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Práticas da História

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Índice

Special issue "Provincializing Europe – 20th anniversary"

Editorial

On the 20th Anniversary of *Provincializing Europe* 7
José Neves e Marcos Cardão

Entrevista

Provincializing History 25
A conversation on the 20th Anniversary of Provincializing Europe. Interview with Dipesh Chakrabarty by José Neves and Marcos Cardão

Articles and Essays

Rethinking Medieval Japan, *Provincializing Europe* 35
Rajyashree Pandey

Misreading *Provincializing Europe* 53
Christopher L. Hill

Historicism and Modernity in the Wake of *Provincializing Europe* 63
Saurabh Dube

Más allá del orientalismo: leer a Marx entre Chakrabarty y Aricó 81
Marcelo Starcenbaum

Comentario a *Provincializing Europe* 111
Montserrat Galcerán Huguet

Traduzir "o que ainda não compreendo." Um diálogo com *Provincializing Europe* 125
Manuela Ribeiro Sanches

Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time 143
Patrícia Martins Marcos

Reading *Provincializing Europe* as a Missed Opportunity 181
Réal Fillion

Scientific Humanisms and the Anthropocene, Or the Dream of Steering the Evolution of the Human and Natural World 199
Marianne Sommer

Provincializing for a Planetary Perspective 225
Bo Stråth

A póscolonialidade e o artifício da história 247
Dipesh Chakrabarty

Recensões

Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth e Ajay Skaria, eds., *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene* 279
António Carvalho

Vasant Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient. The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe* 287
Sara Araújo

Editorial
On the 20th Anniversary of *Provincializing Europe*

José Neves e Marcos Cardão

In 2000, when Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe - Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* was published, the scientific authority of History as a discipline was already being called into question from a standpoint generally labelled as postmodern, in the wake of seminal interventions such as Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe*, of 1973. The publication of Chakrabarty's best known book contributed to the consolidation of these perspectives, but also to the opening of a new angle from which to challenge the discipline, by confronting historians with post-colonial criticism, then in the midst of its affirmation in Anglo-Saxon academia, undermining the Eurocentric assumptions of various disciplines in the field of social sciences and the humanities.

Twenty years after the publication of *Provincializing Europe*, we proposed a special issue to the journal *Práticas da História – Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past*, one dedicated to the historian Dipesh Chakrabarty and, more specifically, to the above-mentioned book. Our reasons for putting together this issue are rooted in the impact that reading Chakrabarty had on our own intellectual trajectory, but they are also spurred by recent anti-racist struggles and the fact that they have stirred a series of debates around the decolonisation of historical knowledge, collective memory and the remnants of the colonial past that linger in the present. We are pleased to register that the year in which so many statues celebrating the heroes of European colonialism were toppled coincides with the twentieth anniversary

of *Provincializing Europe*, a text that continues to challenge the limits of modern European thought by sparking debates on historicism, the writing of history and the politics of time, problematising categories central to social and political theory, such as modernity, universalism, capitalism or difference.

Professor of History, South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, Dipesh Chakrabarty's academic background is marked by the crossing of disciplinary boundaries, from a degree in Physics (University of Calcutta) to an MBA (Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta), and finally a PhD in History at the Australian National University (Canberra). Upon his move to Chicago, where he has lived since the 1990s, he became one of the foremost authors in the fields of History and Postcolonial Studies, and nowadays is a key voice in discussions on climate change and its implications for historical and political thought.

Born in Calcutta in 1948, one year after India's independence, in the early 1980s Dipesh Chakrabarty joined the emerging Subaltern Studies group, which included historians such as Ranajit Guha, at the time at the University of Sussex[1]. The group would carry out various original studies on Indian pasts while simultaneously questioning the protocols that governed the discipline of History and their adequacy for the study of non-Western pasts. Swarming with gods and spirits, these pasts were at one time represented and belittled by secularised Western histories, which took them as a mystification of social phenomena deemed – unlike its more shadowy counterparts – worthy of historiographical analysis. The attention of subaltern studies researchers, namely Chakrabarty, to the disciplinary limits of History also came into play in their examination of the political agency of subaltern groups, in particular the peasants' role in social uprisings and popular protests.

1 On the formation and development of *Subaltern Studies*, as well as on its global academic dissemination, see Vinayak Chaturvedi's introduction to the anthology *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (London: Verso, 2000). For a political and scientific genealogy of *Subaltern Studies*, see "Revolution and History: Maoism and Subaltern Studies", *Storia Della Storiografia*, volume 62 (2012): 131-150.

On this last topic, it should be noted that even within the Marxist historiographical tradition, whose ideological framework would seem to imply an identification with the political actions of subalterns, a developmentalist conception of time prevailed. The latter, as Chakrabarty argued in *Provincializing Europe*, hindered knowledge, representation and historiographical interpretation of those actions, and downplayed the political importance of the agency of subaltern groups. In its crudest version, the Marxist historiographical tradition postulated that humanity would be all the more conscious of itself the more modern it was – and would be all the more modern the closer it was to the regions of the world where capitalism was at its most mature. In its more elaborate versions, while the Marxist historiographical tradition did seek to unfasten subaltern groups from the "enormous condescension of posterity" (to borrow E.P. Thompson's famous phrase in the opening of *The Making of the English Working Class*), it also tended to decompose the revolutionary crowd into faces and proper names, thus subordinating its agency to one of the hegemonic forms through which Western modernity shaped humanity: the individual. [2]

Yet *Provincializing Europe*, rather than a critique levelled specifically at Marxist historiography (all the more since Chakrabarty found inspiration in authors such as Thompson and Rudé), tried to question the universalism of the discipline of History as a whole. Against the illusion of a universally valid historiographical knowledge, suitable to all times and all places, Chakrabarty presents the discipline as a form of knowledge emanating from a specific space and time, the modern West. And he suggests that the fact that the discipline nowadays enjoys a universal status, more often than not forgetting its situated origin, should be perceived as an epistemic privilege inseparable from the process of imperial domination undertaken by that same West.

2 See Dipesh Chakrabarty, "História subalterna como pensamento político", in *A Política dos Muitos: Povo, Classes e Multidão*, ed. Bruno Peixe Dias, José Neves, 281-307 (Lisbon: Tinta-da-China, 2010). See, in particular, Chakrabarty's critique of George Rudé, 299-230. An earlier and slightly different version of this text is to be found in Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Subaltern History as Political Thought", in *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, edited by V. R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham, 93-109 (New Delhi: Sage, 2006).

However, it should be stressed that this questioning of the universalism of the discipline of History, distancing us from its ambition to produce a progressively truer knowledge, is also concerned with making the discipline permeable to other understandings of time, as well as to the matter of cultural difference[3]. In other words, "provincializing Europe" implies contesting those Western categories that wish to translate the non-Western worlds in their entirety, exposing the "inadequacy" of such categories[4], but it also paves the way to a renewal of the processes of knowledge production, placing them in a state of permanent precariousness and tension. To gain distance from the ambition of total knowledge that characterises Western historiography can thus be understood as an invitation to the practice of a History that is inescapably fragmentary. History should be seen not as the proper and universal way of reading and interpreting the past, but as a situated and particular form of "knowledge", an awareness that also helps us to refrain from definitive solutions or answers.

*

Composed of ten articles and essays[5] by researchers from various disciplinary and geographical backgrounds, the present issue also includes a previously unpublished interview with Dipesh Chakrabarty, which we

3 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The difference-deferral of a colonial modernity: Public debates on domesticity in British Bengal", in *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in honor of Ranajit Guha*, ed. David Arnold and David Hardiman, 50-88 (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern* Studies" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

4 One of the most famous formulations in "Provincializing Europe", to the point where it has become a kind of shorthand for the whole of Chakrabarty's work, claims that the thinking of the social sciences is simultaneously indispensable and inadequate: "It is both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the various life practices that constitute the political and the historical in India. Exploring—on both theoretical and factual registers—this simultaneous indispensability and inadequacy of social science thought is the task this book has set itself". Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*: *Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 6.

5 In this special issue, unlike in previous ones, there are no separate sections for essays and articles: essays are duly signalled in a footnote. We also publish texts at the invitation of the editors that were not submitted to a peer-review process; this is also signalled in a footnote.

conducted in January 2020, when he came to Lisbon to give a talk on the Anthropocene. [6] The interview covers a variety of topics that may contribute to a genealogy of *Provincializing Europe*, from the author's formative years to his relationship with Marxism. The issue also includes the Portuguese translation of "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History", the first chapter of *Provincializing Europe*, and a version of an article published in 1992.[7]

Among the articles and essays included in this special issue, several of them attempt to reread Chakrabarty by striking a dialogue between his work and that of other thinkers. In the article "Reading Provincializing Europe as a Missed Opportunity", Réal Fillion addresses the challenge posed by *Provincializing Europe* in terms of thinking about the universal and the particular simultaneously. To this end, Fillon engages in a dialogue with Hegel's philosophy of history, suggesting that the distinction between a (universal) History 1 and a (particular) History 2 may be clarified by a confrontation with the German philosopher, who examines precisely how universality is particularised. In the article "Más allá del orientalismo: leer a Marx entre Chakrabarty y Aricó", Marcelo Starcenbaum observes how both Chakrabarty and the Argentine José Aricó try to intervene in the discussion on Marx's Orientalism: the former by opening up the Marxist corpus to the question of historical and cultural difference; the latter by seeking to displace the Marxist tradition through the recuperation of a particular aspect of Marx, his interest in the specificities of non-European societies. In the article "Scientific Humanisms and the Anthropocene, Or the Dream of Steering the Evolution of the Human and Natural World", Marianne Sommer calls upon the work of the biologist Julian Sorell Huxley, in particular the idea of humanism that emerges from the history of science and evolutionary

6 The conference was organised by Fundação Culturgest and the Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT), whom we thank for their support to our interview. We should also add that, on that same occasion, we conducted another interview with Chakrabarty focused exclusively on the topic of the Anthropocene and on his reflections on the challenges climate change poses to the discipline of History. This interview can be read (in Portuguese and English) in issue 11 of the magazine *Electra*.

7 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?", *Representations* 37 (1992): 1-26.

biology, to question the categories of progress, teleology, universalism and eurocentrism that govern some of the ways of making history. Marianne Sommer discusses these categories through Dipesh Chakrabarty's recent work on climate change and the Anthropocene, highlighting the problematic nature of the notion of "anthropos".

Other texts address Chakrabarty and his *Provincializing Europe* from the point of view of the specific geographies that ground the authors' teaching experience or research areas. Saurabh Dube offers a first-person account of his encounter with the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty and how it presented him with a challenge that was both intellectual and pedagogical. In the article "Historicism and Modernity in the Wake of Provincializing Europe", Dube tells us how his experience as a Professor of History in El Colegio de México allowed him, on the one hand, to test the problems and possibilities of postcolonialism as a concept and point of view, and, on the other hand, to look at modernity as a historical process and a form of power. In "Rethinking Medieval Japan", Rajyashree Pandey takes up the famous formula from *Provincializing Europe*, already mentioned above, according to which the thinking of social science is both indispensable and inadequate to understand non-Western worlds, particularly when it comes to areas that have remained virtually untouched by Western thought, such as medieval Japan, and that have not been captured by Eurocentric binaries such as sex/gender or nature/society. Rather than arguing that the "inadequacy" of Western categories renders the hermeneutic task impossible, or that it is a source of anxiety, Rajyashree Pandey suggests that one of the pleasures of analysing the texts of medieval Japan is precisely their strangeness, which calls for a defamiliarisation of categories that have become obvious and unquestionable in Western thinking. In her turn, Patricia Martins Marcos seeks to denaturalise the legacies of imperialism inscribed in ideas about place (Europe or the nation-state) and time (the universal chronology of modernity). In the article "Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time", the author seeks to provincialize the political chronology that binds the colonial past to the (post-) colonial present,

and to challenge "sovereignist" forms of periodisation, countering them with the bodily or corporeal chronologies one finds in Amerindian forms of colonial resistance, so as to consider how the past is embodied and reiterated through memory, trauma and disability.

Finally, the issue also includes a collection of essays and articles that focus more on how we understand Europe, its histories and legacies. In the article "Provincializing for a Planetary Perspective", Bo Stråth extrapolates the analysis of the dynamics of Enlightenment modernity to the present time, highlighting how these dynamics have been interrupted by the growing polarisation between the narrative of globalisation, which may be equated with a new 'history 1', and the forms of ethnic nationalism that emerged in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, which may be identified with 'history 2'. Stråth appropriates both these forms of historical time to discuss the persistence, in our day, of a presentist temporal regime. The absence of a mobilising future and the discursive construction of an idealised past, driven largely by the new xenophobic nationalism and right-wing extremism, can be read as the expression of the lack of horizons of expectation and of the breakdown of the category of progress.

Manuela Ribeiro Sanches addresses *Provincializing Europe* from the point of view of the practice of translation, signalling the way in which the latter may function as a point of departure to tease out the ambiguities of Chakrabarty's work. Having translated two of his texts into Portuguese, in the article "Traduzir o que ainda não compreendo" [Translating what I am yet to understand], Ribeiro Sanches stresses that the project of "provincializing Europe" should not be equated with a rejection of Europe, as an imagined entity, but rather with an effort to translate between European thought and other ways of seeing and being in the world[8]. Following the Chakrabartian gesture of placing apparently irreconcilable worlds into permanent tension, Manuela Ribeiro

8 Manuela Ribeiro Sanches translated one of the chapters of "Provincializing Europe", in a 2003 book that aimed to make both Chakrabarty and postcolonial thought more widely known in Portugal. Cf. Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, *Dipesh Chakrabarty, História subalterna como pensamento político* (Lisbon: Tinta da China, 2010); Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, *Dipesh Chakrabarty, Histórias de minorias, passados subalternos* (Lisbon: Livros Cotovia, 2005).

Sanches suggests that translation is precisely an attempt to negotiate meanings, to accommodate opposites and to position oneself in such a way that one may embrace an ethical horizon and "listen to what one is yet to understand".

In his turn, in the article "Misreading Provincializing Europe", Christopher L. Hill underlines the ambiguities and contradictions of a work that proposes to deal with a problem that is methodological, institutional and political at one and the same time. Recalling the impact of reading Chakrabarty's book on his own trajectory, namely in his doctoral research on the development of national histories (cf. *National History and the World of Nations - Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States*) [9], Hill pinpoints the various biased interpretations to which the idea of provincializing Europe has been subjected, putting forward the transnational perspective as a way of exploring and seeking to resolve those ambiguities and contradictions. Finally, in her commentary on "Provincializing Europe", Montserrat Galceran notes how European thought, marked though it is by deviations and disjunctions, is nonetheless exported in bulk, making it appear more homogeneous than it really is, as a result of a geopolitics of knowledge that is bound to the history of imperial domination. Galceran also argues that Chakrabraty's work contributes to a break with the single and linear temporality inherited from the Enlightenment and historicism, which implies, for example, no longer thinking of politics as a future to come, but approaching it on the basis of the notion that events are not predetermined.

Finally, we would also like to highlight two reviews related to the topic that brings us together in this issue. António de Carvalho reads a very recent work that pays homage to Chakrabarty, *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South. Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene* (published by Routledge, coordinated by Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth and Ajay Skaria), while Sara Araújo

9 Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations - Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

offers us her reading of a less recent publication that mounts a critique of the project of provincializing Europe: Vaisant Kaiwar's *The Postcolonial Orient - The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe.*[10]

Editorial

No 20.º Aniversário de *Provincializing Europe*

Em 2000, quando foi publicado o livro *Provincializing Europe – Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, de Dipesh Chakrabarty, a autoridade científica da disciplina da História vinha já sendo questionada por perspectivas genericamente classificadas como pós-modernas, na senda de intervenções tão seminais como *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe*, de Hayden White, obra esta datada de 1973. A publicação do livro mais conhecido de Chakrabarty veio contribuir para o aprofundamento destas perspectivas, mas também para a abertura de um novo ângulo de questionamento da disciplina, ao confrontar os historiadores com a crítica pós-colonial, que então se encontrava em fase de afirmação académica no espaço anglo-saxónico e ameaçava as assunções eurocêntricas de várias disciplinas no campo das ciências sociais e das humanidades.

Vinte anos após a publicação de *Provincializing Europe*, propusemos à revista *Práticas da História – Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past* a organização de um número especialmente dedicado ao historiador Dipesh Cakrabarty e, em particular, ao seu livro acima referido. As nossas motivações para a organização deste número radicam no impacto que a leitura de Chakrabarty teve na nossa formação intelectual, mas também ganham alento pelo facto de lutas anti-racistas recentes terem vindo a

10 Among the critiques levelled at Dipesh Chakrabarty's work, one should single out, given its impact and the responses it elicited, Vivek Chibber's *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London, Verso, 2013). For a critique from a radically different angle, dealing not only with Chakrabarty's work under analysis in this issue but also with his more recent reflections on the Anthropocene and his work on the Indian historian Jadunath Sarkar (D. Chakrabarty, *The Calling of History: Sir Jadunath Sarkar and His Empire of Truth* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015)), see Suman Seth, "The Politics of Despair and the Calling of History", *History and Theory*, Volume 56, n. 2 (2017): 241-257.

instigar uma série de debates em torno da descolonização do conhecimento histórico, da memória colectiva e dos resquícios do passado colonial no presente. É com regozijo que registamos que o ano em que se derrubaram tantas estátuas que celebram os heróis do colonialismo europeu coincide com o vigésimo aniversário de *Provincializing Europe*, texto que continua a desafiar os limites do moderno pensamento europeu, animando debates sobre o historicismo, a escrita da história e as políticas do tempo, bem como a problematização de categorias centrais à teoria social e política, tais como modernidade, universalismo, capitalismo ou diferença.

Professor de História e Estudos do Sudeste Asiático na Universidade de Chicago, Dipesh Chakrabarty teve uma formação académica marcada pelo cruzamento disciplinar, da licenciatura em Física (Universidade de Calcutá) ao mestrado em Gestão Empresarial (Instituto Indiano de Gestão), culminando no doutoramento em História, obtido na Universidade Nacional da Austrália. Com a ida para Chicago, onde se encontra desde os anos de 1990, tornou-se um dos autores mais proeminentes na área da História e dos Estudos Pós-coloniais, sendo hoje também uma voz importante nas discussões sobre as alterações climáticas e suas implicações para o pensamento histórico e político.

Tendo nascido em Calcutá em 1948, um ano após a independência da Índia, Dipesh Chakrabarty juntou-se ao grupo de Estudos Subalternos emergente no início dos anos de 1980, e onde pontificavam historiadores como Ranajit Guha, à época na Universidade de Sussex.[11] O grupo desenvolveria vários estudos originais sobre os passados indianos e simultaneamente questionadores dos protocolos dominantes na disciplina da História e de sua adequação ao conhecimento de passados não-ocidentais. Caso convocassem deuses e espíritos, estes passados eram a um tempo representados e menorizados pelas histórias ocidentais secularizadas, que os tomavam como uma mistificação de fenómenos sociais tidos – estes, sim – como matéria susceptível de análise historiográfica.

11 Sobre a formação e desenvolvimento dos *Subaltern Studies*, assim como acerca da sua disseminação académica global, veja-se a introdução de Vinayak Chaturvedi à antologia *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (Londres: Verso, 2000). Para uma genealogia a um tempo política e científica dos *Subaltern Studies*, veja-se: "Revolution and History: Maoism and Subaltern Studies", *Storia Della Storiografia*, volume 62 (2012): 131-150.

Sendo que a atenção dos subalternistas e de Chakrabarty aos limites disciplinares da história se revelou igualmente na hora de investigar o agenciamento político dos grupos subalternos, em particular, a participação camponesa em revoltas sociais e protestos populares.

A respeito deste último ponto, note-se que mesmo na tradição historiográfica marxista, que por razões ideológicas mais facilmente se identificaria com as acções políticas dos subalternos, prevalecia uma concepção desenvolvimentista do tempo que, como argumentado por Chakrabarty em *Provincializing Europe*, condicionava negativamente as possibilidades de conhecimento, representação e interpretação historiográfica daquelas acções, além de retirar importância política ao agenciamento dos grupos subalternos. Na sua versão mais simplista, a tradição historiográfica marxista predicava que a humanidade teria tanto mais consciência de si quanto mais moderna fosse – e seria tanto mais moderna quanto mais próxima se encontrasse das regiões do mundo onde o capitalismo estivesse mais amadurecido. Já nas suas versões mais elaboradas, se a tradição historiográfica marxista procurava resgatar os grupos subalternos à «enorme condescendência da posteridade» (para glosarmos a célebre expressão de Thompson na abertura de *The Making of the English Working Class*), tendia igualmente a decompor a multidão revolucionária em rostos e nomes próprios – e assim acabando por subordinar a sua agencialidade a uma das formas hegemónicas pela qual a modernidade ocidental configurava a humanidade: o indivíduo.[12]

Mas *Provincializing Europe*, mais do que uma crítica dirigida especificamente à historiografia marxista (e mesmo porque autores como Thompson e Rudé foram inspiradores para Chakrabarty), tratará de questionar o universalismo da disciplina da História em geral. Contra a ilusão de um conhecimento historiográfico universalmente válido,

12 Ver Dipesh Chakrabarty, "História subalterna como pensamento político", in *A Política dos Muitos: Povo, Classes e Multidão*, ed. Bruno Peixe Dias, José Neves, 281-307 (Lisboa: Tinta-da-China, 2010). Veja-se nomeadamente a crítica dirigida por Chakrabarty a George Rudé, 299-230. Um versão ligeiramente diferente, ainda que anterior, deste texto encontra-se em: Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Subaltern History as Political Thought", in *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, coord.V. R. Mehta e Thomas Pantham, 93-109 (Nova Deli: Sage, 2006).

adequado a todos os tempos e a qualquer lugar, Chakrabarty apresenta-nos a disciplina como um saber emanado de um espaço e tempo específico, o ocidente moderno. E sugeria que o facto de a disciplina ter hoje um estatuto universal, que tende já a esquecer a sua proveniência situada, deveria ser entendido como um privilégio epistémico indissociável do processo de dominação imperial conduzido por aquele mesmo ocidente.

Entretanto, importa sublinhar que o questionamento do universalismo da disciplina da História, distanciando-nos da sua ambição de produzir um saber progressivamente mais verdadeiro, trata igualmente de tornar a disciplina permeável a outros entendimentos do tempo, bem como à questão da diferença cultural[13]. Ou seja, "provincializar a Europa" implica contestar as categorias ocidentais que pretendem traduzir os mundos não ocidentais na íntegra, denunciando a sua "inadequação"[14], mas também abre caminho à renovação dos processos de produção de conhecimento, colocando-os num estado de precariedade e tensão permanentes. O distanciamento em relação à ambição de um conhecimento total, própria da historiografia ocidental, pode assim ser entendido como um convite à prática de uma história necessariamente fragmentária. A História deveria ser por nós encarada não como a maneira correta e universal de ler e interpretar o passado, mas enquanto uma forma situada e particular de "saber", deste modo também se evitando soluções ou respostas definitivas.

13 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The difference-deferral of a colonial modernity: Public debates on domesticity in British Bengal", in *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in honor of Ranajit Guha*, ed. David Arnold and David Hardiman, 50-88 (Nova Deli: Oxford University Press, 1994); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern* Studies"(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

14 Uma das formulações mais célebres de "Provincializing Europe", que se tornou uma espécie de emblema da obra de Dipesh Chakrabarty, menciona que o pensamento das ciências sociais é simultaneamente indispensável e inadequado: "It is both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the various life practices that constitute the political and the historical in India. Exploring—on both theoretical and factual registers—this simultaneous indispensability and inadequacy of social science thought is the task this book has set itself". Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*: *Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 6.

