Ed., *Women Writing Resistance: Essays on Latin America and the Caribbean* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2017); Nelly Richard, *Abismos temporales: feminismo, estéticas travestis y teoría queer* (Santiago de Chile: Metales Pesados, 2018); Héctor Domínguez-Ruvalcaba, *Latinoamérica queer: cuerpo y política queer en América Latina*, Translated by Sonia Verjovsky Paul (Mexico City: Ariel, 2019).

¹⁶ Igancio López-Calvo, “Coloniality is not over, it is all over:’ Interview with Dr. Walter Mignolo. Part I,” *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 6.1 (2014): 175-84; Igancio López-Calvo, “Coloniality is not over, it is all over:’ Interview with Dr. Walter Mignolo. Part II,” *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 6.2 (2014): 171-96.

¹⁷ Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, Colonization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of*

Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options (Latin America Otherwise) (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

¹⁸ Enrique D. Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad: Diálogos con la filosofía de Gianni Vattimo*. (Puebla, México: Universidad Iberoamericana Plantel Laguna and Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente: 1999).

¹⁹ Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch'ixinakax Utxiwa: una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores* (Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón, 2010); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Oppressed but Not Defeated: Peasant Struggles among the Aymara and Quechua in Bolivia, 1900-1980* (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1984).

²⁰ “El mundo indígena no concibe la historia linealmente, y el pasado-futuro están contenidos en el presente: la regresión o la progresión, la repetición o la superación del pasado están en juego en cada coyuntura y dependen de nuestros actos más que de nuestras palabras” (54-55).

²¹ Miguel Rocha Vivas, *El héroe de nuestra imagen: visión del héroe en las literaturas indígenas de América* (Convenio Andrés Bello, 2004); Miguel Rocha Vivas, *Mingas de la palabra. Textualidades oralitegráficas y visiones de cabeza en las oralituras y literaturas indígenas contemporáneas* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, Ediciones Uniandes, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2018); Miguel Rocha Vivas, *Palabras mayores, palabras vivas. Tradiciones mítico-literarias y escritores indígenas en Colombia* (Bogotá: Taurus, 2012).

²² Arturo Arias, *The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001); Arturo Arias, *Taking their Word: Literature and the Signs of Central America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Arturo Arias, *Recovering Lost Footprints: Contemporary Maya Narratives*. Vol. 1. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2017); Arturo Arias, *Recovering Lost Footprints: Contemporary Maya Narratives*. Vol. 2. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2018).

²³ Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, “Introducing the New Materialisms,” in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 1-43, <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822392996-001>.

²⁴ Coole and Frost, *New Materialisms*, 20.

²⁵ Stacy Alaimo, “States of Suspension: Trans-corporeality at Sea,” *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 19.3 (2012): 476-93, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44087131>.

²⁶ Kim De Wolf, Rina Faletti and Ignacio López-Calvo, *Hydrohumanities: Water Discourse and Environmental Futures* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2021).

²⁷ Héctor Hoyos, *Things with a History: Transcultural Materialism and the Literatures of Extraction in Contemporary Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).

²⁸ Gisela Heffes, *Políticas de la destrucción/Poéticas de la preservación. Apuntes para una lectura (eco)crítica del medio ambiente en América Latina* (Rosario: Beatriz Viterbo, 2013); Mark Anderson and Zélia M. Bora, Eds., *Ecological Crisis and Cultural Representation in Latin America: Ecocritical Perspectives on Art, Film, and Literature* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016); Lisa Blackmore and Liliana Gómez, Eds., *Liquid Ecologies in Latin American and Caribbean Art* (New York: Routledge, 2020); Edward King and Joanna Page, *Posthumanism and the Graphic Novel in Latin America* (London: UCL Press, 2017).

²⁹ Martha Few and Zeb Tortorici, Eds., *Centering Animals in Latin American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013); Gabriel Giorgi, *Formas communes: animalidad, cultural y biopolítica* (Buenos Aires: Eterna Cadencia, 2014); Scott M. DeVries, *Creature Discomfort: Fauna-criticism, Ethics, and the Representation of Animals in Spanish American Fiction and Poetry* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2016); Liliana Colanzi, *Of Animals, Monsters, and Cyborgs: Alternative Bodies in Latin American Fiction (1961-2012)*. Doctoral Dissertation. Cornell University, 2017.

³⁰ Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect Imagery Consciousness: Volume I, The Positive Affects* (London: Tavistock, 1962); Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect Imagery Consciousness: Volume II, The Negative Affects* (London: Tavistock, 1963); Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect Imagery Consciousness Volume III. The Negative Affects: Anger and Fear* (New York: Springer, 1991); Silvan S. Tomkins and Bertram P. Karon, *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness Volume IV* (New York: Springer, 1962–1992).

³¹ Brian Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect.” *Cultural Critique. The Politics of Systems and Environments, Part II* 31 (1995): 83-109.

³² Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, “Shame in the Cybernetic Fold: Reading Silvan Tomkins.” *Critical Inquiry* 21.2 (1995): 496-522.

³³ Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual. Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

³⁴ Patricia Clough, “The Affective Turn: Political Economy, Biomedicine and Bodies.” *Theory, Culture and Society* 25.1 (2008): 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276407085156>.