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Composto por dez artigos e ensaios[15] da autoria de investigadores de várias proveniências disciplinares e geográficas, este número contém ainda uma entrevista inédita a Dipesh Chakrabarty, conduzida por nós em janeiro de 2020, por ocasião de uma sua conferência em Lisboa sobre a temática do Antropoceno.[16] A entrevista abrange diferentes temas que podem contribuir para uma genealogia de *Provincializing Europe*, desde os anos formativos do autor à sua relação com o marxismo, sendo que o presente número inclui também a tradução de um texto da autoria do próprio Chakrabarty –"Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History", primeiro capítulo de *Provincializing Europe*, e que retoma um seu artigo publicado em 1992 na revista *Representations*.[17]

Entre os artigos e ensaios que compõem este número especial, vários tratam de reler Chakrabarty colocando-o em diálogo com outros pensadores. No artigo "Reading Provincializing Europe as a Missed Opportunity", Réal Fillion refere o desafio que *Provincializing Europe* coloca para pensar simultaneamente o universal e o particular e, para este efeito, promove um diálogo com a filosofia da história de Hegel, sugerindo que a distinção entre uma História (universal) 1 e História (particular) 2 pode ser clarificada pelo confronto com o filósofo alemão, que examina precisamente como a universalidade se particulariza. Por sua vez, no artigo "Más allá del orientalismo: leer a Marx entre Chakrabarty y Aricó", Marcelo Starcenbaum refere como ambos os autores, Chakrabarty e o argentino José Aricó, tratam de intervir na

15 Neste número especial, ao contrário dos anteriores números, não há rubricas diferenciadas para ensaios e artigos. Quando são ensaios, tal está devidamente assinalado em nota de rodapé. Publicamos ainda textos a convite dos editores que não passaram por um processo de arbitragem científica externo; tal está também assinalado em nota de rodapé.

16 A conferência foi organizada pela Fundação Culturgest e pelo Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT), a quem agradecemos o apoio concedido para a realização da entrevista. Refira-se ainda que na mesma ocasião realizámos uma entrevista com Chakrabarty exclusivamente centrada na questão do antropoceno e na sua reflexão sobre os desafios colocados pelas alterações climáticas à disciplina da História. Esta entrevista pode ser lida (em português e em inglês) no número 11 da revista *Electra*.

17 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?", *Representations* 37 (1992): 1-26.

discussão sobre o orientalismo em Marx: o primeiro fá-lo abrindo o corpus marxista ao problema da diferença histórica e cultural; o segundo, procurando deslocar a tradição marxista através da recuperação de um Marx interessado nas especificidades das sociedades não-europeias. Já no artigo "Scientific Humanisms and the Anthropocene, Or the Dream of Steering the Evolution of the Human and Natural World", Marianne Sommer convoca a obra do biólogo Julian Sorell Huxley, em particular a noção de humanismo proveniente da história da ciência e da biologia evolutiva, para questionar as categorias de progresso, teleologia, universalismo e eurocentrismo presentes nalguns modos de fazer a história. Marianne Sommer discute tais categorias a partir da obra recente de Dipesh Chakrabarty sobre as alterações climáticas e o antropoceno, salientando como a noção de "antropos" se lhe afigura problemática.

Outros textos aproximam-se de Chakrabarty e do seu *Provincializing Europe* a partir de geografias específicas, relativas à experiência de ensino ou às áreas de investigação dos autores dos textos. Saurabh Dube relata na primeira pessoa o seu encontro com a obra de Dipesh Chakrabarty e como esta constituiu para si um desafio simultaneamente intelectual e pedagógico. No artigo "Historicism and Modernity in the Wake of Provincializing Europe", Dube conta como a sua experiência de professor de História no Colégio do México lhe permitiu, por um lado, testar os problemas e as possibilidades do pós-colonialismo enquanto conceito e perspectiva, e, por outro, olhar para a modernidade enquanto processo histórico e forma de poder. Em "Rethinking Medieval Japan", Rajyashree Pandey retoma uma célebre fórmula de *Provincializing Europe*, segundo a qual o pensamento das ciências sociais é simultaneamente indispensável e inadequado para compreender os mundos não ocidentais, em particular quando se trata de áreas que permaneceram praticamente intocadas pelo pensamento ocidental, como o Japão medieval, e que não foram aprisionadas a uma série de binarismos eurocêntricos, como sexo/género ou natureza/sociedade. Ao invés da "inadequação" das categorias ocidentais impossibilitar a tarefa hermenêutica, ou ser uma fonte de ansiedade, Rajyashree Pandey sugere que um dos prazeres de analisar os textos do Japão medieval é

precisamente a sua estranheza, e que lidar com ela exige uma desfamiliarização de categorias que se tornaram óbvias e inquestionáveis no pensamento ocidental. Por sua vez, Patrícia Martins Marcos procura desnaturalizar os legados do imperialismo inscritos em ideias sobre o lugar (Europa ou o Estado-nação) e o tempo (a cronologia universal da modernidade). No artigo "Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time", a autora propõe-se provincializar a cronologia política que liga os passados coloniais a presentes (pós-) coloniais, e desafiar as formas de periodização "soberanistas", contrapondo-lhes cronologias corporais, presentes nas expressões ameríndias de resistência colonial, de modo a considerar o modo como o passado é corporificado e reiterado através da memória, trauma e deficiência.

Finalmente, um último conjunto de ensaios e artigos concentra-se mais demoradamente na forma de compreendermos a Europa, as suas histórias e legados. No artigo "Provincializing for a Planetary Perspective", Bo Stråth extrapola a análise das dinâmicas da modernidade iluminista para os tempos actuais, destacando como estas foram interrompidas pela polarização crescente entre a narrativa da globalização, que equivaleria a uma nova história 1, e o actual nacionalismo étnico, que emergiu após a crise financeira de 2008 e que corresponderia à história 2. Stråth apropria-se das duas formas de tempo histórico para discutir a permanência do regime temporal presentista na actualidade. A inexistência de um futuro mobilizador e a construção discursiva de um passado idealizado, impulsionado em grande medida pelo novo nacionalismo xenófobo e pelo extremismo de direita, seriam a expressão da falta de horizontes de expectativa e do fracasso da categoria de progresso.

Já Manuela Ribeiro Sanches aborda *Provincializing Europe* a partir da prática da tradução, assinalando o modo com esta pode constituir um ponto de partida para dar conta das ambiguidades da obra. Tradutora de dois textos de Chakrabarty para português, no seu artigo "Traduzir o que ainda não compreendo", Ribeiro Sanches salienta que o projeto de "provincializar a Europa" não equivale à rejeição da Europa, enquanto entidade imaginada, mas a um esforço de tradução entre o

pensamento europeu e outros modos de ver e estar no mundo.[18] Seguindo o gesto chakrabartiano de colocar em tensão permanente mundos aparentemente inconciliáveis, Manuela Ribeiro Sanches sugere que a tradução é precisamente uma tentativa de negociar sentidos, de conjugar opostos e de se predispor a aceitar um horizonte ético, de modo a "ouvir aquilo que ainda não se compreende".

Por sua vez, no artigo "Misreading Provincializing Europe", Christopher L. Hill sublinha as ambiguidades e contradições de um livro que se propõe tratar de um problema que é simultaneamente metodológico, institucional e político. Recordando o impacto que a leitura de Chakrabarty teve no seu próprio trajecto, nomeadamente na sua investigação de doutoramento em torno do desenvolvimento das histórias nacionais (veja-se o seu *National History and the World of Nations - Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States*)[19], Hill identifica diferentes interpretações enviesadas a que a ideia de provincializar a Europa foi sendo sujeita, propondo a perspectiva transnacional como uma forma de explorar e procurar resolver aquelas ambiguidades e contradições. Por fim, no comentário a "Provincializing Europe", Montserrat Galceran refere como o pensamento europeu, sendo marcado por desvios e disjunções, nem por isso deixa de ser exportado como um todo, parecendo mais homogéneo do que realmente é, em consequência da geopolítica do conhecimento que está ligada à história da dominação imperial. Montserrat Galceran argumenta ainda que o trabalho de Chakrabraty contribui para romper com a temporalidade única e linear herdada do Iluminismo e do historicismo, o que implica, por exemplo, deixar de pensar a política como um futuro por vir, para se aproximar dela a partir da ideia de que os acontecimentos não estão predeterminados.

Por último, destacamos ainda a publicação de duas recensões relacionadas com o tema deste número. António de Carvalho leu a recen-

18 Manuela Ribeiro Sanches traduziu um dos capítulos de "Provincializing Europe", num livro publicado em 2003, que pretendia divulgar o autor e as tendências pós-coloniais em Portugal. Ver Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, *Dipesh Chakrabarty, História subalterna como pensamento político* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2010); Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, *Dipesh Chakrabarty, Histórias de minorias, passados subalternos* (Lisboa: Livros Cotovia, 2005).

19 Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations - Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

tíssima obra de homenagem a Chakrabarty publicada pela Routledge, com o título *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South. Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene*, coordenada por Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth e Ajay Skaria, ao passo que Sara Araújo traz-nos a sua leitura de uma publicação menos recente e, neste caso, dirigida à crítica do projecto de provincialização da Europa: *The Postcolonial Orient – The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe*, de Vaisant Kaiwar.[20]

20 No que diz respeito às críticas que o trabalho de Dipesh Chakrabarty tem sido objecto, destacam-se, pela sua ressonância e pelas respostas que suscitou, as seguintes obras: *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital*, de Vivek Chibber (Londres, Verso, 2013). Para uma crítica de teor radicalmente distinto, e que se dirige quer ao trabalho de Chakrabarty em análise neste número, quer à sua reflexão mais recente relativamente ao antropoceno e ao seu estudo sobre o historiador indiano Jadunath Sarkar, publicado em D. Chakrabarty, *The Calling of History: Sir Jadunath Sarkar and His Empire of Truth* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2015), veja-se Suman Seth, "The Politics of Despair and the Calling of History", *History and Theory*, Volume 56, n.º 2 (2017): 241-257.

Provincializing History

A conversation with Dipesh Chakrabarty on the 20th Anniversary of Provincializing Europe by José Neves* and Marcos Cardão**

This interview was held in Lisbon in January 2020. At the time Dipesh Chakrabarty was visiting the city where we live to participate as a keynote speaker in a congress on the Anthropocene, organized by Fundação Culturgest and Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia. Nevertheless, this interview focuses exclusively on *Provincializing Europe - Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference.* The book was first published by Princeton University Press in 2000. At that point, Dipesh Chakrabarty was already living in the USA, teaching at the University of Chicago, where he still remains a professor, although in the last ten years his main interest has become climate change and the challenges it presents to the discipline of History and the Humanities, not to mention to humanity itself. Throughout the last two decades, *Provincializing Europe* became one of the most influential books in the field of History, with far-reaching implications for theoretical debates on the status of the discipline, ranging from the ethical to the methodological dimensions of its practice. Planned to be part of *Práticas da História* special issue on the 20th anniversary of *Provincializing Europe*, our conversation with Dipesh Chakrabarty covers, among other issues, his formative years, his move to Australia and his relation with Marxism.

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***Provincializing Europe* was published twenty years ago. What was the initial motivation for writing the book?**

One early motivation was my archival experience, the other one was more personal. The archival experience arose from the fact that when I was young and an apprentice historian, I decided to do labour history, working class history. And I took the idea of "the working class" for granted. I thought that if you worked in a factory, you were a member of the working class. This was the early 1970s in Calcutta, a city where the dominant academic culture was Marxist. The assumption of the received Bengali Marxism was that the working class had a "natural" or "inborn" tendency to be united against their oppressors, the owners of factories and industries. But when I went to the archives, one of the first things I discovered was a lot of new evidence for conflicts –some of which turned bloody, causing big and small riots –between Hindu and the Muslim workers in the factories around the city towards the end of the 19th century. The data suggested that the facts of being Hindu or Muslim mattered to the workers. My Marxist friends and teachers, however, felt very uneasy about my findings. For, as readers of E. P. Thompson, they assumed that there was a story waiting to be written about "the making of the Indian working class." They thought a good Marxist analysis would explain these conflicts away by showing that it was either because of what the employers were doing that the workers were divided against their "own" interests, or it was because of the nature of the labour market, but they would feel extremely uncomfortable with a historical account in which the workers themselves had some responsibility for having feelings that did not accord with our Marxist theories. So they would say, "No, no, you have to find an interpretation that gives a political-economic explanation for the level of workers' consciousness. If you say that the Muslim and Hindu workers had their own "reasons" for engaging in these conflicts, then that's just too superficial." A veritable intellectual battle emerged around my work and around these ideas that I had put forward in a paper I wrote in Calcutta around 1975 on these working-class riots, though I also have to acknowledge the stimulation that these debates gave me

even if much of the criticism seemed stinging at the time. My teachers, I should also say, were liberal and generous enough to encourage me to publish my ideas even if they were vehemently opposed to them. That very controversial paper was later published in the English journal *Past and Present*.[1]

When I left the country to go to Australia to pursue a doctoral degree, I left having been somewhat scarred by the experience of this intellectual battle. But leaving the country made for another realization that became very important in shaping my academic life. In the India I grew up in, Marxist academics did not care to think about whether or not Marx was, after all, a European intellectual, born of traditions of thought that were particularly – and in a provincial sense – European. We used to think of Marx as a scientist. Just as it did not matter that Newton was English, similarly it didn't matter to us that Marx was a German thinker. We had very little self-consciousness about the history of the intellectual traditions we actually loved to work within. As a student, I was thought to think that Marx was right, Max Weber was wrong, you know, that Lenin was right and Kautsky was wrong, that Stalin was right and Trotsky was wrong, and so on. Suddenly, as I started my student-life in Australia of the late 1970s, I encountered several reading groups, reading Marx and *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* and commentaries on them. Reading that commentarial literature, you could not but be aware that Marx was a German intellectual, and that he was a German Jewish intellectual who worked within certain intellectual traditions that he probably shared even with those who were opposed to him. Reading Marx more deeply than I had ever done in Calcutta, I was becoming much more aware of different currents in the European intellectual traditions that Marx drew on. In my Indian upbringing, what we had already accepted from Europe seemed ours. So you could say that my intellectual alienation from Europe, ironically, began outside of India, as I engaged more deeply with European intellectual traditions. In India I was just a Marxist, we were all Marxists,

1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Communal Riots and Labour: Bengal's Jute Mill-Hands in the 1890s", *Past & Present* 91 (May 1981): 140-169.

and Marx was simply right. There was no question of historicizing Marx. Marx was not historical; Marxism was scientific and universal.

At the same time, I felt that without somebody like Marx guiding our analytical framework it would be very hard to think of modernity, capitalism, and modern India. So that's why I eventually said that European thought is both indispensable and inadequate. That was the general idea of "provincializing" Europe. To say that, yes, European thought is part of everybody's life after colonial rule, so it is indispensable but it is also inadequate, because the colonized came to these ideas from within other histories, other understandings of life, other modes of being that were not extinguished (in India), and hence there were always problems of translation (using that word in a broad sense).

Ok, so in *Provincializing Europe* there is an attempt to historicize Marxism... And at the same time, in the book, when you talk about "History 2", you take inspiration from part of the Marxist tradition – for instance, Rubin's writings on value. So one could say that in *Provincializing Europe* there is also an attempt to read Marxism against Marx...

So, I never became an anti-Marxist, unlike some people. I did not become alienated from Marxism to the degree that I would be hostile to it. But I was interested in Marx because Marx essentially embodied and represented that part of Enlightenment thought that was interested in the universal. And the real question for me was: What is the universal? What is its relationship to the particular and the singular? Is it an abstract form? How and where do you see it? I have a sentence in "The Two Histories of Capital" chapter, where I say that the universal becomes visible only when somebody falsely claims to be universal.[2] You know, because the universal is not empirically observable but it becomes visible through acts of usurpation. It is only when somebody

2 "The universal turns out to be an empty place-holder whose unstable outlines become barely visible only when a proxy, a particular, usurps its position in a gesture of pretension and domination", see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009 [2000]), 70

falsely claims to represent the universal that you know that they are not so, but you also see the form of the universal. No particular human being, for instance, represents *the* human form, but you can see the human form in all individuals.

So one can understand from your answers that *Provincializing Europe* addresses major challenges confronting historians and the discipline of History, but also engages with your own political concerns about Marxism, the Left, etc... This simultaneity reminds us of an article you wrote in 2006, "Subaltern History as Political Thought"[3], where you start with a reading of Hayden White, then you discuss the work of historians like Georges Rudé and you end up dialoguing with Rancière's notion of politics and case studies like Francesca Orsini's *The Hindi Public Sphere 1920-1940: Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism*. In this same article you address both the politics and the history of collective agency. And in-between you state your scepticism towards what you somehow consider the final attempts from the Left and from Marxism to name a universal political subject – and you refer to the multitude of Negri and Hardt...

I think something interesting happened in Marxist traditions in the twentieth century, beginning particularly with the Soviet revolution. Take the question of how Marx comes to the world-historical category of the proletariat. The category almost comes out of a Hegelian deduction, a dialectic of deduction. Like if you have Capital as a category that is able to appropriate even the worker's body into the process of its self-reproduction, its opposite is really the person who has nothing to lose but their chains. So the proletarian is the dialectical opposite of the person who acts as the bearer of capital, the capitalist. You don't have to be empirical; if you could think of Hegel's philosophy as

3 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Subaltern History as Political Thought," in *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, eds. V. R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 93-109.

an algorithm, then this would be the result. And I think Marx came to this idea without being empirical. But in 1844, when Engels was writing *The Conditions of the English Working Class* in Manchester, it was as though they found a sociological correlate of the philosophical category. So what happened was that the sociological working class and the philosophical proletariat become the same, as if you had found a philosophical category realized in flesh and blood in a social group that constituted the working class, the class that would carry out the anti-capitalist revolution. This expectation marks the First International and the 19th century. But by the time of the First World War it's clear that the revolutionary Europe of 1848, of the Paris Commune, that revolutionary Europe has been exhausted. And this revolutionary spirit had moved to other parts of the world that were not as industrialized as Western Europe or Great Britain. What you thus have is the reversal of the European 19th century when the sociological category of the working class looked for a while like the revolutionary and philosophical category of the proletariat. But when the revolutionary spirit came to Russia, the working class was small. The overlap between the sociological and the philosophical had collapsed. So by the time the Russian revolution happens, Lenin develops the theory of the "professional revolutionary", who leads the working class. The theory becomes: "The working class by itself will not produce the revolutionary demands that go beyond economism. You need people from outside the working class to lead that class to its revolutionary mission." Trotsky develops the "theory of substitutionism", where the party comes to represent the interests of the proletariat. Lukács has a similar formulation in *History and Class Consciousness*. So you can already see a historical displacement of the original category of the proletariat. The Party has become the working class. And then when you come, later on, to the Chinese revolution –and these are the two most inspiring revolutions, the Soviet and the Chinese, and then the Vietnamese one –you have this idea with Mao that the peasants will be the substitutes for the working class. Going forward in history, when you come to someone like Franz Fanon, the proletariat is replaced by "the wretched of the earth", an expression

that is taken from a line in the song the Communist Internationale. So what you get in the twentieth century is a series of historical substitutes for the category proletariat. And then we, in subaltern studies, come a long way away from Gramsci, with our use of the category of subalterns. Similarly, Hardt and Negri refer to the multitude. My friend Partha Chatterjee created a new category of agents he called the "political society" as distinct from those who belonged to the Hegelian sphere of the civil society. I would say that the 20th century is a hunt for a series of substitutes for the proletariat. The big question of the 20th century left was "Who would be the revolutionary subject?" The Left spent a lot of time, almost a century, looking for a substitute.

And, therefore, while the challenges posed to you by the figure of the working class would eventually lead you to write *Provincializing Europe,* for other members of the Subaltern Studies collective it was the figure of the peasant that first intrigued them...

If we read E.P. Thompson, who was a kind of an intellectual guru for us, we see that the path to citizenship includes the death of the peasant, the medieval peasant. The peasant is forced to move to the city. He is at the factory gate, an unskilled worker. The unskilled worker-peasant is disciplined inside the factory. And these peasant-workers go through a period of transition where they engage in all forms of protest including machine-breaking but, eventually, the stories of trade unionism and organization, and the story of citizenship converge. So that trade union rights become the rights of a citizen. The political subject of modernity, the citizen subject, is thus written into the category of the "working class". What happened in the history of modernity in India or China was that revolutionary politics were engaged in without the assumption that the peasant would die out as a social category. Instead you assumed that the peasant would remain a peasant and would yet be a revolutionary and/or a citizen. And that's why the Party becomes important, because ultimately it's the Party that would have to mobilize the peasants. Subaltern studies arose from the empir-

ical fact peasants did not cease to be peasants even as they became revolutionaries or nationalists. This fault line, between the theory and the peasants, what the peasants actually thought, drove the subaltern studies project. Early subaltern studies – especially in the work of our teacher, Ranajit Guha, undertook structuralist operations to distil out of empirical peasants an abstract consciousness that will be closer to revolutionary consciousness needed for a complete remaking of society.

There are many ways of reading *Provincializing Europe*, but perhaps we can agree that there is a tension between, on the one hand, your attempt to contribute to a better knowledge, a better practice of the discipline of History, so that the categories we use do not limit our awareness of the richness of empirical reality, in search for a better "translation" ..., and on the other hand there is your engagement in a critique of the discipline of History itself, the impossibility of "translation", etc. And when we see your trajectory, from your work on the working class to your book *The Calling of History,* perhaps we can also see in this ambivalence...

In the Introductory chapter of *Provincializing Europe* you'll find that I ask, as a postcolonial person who has been through the historical process of Europeanization of the earth and who, yet, had an awareness of non-European modes of being, from what perspectives would I examine my own life, if you took seriously the Socratic maxim that an unexamined life was not worth living. I realize that my deeper interest in History has always been about making sense of life, of historical forms of life and of different modes of being in the world, to use a Heideggerian turn of phrase. Having a conversation with the two of you, sitting in Lisbon, is very distinct from having a conversation with old friends in Calcutta but not any less enriching or interesting. I was always interested in the meanings of these connections between humans. Because sometimes you don't know a human being autobiographically, but you can have a deep conversation. And I was interested to know, if History, the discipline, could be a way to examine our lives in that Socratic sense. When

I was taught History, it was all Marxist social history and was very sociological. Softly sociological, with causal connections between events, like "this happened because that had already happened." And those were interesting tricks to learn, but I realized that my deeper impulses had to do with more philosophical questions about the meanings of the past or in the human need for past accounts of themselves. So part of *Provincializing Europe*, and part of the work I'm doing in climate change, has to do with this deeper question of what does it mean to be a human being in our times.

But part of *Provincializing Europe* was also about understanding how globalization and the general sense of democratization of the world after the 1960s – when Western liberal-capitalist countries changed their immigration laws to allow the migration of skilled labour from the formerly-colonized nations –enabled different kinds of self-reflexivity about the disciplines we work within. I am part of that migration. By the time I was writing *Provincializing Europe*, I was in Australia. And the most revolutionary thing that happened in my academic world in Australia was the establishment of Indigenous or Aboriginal History as an academic subject. I was teaching at the University of Melbourne. This was a great learning experience. There was an English friend of mine, Patrick Wolfe, who for his Ph.D. worked on the connection between the history of the Australian settler-colonial state and the development of Anthropology as a discipline. He was a very fine man and a brave scholar who sadly died last year. Patrick was teaching a small class on Aboriginal History, and the class had some aboriginal students. Once the class was given the exercise of discussing a historical document as part of their lessons in History's methods, but the document had to with a case of a massacre of an Aboriginal group by white settlers. The Aboriginal students in the class said, "We don't want to read this document. It's too painful." But all this was very instructive from the point of view of how you might go about writing the history of the discipline of history in the colonial or post-colonial setting. Patrick was in effect trying to teach his Aboriginal students that, in order to write good [?] history that would get back at their exploiters or

oppressors, they have to work on and get over their experience of pain enough so that they could read and use the document as historians! I joked and told Patrick this story about an Indian psychoanalyst who had trained as psychoanalyst in America and then gone back to Delhi to practice as a psychoanalyst. And then he discovered that Indians did not know how to be patients of psychoanalysis. Because instead of working the triangle of mother, father and the child, they would talk about extended families, imagined families, village-related uncles and aunts. So the psychoanalyst finally realized that in order to function as an analyst in India, he would first have to teach Indians how to be patients of psychoanalysts, so then he could then cure them of their problems! That anecdote, apocryphal or not, sums up for me the history of the disciplines – at least the social science disciplines – in the colony.

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Rajyashree Pandey

Rethinking Medieval Japan, *Provincializing Europe*

Drawing on the insights offered in Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*, this essay seeks to inquire into both the possibilities and limits of using modern categories of thought, which have emerged out of a specifically Western tradition, for an analysis of medieval Japanese texts. It questions the purported universalism of the categories body, gender, sex and agency – all of which are central to feminist analysis – for reading texts that emerged from within the East Asian religious and philosophical traditions. It argues that sex and gender, which are premised in modern thinking upon a division between natural attributes and social roles, have little valence in medieval Japanese writings because 'nature' and 'society' were not constituted as two separate spheres; and suggests that modern liberal conceptions of agency are inadequate for they cannot take into account gods and buddhas, who were seen as central actors in the cosmological/social world of medieval Japan.
Keywords: Body; gender; sex; agency; Buddhism; passivity.

Repensar o Japão Medieval, *Provincializaing Europe*

Com base nas ideias avançadas em *Provincializing Europe*, de Dipesh Chakrabarty, este ensaio visa investigar as possibilidades e os limites do uso de categorias modernas de pensamento, surgidas no âmbito de uma tradição especificamente ocidental, para a análise de texto medievais japoneses. Este texto questiona o suposto universalismo das categorias de corpo, género, sexo e agência – todas centrais para a análise feminista – para a leitura de textos que surgiram de tradições religiosas e filosóficas do Leste Asiático. Argumento que o sexo e o género, os quais assentam na premissa do pensamento moderno que divide atributos naturais e papéis sociais, têm pouco valor nos escritos medievais japoneses uma vez que "natureza" e "sociedade" não foram constituídas como duas esferas separadas; sugiro ainda que as concepções modernas de agência são inadequadas pois não podem tomar em consideração deuses e budas, os quais eram vistos como atores centrais no mundo cosmológico/social do Japão medieval.
Palavras-chave: Corpo; género; sexo; agência; Budismo; passividade.

Rethinking Medieval Japan, *Provincializing Europe*

Rajyashree Pandey*

The world of medieval Japan, at first glance, seems far removed from the questions and concerns that have animated the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty and others working under the sign of postcolonialism. However, the insights offered by these writings have opened up exciting new possibilities for research fields that have traditionally worked within the framework of 'Area Studies' –a self-contained, empirically based scholarly enterprise, with little intrusion from the theoretical currents and intellectual reverberations that have shaken, and on occasion transformed, academic disciplines such as English and French Studies, Religious Studies and History, to name but a few. The far reaching implication of Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* is the call for a critical inquiry into conceptual categories that are central to the social sciences on the grounds that these categories, "which go deep into the intellectual and even theological traditions of Europe,"[1] are necessarily parochial or provincial, and hence not amenable to being seamlessly transposed to the texts and life-worlds of other times and places that do not share in the history that has produced them.

The categories body, sex/gender and agency – all of which are central to my research on medieval Japanese literary and Buddhist texts – emerged within the context of modern Western philosophical, religious and (more recently) feminist debates. The concepts that in-

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1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 4.

form and give meaning and purpose to liberalism, Marxism and feminism – including rights, class and sex/gender –have genealogies that go back (at least) to the revolutions in parts of Europe and America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. They come to us laden, inevitably, with certain presuppositions that are shaped by the questions and debates that animated Enlightenment thought. If, as Chakrabarty demonstrates, these categories are not entirely adequate to understanding the political modernity of South Asia, they are even more problematic for illuminating the distant world of medieval Japan, which was as yet largely untouched by 'European' thought. However, in so far as these concepts form our grid of intelligibility and are born of our own historical conditions, they are, inescapably, the necessary starting point of our hermeneutic endeavours. For there is little to be gained by aspiring to an unrealizable and indeed unproductive romantic hermeneutic that seeks 'to step into the shoes' of those who lived in that long-ago world.

Chakrabarty's work has brought into view the paradox of using modern conceptual categories which "entail an unavoidable – and in a sense indispensable – universal and secular vision of the human."[2] The challenge, as Chakrabarty poses it is "How do we conduct these translations in such a manner as to make visible all the problems of translating diverse and enchanted worlds into the universal and disenchanted language of sociology?"[3] Working with the categories body, sex, gender and agency – whose presuppositions are grounded in Enlightenment thought – to study medieval Japan is necessarily an act of translation, one which requires rendering medieval Japanese texts into a language that is intelligible to us moderns; at the same time any attempt at translating works from a very different time and place also brings into view the limits of our analytical framework, which far from being universal, is animated by our own prejudices that are inescapably in and of our times.

2 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 4.

3 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 89.

Sex/Gender

We have come to assume that what distinguishes men from women is sexual difference, and that this difference is biologically determined. This distinction is founded on the idea that there are two distinct domains – nature and culture – and that the body and sex are aligned with nature, whilst gender, a social construction, belongs to the domain of culture. As a conceptual category, widely deployed in feminist writing, the term gender, from the outset, served a political function. It emerged in feminist writings as a response to the biological determinism that was at the heart of the claim, made since the eighteenth century, that sexual difference was something inscribed on the body, a fact of nature, that could not be changed, and the reason why women were innately inferior to men. The feminist project of the sixties and seventies assumed the naturalness of sex, while challenging the idea that social roles inevitably followed from 'natural' biological differences.

In recent decades, scholars such as Judith Butler, often working under the sign of post-structuralism, have sought to challenge the claim that the materiality of the body and sex is self-evident and pre-discursive. The focus has shifted to an inquiry into the ways in which this 'facticity' is produced, and how the naturalization of these categories is an effect of the regimes of power/knowledge that produce normative and regulatory frameworks. It is important to note that recent post-structuralist challenges to the view that body, nature, sex and woman are pre-discursive and natural, for all their insights, have emerged within debates that are internal to and produced within a specific framework of knowledge that has dominated Europe's intellectual tradition. These critiques are reactions to a specific, even provincial, history that is seen as having imprisoned thought within the hard and fast binaries of sex/gender and nature/society. Cultures that have not worked with these binaries, and whose life-worlds were produced within a different epistemic framework do not need the insights offered by post-structuralist arguments in the same way. Neither materialist arguments nor social constructivist claims, I suggest, are entirely adequate to conceptualizing the body in medieval Japanese texts.

Even a cursory glance at pre-modern worlds suggests that male and female were often formal organising principles, which accounted for the very generation of the universe and as a way of structuring both the cosmic and social order. They were used to explain and describe larger generative and creative forces which were hardly reducible to accounts of the human body or sexual difference. Furthermore, these worlds were not organised through the distinctions of nature/culture and sex/gender. Thomas Laqueur has demonstrated how until the seventeenth century in Europe, what prevailed was the 'one sex model,' in which men and women were seen as having essentially the same sexual organs – no linguistic distinction was made between ovaries and testicles, which shared the same name, and what distinguished men from women was merely that men's genitalia lay on the outside while those of women were inverted.[4] To be one's gender, to occupy a particular place within the social order as a man or woman, was itself seen as part of the natural order. Both what we would call 'nature' and 'culture' were cut of the same cloth, part of the same divine scheme, and there was no need to turn to the body for affirming this preordained hierarchy. Sex did not function as a biological category any more than gender did as a social one.

In pre-modern China and Japan, likewise, sex and gender, which are premised in modern thinking upon a division between natural attributes and social roles, had little valence given that 'nature' and 'society' did not constitute two separate spheres. Male and female relations were both 'natural' and 'social,' "and their "bodily powers were given spiritual significance as fitting microcosmic participants in a universal order."[5] Male and female principles (*yin* and *yang*) functioned as complementary aspects of the body and were seen to interpenetrate both men and women.[6] Neither the body nor its sexual organs were the privileged sites for the justification of particular social arrangements.

4 Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 19–20, 25–62, 63–113, 114–142, and 150–154.

5 Charlotte Furth, *A Flourishing Yin: Gender in China's Medical History, 960–1665* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 7.

6 Furth, *A Flourishing Yin*, 34.

Sexual difference in feminist history and activism has been the troubled site for imagining women's struggles and emancipatory possibilities. As Joan Scott has argued, there is a fundamental paradox at the heart of feminist politics: on the one hand feminists claimed that "sexual difference was not an indicator of social, intellectual or political capacity." At the same time, by seeking to act on behalf of women, they "invoked the very difference they sought to deny."[7] Butler's rejection of sex as pre-given and her argument that both sex and gender are products of discourses and power rather than natural effects of the body,[8] or Denise Riley's denial of an ontological foundation for grounding 'women' as a stable category,[9] have to be understood as part of ongoing debates and conversations that are central to the history of Western feminism itself.

In medieval Japan, as I have argued, 'man' and 'woman' were not constituted through the immutability of their sexual organs. There was therefore no need to argue that sexual difference was irrelevant in determining women's moral or intellectual potential. In a world in which hierarchy was taken as a given and seen as part of the natural order of things, there were no grounds for challenging unequal and asymmetrical relationships, and the body and sexual organs did not need to become the sites for justifying social arrangements. Given that both sex and the body were unstable and imbued with transformational potential, there was no way of fixing 'man' or 'woman' and indeed 'human' and 'non-human' as unchanging and essentialist categories. The set of problematizations with which Western feminism has had to grapple are therefore not seamlessly applicable to non-Western pasts, which had a different order of questions to which they sought answers.

Body

First, it is worth noting that the dualism that the mind/body debates that have preoccupied Western philosophical thought had no valence in

7 Joan Wallach Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man* (Harvard Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), x.

8 Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 2.

9 Denise Riley, *"Am I that Name?": Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 2-5.

the East Asian religious traditions. Both Daoist and Buddhist writings worked with the assumption that the body and mind were integrally connected, and the central question that animated their theorisations was working out how the two could function most effectively together as a mind-body complex. Mental and affective processes were mutually intertwined, and the body, far from being defined as pure materiality, was seen rather as a psychosomatic process, "something done, rather than something one has."[10]

This is reflected in medieval Japanese texts where 'thought' does not function as the other of 'feeling' or emotion, and where the term used for love makes no distinction between spiritual or platonic love, on the one hand, and sensual and profane love, on the other. The term carries a wider range of significations incorporating physical desire, longing, passion, and affect. The body through which these feelings are given expression is not associated with sin or shame. The word *mi* in the Japanese medieval lexicon that corresponds to the term 'body' does not differentiate between the physical body and what we might call the psychic, social, or cultural body, and hence one of the most common usages of the term *mi* is to signify a person's status or standing in the world. Both material and mental/emotional processes are integrally linked and central to the constitution of a meaningful body/self.

Second – and this has implications for the purported universality of eroticism and desire – the literary and pictorial traditions of pre-modern China (and this is equally true of medieval Japan) have no "image of a body as a whole object, least of all as a solid and well-shaped entity whose shapeliness is supported by the structure of the skeleton and defined in the exteriority of swelling muscle and enclosing flesh."[11] This is in striking contrast to European conceptions of the body envisaged in its fullness through muscle, flesh, and bone.

10 Roger Ames, "The Meaning of the Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy," in *Self as Body in Asian Theory and Practice*, eds. Thomas P. Kasulis, Roger Ames, and Wimal Dissanayake (New York: SUNY Press, 1993), 168.

11 John Hay, "Is the Body Invisible in Chinese Art?" in *Body, Subject, and Power in China*, eds. Angela Zito and Tani Barlow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 51.

Although we would readily grant that different cultures and historical moments privilege certain aspects of the body, be it the ankle, the nape of the neck, or the foot, we are accustomed to assuming that the physical attributes of the body are central to the language of eroticism. And yet, we are hard pressed to find in courtly tales or in love poetry any descriptions of a material body, made manifest through the fullness of the breast, the rosiness of the cheeks, or the shapeliness of the leg. In the literary and visual texts of medieval Japan both the physical and psychic attributes that went into the making of the body found expression in the robes within which the body was enveloped. Robes, which were metonymically linked to the body, were not seen as mere embellishments that adorned, covered, and enhanced the beauty of the body: they served as privileged repositories of both the physical and psychic attributes that went towards the constitution of the body/self; they were part and parcel of embodied being and it is the two together as an ensemble that had the power to generate erotic and affective desire.[12]

Third, across a wide range of literary and Buddhist genres, medieval bodies were granted transformative powers that rendered the boundaries between gods, humans, men, women and beasts porous and fluid. The popular tales of medieval Japan conjure up an unfamiliar cosmology in which plants, animals, humans and supernatural beings intermingle and perform the strangest of boundary crossings. A man has sex with a turnip. A young girl eats the turnip, falls pregnant and gives birth to a boy. A snake is aroused and has sex with a woman. A priest makes love to a young boy who falls pregnant and gives birth to a baby, who turns out to be a nugget of gold. A beautiful woman turns out to be a deceitful fox; a young boy reveals himself to be a bodhisattva. All bodies, even those of women, were conceptualized as active agents that could defy common expectations and perform miraculous transformations.

12 For an extensive discussion of the connections between body, robes and erotic desire see Rajyashree Pandey, *Perfumed Sleeves and Tangled Hair: Body, Woman, and Desire in Medieval Japanese Narratives* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 34-42.

The Performativity of Gender

Rather than the sexual attributes of the body, gendering in medieval Japanese texts is a process that is materialised through specific modes of comportment, patterns of speech, and stylized performative modes, which make the categories 'male' and 'female' intelligible. Here Judith Butler's work acquires a new kind of relevance that may go beyond her auto-critiques of the West, for her understanding of gender is precisely one that sees it not as "a static cultural marker,' but rather 'a kind of becoming, an activity..."[13] The romance narrative the *Tale of Genji*, written by a lady-in-waiting at the imperial court at the beginning of the eleventh century – arguably the most important literary work not only of its own period, but of Japanese literature tout court – demonstrates the inextricable links between class, age and the performance of gender. To say that gender and class/status intersect is of course true, but it can have (at least) two different meanings. In one, gender is fixed or static, and variations in it are due to class – a serving woman has fewer privileges but perhaps also greater freedom because of her class. In this reading, her "womanness" is fixed, but how it plays out in social terms is determined by class. The categories are stable, and one could more or less represent the range of possibilities in a graph, where the vertical line is gender and the horizontal line class; where they intersect gives us a reading/representation of what it was like to be a serving woman, an aristocratic woman of the middling ranks, a woman belonging to the uppermost echelons of court nobility, and so on. In the second reading, and one that informs my interpretation of this text, gender is performative, not fixed and given, and thus how it is performed – what constitutes being a woman – is itself shaped by class, which again, far from being stable, functions as a dynamic and fluid category.

Literary texts such as the anonymous twelfth-century fictional tale *Torikaebaya Monogatari* (*The Tale of "If Only I Could Change Them Back"*) explicitly thematize the idea of gender as something that

13 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) 112.

is not a given but rather a matter of 'becoming' through repeated performance. The daughter of the Minister of the Right Himegimi is raised as a boy and takes her place at the court as a man, while her brother Wakagimi, brought up as a girl, enters court as a lady. It is through forms of rigorous self-fashioning, that is to say, through the cultivation of particular dispositions and forms of comportment appropriate to their respective genders that Himegimi and Wakagimi are able to transform themselves and inhabit their new gendered identities, regardless of their sexual attributes.

A striking feature of medieval Japanese poetry is that gender is disassociated from the body and sex and is seen principally as a matter of certain prescribed stylizations of performative roles. The central figures of love poems, man and woman, appear through terms that are used for both men and women alike. They indicate nothing about the gender, identity, or social status of either the poet or the one who is being addressed. When a poem is described as being a woman's poem, what is at issue is not the sexual or personal identity of the composer of the poem, but rather the particular stylized role or persona to be adopted by the poet that is consonant with woman, not as a real, living being, but rather as a trope or an idea. Even when a poem is marked as anonymous, or when there is no headnote explaining the circumstances under which it was composed, it is possible to infer which persona a poet has adopted. A poet, regardless of his/her biological sex (a category that has no real meaning in this context), can slip seamlessly into the persona of the waiting female or the male who visits. It is through the performative stances adopted by poets that 'man' and 'woman' come into being, and only provisionally so, within the discursive space of *waka* poetry.

Buddhism and Gender

Many of the observations I have made above could be challenged by turning to Buddhist texts in which undoubtedly 'woman' is the marked category, both implicitly and explicitly defined as different from and inferior to 'man,' the normative ideal. Her gendered difference in these

texts takes many forms: her body is marked by the impurities of childbirth and menstruation; she is hindered by the five obstructions - the impossibility for women to attain rebirth as a Brahmā, Indra, Māra, Cakravartin or Wheel-turning King, and, most significantly, Buddha; she is given to greed, anger, pride, and envy; and her beauty is dangerous for men for it serves as a hindrance to the path of renunciation. The fact that in canonical works such as the *Lotus Sutra*, a woman must attain rebirth as a man before she can embark on her journey to become a Buddha has often been singled out as proof of Buddhism's fundamental misogyny.

While it is true that women's shortcomings and sinful dispositions were often used in Buddhist discourse, *even* here, 'man' and 'woman' are marked by a certain indeterminacy, defying any consolidation of them as unchanging and essentialist categories, always fixed in the same way. In the *Lotus Sutra* for example, in which one of the Buddha's disciples, Sāriputra, expresses doubts about the eight-year-old daughter of the dragon king possessing the necessary requisites for attaining Buddhahood, the dragon girl swiftly transforms herself into a man and proceeds to achieve Buddhahood, thereby demonstrating the shifting and provisional boundaries that separate men, women, dragons, and Buddhas. It is hard to distil from this text any sense of 'woman' as an essentialist and abiding identity. This is in large part because all bodies, even those of women, are conceptualized as active agents that can defy common expectations and perform miraculous transformations, thereby attesting to the power of the Buddhist faith. The fact that the body in medieval Japanese texts is conceived of as a malleable and changeable entity and granted enormous potential for transformation renders the boundaries between 'man' and 'woman' porous and unstable. The transformative potential granted to all bodies serves a larger purpose, namely as a reminder of the temporary and provisional nature of all that seems real in the mundane world of *samsāra*.

Indeed, the instability of man and woman as fixed and enduring entities is the subject of conscious thematization in the *Vimalakīrti Sutra*. As in the *Lotus Sutra*, Sāriputra challenges a goddess residing in the house of the lay bodhisattva Vimalakīrti by saying that if she were truly endowed

with wisdom, she would be able to change herself into a male. The goddess promptly responds by changing herself into a man *and* turning Sāriputra into a woman. Drawing on the doctrine of nonduality, she claims that neither maleness nor femaleness are innate or stable characteristics, thereby attesting to the provisional nature of gendered identities.

The stories in collections of popular tales (*setsuwa*) abound with humans, gods, bodhisattvas, buddhas, and beasts who intermingle and change forms. We can only make sense of this mutual imbrication of different realms of existence, if we are attentive to the Buddhist epistemic framework within which this particular way of ordering, knowing, and inhabiting the world, came to imagined.

The idea of the inter-penetration of human and nonhuman worlds was central to medieval Japanese texts, which thematised both the pleasures and dangers of living in a world in which humans and other beings shared a common space and marvelled at the inexorable forces of karma that could work in unexpected ways, bringing human beings in contact with both bodhisattvas and demons.

Agency

What I have argued above has implications for how we use the term agency when we interpret women's actions in medieval Japanese texts. It was in order to get away from narratives of 'victimology' that positioned women as passive objects, subjected to oppression under patriarchal norms and structures, that the term agency gained currency; it came to be used as a way to describe the actions of women, who were perceived as being oppressed, but who nonetheless rebelled against the dominant forms of authority that worked to subjugate them. In their analyses of medieval Japanese texts scholars do not go much beyond the claim either that women had agency and rebelled against the attempts by Buddhism and patriarchy to degrade them, or the assertion that women lacked agency because they were helpless in the face of their oppression. However, ascribing agency to women has been no easy task, for there is little consensus on how one might gauge the significance of women's activities in medieval

texts. There is no way of adjudicating on these different positions on an evidential basis given that the same textual material can yield different readings ranging from women's insubordination and passivity to even complicity in the face of oppression. And yet this framework prevails because, as Marshall Sahlins puts it, the dominance-resistance coupling is "a no-lose strategy since the two characterizations, domination and resistance...in some combination will cover any and every historical eventuality."[14]

A number of unwarranted assumptions undergird the use of agency as a conceptual tool in our readings of medieval Japanese texts. First, agency here is implicitly understood to signify the capacity for action that inheres to humans, defined as autonomous individuals with free will. This understanding of agency is based on a modern humanist conception born of liberal thought, which assumes that each individual is a sovereign subject and is responsible for his/her own choices and actions. However, self-evidently, the world of medieval Japan was not shaped by the anvil of post-Enlightenment thought, or by the self-mythologizing claims of modern liberal and neo-liberal ideologies that declare humans to be autonomous individuals who exercise their freedom and choose that which is in their own self-interest.

Second, this vision of individual responsibility and freedom also presupposes the supremacy of Man as the maker of meaning in the world. Agency in this understanding is something possessed by humans alone. The epistemic shift to a human-centred world, which excised the agency of gods and spirits, was closely associated in the West with the emergence of a new conception of a separate sphere of human life called 'religion,' which from the nineteenth century came to be understood as "a set of propositions to which believers gave assent".[15] 'Belief' in gods and in the cosmos as active agents, in this view, came to be dismissed as flights of fancy or manifestations of irrational superstition, or translated into a secular idiom where they became simply signs or symbols for human fears and anxieties.

14 Marshall Sahlins, *Waiting for Foucault, Still* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press 2002), 52.

15 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) 41.

And yet, it is obvious that in medieval Japan, humans were not the sole actors and makers of meaning: gods, beasts, demons, and even dreams and material objects were seen as working together with humans as active agents in a shared cosmological and worldly order. Medieval texts consistently fail to attribute the events that take place in the world solely to human intentions and will; rather they present them as effects unfolding as a consequence of a concatenation of forces, in which a significant role is assigned to the power of the divine and to karma from past lives. Time and time again both men and read the circumstances that unfold in their lives as the workings of inexplicable causes and contingencies reverberating through past existences rather than primarily as consequences of their own actions as autonomous individuals who are in control of their own destinies.

Third, liberal accounts of agency presuppose that it is the natural inclination of all humans to strive to resist the oppressive conditions of their lives. If agency is treated as being conceptually interchangeable with the notion of resistance against relations of power and domination then acts, particularly religious ones, that work in consonance *with* social conventions rather than *against* them cannot be granted real agency. However, what if we were to decouple agency from the liberatory project of progressive politics? Saba Mahmood does precisely this by calling into question the universality of liberal conceptions of freedom, arguing that "the desire for freedom from, or subversion of norms is not an innate desire that motivates all beings at all times, but is also mediated by cultural and historical conditions..."[16]

Agency, particularly in religious contexts, often lies not in challenging the normative framework of piety, but rather in developing a personal relationship to it through the cultivation of forms of bodily comportment and other acts of self-fashioning to craft the self into a pious and ethical subject. A conception of agency that speaks only the language of compliance or resistance is clearly inadequate to capturing

16 Saba Mahmood, *Politics of piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 14.

these forms of desire and affect, which from a contemporary feminist perspective are reduced to being either signs of passivity or co-option, or at best excused as necessary strategies for coping with patriarchal norms. The act of female tonsure, for example, has been reduced either to an act of resistance to unequal social arrangements where nunhood becomes the space of freedom that a woman actively chooses, or interpreted negatively as 'a form of death in life.'

Piety in these readings is given little credence for it is often seen as a mask that hides *real* social issues and inequalities. When Murasaki, the heroine of the *Tale of Genji* expresses her repeated wish to take the tonsure, her commitment to the Buddhist path is given far less weight than the fact that her husband Genji refuses to let her do so. Murasaki's reason for becoming a nun is emptied of religious content or significance and reduced to being little more than a practical way of escaping from a husband who has been unfaithful to her. However, both the taking of the tonsure and the inability to do so carry multiple significations in the *Genji*, and neither is reducible to being seen solely through the prisms of gender and agency, understood in terms of a binary framework of domination and subordination.