³⁵ Jerónimo Arellano, *Magical Realism and the History of the Emotions in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Cecilia Macón, Mariela Solana, Nayla Luz

Vacarezza, Eds., *Affect, Gender and Sexuality in Latin America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); Philippa Page, Inela Selimovic, and Camilla Sutherland, Eds., *The Feeling Child: Affect and Politics in Latin American Literature and Film* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2018).

³⁶ Jeffrey Lesser, *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960—1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

³⁷ Debra Lee-DiStefano, *Three Asian-Hispanic Writers from Peru: Doris Moromitsato, José Watanabe, Siu Kam Wen* (New York: Mellen Press, 2008); Rebecca Riger Tsurumi, *The Closed Hand: Images of the Japanese in Modern Peruvian Literature* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2012); Koichi Hagimoto, *Samurai in the Land of the Gaucho: Transpacific Modernity and Nikkei Literature in Argentina* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2023). My books in this area include: Ignacio López-Calvo, *The Affinity of the Eye: Writing Nikkei in Peru* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2013); *Dragons in the Land of the Condor: Writing Tusán in Peru*. (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2014); *Imaging the Chinese in Cuban Literature and Culture* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2008); *Japanese Brazilian Saudades: Diasporic Identities and Cultural Production* (Louisville, CO: University of Colorado Press, 2019); *The Mexican Transpacific: Nikkei Writing, Visual Arts, and Performance* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2022).

³⁸ Julia Kushigian, *Orientalism in the Hispanic Literary Tradition: In Dialogue with Borges, Paz, and Sarduy* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991); Araceli Tinajero, *Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2004); Axel Gasquet, *Oriente al Sur. El orientalismo literario argentino de Esteban Echeverría a Roberto Arlt* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2007); Ana Paulina Lee, *Mandarin Brazil: Race, Representation, and Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018); Laura Torres Rodríguez, *Orientaciones transpacificas: la modernidad mexicana y el espectro de Asia* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Rosario Hubert, *Disoriented Disciplines: China, Latin America, and the Shape of World Literature* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2024).

³⁹ Antonio Estache, Vivien Foster, and Quentin Wodon, *Accounting for Poverty in Infrastructure Reform: Learning from Latin America's Experience* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2002); William Easterly and Luis Servén, Eds., *The Limits of Stabilization: Infrastructure, Public Deficits, and Growth in Latin America* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁴⁰ Jonathan Alderman and Geoff Goodwin, Eds., *The Social and Political Life of Latin American Infrastructures* (London: Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, School of Advanced Studies, University of London, 2022).

⁴¹ Adriana Johnson and Daniel Nemser, "Reading for Infrastructure," In *Reading for*

Infrastructure: Worlds Made and Broken, Edited by Adriana Johnson and Daniel Nemser, *Social Text* 40.4 (2022), pp. 1-16, <https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-10013276>.

⁴² See: Daniel Nemser, *Infrastructures of Race: Concentration and Biopolitics in Colonial Mexico* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2017); and Brian Whitener, *Crisis Cultures: The Rise of Finance in Mexico and Brazil* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019).

⁴³ Alejandra Bronfman and Andrew Grant Wood, Eds., *Media, Sound, and Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012); Ana María Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Dylon Lamar Robbins, *Audible Geographies in Latin America: Sounds of Race and Place* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

⁴⁴ Mariano Siskind, *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2014); Ignacio M. Sánchez-Prado, *Strategic Occidentalism: On Mexican Fiction, the Neoliberal Book Market and the Question of World Literature* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018); Ana Gallego Cuiñas, *Cultura literaria y políticas de mercado. Editoriales, ferias y festivales* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2022); Hubert, *Disoriented Disciplines*.

⁴⁵ Gesine Müller and Mariano Siskind, Eds., *World Literature, Cosmopolitanism, Globality: Beyond, Against, Post, Otherwise* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2019); Ignacio M. Sánchez-Prado, Ed., *Mexican Literature as World Literature* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021); Sophie Esch, Ed., *Central American Literatures as World Literatures* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023).

⁴⁶ Thea Pitman and Claire Taylor, Eds., *Latin American Cyberculture and Cyberliterature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007); Thea Pitman and Claire Taylor, *Latin American Identity and Online Cultural Production* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Luis Correa-Díaz and Scott Weintraub, *Poesía y poéticas digitales/electrónicas/tecno/New Media en América Latina: definiciones y exploraciones* (Bogotá: Editorial Universidad Central de Bogotá, 2016); Eduardo Ledesma, *Radical Poetry: Aesthetics, Politics, Technology, and the Ibero-American Avant-Gardes, 1900-2015* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2016); Scott Weintraub, *Latin American Technopoetics: Scientific Explorations in New Media* (New York: Routledge, 2018); Claire Taylor, *Electronic Literature in Latin America: From Text to Hypertext* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).

⁴⁷ Víctor Vich, *Poéticas del duelo: ensayos sobre arte, memoria y violencia en el Perú* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2015); Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); 2017); Elizabeth

Jelin, *La lucha por el pasado. Cómo construimos la memoria social* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, See also, Sarlo, *Tiempo pasado*.

⁴⁸I previously published a review of Guillermina De Ferrari and Mariano Siskind's *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literary and Cultural Forms* in *A contracorriente* 20.2 (2023): 283-94, from which I take much of the information of this book in this essay. For more information on this book, consult the full review: <https://acontracorriente.chass.ncsu.edu/index.php/acontracorriente/article/view/2328>.