Chakrabarty, in his sensitive reading of accounts of widows in Bengali writings, describes how a child widow recounts her suffering and the role played by the Hindu goddess Kali in alleviating it. Her voice, he suggests, conjures up a different subjectivity from that of the modern individual, evoking a self "who acts as though she or he implicitly knew that being human meant one could address gods without having first to prove their reality [?]."[17] These practices of the self, he suggests, are ones "that leave an intellectually unmanageable excess when translated into the politics and language of political philosophies we owe to European intellectual traditions."[18]

If what Chakrabarty argues is true of Indian modernity, then it is more obviously so in the case of medieval Japan, where relations between men and women were not conceptualized through the language of social justice or human agency, but through an altogether different

17 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 145.

18 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 148

idiom that belonged to a Buddhist view of the world. Amorous attachments, it was acknowledged, inevitably produced pain and misery for all beings, and women often came to exemplify this suffering. However, as Dipesh Chakrabarty puts it, "In religious thought suffering is existential...In social thought, however, suffering is not an existential category. It is specific and hence open to secular interventions."[19] To turn the protagonists of medieval Japanese texts into subjects of modern 'social thought' is in effect to turn the medieval world into a secular one where piety simply becomes a displacement or metaphor that obscures (when read through the lens of 'gender,' 'agency,' and 'resistance,') the 'truth' of the inequality and injustice of gender relations.

One of the pleasures of encountering the texts of medieval Japan is their strangeness, which calls for a defamiliarization of categories that have become naturalized and obvious, such that the reading and interpretive practices to which we have grown habituated are unsettled. The 'otherness' of these distant worlds requires us to be attentive to the moments when our categories are stretched to the point where they fail to render us service. Without disavowing the intellectual tradition within which our work is perforce located, the medieval texts of Japan might open up new ways of conceptualising the body, gender and agency such that they bring into view both the possibilities and limits of working with these categories for describing not only the distant past of the non-West, but equally the world we inhabit today. For these two worlds while different, are not incommensurably so. What makes possible an intelligible conversation between the now and the then is that moment of the uncanny, when we recognise that "these [past] worlds are never completely lost" ... and that "we inhabit their fragments even when we classify ourselves as modern and secular."[20] Without flattening or domesticating other life worlds, it may be possible for us to hear, however faintly, reverberations from a distant past that we believe we left behind long ago.

19 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 120.

20 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 112.

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Christopher L. Hill

Misreading *Provincializing Europe*

Dipesh Chakrabarty's proposition to provincialize Europe harbors ambiguities and contradictions that open it to misreadings. Some misreadings stem from a shallow grasp of Chakrabarty's argument or a cavalier invocation of the title, but others follow from deeper issues in the book concerning the place of Europe in social theory, the universality of concepts from European thought, and the difficulty of escaping the frame of national history. Some problems arising from these issues might be avoided by taking a transnational perspective on the questions Chakrabarty raises, although a transnational approach does not necessarily guarantee success. However one views them, such seeming limitations of *Provincializing Europe* reflect the risks Chakrabarty took in proposing a project that is simultaneously methodological, institutional, and political. Moreover, they are the source of its wide impact.
Keywords: Dipesh Chakrabarty, transnational perspective, *Provincializing Europe*.

Treslendo *Provincializing Europe*

A proposta de Dipesh Chakrabarty de provincializar a Europa é marcada por ambiguidades e contradições que a tornam suscetível a leituras enviesadas. Algumas destas leituras partem de um entendimento superficial dos argumentos de Chakrabarty ou de uma invocação leviana da sua obra, mas outras têm origem em questões mais profundas a respeito do lugar da Europa na teoria social, da universalidade dos conceitos procedentes do pensamento europeu e das dificuldades de escapar ao quadro da história nacional. Alguns dos problemas que advêm destas questões podem ser evitados se adotarmos uma perspetiva transnacional sobre os temas abordados por Chakrabarty, embora esta perspetiva transnacional em si mesma não seja uma garantia de sucesso. Seja como for, as aparentes limitações de *Provincializing Europe* tornam patentes os riscos que Chakrabarty correu ao propor um projeto que é simultaneamente metodológico, institucional e político. São, de resto, estes riscos que estão na origem do seu vasto impacto.
Palavras-chave: Dipesh Chakrabarty, perspectiva transnacional, *Provincializing Europe*.

Misreading *Provincializing Europe*

Christopher L. Hill*

Reading Dipesh Chakrabarty's "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," the 1992 article in *Representations* that became the first chapter of *Provincializing Europe*, was one of those experiences in graduate school when one finds someone has said, and said brilliantly, what was on one's mind without one fully realizing it. Many parts of Chakrabarty's article resonated deeply for reasons both intellectual and institutional. I was already studying the history behind the "universalization of Europe"—especially the role that non-European historians played—without quite thinking of it in those terms. Chakrabarty's argument that other pasts could be mobilized to contest histories governed by European metanarratives—and that national history in particular depended on suppressing such pasts—confirmed my intuition that the topic of my dissertation, the history of national history, was a story of contention and struggle whose ultimate actors were states and the populations they sought to control. For a student of nationalist thought — particularly in Japan, where a particularistic view of history became a legitimation for the invasion of Asia — Chakrabarty's position that a critical view of Europe's universalization need not be nationalist or nativist strengthened my political backbone. Finally, I knew by experience the obligation Chakrabarty observed of so-called "non-Western" historians to know the literature on European history, without the reciprocal obligation of one's Europeanist colleagues. I was an impressionable doctoral student, but I still recall the uncanny sense that Chakrabarty seemed to be saying what I was thinking.[1]

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1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?", *Representations* 37 (1992): 1-26.

Although *Provincializing Europe* is rightly critical of "transition narratives," it is not wrong to say the book appeared at a time of true transition in historical research on the world outside the North Atlantic. Chakrabarty says in the preface to the 2007 reprint that the condition of possibility for the project was globalization, but it is important to recall that the era when the project took shape, the late 1980s and early 1990s, saw the final assault on modernization theory in the Anglophone social sciences. Modernization theory was a key postwar means by which categories derived from the history of Europe were enforced in the study of non-European societies. The condition of possibility for formulating the project may more properly speaking have been the dissolution of the geopolitical order that gave rise to modernization theory, socialist theories of non-capitalist development, and Area Studies. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History" and *Provincializing Europe* were strikes against the lingering presence of modernization theory in historical methods and academic institutions, and an exploration of what could follow its demolition. This was also the era of the ascendance of postcolonial theory's critique of the categories of European knowledge and of their use to rule over the colonized. Like *Provincializing Europe*, other work built on this critique, such as Partha Chatterjee's *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*, was empirically rich and politically bold, but also methodologically introspective.[2] What would follow — where the project of provincializing Europe would lead—was far from clear.

Perhaps reflecting the uncertainty of the moment when *Provincializing Europe* appeared, what readers have taken away from it has varied widely, not always echoing its most important arguments. Foremost among Chakrabarty's interventions, I would say, was the contention that Europe, as the source of metanarratives in the social sciences, "remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call 'Indian,' 'Chinese,' 'Kenyan,' and so on," a condition he

2 Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

described as the "everyday subalternity of non-Western histories."[3] The presence of a "hyperreal" Europe in the social sciences meant that the provincialization of Europe had to be a *methodological* project, not one grounded on the geographical focus of the research. Taking history as "a knowledge system embedded in institutional practices," the project also had to challenge institutions such as universities and the organizations that regulate the historical profession.[4] Though it may have seemed academically oriented, the ultimate goal of such a project was political: to renew political philosophy "from and for the margins" by returning to it "categories whose global currency can no longer be taken for granted."[5] *Provincializing Europe* meant to recuperate the emancipatory potential—and the *universality*—of European concepts such as rights and nation through a double move: to expose the parochialism of their canonical expression, on the one hand; to show the ways the colonized both used and challenged them to "arrogate subjecthood to themselves", on the other.[6]

Bold and confident as its arguments were, *Provincializing Europe* has been subject to frequent misreadings. It is not uncommon to hear "provincialize Europe!" as no more than a call for attention to the histories of other, equally important, parts of the world. The book has been taken too as a program to write the histories of non-Western countries in their own terms, not those of European historiography, despite Chakrabarty's avowal that this was not a nativist project.[7] By the time the argument on the "politics of despair" appears in the first chapter — reproduced from "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History," it seems, out of fidelity to Chakrabarty's first articulation of the problem — the entire proposition may seem like an impossible contortionist act.[8] The verve of the eye-catching title, which can serve as a simple (maybe ir-

3 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 27, 42.

4 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 27, 41.

5 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 16, 45.

6 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 40.

7 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 43

8 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 45-46.

ritable) riposte to all those Europeanists in history departments—may ironically have contributed to such misreadings by drawing attention away from the content.

There are more fundamental sources, however, for misreadings of *Provincializing Europe*. I will point out some sources candidly but also, I want to stress, in a spirit of admiration. What I see as the book's most important contention is also the most difficult one to reckon with. How *does* Europe remain the sovereign, theoretical subject of non-European history? What's more, what can one do about it if, as Chakrabarty says, the European intellectual tradition is the only one "alive" in social science?[9] Misreadings of *Provincializing Europe* also are enabled by ambiguities and contradictions it contains. For one, the book's stance toward national history — jointly universalized by imperialism and anticolonial nationalism — is ambiguous.[10] The critique of the naturalization of the nation-state notwithstanding, the project can be taken as a self-aware continuation of national history as method, inasmuch as the practical illustrations in *Provincializing Europe* can be construed as "Indian," not middle-class Bengali. (The subtitle of the original article *was* "Who Speaks for 'Indian' Pasts?"). The book's treatment of concepts from the European Enlightenment, moreover, is irresolute. Are they truly "universal" or only "placeholders" that perhaps are heuristically necessary for thought?[11] More on this later.

Rereading *Provincializing Europe* twenty years after its publication (nearly thirty since "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History"), I see that what I took from it as a graduate student was also a misreading. The question that crystallized for me from reading the initial article was one Chakrabarty never asked: how *were* concepts derived from European history "made universal"?[12] I accepted the methodological critique, but turned it toward a project in intellectual history, specifically national history as an epistemology and practice of writing.

9 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 5.

10 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 41.

11 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 70.

12 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 42.

In *National History and the World of Nations* I argued that this way of representing the past was adopted around the world as the result of a structural causality created by the extension of the international system of states and the global market. The genealogical sources of ideas about history and society that underlay national history (including the concepts "nation" and "history" themselves) were French, British, and German but it was transnational political and economic conditions that made them useful, even necessary, in other parts of the world. The writing of national history was, fundamentally, a way of explaining the place of one's nation in the world. Establishing and institutionalizing it required extinguishing other ways of imagining the history and geography of human communities.[13] As local as the struggles to do so may have been, however, I thought that understanding the large-scale, structural forces at work required a comparative and transnational perspective. In a sense the argument was about how Europe was *de*-provincialized in the nineteenth century, that is, how some ideas of parochial origin changed the imagination and political construction of community in the ways that were the subject of Chakrabarty's critique.

I continued this exploration in my work on the universalization of concepts which, though still inspired by Chakrabarty's example, was perhaps a more fundamental misreading of it. Looking at why some particularly unusual European concepts such as "society" came to be accepted as universally valid for describing the history and organization of human life, I argued that the critical part of the process was not their production but *reproduction*, a process of transnational vernacularization carried out through second-hand readings and successive translations, that progressively attenuated the concept's connection to the European history from which it derived. Whether those who produced the concepts thought they were universal was not the issue; rather, it was how they were universalized. Political struggle might be founded on competing universalisms, particularly between what I called gene-

13 Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 40-42.

ralizing universalisms (as a process, civilization always has the same result) and relativizing ones (every place has a nation, but each nation is different from all the others).[14] Again I thought this history had to be understood transnationally, and again I was far—actually farther—from *Provincializing Europe*'s goal of reinvigorating the universality of categories of political thought that Chakrabarty considered to be only nominally European.

I have touched on these examples from my own work because it is clear now that in it I set aside ambiguities and contradictions in Chakrabarty's proposition for provincializing Europe—or one might say that I chose one side of the contradictions and ignored the other. One example is *Provincializing Europe*'s treatment of the universality of ideas from the European Enlightenment, whose legacy may be in even greater dispute now than it was in the 1990s. Chakrabarty approached the problem as one of "being" and "becoming," borrowing terms from Marx's argument on the history of capital. Ideas that "are" universal must "become" manifest in the world through a process of working out "logical presuppositions." The universal is never truly realized. Instead different particulars temporarily occupy its place. Nonetheless it still exists. (62-63, 70) This is an unexpectedly Platonist argument that to me never adequately explains why concepts derived from the history of several European societies should be inherently valid elsewhere. Without really reckoning with the problem, in my work on national history and the history of concepts I set aside "being" (the supposition that universal ideas exist) and concentrated on "becoming" (how ideas are universalized). More consciously, I set aside investment in the universality of one set of ideas as untenable, and argued instead that political struggle can be waged through different universalisms (in the example above, nation versus civilization).

Another ambiguity in *Provincializing Europe* that I maneuvered around is the way — mentioned earlier — that the project can seem

14 Christopher L. Hill, "Conceptual Universalization in the Transnational Nineteenth Century," in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 147, 150-52.

to resurrect a national frame for history, despite its critique of the universality of the nation-state. I think that fulfilling the project of provincializing Europe does indeed require working transnationally, not only in methodology but also in empirical examples. A transnational approach is not necessarily a resolution of the problem of working with categories received from the Enlightenment, however. It may in fact create the risk that conundrums in *Provincializing Europe* regarding the universality of concepts, for example, would be reproduced in worse form through the transnational turn. Will transnational history only be a history of the universalization of Europe? The work of Christopher Bayly comes to mind, although one might even fault Odd Arne Westad's much praised *Global Cold War* on this front, inasmuch as "Third World" solidarity movements inevitably collapsed back into the U.S.-USSR conflict, in Westad's view.[15] A decade of dynamic research on the economic, religious, and cultural history of the Indian Ocean—among other examples—suggests however that working on scales other than the nation—that is, differently than *Provincializing Europe*—is a promising path to Europe's provincialization.

With an attitude of great respect, I should say that what I have called ambiguities and contradictions in *Provincializing Europe* reflect the risks Chakrabarty was willing to take in proposing a response to a problem that was simultaneously methodological, institutional, and political. Apparent aporias in the project made *Provincializing Europe* subject to strong misreadings, as well as weak ones. (Hopefully mine are the former.) Places where Chakrabarty did not have everything worked out were openings where others following his lead could go. This may ultimately be the source of its inspiration. *Provincializing Europe* is a project that can be fulfilled in many ways.

15 Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 107.

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Saurabh Dube

Historicism and Modernity in the Wake of *Provincializing Europe*

Focusing particularly on *Provincializing Europe* (*PE*), this essay is cast as a close and critical engagement with the work of Dipesh Chakrabarty over almost three decades. To begin with, I trace how Chakrabarty's provocations have pointed toward post-coloniality and modernity as necessarily contradictory, contended, and contingent procedures and perspectives. Second, the essay tracks pathways that *PE* haltingly intimates and partially illuminate but mostly routes that the work chiefly shies of treading, in order to open up instead the different registers of historicism, the hermeneutical, and the analytical, including their mutual interplay and formidable entanglements, as formative of modern knowledges. Finally, these steps help foreground my own explorations of modernity. Braiding together analytical impulses and hermeneutic sensibilities, theory and narrative, these efforts have distinguished between historically located *subjects of modernity* as bearers of heterogeneous reasons/understandings, on the one hand, and routine representations of *the modern subject* as insinuating a singular rationality, on the other, which together carry wide implications.
Keywords: Historicism; modernity; *difference*; analytical/hermeneutical.

Historicismo e Modernidade depois de *Provincializaing Europe*

Centrando-se em particular em *Provincializing Europe* (*PE*), este ensaio apresenta-se enquanto engajamento próximo e crítico com o trabalho de Dipesh Chakrabarty ao longo de quase duas décadas. Em primeiro lugar, rastreia a forma como as provocações de Chakrabarty inscrevem a pós-colonialidade e a modernidade enquanto procedimentos e perspectivas necessariamente contraditórias, contestadas e contingentes. Em segundo lugar, o ensaio indaga os caminhos que *PE* hesitantemente sugere e parcialmente ilumina, mas sobretudo persegue vias que o trabalho evitar tomar a fim de revelar os diferentes registos do historicismo, do hermenêutico e do analítico, incluindo a sua interação mútua e entrecruzamentos formidáveis, enquanto formador de conhecimentos modernos. Finalmente, estas disposições ajudaram a enquadrar as minhas próprias investigações em torno da modernidade. Entrelaçando impulsos analíticos e sensibilidades hermenêuticas, teoria e narrativa, estes esforços distinguiram entre, por um lado, os *sujeitos da modernidade* historicamente localizados como portadores de razões/entendimento heterogêneos, e, por outro, representações usuais do *sujeito moderno* enquanto insinuando uma racionalidade singular, sendo que ambas, em conjunto, assumem implicações mais vastas.
Palavras-chave: historicismo; modernidade; *difference*; analítico/hermenêutico.

Historicism and Modernity in the Wake of *Provincializing Europe*

Saurabh Dube*

My engagement with *Provincializing Europe* (henceforth, *PE*) began much before its publication two decades ago.[1] This should not be surprising, for it was in his influential essay "Postcoloniality and the artifice of history" of the early 1990s, that Dipesh Chakrabarty first raised probing questions concerning the writing of history as haunted by the spectre of Europe.[2] Here, while he focused on "history" as produced in the institutional academe as stamped by Europe as the sovereign subject of all histories, Dipesh equally underscored how, in "phenomenal" worlds of quotidian imaginaries, Europe routinely appears as the overwhelming means and measures of the modern, the very habitus of history, progress, and modernity.

I initially encountered the essay a year after my return to India in 1992 – from the University of Cambridge, where I had pursued a PhD

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1 Actually, close encounters with Dipesh Chakrabarty's corpus have been an integral part of my critical concerns since at least the late 1980s. The entanglements should become clear from the arguments and citations that underlie this essay. Now, rather than claiming any novelty (wherever that might rest), the present piece presents the terms, textures, and transformations of my engagements with Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*: *Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). See also the dialogue conducted over almost two decades contained in Saurabh Dube, "Histories, dwellings, habitations: A cyber-conversation with Dipesh Chakrabarty," in *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene*, ed. Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth, and Ajay Skaria (London and New York: 2020), 56-72.

2 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the artifice of history: Who speaks for 'Indian' pasts?" *Representations* 37 (Winter 1992): 1-26.

in South Asian history – in order to teach and research at the University of Delhi. Now, my abiding interests in historical anthropology, subaltern worlds, the "everyday" as a critical perspective, and key conjunctions of archival research and field work were always at odds with much of the Cambridge style of historical scholarship.[3] Yet, as a hangover of sorts, I had carried from my time there a suspicion of "trendy" theory, especially the excesses and pretensions of the "postcolonial." It followed that I found Dipesh's arguments as raising provocative queries but as also affected by a theoretical modishness residing in *au courant* twists, turns, thrusts. I was impressed enough by the essay, yet only ambiguously excited about it.[4]

All this was to change with my move in the mid-1990s to join the faculty of the Centro de Estudios de Asia y África at El Colegio de México in Mexico City. I now found that:

> At the Centro...among students and faculty, India – or China or Chad – frequently appeared as essentially different, all too distant, articulated by the oppositions between the Occident and the Orient, the West and the Rest, with Latin America positioned, uneasily yet readily, as part of *el Occidente*. This was true not only of my centre, but it was characteristic of scholarly sentiments, quotidian conceptions, academic apprehensions, and their institutional manifestations in the Latin American world, more generally. On the one hand, Asia and Africa embodied a marvellous difference from the West, the mark of enchantment, *algo bello*, something beautiful. On the other hand, they embodied a contaminated distance from the West, the sign

3 For example, Saurabh Dube, *Untouchable Pasts: Religion, Identity, and Power among a Central Indian Community, 1780-1950* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998).

4 See the discussion ahead of Chakrabarty's explorations of a Bengali modernity in colonial India, which were anticipated by "Postcoloniality and the artifice of history." Dipesh Chakrabarty "The difference-deferral of a colonial modernity: Public debates on domesticity in British Bengal," in *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in honor of Ranajit Guha*, ed. David Arnold and David Hardiman (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 50-88.

> of backwardness, *algo feo*, something ugly. At the same time, these twin dispositions rested upon the hierarchies and oppositions of a singular Western modernity and an exclusive universal history, the seductions of enchantment and the ruses of disenchantment, scholarly traces and commonplaces, tracks in the shadow of the nation – in Western contexts, and non-Western theatres.[5]

As I set out to query such grids, particularly in pedagogical endeavours, two loaded terms revealed and insinuated themselves in my attempts at a conversation between South Asian and Latin American worlds: on the one hand, the problems and possibilities of the *postcolonial* as a concept and perspective; on the other, the apprehensions and articulations of *modernity* as historical processes of meaning and power. In each case, I learned much from Dipesh's essay as I read and re-read it, several times, while teaching and writing. Now, more than just its seemingly snazzy coinage of "provincializing Europe" – that had catapulted the essay to enormous importance, and possibly brought Chakrabarty to Chicago from Melbourne – my engagements with the author and his emphases had their own place and provenance.

The essay allowed me to think through ways in which the past and present of India or Mexico come to be cast in "terms of irrevocable principles of failure, lack, and absence, since they are always/already measured against apparent developments in the European/Euro-American arenas."[6] Nor was this the case merely with Mexico and India, but of all space-times that are not quite the West, which is itself a hyper-imaginary construct *and* an entirely-tangible category, an overwrought apparition *and* a palpable entity. Unsurprisingly, this Europe appears as history, modernity, and destiny – realized or failed – for every people and each country across the globe. At stake are procedures

5 Saurabh Dube, *Stitches on Time: Colonial Textures and Postcolonial Tangles* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 5.

6 Saurabh Dube, "Mirrors of modernity: Time-space, the subaltern, and the decolonial," *Postcolonial Studies* 19, no. 1 (2016): 3.

that exorcize the fault-lines of this West – especially the "undemocratic foundations" of modern democracy as resting upon political-economies of slavery, for example – that Dipesh pointed toward in his elaborations of "a politics of despair" that drove the bid to provincialize Europe.[7] Taken together, circulating amidst other prescient perspectives, critical ethnographies, theoretical endeavours, and imaginative histories, Dipesh's provocations pointed me to post-coloniality and modernity as necessarily contradictory, contended, and contingent procedures and perspectives.

"Postcoloniality and the artifice of history" announced the wider project that went onto become *PE*. Allow me to present a thumbnail account of *PE*'s key claims, a sketch appropriately, appositely drawn jointly with two companions and colleagues, comrades and co-conspirators, who have also long engaged Dipesh's writings. In *PE* Chakrabarty argues that:

> ...displacing, or at least challenging, the positioning of Europe as the sovereign theoretical subject of all histories (and thereby "provincializing Europe") requires making a place for "difference" in historical thought. The difference of the non-Western world is in fact already registered in history writing, as well as in other disciplines and in quotidian forms of thought, but this takes the form of what Chakrabarty calls "historicism" – regarding the non-Western world as "backward"' and "behind" the West, and thus destined, one (distant) day, to recapitulate its trajectory.... [Here] Chakrabarty counterpoises two modes of thought for studying the past: an analytic mode, which is indispensable to accounting for the common world we all now inhabit, decisively remade by capital (what he labels "History 1"); and a hermeneutic mode, more attentive to that which has not been remade and homogenized by capital, where "dif-

7 Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the artifice of history," 20-23.

> ference" inheres without (necessarily) being in opposition to the homogenizing drive of capital (what he labels "History 2"). While the first mode of thought is usually deemed to be sufficient, Chakrabarty insists that both are indispensable, for without the latter, difference is erased and the temporally disjointed nature of human pasts and presents (what he calls "time knots") is elided and, indeed, illegitimately "smoothed out."[8]

All of this registered, it is to issues of historicism and history-writing, the analytical and the hermeneutic, and modernity and difference in *PE* that I now turn. My bid is to open up the terms and textures of these formulations, entering precisely their protocols of presentation while tracking their certainties, hesitations, and possibilities, as read in their overlapping yet distinct registers.

Chakrabarty frames "historicism" as persistent developmental regimes of time, temporality, and history. This is to say, a pervasive mode of thinking and manner of knowing, which appears intimately implicated in social-scientific understandings and wider historical practice. Based on the principle of "secular, empty, homogeneous time", historicism has found acute articulations since the nineteenth century, when it made possible "the European domination of the world."[9] Here are to be found, then, key questions concerning a singular yet hierarchizing time that splits social words into "developed" spaces and "backward" ones. Against such terms of historicism, Chakrabarty posits the plurality of life-worlds, the "necessarily fragmentary histories of human belonging that never constitute a one or a whole", which straddle an ever living past and a radically heterogeneous now.[10]

8 Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth, and Ajay Skaria, "Engaging Dipesh Chakrabarty: An introduction," in *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene*, eds., Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth, and Ajay Skaria (London and New York: 2020), 2-3.

9 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 7.

10 Ibid., 255; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

It is possible to suggest that Chakrabarty's rendering of historicism shares attributes with understandings of the concept that not only abound in the present but reach back to the past (recall Karl Popper, for example). But my point concerns the importance of attending to other sets of delineations and debates arounds historicism.[11] To begin with, here are to be found discussions of historicism as entailed in the practice of philosophy and history of, for example, Giambattista Vico, Johann Gottfried von Herder, and Johann Georg Hamann, and acquiring diverse yet acute manifestations across the nineteenth century, the time when the term was first invented. Such expressions of historicism variously entailed: the principle of the individuality (even as they often pursued a universal history); critiques of an abstract and aggrandizing reason as well as of "the prejudice of philosophers that, in some spiritual way concepts preceded words"; reassertions of the centrality of language and historical experience; and acute inclinations toward hermeneutical (as distinct from analytical) understandings.[12] This is to say also distinct formations and discrete intimations of what Isaiah Berlin has notably described as the "Counter-Enlightenment", "the great river of romanticism" running from the eighteenth into the nineteenth centuries, its waters no less overflowing into the times and terrains that have come after.[13] Now, if *PE* admits at all of such formations of historicism in its discussion of the concept-entity, the work does so mainly in implied manners.[14]

11 For an early statement of these issues see Saurabh Dube, *After Conversion: Cultural Histories of Modern India* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2010); see also, Dube, "Histories, dwellings, habitations."

12 Donald R. Kelley, *Faces of History: Historical Inquiry from Herodotus to Herder* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 247.

13 Isaiah Berlin, *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 1-24; Isaiah Berlin, *Three Critics of the Enlightenment*: *Vico, Hamann, Herder* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

14 Five clarifications warrant emphasis, keeping in view the concerns of this journal symposium on *PE*. First, I view the various counter-Enlightenments as constitutive of the Enlightenment. Second, rather than an exclusive Enlightenment I am speaking here of rather more plural Enlightenment*s*, not merely on empirical registers but in critical ways. At stake were distinct expressions of universal and natural history alongside contending strains of rationalism in France, of empiricism-scepticism in Britain, and of their particular conjunctions in Germany. Third, in my reading, procedures of the secularization of Judeo-Christian time that accompanied the Enlightenment were at once an emergent and consequential idea yet a circumscribed and

In terms of textual traditions, then, does Chakrabarty's reference to historicism involve mainly the writing of history that began in the second half of the nineteenth century? Here were to be found the disciplinary elaborations of *historismus* in Germany, which bore a double-side relationship with the ideas and imaginaries of universal human progress.[15] Avowing hermeneutic and counter-Enlightenment impulses, such historicist accounts acutely articulated notions of culture, tradition, and the *Volk*, principally of the nation. In doing so, they queried the conceits of an aggrandizing reason as well as of developmental schemes of philosophical history that they saw as leitmotifs of the Enlightenment. The point is that all this could allow for relatively pluralistic understandings of cultures and nations. At the same time, following the influence of Leopold von Ranke's endorsements of "source criticism", the official archive, and historical narration (as "telling it the way it really was") such historicism principally reinforced the exclusive designs of singular histories, turning on a parochial, often divisive, nation-state and its power-politics. The documentary dispositions and the philological methods underlying the historicist principle of "continuity" meant also that most non-European "others" were banished from the pages of history. In sum, going back to the compelling influence of Herder, these traditions reveal the possibility of pluralist and relativist imaginaries *and* the presence of nationalist and racialist presumptions – providing a distinct twist to hermeneutic dispositions, analytical orientations, and their conjunctions.[16]

limited process. Fourth, the Enlightenment entailed not only the reordering of philosophy but the remapping of history, not just the reworking of human reason but the replotting of human nature. Fifth and finally, taken together, at stake was the rethinking – at once philosophical, historical, and anthropological – of "man", "civilization", and "nature", in terrains where biblical assumption continued to cast its light and shadow. Saurabh Dube, "History, anthropology, and rethinking modern disciplines," in *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Anthropology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press [web resource], forthcoming); Saurabh Dube, *Subjects of Modernity: Time-Space, Disciplines, Margins* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017).

15 Here I am bringing together the emphases of works such as Kelley, *Faces of History*, 244-72; Georg Iggers, "Historicism: The history and meaning of the term," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995): 129-52; Georg Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*. Revised edition. (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2012); George Stocking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), particularly 20-5; and John Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

16 Alongside, the elaboration of the discipline elsewhere in Euro-American arenas meant that history-writing not only bore the flag of the nation but carried the impress of empire. Here, the

There are critical overlaps as well as key distinctions between Chakrabarty's sensibilities and those of these other, modern historicisms. The overlaps especially concern Chakrabarty's avowal of hermeneutic propensities and protocols and his interrogation of a purely analytical reason and its overwrought procedures. He finds in "analytical" social science the tendency to "evacuate the local in favour of some abstract universal" and to demystify "ideology" in the pursuit of a just social order. Against this is contrasted the "hermeneutical" tradition that "produces a loving grasp of detail in search of an understanding of the diversity of human life-worlds", based on the intimate connection of thought with particular places and forms of life and resulting in "affective histories." Chakrabarty admits that the distinction between these traditions is somewhat "artificial" in as much as "most important thinkers" belong to both at once. At the same time, he equally casts the division as "a fault line central to modern European social thought". Thus, the claims of *PE* "turn around" and "take advantage" of the "fault line" by sustaining a separation between the "analytical" and the "hermeneutical" as critically opposed traditions.[17] Indeed, Chakrabarty's effort is to retain a tension between the two, where the "analytical" is seen as indispensable to thinking about issues of social justice and the "hermeneutic" is understood as leading toward recognition of the innate heterogeneity and the not-oneness of social worlds. These entwined procedures – themselves containing Chakrabarty's rethinking of developmental thought – intimate Chakrabarty's uses and ruses of modern historicism.

Where am I going with this discussion? Much more than terminological quibbles about the word and category of historicism are at

recent pasts of dark and distant, chiefly colonial, territories and terrains frequently appeared as footnotes and appendices to the master-history of Europe, and the extending frontiers of the historical imagination in settler spaces orchestrated their primitive subjects through civilizational allegories. And what of the modern histories construed in colonized countries and emergent nations? These accounts were not merely replications of blueprints out of Europe, instead imbuing their accounts with particular protocols of proof and method, truth and philosophy. At the same time, such renderings of the past were also often envisioned in the image of a progressive European civilization, albeit using unto their own purposes the hierarchies and oppositions of Western modernity. These and other issues of historicism are discussed in Dube, "History, anthropology, and rethinking modern disciplines."

17 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 18.

stake here. Nor are mine mere empirical exceptions to Chakrabarty's theoretical claims. It is not only that Chakrabarty's apprehensions and critique of historicism can be understood as being internally consistent, also bearing into account the lack of consensus that has characterized this contended notion from the beginning. It is also that his definition of historicism has the potential of registering that its other usages could be marked by developmental assumptions and epistemic violations regarding the past and the present, even if Chakrabarty's understanding appears to ignore the hermeneutic propensities of historicism in its distinct avatars.

To bring matters home, my suggestion concerns the importance of traversing pathways that *PE* might point toward and even partially illuminate but also routes that the work chiefly shies away from treading – on account of its emphases and procedures. Specifically, it is important to open up the different registers of historicism, the hermeneutical, and the analytical, including their mutual interplay and formidable entanglements, as a crucial part of modern knowledges and their articulations. Here, it is crucial to stay with the distinction between analytical and hermeneutical traditions, one that Chakrabarty foregrounds. At the same time, it is equally imperative to take leave of those of Chakrabarty's procedures that treat these traditions as rather pure heuristic principles and render them as functioning at a remove from each other, only to then bring the two together by retaining a tension between them.

These simultaneous steps lead us to encounter the analytical and the hermeneutical in their precise concreteness and murkiness, their mutual admixtures and interpenetrations. And this means tracking, too, the wider contours and shifting configurations of the hermeneutical and the analytical – as at once on conceptual and narrative registers. Here, as indicated, it is crucial to acknowledge that writings and traditions profoundly veering toward hermeneutic ways of understanding have often shared crucial attributes of historicism's developmentalism that is the object of Chakrabarty's critique. At the same, it is critical to underscore that varieties of history writing and social theory – of a

hermeneutic provenance as well as an analytical bent – have not only accessed projections of secular, empty, homogeneous time, but in their routine practice have also exceeded such construal of temporality. It is in these ways that they have intimated (especially when they are read with an eye for the under-thought and the under-said) concrete, heterogeneous, even eschatological times and temporalities. Moreover, this is entirely in tune with the experience and construal of time and space within constellations of everyday activities. Finally, tracing the interleaving and admixture of analytical and hermeneutical traditions can reveal the formative ambivalences and constitutive contentions at the core of modern knowledges.

Taken together, it is exactly these issues that I have elaborated in my explorations of history and anthropology as modern disciplines; of the construal of space and time in everyday activities and their epistemic avatars; and of the worlds of modernity and their knowledges at large.[18] Here are to be found discussions of the common grounds and routine excesses of formations of modernity as bearing the impress of enduring oppositions between static, traditional groups (that is, "savage" peoples or "native" communities), on the one hand, and dynamic, modern societies (that is, "civilized" states or "progressive" orders), on the other.[19] These have wide implications. For at stake are ongoing and critical matters of difference and power as turning on: constative assertions upholding temporal hierarchies, spatial segregations, and their mutual productions; and contending alterities shaped by historical progress, modernity's guarantees, and their constitutive contradictions. If the questions have been acutely yet uncertainly articulated in the key corpus of anthropologists such as Franz Boas and Evans-Pritchard, thinkers such as Pierre Bourdieu and Jürgen Habermas, and critics such as Ranajit Guha and Partha Chatterjee, their terms and textures have no less animated the meanings and practices of diverse modern subjects and distinct subjects of modernity.[20]

18 See especially, Dube, *Subjects of Modernity.*

19 Ibid.; Dube, "History, anthropology, and rethinking modern disciplines."

20 Consider together, for example, Dube, *Stitches on Time*; Dube, *Subjects of Modernity*; and Dube, *After Conversion.*

In the end, therefore, it is worth staying with and thinking through Chakrabarty's orientations to modernity, their openings and closures. A few years before *PE*, Dipesh imaginatively attempted to "write difference into the history of our [Bengali/Indian] modernity in a mode [or manner] that resists the assimilation of this history to the political imaginary of European-derived institutions ... which dominate our lives".[21] The details need not detain us, but his analyses lead to a series of questions, which I now signal somewhat telegraphically as critical provocations.

Is it the case perhaps that Chakrabarty analytically replicates as *a priori* some of the exact attributes of the "epistemic violence" that he queries? Is this because Dipesh derives from a master scheme of modern history the gendered domains of the "public" and the "domestic", the concepts of "personhood" and the "civil-political", and the antinomy of "state" and "community"? Is this the reason why in his analyses these categories and entities appear as always there, already in place, under every modernity? Are we in the face of the rendering of difference against, into, and ahead of discipline? Do such readings arguably inform also Chakrabarty's endeavour to recuperate the difference of "subaltern pasts" ahead of the discipline of "minority histories", such that alterities exist alongside yet ever exceed the authority of historicism? Are these measures not connected to questions of time and space, their everyday and epistemic productions? Do Dipesh's measures in reading difference against, into, and ahead of discipline – that brackets their mutual fabrications and productions – result in analytically segregated spaces? Does Chakrabarty query the aggrandizing terms of homogeneous time while accepting the ruptures of modernity on which they are founded?[22]

Such questions follow from as well as impel my own explorations of modernity. Braiding together analytical impulses with hermeneutic sensibilities, theory and narrative, my efforts have distinguished be-

21 Chakrabarty, "The difference-deferral of a colonial modernity," 84.

22 Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity*; Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*; Dube, "Mirrors of modernity"; Dube, "Histories, dwellings, habitations".

tween historically located *subjects of modernity* as bearers of heterogeneous reasons/understandings, on the one hand, and routine representations of *the modern subject* as insinuating a singular rationality, on the other.[23] This distinction indeed lies at the core of my understanding of modernity, which I approach not merely as an idea, an ideal, an ideology but as historical processes of meaning and power that stretch back over the past five centuries. In my reading, then, modernity is not the irrevocable product of Cartesian dualities and a singular Enlightenment predicated upon aggrandizing analytics; or of the ravages of the British, French, and Dutch empires after the eighteenth century; or, indeed, of the admixtures of the above. Rather, the modernity of the Enlightenment (with its acute interplay between race and reason) came only after the modernity of the Renaissance (with its interleaving of metaphysical instrumentalism and mercantile capitalism), quite as the violence of modernity of later colonialisms was preceded by modern genocides of the anterior empires of Spain and Portugal. The point is that the processes of modernity since the sixteenth century need to be approached as being constitutively contradictory – not unlike the innate heterogeneity and formative contentions of the Enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[24]

Singular narratives of modernity – as the secular redemption of humanity, or as its fundamental fall – are all too tendentious, seeking to remake the world in their own image. Here, it would be churlish to overlook formations of modernity as drawing in procedures of commerce and consumption, rationality and science, industry and technology, nations-states and citizens-subjects, public spheres and private spaces, and secularized religion(s) and disenchanted knowledge(s). At the same time, far removed from inexorable heroic histories of these developments to be found instead are formidably chequered narratives of their unfolding. This is bound also to the ways in which the core of

23 Dube, *Subjects of Modernity*.

24 Ibid.; Dube, *Stitches on Time*; Saurabh Dube, ed., *Enchantments of Modernity: Empire, Nation, Globalization* (London and New Delhi: Routledge, 2009); Saurabh Dube and Ishita Banerjee-Dube, eds., *Unbecoming Modern: Colonialism, Modernity, Colonial Modernities*, Second Edition (London and New York: Routledge 2019).

modernity contains the interplay between the Renaissance and colony, the Enlightenment and empire, reason and race, liberty and slavery, democracy and subjectivation, sovereign and subaltern, progress and loss, seductions of the state and enchantments of the modern – all shot through with the work of gender and the labour of sexuality, the cultivation of culture and the control of nature, and the triumph of the human and the tragedy of the species. Needless to say, each of these scenes and subjections of modernity, such sites and sides of the modern, are intimately enmeshed with one other. Put simply, procedures of modernity have been contradictory, contingent, and contested – protocols that are incessantly articulated yet also critically out of joint with themselves.

It is precisely these procedures that emerge expressed by subjects of modernity. I am pointing to historical *subjects* that have distinctly participated in formations of modernity: different actors who have been at once *subject to* its procedures while also *subjects shaping* its processes. (That is, the twin implications of the being/becoming and the becoming/being of *subjects*.) Expressed concretely, over the past few centuries, subjects of modernity have included indigenous communities under imperial and national dispensations; the subordinate peoples of African descent not only on the original continent but in different Diasporas across the world; and peasants and artisans, workers and laborers, the poor and the subaltern, the indigent and the marginal that have diversely articulated the colony and the post-colony in non-Western and Western theatres. These subjects have registered within their measures and meanings the constitutive contradictions, contentions, and contingencies of modernity.[25]

At the widest level, the distinction between *the* modern subject and *subjects* of modernity is especially important for thinking through a pervasive meaning-legislative, adjudicatory reason that abounds in

25 Dube, *Subjects of Modernity*, which discusses also the dangers of envisioning subjects of modernity in the image of *the* modern subject; the fact that there are different ways of being modern – and non- and extra-modern –for subjects of modernity and for modern subjects; and that modern subjects are of course also subjects of modernity.

various reaches of the academy while also of course extending far beyond its dispersed terrains. This is to emphasize the requirements of constant vigilance against the seductions of the privileged rationality (and rationale) that frames the objects it considers in the image of the commentator-analysts' singular, self-same reason rather than avowing and articulating subjects of/with other reasons, equally entailing issues of affect, embodiment, and immanence.[26]

Clearly, there is much that I have learned from engaging with Dipesh Chakrabarty – afore, about, around, and after *PE*.

26 Ibid.; Dube, *Stitches on Time*; Dube, *After Conversion;* and Saurabh Dube, "Figures of immanence", in *Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene*, eds. Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth, and Ajay Skaria (London and New York: 2020), 232-47.

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Marcelo Starcenbaum

Más allá del orientalismo: leer a Marx entre Chakrabarty y Aricó

Beyond the differences between the intellectual and political practices of Dipesh Chakrabarty and José Aricó, the work of both authors represent a common way of intervening in the discussion about Marx's Orientalism. Simultaneously with Said's work and the debates generated by it, the Indian historian and the Argentine intellectual developed a reading of Marx focused on the ambivalences of the German thinker regarding non-European societies. Differentiated from the hypothesis of a necessary Eurocentrism in the configuration of Marxist theory, the two authors endeavored to demonstrate the need for Marxist concepts to account for peripheral realities. In the case of Chakrabarty, rescuing the narrative of capital but opening the Marxist corpus to the problem of historical difference. In the case of Aricó, destabilizing the Marxist tradition through the recovery of a Marx interested in the specificities of non-European societies. Through these operations, Chakrabarty and Aricó developed a critical movement within Marxism that involved maintaining a materialistic position but also opening up to national and regional singularities.
Keywords: Dipesh Chakrabarty, José Aricó, Marxism, Orientalism.

Para lá do orientalismo: ler Marx entre Chakrabarty e Aricó

Além das diferenças entre as práticas intelectuais e políticas de Dipesh Chakrabarty e José Aricó, o trabalho de ambos os autores representa uma maneira comum de intervir na discussão sobre o orientalismo de Marx. Simultaneamente ao trabalho de Said e aos debates gerados por ele, o historiador indiano e o intelectual argentino desenvolveram uma leitura de Marx focada nas ambivalências do pensador alemão em relação às sociedades não europeias. Diferenciados da hipótese de um eurocentrismo necessário na configuração da teoria marxista, os dois autores fizeram um esforço para demonstrar a necessidade de ter conceitos marxistas para dar conta das realidades periféricas. No caso de Chakrabarty, resgatando a narrativa do capital, mas abrindo o corpus marxista ao problema da diferença histórica. No caso de Aricó, desestabilizando a tradição marxista através da recuperação de um Marx interessado nas especificidades das sociedades não europeias. Através dessas operações, Chakrabarty e Aricó desenvolveram um movimento crítico dentro do marxismo que envolveu a manutenção de uma posição materialista, mas também a abertura a singularidades nacionais e regionais.
Palavras-chave: Dipesh Chakrabarty, José Aricó, Marxismo, Orientalismo.

Más allá del orientalismo: leer a Marx entre Chakrabarty y Aricó

Marcelo Starcenbaum*

I.

Resulta atinado el señalamiento de Gilbert Achcar de que si bien *Orientalism* representa un hito en la historia intelectual contemporánea, gran parte de su repercusión se debe a que logró sistematizar y amplificar una serie de tesis esbozadas anteriormente por otros autores.[1] Esto es particularmente oportuno para el marxismo, ya que el libro de Said retomaba un conjunto de críticas y reflexiones realizadas dentro de esta tradición a propósito de la relación de Marx con el mundo no europeo. Desde la inclusión de una frase de *El dieciocho brumario* como epígrafe del libro hasta la colocación de Marx en un linaje orientalista que se remontaba a la Antigüedad, Said analizaba la obra del pensador alemán como expresión de la distinción ontológica y epistemológica entre Oriente y Occidente.[2] Bajo la hipótesis de que "Marx is no exception",[3] Said afirmaba que si bien se podía identificar en Marx sentimientos de humanidad y simpatía hacia la miseria de los pueblos sometidos, la matriz orientalista terminaba primando en sus interpretaciones de la realidad no europea. Prolongando la sugerencia de Achcar, podríamos ver en el repertorio de críticas marxistas a las tesis de Said una condensación de las mismas discusiones sobre la relación entre los esquemas

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1 Gilbert Achcar, "Marx, Engels and 'Orientalism': On Marx's Epistemological Evolution," en *Marxism, Orientalism, Cosmopolitanism* (Londres: Saqi, 2013), 68.

2 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Nueva York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

3 Said, *Orientalism*, 155.

interpretativos marxistas y las sociedades no europeas. Piénsese, por ejemplo, en las primeras lecturas de *Orientalism*, como la de Maxime Rodinson,[4] quien señalaba el potencial riesgo de rechazar en bloque cualquier teoría caracterizada como orientalista, o la de Sadik Jalal al-'Azm,[5] quien afirmaba que Said mantenía las categorías esencializadas de Oriente y Occidente y que confundía en la obra de Marx el hecho contingente de la superioridad de Europa en el siglo XIX con una realidad necesaria y eterna. Lo mismo cabría decir de las lecturas posteriores, como la de Aijaz Ahmad,[6] quien advertía que *Orientalism* no daba lugar a las complejidades del pensamiento de Marx, la de Sumit Sarkar,[7] quien llamaba la atención sobre la esencialización de lo otro oriental y la evocación romantizada de lo pre-moderno y pre-colonial, y la de Marcello Musto,[8] para quien la caracterización de Marx como autor orientalista y eurocéntrico no refleja las aperturas teóricas que se producen en sus últimos años de vida.[9]

Al dar cuenta de este repertorio de lecturas críticas, Achcar y Benita Parry pusieron de relieve la desconexión de Said con las discusiones marxistas desarrolladas en los países no europeos y la desatención en *Orientalism* del lugar ocupado por el marxismo en las políticas revolucionarias llevadas a cabo en el llamado Tercer Mundo. En sintonía con estas observaciones, me propongo analizar dos lecturas de Marx realizada de manera simultánea al trabajo de Said y a los debates generados a partir

4 Maxime Rodinson, "Introduction," en *La Fascination de l'Islam* (París: Maspero, 1980), 12-16.

5 Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, "Orientalism and orientalism in reverse," *Kashmin. Journal of the Revolutionary Socialists of the Middle-East* 8 (1980): 5-26.

6 Aijaz Ahmad, "Marx on India: A Clarification," en *In Theory. Classes, Nations, Literature* (Londres: Verso, 1992), 221-242.

7 Sumit Sarkar, "Orientalism Revisited: Saidian Frameworks in the Writing of Modern Indian History," *Oxford Literary Review* 16 (1994): 205-224.

8 Marcello Musto, *L'ultimo Marx (1881-1883). Saggio di biografia intellectuale* (Roma: Donzelli, 2016).

9 Para una profundización de las relaciones entre Said y el marxismo, ver Stephen Howe, "Edward Said and Marxism: Anxieties of Influence," *Cultural Critique* 67 (2007): 50-87; Benita Parry, "Edward Said and Third-World Marxism," *College Literature* 40 (2013): 105-126; Robert Tally Jr., "Said, Marxism, and Spatiality: Wars of Position on Oppositional Criticism," *ariel. A Review of International English Literature* 51 (2020): 81-103. Para una visión panorámica de la recepciones de *Orientalism*, ver Alexander Lyon Macfie, *Orientalism. A Reader* (Nueva York: New York University, 2000).

de sus afirmaciones. Me refiero a los trabajos del historiador indio Dipesh Chakrabarty (1948-) y del intelectual argentino José Aricó (1931-1991). Si bien cada uno de estos trabajos representa intervenciones políticas e intelectuales singulares, es posible reconocer en ellos un modo común de procesar las discusiones largamente sostenidas en el campo del marxismo sobre la relación entre la obra de Marx y las sociedades no europeas. Tanto Chakrabarty como Aricó comenzaron su práctica intelectual en culturas de izquierdas periféricas (India y Argentina), desplegaron sus primeras investigaciones en oposición a un marxismo oficial economicista y evolucionista (proyecciones del stalinismo en Asia y América Latina), enfrentaron interpretaciones negativas del propio Marx sobre los espacios a los que pertenecían ("La dominación británica en la India" y "Bolívar y Ponte") y produjeron obras emblemáticas sobre el problema del vínculo entre Marx y las realidades no europeas (*Provincializing Europe* y *Marx y América Latina*). En el marco de estas trayectorias convergentes, ambos autores desarrollaron, por distintos caminos, una aproximación a la obra de Marx que les permitió saldar el problema de la universalidad de un esquema interpretativo forjado en Europa y afirmar, de este modo, la necesidad de los conceptos marxistas para la comprensión de las sociedades no europeas. A diferencia de las tesis de *Orientalism* y en sintonía con algunos de sus críticos, Chakrabarty y Aricó constataron en la obra de Marx contradicciones y desplazamientos con respecto a su interpretación de las realidades periféricas. A través de distintas operaciones teóricas, pero con el mismo afán superador del marxismo economicista y evolucionista, desplegaron una interpretación novedosa sobre la relación entre el carácter universal del capital y las particularidades nacionales y regionales.

II.

Ha sido suficientemente destacada la importancia de la historiografía marxista británica en el desarrollo de los estudios subalternos.[10] En el

10 Menciones generales pueden ser encontradas en cualquier repaso de los orígenes y desarrollo de la tradición. Para análisis específicos, ver Rajnasharan Chandavarkar, "'The Making of the Working Class': E.P. Thompson and Indian History," *History Workshop Journal* 42 (1997): 117-196; Sumit Sarkar, "The Relevance of E.P. Thompson," *Writing Social History* (Delhi:

caso de la obra temprana de Chakrabarty, pueden ser allí recuperados los principales elementos que han delineado el aporte común del grupo de historiadores vinculados al Partido Comunista de Gran Bretaña. Siguiendo la sistematización realizada por Harvey Kaye, podemos caracterizar dicho aporte como el intento por trascender la estricta noción económica de clase, el desplazamiento hacia el análisis de la lucha de clases, el despliegue de una perspectiva *de abajo arriba* y la recuperación de la politicidad de las clases populares.[11] El efecto de distanciamiento de una matriz interpretativa que se revelaba incapaz de dar cuenta de la experiencia de la clase obrera india es claramente perceptible en la discusión entablada por Chakrabarty con Ranajit Das Gupta a comienzos de la década de 1980.[12] En un pasaje que condensa el sentido de dicho distanciamiento, Chakrabarty afirmaba que el trabajo de Das Gupta no constituía un ejercicio solitario de otorgamiento automático de conciencia de clase a las acciones de protesta de la clase obrera india, sino que formaba parte de una tradición marxista para la cual "protests becomes equal to class consciousness -in other words, no distinction is made between class struggle and class identity- and nothing mediates between the economic/subjective of the worker and the generation of such consciousness".[13] Del mismo modo en que Thompson enjuiciaba el automatismo del marxismo ortodoxo británico, Chakrabarty advertía

Oxford University Press, 1996): 50-81; Bill Schwarz, "Subaltern Histories," *History Workshop Journal* 89 (2020): 90-107. Una consideración en el marco de la difusión global de la obra de Thompson puede verse en Matt Parry, *Marxism and History* (Nueva York: Palgrave, 2002), 104-109. Vinayak Chaturvedi ha señalado que si bien se ha constatado la importancia de la historiografía marxista británica en la conformación de los estudios subalternos, dicho ejercicio ha estado circunscrito a la obra de Thompson y ha quedado relegado una vez que los trabajos realizados en dicha tradición se distanciaron de la historia social, "Introduction," en *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (Londres: Verso, 2000): XVI.

11 Harvey Kaye, *The British Marxist Historians: An Introductory Analysis* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984). También puede verse Dennis Dworkin, *Cultural Marxism in Postwar Britain. History, the New Left and the Origins of the Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

12 La discusión se originó con un comentario crítico de Das Gupta sobre el texto de Chakrabarty "Communal Riots and Labour: Bengal Jute Mill Hands in the 1890s," *Occasional Paper Series* 11 (1978). La crítica de Das Gupta puede encontrarse en "Material Conditions and Behavioural Aspects of Calcutta Working-Class, 1875-1899," *Occasional Paper Series* 22 (1979). La respuesta de Chakrabarty a la que hacemos alusión aquí es "Class Consciousness and Labour History of Bengal: A Critique of Ranajit das Gupta's Paper 'Material Conditions and Behavioural Aspects of Calcutta Working-Class, 1875-1899'," *Occasional Paper Series* 40 (1981). En el mismo volumen se publicó una contrarréplica de Das Gupta.

13 Chakrabarty, "Class Consciousness and Labour History of Bengal," 14.

que Das Gupta no concebía la conciencia de clase como un fenómeno abierto y problemático sino como el resultado necesario del modo de producción capitalista. De esta manera, Chakrabarty constataba que Das Gupta esquivaba los problemas derivados de la existencia de lealtades religiosas en la clase obrera india al catalogar como *sentimientos* a experiencias que podrían ser comprendidas como conciencia de clase de no mediar esquemas interpretativos teleológicos. Sólo la ausencia de una mediación entre la posición económica del sujeto y la generación de conciencia de clase podía haber llevado a Das Gupta a malinterpretar la categoría de "conciencia comunitaria" en el sentido de una matriz intrínsecamente comunal en el seno de la clase obrera india.[14]

Diversas afirmaciones realizadas por Chakrabarty en textos de la década de 1980 dan cuenta que esta investigación histórica orientada por los principios del marxismo británico descansaba sobre un ajuste de cuentas con las tendencias economicistas del marxismo indio y una consecuente recolocación teórica y política de la obra de Marx. En el célebre "Invitation to dialogue", en el cual Chakrabarty respondía a las críticas realizadas a los textos inaugurales de los estudios subalternos, el marxismo era comprendido como un sistema abierto atravesado por interpretaciones divergentes.[15] Se trataba de encontrar un espacio de enunciación tan diferenciado de una apropiación *correcta* de los principios marxistas como de una concepción liberal que sumergiera al marxismo en una pluralidad de interpretaciones. La línea de demarcación era clara. El marxismo se diferenciaba del liberalismo por poseer un compromiso con las luchas contra la desigualdad y la explotación, así como por otorgarle

14 La puesta en relación de los estudios subalternos con la historiografía marxista británica busca evidenciar préstamos de conceptos, metodología e intuiciones, así como un esfuerzo común por superar la matriz economicista de las formaciones de izquierda que precedieron a ambas tradiciones. Dicha vinculación, por tanto, está lejos de suponer al subalternismo como mera repetición o prolongación del marxismo británico. Un tratamiento clásico sobre este problema, en Dipesh Chakrabarty, "A Small History of Subaltern Studies," en *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Henry Schwarz y Sangeeta Ray (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), 476-485. Una aproximación reciente en Rochona Majumdar, "Thinking through transition: Marxist historiography in India," en *Marxist Historiographies. A Global Perspective*, ed. Georg Iggers y Edward Wang (Londres: Routledge, 2016), 193-218.

15 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Invitation to dialogue," en *Subaltern Studies IV. Writings on South Asia History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 364-376.

al concepto de *modo de producción* un rango teórico determinante en el análisis de lo social. Sin embargo, allí finalizaba el consenso. Las diferentes interpretaciones desplegadas dentro del marxismo eran habilitadas por las propias tensiones en la obra de Marx. No cabía, por tanto, ni la elevación de una de esas interpretaciones a canon ni la resignación frente a la multiplicidad. El modo de vinculación con el corpus marxista debía estar mediado por las necesidades de la investigación a ser desarrollada. En este caso, el análisis de unas relaciones de clase subsumidas en relaciones de dominación y subordinación entre las élites y las clases subalternas. Por ello, según Chakrabarty, la tarea de los historiadores marxistas no era la de repetir las ortodoxias aceptadas del marxismo, sino la de restaurar al pensamiento de Marx sus tensiones originales. La historiografía marxista india de la década de 1970 se presentaba como un horizonte contrario a dicho requerimiento. Al respecto, Chakrabarty constataba la paradoja de que en aquellos años había crecido el interés de los historiadores por los movimientos populares pero la comprensión de los mismos seguía siendo abrumadoramente economicista. Replicando nuevamente la crítica thompsoniana, se observaba en dichas investigaciones la tendencia a percibir en las movilizaciones populares una racionalidad económica inevitable y a separar en ellas *contenidos* económicos de *formas* religiosas.

El anudamiento entre superación de los esquemas economicistas y aproximación renovada a la obra de Marx puede ser también advertido en *Rethinking Working-Class History*. Los argumentos centrales de este destacado trabajo son conocidos. La reconstrucción de la experiencia de la clase obrera en sociedades en las que no predominan las relaciones burguesas enfrenta al historiador a un replanteo de su estrategia narrativa. La investigación histórica requiere una ampliación de los marcos explicativos de la economía política a los fines de dar cuenta de la importancia de la dimensión cultural. Una mirada retrospectiva del trabajo historiográfico marxista realizado sobre la temática conducía a la multicitada afirmación de que la cultura era "the 'un-thought' of Indian marxism".[16] En relación a las operaciones sobre la obra de Marx

16 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal, 1890-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), XII.

que actuaban como sustento teórico de dichos argumentos, resulta evidente que por un lado Chakrabarty enfrentaba los mismos dilemas que Thompson con respecto a la jerarquización de la dimensión cultural. Su respuesta, sin embargo, tendía a dislocar los modos habituales en los que era comprendida la relación entre economía y cultura. Esto es, los postulados a través de los cuales se llevaba a cabo la investigación sobre la clase obrera bengalí no podían ser caracterizados como culturalistas porque la propia oposición entre condiciones materiales y conciencia era inválida e innecesaria. Sin abandonar los principios marxistas, Chakrabarty rechazaba la idea de la cultura como un espacio sujeto a leyes externas que lo constituyen como un afuera. Previsiblemente, esta redefinición de la relación entre economía y cultura arrastraba una recolocación del problema de la universalidad de los conceptos marxistas. En sus palabras, "the 'universal' categories of Marx's thought, such as 'capital' and 'labor', considered in their interrelationship, offer us no master narrative of the history of 'consciousness' or 'culture' (and by extension, of 'politics')".[17] Por otro lado, sin entrar directamente en la discusión acerca del eurocentrismo de Marx, Chakrabarty explicitaba los modos en los cuales procesaba la relación entre los conceptos marxistas y la realidad de la clase obrera inglesa. Así como una concepción diferenciada de cultura evitaba explayarse acerca de una posible recaída culturalista, en este caso lo que permitía esquivar los términos del debate sobre el eurocentrismo era sobre todo una vinculación de índole argumental con la obra de Marx. Es decir, que por un lado estaban las ideas de Marx y por el otro la situación inglesa como caso. Resulta iluminadora, al respecto, la siguiente afirmación que precede el desarrollo del capítulo tercero del libro, el cual está dedicado a la relación entre Estado y condiciones de trabajo, y en el que el tratamiento del problema en *El Capital* era una referencia constante: "it should be emphasized that what we are borrowing here from Marx is essentially an *argument*. Marx used the English case to illustrate his ideas, but the specifics of English history do not concern us here. We are not reading

17 Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History*, 6.

Marx as a historian of England and this is not an exercise in comparative history".[18]

Sobre el sustrato de la crítica a las formaciones economicistas del marxismo, la discusión sobre el eurocentrismo de Marx -y el marxismo- se irá imponiendo frente a la necesidad de reescritura heterodoxa de la historia de la clase obrera india. Es más, la imposición de este problema estará acompañada por una autocrítica de los esquemas interpretativos imperantes en la década de 1980. En un texto escrito después de la caída de la URSS, y titulado sugerentemente "Marx after Marxism", Chakrabarty caracterizaba de la siguiente manera el proceso de surgimiento y desarrollo de los estudios subalternos: "our aim was also to produce 'better' Marxist histories. It soon had become clear, however, as our research progressed, that a critique of this nature could hardly afford to ignore the problem of universalism/Eurocentrism that was inherent in Marxist thought itself".[19] El predominio de esta problemática ubicaba a la reflexión de Chakrabarty en un espacio teórico tensionado. Por un lado, porque se mantenía aquella línea de demarcación entre una posición materialista y aquellas otras que no tenían a las contradicciones como objeto de análisis y a la emancipación como horizonte político. Prolongada en el contexto teórico de la década de 1990, la defensa de una posición materialista pasaba por el modo de tramitar los desafíos planteados al marxismo por el posestructuralismo y la deconstrucción. Al igual que en su obra temprana, Chakrabarty abogaba por un vínculo con Marx diferenciado de la ortodoxia pero a su vez renuente a todo intento liquidacionista. En este caso, si bien aceptaba que algunos aspectos de la crítica posestructuralista y deconstructiva debían ser atendidos -los nombres propios allí presentes eran los de Foucault y Derrida-, esto no conllevaba la declaración del marxismo como discurso anclado en el siglo XIX ni como teoría a enterrar junto a la experiencia del comunismo soviético. Resulta interesante destacar al respecto cómo Chakrabarty hacía jugar el lugar periférico de la India

18 Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History*, 66.

19 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Marx after Marxism. A Subaltern Historian's Perspective", *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, no. 22 (1993): 1094.

como elemento determinante de su permanencia en el espacio marxista: "Unlike in the Paris of the post-structuralist, there was never any question in Delhi, Calcutta or Madras of a wholesale rejection of Marx's thought".[20] Alejado de toda victimización, este argumento espacial remitía a la importancia de las narrativas críticas del imperialismo en el imaginario de las formaciones intelectuales y políticas de la izquierda india. Por ello, el reconocimiento de que "much in Marx is truly 19th--century, gender blind and obviously Eurocentric"[21] no implicaba negar la necesidad de los conceptos marxistas para desarrollar una crítica del capital y la mercancía.[22]

Es precisamente sobre esta tensión que descansa el argumento de *Provincializing Europe* que hace del marxismo un conocimiento tan indispensable como inadecuado para la comprensión de la realidad social e histórica de la India.[23] El hecho de que el proyecto de la provincialización de Europa entroncara -tal como Chakrabarty reconoce en la Introducción al libro- con la crítica subalternista al historicismo y a la idea de lo político, redundaba en una prolongación de las consideraciones sobre el marxismo presentes en las obras inaugurales de dicha

20 Chakrabarty, "Marx after Marxism," 1094.

21 Chakrabarty, "Marx after Marxism," 1094.

22 Estos mismos términos pueden encontrarse en la reseña de *In Theory* de Ahmad. Por un lado, Chakrabarty compartía con Ahmad la permanencia en el espacio marxista. Pero por el otro, dudaba de la necesidad y eficacia de lo que entendía como "a moralistic Marxist critique of postmodern and postcolonial discourses". Es decir que en lugar de un esfuerzo por dotar al marxismo de elementos que permitieran un mejor comprensión del mundo capitalista -y que por lo tanto, contribuyeran a una práctica política transformadora-, el horizonte de un trabajo como el Ahmad era el de una defensa dogmática de la teoría inaugurada por Marx. La posición de Chakrabarty era, si se quiere, más pragmática. Antes de reaccionar frente a los discursos que criticaban y enjuiciaban al marxismo, Chakrabarty llamaba a hacerse una pregunta básica: "Do Marxist historians, particularly in the Third World, have anything to learn from what Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Deleuze and Guattari, and others have taught us?". La respuesta a esa pregunta era afirmativa. Dado que proporcionaba los elementos necesarios para una crítica del capitalismo global, el marxismo no podía ser abandonado. Sin embargo, los discursos posmodernos y posestructuralistas permitían dar cuenta de una dimensión que el marxismo realmente existente había obturado: la pluralidad de formas de vida. Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Categorial Theory: A Response to Aijaz Ahmad," *Middle East Report* 187/188 (1994): 54-55.

23 Para un análisis integral del problema de la necesidad e inadecuación del marxismo -y del pensamiento occidental en general- en *Provincializing Europe*, ver Alf Lüdtke, "Western thought as 'Indispensable and Inadequate'. Dipesh Chakrabarty and the paradox of postcolonial historiography," en *Dipesh Chakrabarty and The Global South. Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene*, ed. Saurabh Dube, Sanjay Seth y Ajay Skaria (Londres-Nueva York: Routledge, 2020), 174-186.

tradición. En el mismo sentido de la crítica simétrica de Ranajit Guha al marxismo y el liberalismo por haber sedimentado un relato elitista de la formación de la nación india, Chakrabarty caracterizaba ambas tradiciones como legatarias de un modo de comprensión -y de crítica- de la realidad sudasiática a partir de categorías y conceptos europeos.[24] Esta intervención crítica en la tradición marxista puede ser pensada en dos direcciones. Por un lado, es evidente que Chakrabarty apuntaba a la propia obra de Marx. No casualmente el empleo por parte de Marx de categorías como *burgués* y *preburgués* o *capitalista* y *precapitalista* era utilizado como síntoma del lugar ocupado por Europa como *silent referent* del conocimiento histórico. Pero por otro lado, el proyecto de *Provincializing Europe* cobraba sentido en el marco de una nueva crítica a las interpretaciones marxistas de la India de la década de 1960 y 1970. El desplazamiento de las reflexiones de Chakrabarty desde la necesidad de una reescritura heterodoxa de la historia de la clase obrera india hacia la indagación sobre el problema del eurocentrismo de Marx y el marxismo implicó una resignificación de la crítica a la generación de intelectuales marxistas que lo habían precedido. Ya no se trataba de advertir la oclusión de la dimensión cultural e histórica de las luchas políticas entabladas por la clase obrera india sino más bien de constatar la matriz historicista según la cual los elementos racionales debían necesariamente prevalecer por sobre los supersticiosos.[25]

24 La crítica de Guha, por supuesto, en "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," en *Subaltern Studies I. Writings on South Asia History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 1-8.

25 Si bien por un lado el proyecto de provincializar a Europa representaba una continuidad con el impulso original de los estudios subalternos, por otra parte el mencionado desplazamiento estuvo acompañado por una mayor autocrítica de los esquemas marxistas desplegados por esta tradición en la década de 1980. En *Provincializing Europe* se realizaba un trabajo de detección de elementos historicistas en las obras pioneras del subalternismo, en el propio trabajo de Chakrabarty sobre la clase obrera bengalí y en la historiografía marxista británica. Se revelaba de este modo, en el primer caso, una narrativa centrada en la transición al capitalismo, de lo cual daban cuenta las figuras de la incompletitud en el trabajo inaugural de Guha (fracaso de la burguesía india, "dominance without hegemony"). En el segundo, la pervivencia de una noción historicista de *precapitalismo* y una indagación histórica centrada en la pregunta acerca de por qué la clase obrera no había logrado mantener a largo plazo un sentido de conciencia de clase. En el tercero, la marca *precapitalista* de las luchas entabladas en el pasado por las clases populares (como en Hobsbawm) y la interiorización progresiva de la disciplina del trabajo en la clase obrera (como en Thompson). Esta autocrítica de las posiciones del subalternismo y de historiografía marxista británica se prolongó más allá de *Provincializing Europe*. Ver respectivamente Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Subaltern Histories and Post-Enlightenment Rationalism," en

Si estos elementos representaban el costado *inadecuado* del marxismo para dar cuenta de la sociedad y la historia de la India, *Provincializing Europe* otorgaba una serie de argumentos igual de contundentes sobre el carácter *indispensable* de la obra de Marx y la tradición por ella inaugurada para una comprensión y una crítica de la realidad de aquel país. Resultaba tan crucial el vínculo con el marxismo que Chakrabarty lo postulaba como una de las principales fuentes del proyecto de la provincialización de Europa. La crítica de la universalización del Estado-nación como forma más deseable de comunidad política implicaba un esfuerzo por trascender radicalmente los principios fundamentales del liberalismo. A los fines de delimitar los insumos teóricos que permitían dicha trascendencia, Chakrabarty recortaba "a ground that late Marx shares with certain moments in both poststructuralist thought and feminist philosophy".[26] Como es sabido, la propuesta de *Provincializing Europe* se diferenciaba de otras inflexiones en el problema del eurocentrismo de Marx y el marxismo por esquivar el rechazo *per se* de la razón y de aquellos universales eran deudores de la experiencia histórica europea. Ni inscripción acrítica en la historicidad subyacente a los universales forjados en Europa ni renuncia a los valores y conceptos de ellos derivados. El camino elegido por Chakrabarty era el de la asunción del conflicto inherente al desarrollo de un conocimiento y una crítica estructurados a partir de estos particulares elevados a la condición de universales. Como afirma en un pasaje altamente

Habitations of Modernity: Essays on the Wake of Subaltern Studies (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 20-37 y Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Lost Causes of E.P. Thompson," *Labour/Le Travail* 72 (2013): 207-212. Cierta radicalidad de esta crítica no deja de ser llamativa. Si bien la historiografía marxista británica abona ciertos esquemas historicistas, es indudable que se trata de una tradición que contribuyó como pocas a la redefinición de la práctica política de las clases populares. Sobre todo si el aporte renovador de Thompson y otros miembros del grupo -especialmente aquellos que más indagaron en historia de las prácticas políticas- es analizado en términos relacionales con el economicismo imperante en la historiografía marxista de la época. En este mismo sentido, Barbara Weinstein ha llamado la atención sobre la elección de Thompson por parte de Chakrabarty a los fines de ilustrar los límites del historicismo. Es decir, que el blanco de la crítica sea uno de los historiadores más críticos y más influyentes en el desarrollo de los estudios subalternos, y no contribuciones más tradicionales a la exaltación de los valores europeos. Ver Barbara Weinstein, "History Without a Cause? Grand Narratives, World History, and the Postcolonial Dilemma," *International Review of Social History* 50 (2005): 71-93. Volvemos a este problema en la última sección del trabajo.

26 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 42.

iluminador de *Provincializing Europe*: "there is no easy way of dispensing with these universals in the condition of political modernity".[27] No resultaba sencillo prescindir de los universales porque en algunos de sus valores y conceptos se cifraba la crítica más radical de las sociedades contemporáneas. Se revela de este modo la potencia de un entendimiento del marxismo como simultáneamente indispensable e inadecuado. Al representar la crítica más efectiva al capital, el marxismo resultaba indispensable para un análisis de la sociedad capitalista y el sostenimiento de un horizonte político de justicia social. Sin embargo, al mismo tiempo resultaba insuficiente, ya que "we still have to translate into the time of history and the universal and secular narrative of 'labor' stories about being human that incorporate agency on the part of gods and spirits".[28] De esa insuficiencia se derivaba la importancia de contar con historias subalternistas centradas en la diferencia. Esto es, relatos construidos según los códigos de la historia secular y los parámetros consensuados de la disciplina pero que evitaran la inscripción de la experiencia subalterna en las narrativas globales del socialismo y la ciudadanía. Por esta razón, las historias subalternas "will engage philosophically with questions of difference that are elided in the dominant traditions of Marxism".[29] Ahora bien, el carácter indispensable del marxismo obligaba a que dichas elisiones no operaran como el sustento de un abandono de las narrativas centradas en el capital. Es por ello que, si bien resultaban fundamentales para enfrentar la inadecuación del marxismo, "subaltern history cannot be thought of outside of the global narrative of capital".[30]

Es precisamente esta consideración del marxismo como simultáneamente indispensable e inadecuado lo que se encuentra por detrás de la puesta en diálogo de Marx con Heidegger en pos de un análisis renovado de la historia sudasiática. Nuevamente, no quedan dudas acerca de la centralidad de Marx y el marxismo en *Provincializing Europe*. A decir de

27 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 5.
28 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 88.
29 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 94.
30 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 95.

Chakrabarty, "Marx is critical for the enterprise, as his category 'capital' gives us a way of thinking about both histories and the secular figure of the human on a global scale, while it also makes history into a critical tool for understanding the globe that capitalism produces".[31] El hecho de que esta figura humana representara un legado del pensamiento europeo ilustrado no podía ocultar la importancia que ella tenía para una crítica efectiva del capital. Se mantenía de este modo la tensión que venimos analizando. El lugar central de Marx y el marxismo se superponía a su incapacidad para dar cuenta de los problemas de la pertenencia y la diversidad. Al respecto, Chakrabarty esquivaba tanto el camino de una aceptación acrítica de las figuras deudoras del pensamiento europeo como el del abandono de dichas figuras en nombre de una irreductibilidad de lo no-europeo. Frente a estas opciones simétricas, se imponía un trabajo de desestabilización de los conceptos de Marx a partir de la introducción de intuiciones heideggerianas. De este modo, la estructura categorial marxista resultaba afectada a partir de una apertura a la problemática de la diferencia histórica. Recientemente, Alf Lüdtke ha propuesto enfatizar el carácter productivo que tiene la inadecuación del marxismo y el pensamiento occidental en *Provincializing Europe*.[32] Difícilmente pueda soslayarse la fuerza de esta afectación de los conceptos marxistas, en tanto es esta operación la que habilita la tesis de las dos historias del capital. La Historia 1, relativa al desarrollo universal y necesario del capital, y la Historia 2, correspondiente a los modos de ser humano que no se prestan a la reproducción de la lógica del capital. La primera, una historia analítica en la que todos los lugares son intercambiables, y la segunda, una historia afectiva de la pertenencia y la diversidad humana.

III.

Al igual que Chakrabarty, las primeras intervenciones de Aricó en el campo marxista argentino pueden ser comprendidas en el marco de una diferenciación de una izquierda incapaz de dar cuenta de las especifici-

31 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 18.

32 Lüdtke, "Western thought as 'Indispensable' and 'Inadequate'," 174.

dades de la historia argentina. Sin embargo, a diferencia del intelectual indio, cuyo trabajo se desplegó en el terreno de la historia profesional, en el caso de Aricó esta tarea renovadora asumió la forma de una intervención político-intelectual. Nos referimos a la revista *Pasado y Presente*, que bajo la conducción de Aricó contribuyó de manera significativa a la modernización de la cultura de izquierdas y marcó el pulso del debate político e intelectual en la Argentina de las décadas de 1960 y 1970.[33] A través de la recepción de autores marxistas considerados heterodoxos -sobre todo aquellos provenientes del marxismo italiano- y la apertura del marxismo a otros saberes y disciplinas -el estructuralismo, la lingüística, la antropología, el psicoanálisis-, *Pasado y Presente* aportó una serie de hipótesis teóricas y políticas que modificaron sustancialmente los esquemas interpretativos de la izquierda argentina. En el marco del proceso global de desestalinización, la proyección continental de la Revolución Cubana y la reinterpretación de las experiencias políticas nacional-populares de la región, *Pasado y Presente* enjuició de manera radical los modos de vinculación entre teoría marxista y política revolucionaria que habían imperado hasta entonces en el comunismo argentino. Como afirmaba el texto inaugural de la revista escrito por Aricó, una nueva generación de intelectuales comunistas buscaba deshacerse del lastre fatalista y determinista del marxismo oficial y propiciar un vínculo con la teoría en el que el conocimiento no fuera una simple justificación de líneas políticas establecidas.[34] Con una fuerte marca gramsciana, la revista se proponía como una instancia de indagación histórica sobre las razones que habían impedido la formación de una voluntad colectiva nacional-popular en Argentina. Apenas esbozada, dicha tarea permitía avizorar una crítica impiadosa de las formas dominantes de ejercer la práctica política y la práctica teórica en el seno del Partido. No se trataba solamente de una diferencia en

33 Para reconstrucciones integrales de *Pasado y Presente*, ver Raúl Burgos, *Los gramscianos argentinos. Cultura y política en la experiencia de* Pasado y Presente (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2004), 63-125; Martín Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina. José Aricó: traductor, editor, intelectual* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2015), 52-63, y Guillermo Ricca, *Nada por perdido. Política en José M. Aricó* (Río Cuarto: UniRío, 2016), 65-112.

34 José Aricó, "Pasado y Presente," *Pasado y Presente. Revista trimestral de ideología y cultura* 1 (1963): 1-17.

la línea política sino que lo que estaba en juego fundamentalmente era el modo de relacionarse con la teoría. Tal como se afirmaba en aquel texto fundador, las limitaciones que habían impedido la expansión del marxismo en la clase obrera argentina "no provenían exclusivamente de la clase o el país, sino también del propio instrumento cognoscitivo, o mejor dicho, de la concepción que de él se tenía y de cómo se entendía la tarea de utilizarlo como esquema apto para una plena comprensión de la realidad nacional".[35]

En el marco de este esfuerzo renovador deben ser también ubicados los Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente, una experiencia editorial complementaria y en cierta medida sustitutiva de la revista *Pasado y Presente*. Entre fines de la década de 1960 y comienzos de la de 1980, se publicaron a través de los Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente noventa y ocho volúmenes que modificaron significativamente el vínculo de la región con el corpus marxista. En la misma senda de la revista, los Cuadernos propiciaron la difusión de textos *olvidados* de Marx, autores marxistas silenciados por la tradición soviética, materiales relativos a la organización política revolucionaria y debates acerca del proceso de transición al socialismo.[36] En este conjunto es posible recortar una serie de volúmenes dedicados a los análisis de Marx sobre la periferia del mundo capitalista y a la relación entre teoría marxista y sociedades no burguesas. Al respecto, Martín Cortés ha llamado la atención sobre la tendencia de Aricó a privilegiar ciertos escritos *menores* de Marx que permitían "desarticular los relatos consolidados y reponer nuevos modos de hilar una historia".[37] Uno de los hitos de esta operación desestabilizadora del corpus marxista fue la publicación en 1971 de *Formaciones*

35 Aricó, "Pasado y Presente," 5.

36 Sobre los Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente, ver principalmente Horacio Crespo, "En torno a *Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente*, 1968-1983", en *El político y el científico. Ensayos en homenaje a Juan Carlos Portantiero*, ed. Claudia Hilb (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2009), 168-195. Puede verse también Burgos, *Los gramscianos argentinos*, 125-168 y Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina*, 64-108. Para análisis puntuales de la labor editorial de Aricó, ver Diego García, "¿De la ilustración a la revolución? Apuntes sobre la actividad editorial de *Pasado y Presente* en los sesentas," *Prismas. Revista de historia intelectual* 18 (2014): 209-215 y Sebastián Malecki, "Difundir, traducir, producir. Aricó y la difusión del marxismo como problemática," *Nombres. Revista de filosofía* 27 (2013): 153-177.

37 Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina*, 20.

económicas precapitalistas.[38] Con la circulación del texto de Marx y -fundamentalmente- la introducción de Eric Hobsbawm se logró poner en un primer plano de discusión la problemática del desarrollo y la sucesión de las formaciones económico-sociales. Según el trabajo introductorio del marxista inglés, era en las *Formen* y no en otro texto canonizado de Marx donde debía buscarse el tratamiento más sistemático sobre el problema de la evolución histórica. Esto implicaba la revisión y la reconsideración de las afirmaciones marxistas sobre la temática realizadas sin el conocimiento de este material. Al colocar los esbozos teóricos de Marx en un nivel alto de generalización, el análisis de las fuerzas productivas, las relaciones de producción y las contradicciones quedaba desligado de momentos históricos determinados. De esta manera, Hobsbawm podía afirmar contra toda concepción evolucionista y etapista, que la sucesión de modos de producción esbozada por Marx -asiático, antiguo, feudal y burgués- constituía un listado breve y poco desarrollado de épocas en el progreso de las formaciones económico-sociales. Esto significaba, por un lado, que la lista de los momentos históricos no eran resultado de la teoría sino de la observación y que, si bien el materialismo histórico exigía una sucesión de modos de producción, ésto no implicaba determinados modos de producción ni un orden particular entre ellos. Por el otro, que el carácter evolutivo de la sucesión de estadíos pertenecía a un nivel general y no específico, por lo que no debía ser interpretado en términos de sucesión cronológica ni de evolución de un sistema a partir de otro anterior. En suma, la lectura de Hobsbawm contribuía a la disolución del vínculo que unía la progresión de formaciones económico-sociales a una concepción unilineal de la historia.

En esta misma serie de volúmenes deben ubicarse los Cuadernos que reunieron los textos de Marx sobre Irlanda y Rusia. La importancia de estos materiales para una recolocación de la obra de Marx ha sido suficientemente señalada. Como afirma Kevin Anderson, en estos textos sobre los márgenes del mundo capitalista se condensa la idea de que estos espacios contenían estructuras sociales marcadamente dife-

38 Karl Marx y Eric Hobsbawm, *Formaciones económicas precapitalistas* (Buenos Aires: Pasado y Presente, 1971).

renciadas de las de Europa occidental y que los grupos étnicos y las nacionalidades oprimidas debían desplegar una política revolucionaria distinta a la de la clase obrera occidental.[39] Con el título *Imperio y colonia. Escritos sobre Irlanda*, se publicó en 1979 una compilación de las cartas que Marx y Engels habían intercambiado entre ellos y con otros dirigentes del movimiento socialista internacional sobre los procesos políticos desarrollados en Irlanda en la década 1860.[40] Como es sabido, algunas de las cartas sobre la cuestión irlandesa -una de Marx a Engels de 1867 y otra de Marx a Sigfrid Meyer y August Vogt de 1870- permiten constatar la importancia que Marx le otorgaba a las políticas de liberación nacional. Al igual que la mayoría de los Cuadernos, este volumen estaba precedido por un estudio preliminar y una breve nota redactada por Aricó. En este caso, el primero correspondía a un trabajo del italiano Renato Levrero en el que los textos sobre Irlanda eran ubicados en el marco de un viraje decisivo en el pensamiento de Marx y Engels. Según el especialista en el análisis marxista del colonialismo y el imperialismo, estos textos considerados marginales daban cuenta del quiebre con una concepción de la revolución estructurada sobre la creencia en el predominio de las relaciones de producción capitalistas en Europa occidental, la existencia de un proletariado internacional homogéneo y la reductibilidad de factores nacionales a los intereses de clase. En el segundo de los textos que acompañaban el material reproducido, Aricó destacaba al análisis realizado por Marx de la situación irlandesa como un elementos que permitía repensar las relaciones entre lucha de clases y lucha nacional. En sus palabras: "el Marx europeísta y privilegiador de los efectos objetivamente progresivos del capitalismo cede el lugar a un Marx inédito, matizado, profundamente dialéctico y hasta, podríamos decir, 'tercermundista'".[41] [42] Al año siguiente fue pu-

39 Kevin Anderson, *Marx at the Margins. On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

40 Karl Marx y Friedrich Engels, *Imperio y colonia. Escritos sobre Irlanda* (México D.F., Pasado y Presente, 1979).

41 José Aricó, "Advertencia," en Marx y Engels, *Imperio y colonia*, 11.

42 Para una ampliación de las interpretaciones de Marx y Engels sobre Irlanda, ver Anderson, *Marx at the Margins*, 115-153; Ellen Hazelkorn, "*Capital* and the Irish Question," *Science & Society* 44 (1980): 326-356; Ellen Hazelkorn, "Reconsidering Marx and Engels on Ireland," *Saothar* 9 (1983): 79-88.

blicado el volumen *El porvenir de la comuna rural rusa*, el cual reunía los análisis de Marx y Engels sobre el problema del desarrollo en Rusia y las particularidades del movimiento revolucionario en aquel país.[43] Como también ha sido resaltado, estos textos -especialmente las carta a Vera Zasúlich y a la redacción *Otiéchestviennie Zapiski*- acogían la afirmaciones de que la inevitabilidad del capitalismo estaba circunscripta a los países de Europa occidental, que la comuna rural podía constituir el punto de partida de la regeneración social en Rusia y que el esquema histórico de la génesis del capitalismo en Europa no debía convertirse en teoría histórico-filosófica universal.[44] Tal como afirma Cortés, a través del trabajo sobre el llamado *Marx tardío*, Aricó direccionaba su interpretación del marxismo en el sentido de "la crítica del progreso, el esbozo de una teoría del desarrollo desigual del capitalismo y la atención a las singularidades nacionales como eje del análisis concreto".[45]

Destaquemos finalmente dos Cuadernos en los que el problema de la relación entre teoría marxista y sociedades no burguesas era abordado a partir de la relación entre Marx y América Latina. Esta intervención de Aricó en torno al problema del vínculo entre los conceptos elaborados por Marx y la realidad latinoamericana puede ser pensada a su vez en dos direcciones. Por un lado, fueron sistematizados los textos de Marx y Engels referidos a América Latina. En 1972 fue publicado el volumen *Materiales para la historia de América Latina*, el cual reunió los artículos y fragmentos de textos en los que los fundadores del marxismo trataban cuestiones relativas a la realidad latinoamericana. Además del propio trabajo de traducción y edición de los textos, lo más significativo de este volumen lo constituía la densa introducción realizada por el marxista uruguayo Pedro Scaron. En ella, los textos sobre

43 Karl Marx y Friedrich Engels, *Escritos sobre Rusia II. El porvenir de la comuna rural rusa* (México D.F.: Pasado y Presente, 1980). Ese mismo año se había publicado un volumen titulado *Escritos sobre Rusia I. Revelaciones sobre la historia diplomática secreta del siglo XVIII*, el que se compilaban los textos sobre la política internacional británica con respecto a la Rusia zarista.

44 Para una ampliación de los análisis de Marx y Engels sobre Rusia, ver Anderson, *Marx at the Margins*, 196-236; Musto, *L'ultimo Marx (1881-1883)*, 59-84; Theodor Shanin, *Late Marx and the Russian Road: Marx and the Peripheries of Capitalism* (Nueva York: Monthly Review Press, 1983).

45 Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina*, 126.

América Latina eran ubicados en el marco de una compleja evolución del pensamiento de Marx y Engels sobre la cuestión nacional. De este modo Scaron establecía una periodización de las concepciones marxianas y engelsianas sobre la relación entre Europa occidental y el mundo extraeuropeo: repudio moral y justificación teórica del colonialismo entre 1847 y 1856, denuncia del atropello de las potencias europeas y reivindicación del derecho de resistencia de los colonizados entre 1856 y 1864, apoyo a las políticas de liberación en las colonias y aproximación al problema del subdesarrollo entre 1864 y 1883, y estancamiento e involución en los textos de Engels luego de la muerte de Marx. Sin embargo, al mismo tiempo que establecía esta periodización, Scaron hacía constar que en los textos sobre América Latina era difícil de encontrar un viraje como el que se advertía para el caso de Irlanda o la India.

Si la publicación de *Materiales para la historia de América Latina* nos permite dar cuenta de la indagación sobre el vínculo de Marx y Engels con la realidad latinoamericana, otro de los Cuadernos editados nos enfrenta al interés de Aricó por profundizar en la relación de América Latina con el marxismo. Nos referimos al volumen *Mariátegui y los orígenes del marxismo latinoamericano*, publicado en 1978, el cual reunía un conjunto de estudios clásicos y contemporáneos sobre el marxista peruano.[46] Aricó justificaba el esfuerzo de recuperación de la figura de Mariátegui a través de una equiparación con el trabajo de Gramsci. Al igual que la obra del italiano, la del peruano representaba un esfuerzo por relacionarse de manera original con la realidad en un momento de cristalización dogmática del pensamiento marxista. Aricó regresaba a la polémica en torno al *populismo* de Mariátegui para dar cuenta del modo singular en el que el peruano había procesado la teoría marxista para una interpretación renovada de la realidad de su país. Al filtrar los principios del marxismo con una serie de procesos históricos desplegados en la periferia -tales como la revolución china y la revolución mexicana- Mariátegui había sido capaz de refundir el conocimiento científico europeo en una visión de la singularidad nacio-

46 José Aricó (selección y prólogo), *Mariátegui y los orígenes del marxismo latinoamericano* (México D.F: Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente, 1978).

nal. Operaciones tales como *peruanizar el Perú* o *redescubrir América Latina* implicaban el distanciamiento tanto de una aplicación dogmática de los conceptos marxistas a realidades no europeas como de la renuncia a dichos conceptos en nombre de una singularidad irreductible al conocimiento europeo. Lo que volvía a Mariátegui el marxista más importante en la historia de América Latina era precisamente la interpretación de la realidad del subcontinente a partir de un vínculo con el corpus marxista en los que la historia y la política desempeñaban un rol determinante. Era por ello que, según Aricó, "Mariátegui nunca aparece más marxista que cuando se afirma en el carácter peculiar de la sociedad peruana para establecer un acción teórica y política transformadora".[47] [48]

Con *Marx y América Latina*, estas indagaciones sobre el vínculo entre teoría marxista y periferia del mundo capitalista se volvieron un objeto de análisis en sí mismo y se asentaron definitivamente en el espacio problemático de la relación entre Marx y la realidad latinoamericana. Puede decirse al respecto que Aricó comenzaba donde había dejado Scaron. Es decir, cuáles habían sido las razones por las que las interpretaciones de Marx sobre América Latina no habían acompañado el viraje hacia el análisis de las especificidades de las sociedades no europeas. Tal como afirmaba Scaron, lo llamativo de los textos de Marx sobre los problemas latinoamericanos era que si bien se replicaba el repudio al avasallamiento de las potencias europeas y la reivindicación del derecho a la rebelión de los oprimidos, estas posiciones estaban apuntalados por argumentos *poco marxistas*. Scaron se refería, por ejemplo, a la oposición de Marx a la intervención anglo-franco-española en México a través del argumento del viejo *derecho de gentes* o al artículo sobre Bolívar en el que las consideraciones socio-económicas eran reemplazadas por un conjunto de anatemas sobre la *figura* del li-

47 Aricó, "Introducción," en *Mariátegui y los orígenes del marxismo latinoamericano*, LI.

48 Para una profundización de la lectura de Mariátegui realizada por Aricó, ver Martín Cortés, "José Aricó y el coloquio mariateguiano (1980) de la Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa," *Cuadernos Americanos* 165 (2018): 65-82; Diego Giller, "Encender a Mariátegui. La recuperación de su obra en los años ochenta latinoamericanos," en *7 ensayos sobre socialismo y nación (incursiones mariateguianas)* (Buenos Aires: Caterva, 2018), 11-53.

bertador. Es precisamente en torno a la contradicción evidente del texto sobre Bolívar que Aricó hace girar las reflexiones de *Marx y América Latina*. Siguiendo las hipótesis de Scaron y Levrero, Aricó constataba la simultaneidad en los textos de Marx de la tarea de determinación de la especificidad del mundo asiático y la indiferencia frente a la naturaleza de las sociedades latinoamericanas. Sin embargo, dando un paso más allá, Aricó volvía a simultaneidad en el objeto de una indagación teórica y política. En este sentido, como describe Cortés, "Aricó se ve obligado a dar un rodeo al notar que el despliegue de esta 'novedad' en el pensamiento tardío de Marx no registra para América Latina la misma atención que otorga a otras zonas de la periferia capitalista".[49]

El rodeo que le permitía a Aricó abordar la relación entre Marx y América Latina requería, dado los términos del debate sobre teoría marxista y sociedades no burguesas, de una doble consideración. Por un lado, esta tarea implicaba una sistematización de las operaciones que se habían desplegado de manera fragmentaria en los Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente. Esto es, la recuperación de un segmento de la producción de Marx que contribuía a tensionar las representaciones consolidadas sobre su obra. De este modo Aricó volvía a aquellas respuestas al problema del desencuentro entre Marx y América Latina que tendían a refrendar aquellas representaciones. Esto se volvía especialmente enfático en relación al argumento de la previsibilidad de la indiferencia debido a la matriz europea y decimonónica de su pensamiento. Apoyándose en la caracterización de la obra de Marx como un corpus atravesado por rupturas y desplazamientos, Aricó aseguraba que aquella interpretación que "de manera más o menos consciente tiende a subsumir dentro de una categoría tan ambigua como la de 'europeísmo' un pensamiento extremadamente complejo y matizado, borra diferencias y expulsa la historia de una evolución que reconoce períodos, virajes, nuevos descubrimientos, perspectivas diversas".[50] En el tercer capítulo de *Marx y América Latina*, que lleva como título "Realidad y falacia del eurocentrismo de

49 Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina*, 137.

50 José Aricó, *Marx y América Latina* (Lima: CEDEP, 1982), 43.

Marx", Aricó esbozaba la hipótesis según la cual el direccionamiento del análisis de Marx hacia los procesos desarrollados en el mundo no europeo no había sido circunstancial ni había obedecido a la mera búsqueda de un sustento económico, sino que se había originado en la dilatación del concepto de "cosmos burgués". Es decir, que había sido precisamente la nueva fase de desarrollo capitalista iniciada en la década de 1850 la que había conducido a una ampliación de su perspectiva de análisis hacia las sociedades no capitalista, dependientes o colonizadas. De esta manera, Aricó invertía los términos de la hipótesis del eurocentrismo, en tanto la dispersión analítica de Marx dejaba de ser un elemento externo de su investigación económica para convertirse en un presupuesto interno de su propio trabajo. Leyendo a contrapelo el despliegue de la obra de Marx, aquellos textos menores sobre la periferia del mundo capitalista se volvían trabajos concurrentes tanto con la redacción de *El Capital* como con la construcción de la Primera Internacional.

La sistematización de las operaciones fragmentarias desarrolladas en los Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente implicó una profundización de la hipótesis de un viraje en el seno de la obra marxiana. En este sentido, las páginas de *Marx y América Latina* acogían la idea de que la ampliación de la perspectiva analítica de Marx hacia el mundo no europeo implicaba un movimiento sin retorno. Según Aricó, desde finales de la década de 1860 Marx ya no había abandonado la tesis de que el desarrollo desigual de la acumulación capitalista desplazaba el centro de la revolución hacia los países no europeos. El carácter irreversible de este desplazamiento conllevaba una *afectación* de los modos en los cuales Marx había pensado anteriormente la relación entre Europa y las regiones *atrasadas*. En el plano teórico, "quedan afectados los supuestos básicos y el propio postulado de la universalidad 'proletaria' como matriz analítica para el examen de las formaciones nacionales, por cuanto se descree de la racionalidad del proceso histórico capitalista concebido como una 'totalidad'".[51] Y en el plano político, "resulta seriamente quebrantada la idea de un epicentro de la revolución dador

51 Aricó, *Marx y América Latina*, 92.

de sentido al conjunto del movimiento social de liberación de los explotados, el cual, por consiguiente, comienza a ser percibido y revalorizado desde la positividad de su posición excéntrica al proletariado europeo-occidental".[52] La constatación del viraje y de sus efectos teóricos y políticos nos conduce a la otra consideración a la que sometía Aricó al vínculo entre Marx y América Latina. Esto es, si Marx había dejado atrás las concepciones eurocéntricas que lo habían llevado a identificar las condiciones de liberación de los pueblos dominados con el desarrollo capitalista y la presencia de una clase obrera homogénea internacionalmente, por qué no había podido ver lo que sí debería haber visto en los procesos independentistas latinoamericanos. Aquí, nuevamente, lo más original del argumento de Aricó es la problematización del recurso al eurocentrismo de Marx. A través de un sutil trabajo de detección que atendía tanto las condiciones de producción intelectual de Marx como las particularidades de los procesos políticos desarrollados en América Latina a comienzos del siglo XIX, Aricó esbozaba la hipótesis de que el desencuentro que habita el texto sobre Bolívar tenía su origen en la noción hegeliana de "pueblos sin historia" y el marcado antibonapartismo de Marx. Es decir, que lo que había llevado a Marx a malinterpretar las independencias latinoamericanos no era tanto la matriz eurocéntrica de su pensamiento como los rasgos singulares que tuvieron dichos procesos políticos: hechos puramente estatales, protagonizados por minorías defensoras de intereses sectoriales y sin voluntad nacional. Esta hipótesis, por tanto, no podía coronarse sin un enjuiciamiento de las explicaciones centradas en el eurocentrismo de Marx. Por un lado, porque esta caracterización era equívoca: "resulta pobre, limitado y falso asignar al supuesto 'eurocentrismo' marxiano el paradójico soslayamiento de la realidad latinoamericana".[53] Por el otro, porque bloqueaba la apropiación de todos los elementos que ofrecía la obra marxiana para una comprensión y una transformación de las sociedades de América Latina: "aceptar la calificación de 'eurocéntrico' con que se pretende explicar la oclusión marxiana implica de hecho cuestionar el filón democrático, na-

52 Aricó, *Marx y América Latina*, 92.

53 Aricó, *Marx y América Latina*, 140.

cional y popular que constituye una parte inescindible del pensamiento de Marx".[54]

IV.

El epílogo a la segunda edición de *Marx y América Latina* está dedicado a ampliar algunos argumentos que habían sido objeto de crítica por algunos de los comentaristas del libro. Retomando la hipótesis del viraje, Aricó insistía en que, al convertirse Marx en un observador del despliegue del capitalismo en el mundo, comenzaba a percibirse en sus escritos un contraste entre el determinismo de las fuerzas productivas y la resistencia que oponen la política y las relaciones internacionales. Al profundizar en las barreras y las formas de neutralización que enfrenta en su despliegue mundial la energía disolvente de las fuerzas productivas, Aricó afirmaba que "el 'tiempo del capital' evidencia ser distinto y no superponerse al 'tiempo de las sociedades' concretas, por lo que la explicación de la lentitud y de la complejidad que adopta la difusión del modo capitalista de producción deberá ser buscado en el terreno de la política y de las relaciones internacionales".[55] No requiere demasiado trabajo notar la convergencia entre esta lectura de Aricó y la tesis de las dos historias del capital esbozada por Chakrabarty. Al igual que el historiador indio, el intelectual argentino no concebía la permanencia en el espacio categorial del marxismo sin un desdoblamiento de las narrativas del capital. Es decir, tanto uno como el otro afirmaban la necesidad de los conceptos elaborados por Marx para dar cuenta de las realidades no europeas al mismo tiempo que realizaban una operación sobre la obra de Marx que la despojaba de sus sedimentaciones economicistas y evolucionista. Como pudimos ver, la coincidencia en este punto no implica que los caminos por los cuales arribaron a él fueran idénticos. En cuanto al modo de operar sobre la obra marxiana, resulta evidente que mientras Chakrabarty procesa las ambivalencias del corpus en su conjunto, Aricó buscar circunscribir los movimientos de

54 Aricó, *Marx y América Latina*, 141.

55 Aricó, *Marx y América Latina*, 234.

ruptura y desplazamiento que se desarrollan en su seno. En relación al vínculo entre el marxismo y los saberes no marxistas, está claro que mientras Chakrabarty ocupa un espacio de enunciación en el que los conceptos de Marx resultan equivalente a los del posestructuralismo, Aricó produce aperturas en la tradición marxista sin que ésta vea afectado su predominio en tanto único conocimiento capaz de dar cuenta de un modo científico de la realidad y de brindar herramientas para su transformación. En suma, mientras la apertura al problema de la diferencia histórica en Chakrabarty implica necesariamente la caracterización del marxismo como inadecuado, en Aricó dicho movimiento está circunscripto a un relectura crítica de Marx.

Es precisamente la posición común frente al debate en torno al orientalismo y al eurocentrismo de Marx y el marxismo la que permite relegar a un segundo plano dichas diferencias y analizar en conjunto las lecturas de Chakrabarty y Aricó. Mencionemos para concluir que esa posición común fue objeto de controversia en discusiones recientes alrededor de la necesidad o inadecuación de los esquemas marxistas para la interpretación de las realidades no europeas. En lo que podría considerarse una segunda oleada de la polémica abierta por *Orientalism*, tanto *Provincializing Europe* como *Marx y América Latina* formaron parte de discusiones entre el marxismo y los estudios poscoloniales y ciertas versiones de la perspectiva decolonial. En el caso de Chakrabarty, si algunas perspectivas poscoloniales podrían ver en su obra la persistencia en un saber -el marxismo- necesariamente eurocéntrico, desde ciertas posiciones marxistas fue vista como demasiada crítica de la tradición marxista y complaciente con las críticas poscoloniales. Citemos, por ejemplo, la lectura de Sarkar,[56] quien utilizaba a *Provincializing Europe* como ejemplo del abandono de las interpretaciones marxistas por parte de los estudios subalternos, la de Neil Lazarus,[57] quien veía en el libro de Chakrabarty una versión más sofisticada de la tesis de Said acerca

56 Sumir Sarkar, "The Decline of the Subaltern in *Subaltern Studies,*" en *Writing Social History*, 82-108.

57 Neil Lazarus, "The fetish of the 'West' in postcolonial theory", en *Marxism, Modernity and Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Crystal Bartolovich y Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 43-64.

de la constitución necesariamente eurocéntrica del marxismo, y la de Vivek Chibber,[58] quien señalaba a *Provincializing Europe* como el libro que representaba el giro de los estudios subalternos hacia el posmodernismo. En el caso de Aricó, si algunas perspectivas decoloniales objetarían su obra por intentar comprender la realidad latinoamericana desde esquemas interpretativos eurocéntricos, desde posiciones marxistas se observó que su lectura crítica de Marx no implicaba una desplazamiento hacia lo irreductible de lo local. En este sentido, Cortés ha afirmado que lo que llevaba a Aricó hacia figuras como la de Mariátegui era la búsqueda de un pensamiento desde y para América Latina pero sin caer en "la tentación de detener su reflexión crítica en lo irreductible y lo absolutamente singular de la región, sino comprendiendo la complejidad con que ella se articula en la universalidad del mundo capitalista".[59] En una dirección similar, Ricca afirmaba que no debía confundirse el latinoamericanismo de Aricó con perspectivas esencialistas como las que cultivan "un giro que sustituye a Marx por Mariátegui o Waman Puma de Ayala, bajo el imperativo que identifica toda procedencia europea con 'eurocentrismo' o el abandono de la modernidad por su identificación en bloque con el proyecto colonial blanco europeo nordatlántico".[60]

58 Vivek Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (Londres: Verso, 2013).

59 Cortés, *Un nuevo marxismo para América Latina*, 208.

60 Ricca, *Nada por perdido*, 42.

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Montserrat Galcerán Huguet

Comentario a *Provincializing Europe*

Este comentario es una contribución a la lectura del libro de Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* (ed.inglesa, 2000) traducido al castellano como *Al margen de Europa* (Madrid, Tusquets, 2008). El libro presenta un intento audaz y complejo de poner en cuestión el relato hegemónico sobre la historia como un proceso civilizatorio desde la mirada de los historiadores de las poblaciones colonizadas y en especial de los subalternos. Por supuesto el autor no ignora las críticas de que ha sido objeto el proyecto de los historiadores de la subalternidad, grupo al que él mismo perteneció, pero lo revisita en una clave crítica que le permite releer las historias de los subalternos como interrupciones de la historia lineal del capital, "nudos pertinaces que sobresalen y rompen la superficie regular del tejido". La distinción entre historia 1 (historia del capital) e historia 2 (historias locales que interrumpen o alteran su decurso) es clave en este intento. Sus autores de referencia son por un lado los historiadores británicos (E. Thompson, E. Hobsbawm, ...), además de Marx que combina con la tradición hermenéutica, en particular Heidegger y su insistencia en los mundos-de-vida. En la segunda parte del libro utiliza textos clave de la tradición cultural bengalí.
Palabras-clave: Teoría postcolonial, crítica histórica, estudios de la subalternidad, tiempo histórico.

Comment to *Provincializing Europe*

The commentary is a contribution to the reading of Dipesh Chakrabarty's book, Provincializing Europe (English, 2000) translated into Spanish as Al margen de Europa (Madrid, Tusquets, 2008). The book presents a bold and complex attempt to question the hegemonic account of history as a civilizing process from the eyes of historians of colonized peoples and especially the subalterns. Of course the author does not ignore the criticisms that the project of historians of the subalternity, a group to which he himself belonged, has been subjected to, but he revisits it in a critical key that allows him to reread the stories of the subalterns as interruptions of the linear history of capital, "stubborn knots that stick out and break the regular surface of the tissue". The distinction between History 1 (history of capital) and history 2 (local stories that interrupt or alter its course) is key in this attempt Its reference authors are on the one hand the British historians (E. Thompson, E. Hobsbawm, ...), in addition to Marx that combines with the hermeneutic tradition, in particular Heidegger and his insistence on the worlds-of-life. In the second part of the book he uses key texts of the Bengali cultural tradition.
Keywords: Postcolonial Thought, historical critique, subaltern studies, historical time.

Comentario a *Provincializing Europe*

Montserrat Galcerán Huguet*

1. El libro de Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, "provincializar Europa", "convertir a Europa en provincia", nos informa del objetivo del trabajo: tratar a Europa, la idea de Europa y su cultura como una región del mundo. Pero va más allá de ese enunciado pues se encuentra con la dificultad de deconstruir un mito, - o una imagen hiperreal, como él mismo dice, - dentro de sus propios supuestos. Y hacerlo con las herramientas teóricas, especialmente la Historia, que forjaron su construcción. De ahí que siendo notable el intento y ambicioso su punto de partida, no acabe de producir un auténtico desplazamiento. El autor oscila entre considerar su propósito con desesperanza (en el capítulo 1, redactado con anterioridad) a resumirlo como la creación "de genealogías conjuntivas y disyuntivas para categorías europeas de la modernidad política", en el epílogo, pasando por un intento de leer el encuentro entre la historia hegemónica y las locales como una imposibilidad de traducción total que introduce nudos en la narración. Eso hace que el recorrido del libro resulte algo errático.

La traducción del título al castellano no contribuye a aclarar la cuestión. Se traduce por *Al margen de Europa* como si de lo que se tratara es de situarse "fuera" del radio de acción de la idea de Europa. En mi opinión no es eso lo que pretende el autor. Se trata, según sus propias palabras, de un empeño más complejo: por un lado, se trata de

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localizar Europa en su propia tradición, mostrando el localismo de su imagen y el arraigo que esta imagen tiene en sus propias culturas y tradiciones. Al hacer esto se observa que Europa es una entidad regional y su cultura no es por definición universal, como pretende.

Sin embargo, *ha devenido* universal por su hegemonía indiscutida, por su dominio del mundo fraguado en el colonialismo y el imperialismo. Esa hegemonía se sustenta en su cultura, especialmente en el discurso histórico (historicista), además de en sus bayonetas y cañones. Podríamos decir que el discurso histórico acompaña siempre a los vencedores a los que provee de un relato justificatorio. El afán de contar la historia tal como ha ocurrido no puede pasar por alto el cómputo de victorias y derrotas y sobre todo no puede hacer *tabula rasa* de la nueva situación que se crea en virtud de ellas, del hecho de que esas mismas victorias y derrotas constituyen elementos de irreversibilidad. Tras ellas no es posible volver al punto de partida o hacer como si nunca hubieran ocurrido. Por lo mismo nunca hay una historia satisfactoria de los vencidos, siempre les faltó algo para ganar. La historia europea, en cuanto es la historia ganadora, ofrece un modelo que anima los proyectos modernizadores de las poblaciones subalternizadas. En este sentido se convierte en el modelo hiperreal antes mencionado y deviene universal.

Al enfocar ese relato y ese modelo europeo desde sociedades y culturas dominadas no europeas, nuestro autor se encuentra con que el modelo europeo, siendo singular, se convierte en universal por mor de la dominación y hegemonía indiscutida de que disfruta. De modo que el conflicto ya no se sitúa entre universal/local sino entre un localismo devenido universal y otros localismos que interfieren con él. Y lo más difícil, con el devenir universal de aquel originario modelo regional en tanto que es importado y asimilado por los intelectuales de los países/culturas subalternizadas, como es el caso del propio autor. Su propio periplo atestigua que, para él, como para tantos otros intelectuales, determinados supuestos de la cultura europea se convierten en verdades incorporadas y en este sentido devenidas auténticamente universales, reconocidas como tales.

Tal vez la característica de la hegemonía política y cultural en la India, a diferencia de lo ocurrido en Latinoamérica, es que no hubo

una derrota primera que siguiera irradiando en la conciencia de los sometidos – tal vez con la excepción de la insurrección de 1855/6 –, sino que la absorción del pensamiento europeo fue lenta e incluso contribuyó de alguna forma al proyecto emancipatorio que culminó con la independencia en 1947. Por lo que su presencia en el contexto cultural es ambivalente. El pensamiento europeo impuesto como consecuencia de la dominación británica contribuye a producir una modalidad local; la más notable parece ser su adopción por parte de la intelectualidad bengalí, a la que pertenece el autor, que dará lugar a una Ilustración propia. O como él mismo dice, la idea de Europa se convirtió en un "«mito» fundador para el pensamiento y los movimientos emancipadores en la India" (p.21). La tradición europea ilustrada contribuyó así a formar el zócalo del pensamiento reformador indio (bengalí), lo que explica la inestabilidad de la posición de sus intelectuales, especialmente en lo que tiene que ver con los postulados socio-políticos. En mi opinión sería un caso bastante claro de intelectualidad mestiza.

Chakrabarty no parece abandonar esta posición. Para él es como si la historia europea y la Europa hiperreal proveyeran la trama, las historias locales la colorearan. Sostiene con acierto que, en el fondo, la historia de Europa es la historia del capital o se confunde con ella (historia 1), mientras que las historias locales de los subalternizados forman la(s) historia(s) 2, las historias de los mundos-de-vida que el capital subsume, o reprime o elimina y silencia. A su vez me pregunto: ¿no hay una historia 2 de las poblaciones europeas subalternizadas, muchas de ellas vencidas en el propio despegue del capital europeo?, ¿acaso las luchas en suelo europeo por sojuzgar las comunidades rebeldes o los territorios disconformes con una determinada constitución de los Estados -nación no precedieron y acompañaron las primeras campañas de colonización?; ¿la historia del capital (historia 1) no silencia los mundos de vida de las capas subalternas en las propias metrópolis, las historias de las mujeres, o de las minorías racializadas y migrantes?, ¿qué pasa con los sujetos históricos en espacios transnacionales como los marineros, esclavos y campesinos relatados por Peter Linebaugh y

Marcus Rediker?[1] Qué duda cabe de que la Historia de la Humanidad como un relato unívoco de un solo sujeto ha estallado irremediablemente. Sus múltiples fragmentos se mueven en constelaciones no necesariamente estatal-nacionales.

Al romperse la unilinealidad de la historia surge, como el autor menciona, la no contemporaneidad de lo "simultáneo", algo que ocurre al mismo tiempo y que sin embargo pertenece a universos distintos. Nos encontramos con la fuerte heterogeneidad de acontecimientos que tienen lugar al mismo tiempo, pero en espacios distintos con tiempos y ritmos diversos. Nos tropezamos con la violencia de un diseño -el de la categoría del "tiempo histórico", uno, vacío y universal - que pretende hacerlos entrar a la fuerza en un marco pretrazado. Abordar críticamente esa categoría constituye parte del esfuerzo del libro, esfuerzo doblemente complejo puesto que sostiene toda una disciplina intelectual ampliamente reconocida que estructura la memoria colectiva. Es evidente que harán falta muchos más trabajos para conseguirlo.

Chakrabarty recurre en su empeño a poner de relieve la dimensión epistemológica de los conceptos y las ideas. Conceptualiza los universales como abstractos, los locales como concretos. Señala que estos abstractos/universales han sido abstraídos de una tradición cultural determinada y por tanto están "contaminados" por ella, pero en su viaje hacia otras zonas del mundo es como si perdieran aquella contextualización y se presentaran casi como conceptos puros, como "modelos" teóricos y prácticos. De modo tal que las ideas políticas europeas modernas, el concepto de individuo, de ciudadano, de Estado de derecho, etc. en tanto que "modelos universales" serían abstractos que, por definición, adoptarían diversas formulaciones en sus aplicaciones concretas. Cosa que no le quita nada a su relevancia para determinados movimientos y en determinados momentos.

Lo interesante de este modo de enfocar la cuestión es que le permite escapar de cualquier tentación de "relativismo cultural". Aunque creo que debería dar un paso más: en vez de concebir los abstractos y los concretos

1 Peter Linebaugh y Marcus Rediker, *La hidra de la revolución* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2005).

de modo que los segundos son la materialización de los primeros, habría que tratar los abstractos como "segmentos" de lenguaje, como "palabras-fuerza" que se articulan en cadenas lingüísticas complejas construyendo discursos barrocos. Por decirlo con un ejemplo: el término "libertad" tiene múltiples y diversas connotaciones según el contexto. Es por decirlo así, una palabra "fetiche". Lo que se importa no es un discurso entero, sino fragmentos de él que se incorporan a prácticas diversas. A no ser en entornos muy intelectualizados o muy normados donde puede primar la adecuación al modelo frente a su utilización en un entorno práctico. De ahí que el dispositivo adecuado para pensar esa práctica no sea sólo la traducción, como si la cultura receptora destacara una palabra propia que corresponda a la importada, sino la innovación lingüística y política que marca la recepción. El estudio de la recepción de los grandes textos muestra como ésta es siempre una recepción activa, sólo se reciben partes de un texto, o de una teoría, que se incardinan en secuencias teóricas y prácticas diversas formando un conglomerado nuevo y único. De ahí que no creo que haya que pensarlo en base a la idea de "modelo" y "aplicación del mismo" sino en el marco de las prácticas de creación cultural y lingüística que están siempre espacio-temporalmente localizadas y que informan a su vez prácticas políticas.

Por otra parte, si bien insiste con razón en las genealogías conjuntivas o disyuntivas que interaccionan localmente en la recepción del discurso europeo, no introduce suficientemente la genealogía de ese discurso. Es como si el discurso hegemónico no tuviera su propia genealogía; como si, cual Atenea, hubiera salido entero y verdadero de la cabeza de Zeus. Cuando, como sabemos, el propio discurso europeo tiene sus quiebras, derivas y disyunciones. Eso no impide que se exporte como un pack, como señalan acertadamente algunos estudiosos latinoamericanos[2] y que, en ese sentido, resulte mucho más homogéneo

2 Los textos de Anibal Quijano y Ramon Grosfoguel son interesantes a este respecto, ver "Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América latina", en *Colonialidad del saber, eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas*, comp. Edgardo Lander (Buenos Aires: Clacso, 2000); Aníbal Quijano y Immanuel Wallerstein, "Americanity as a concept, or the Americas in the Modern World-System", *International Journal of Social Sciences* 134 (1992): 583-591. Ramón Grosfoguel, "Transmodernity, Border Thinking and Global Coloniality", *Eurozine,* 4 July 2008, 1-23. V. también mi libro, *La bárbara Europa. Una mirada desde el postcolonialismo y la descolonialidad* (Madrid, Traficantes de Sueños, 2016).

y cerrado de lo que realmente es. Es una consecuencia de la geopolítica del conocimiento ligada a su vez a la dominación imperial[3].

2. Tras este primer paso se delinea un segundo. Nuestro autor reflexiona sobre la base antropológica que sustenta ese relato: la construcción del sujeto moderno o ciudadano con su doble faz política/pública y su reverso privado. Esta concepción estaría ausente en la cultura de la India. Podríamos decir que lo está también en la cultura europea al menos hasta el siglo XVIII. La historia no se constituye como disciplina específica digna de tal nombre hasta los ilustrados (Voltaire, entre otros), despegando con gran fuerza en el XIX (Hegel es el gran filósofo europeo de la Historia). En ese discurso la Humanidad, en tanto que sujeto histórico, está pensada bajo el modelo del individuo humano, con su infancia, su madurez, su senectud. Es, por decirlo así, una especie de "individuo colectivo" que va pasando en su desarrollo temporal por una serie de etapas. Eso permite introducir el sustrato de la vida humana en el decurso histórico a través de la analogía entre el "individuo colectivo", pensado como un todo, y la persona individual, la parte. Las relaciones entre ambos son de subsunción del segundo por parte del primero. A su vez la historia oficial nos cuenta los avatares de ese individuo colectivo, básicamente en su configuración como nación. Habrá que esperar a la denominada "historia desde abajo" para que empecemos a enfrentarnos con los movimientos de masas y con esa heterogeneidad de tiempos y acontecimientos. El grupo de historiadores de la subalternidad, al que pertenece el autor, testimonian el esfuerzo y las dificultades al historiar las multitudes subalternas cuyos movimientos, fuertemente autónomos, presentan formas de expresión específicas que no caben en la historia oficial, entre otras y especialmente el discurso religioso.

3 En este sentido comparto el comentario de Frederick Cooper cuando indica que "provincializar Europa debería incluir un examen tanto de los límites como del poder de la dominación europea, de la desigualdad y de los conflictos dentro de la propia Europa; tendría que estudiar los sistemas de poder y representación en interacción unos con otros y no presuponer la centralidad de la Europa moderna como punto de referencia ni dejar de lado el análisis del poder tal como realmente se ejercía", en Ania Lomba et al., *Postcolonial Studies and beyond* (Durham y Londres: Duke University Press, 2005), 412-6.

Los primeros ilustrados, coetáneos de la expansión europea por el globo, estaban entusiasmados por los relatos de viajes que mostraban la extraordinaria diversidad de tipos humanos que los viajeros encontraban en sus expediciones. Su esfuerzo consistía en tratar de incluirlos en algún tipo de orden. En ese marco nació la categoría de "tiempo histórico", un tiempo análogo al tiempo de la física, cuyo sujeto es la Humanidad en su conjunto. Esa categoría implica una determinada metafísica, la de que los individuos humanos son iguales en todas partes y tienen una evolución temporalmente (históricamente) marcada. Según Voltaire, formulador inicial de la *Filosofía de la historia* (1765), esta evolución deberá ser la misma para todos puesto que el ser humano es un ser natural y su naturaleza la misma en todas partes. Lo que cambia entre unos lugares y otros no es la naturaleza humana sino su grado de evolución[4].

Implica además la construcción de un tiempo inicial – los orígenes – en los que colocar aquellos acontecimientos o relaciones que no parecen concordar con el "momento presente". Así por ejemplo la esclavitud y la servidumbre son colocadas en el origen y presentadas como una supervivencia de formas antiguas cuando en realidad son rabiosamente contemporáneas del capitalismo naciente. Por eso, como Chakrabarty pone de relieve en varias ocasiones, la mirada histórica distorsiona el presente.

Sin duda la Historia como disciplina se ha ido desprendiendo de la "filosofía de la historia" que la acompañó en sus inicios, pero mantiene ciertos lazos entre esa idea de un despliegue en el tiempo de las potencialidades humanas, que marcaría el proceso histórico, y el devenir de los pueblos del mundo hacia mayores cotas de bienestar.

Al enfrentarse a ese modelo las poblaciones subalternizadas tropiezan, en primer lugar, con la necesidad de una inversión. Ya que están situadas en el lugar de los dominados deben invertir la relación

4 Eso no impide un fuerte racismo y misoginia, incluso más cruel, puesto que la diferencia va a situarse en la falta de humanidad de algunos grupos o etnias a los que ninguna evolución permitirá saltar el abismo de lo no-humano. Sobre esta línea entre humano/no-humano, ver Frantz Fanon, *Piel negra, máscaras blancas* (Madrid: Akal, 2009).

para deslegitimar la dominación que sufren. No pueden colocarse en el lugar de la carencia, es decir de aquello que les falta para ocupar el lugar del señor y que justifica su dominación por otro. Sino que deben extraer de su propio pasado, de su memoria colectiva - eso es la historia – los signos de su fuerza. Cualquier proyecto de futuro tendría que extraerla de ahí. El hecho de que esa cultura siga estando viva es un prerequisito de su empoderamiento.

3. Por último no podría cerrar este comentario sin referirme a la contraposición con Marx. Chakrabarty reconoce la gran deuda con este autor y la sitúa en torno a dos grandes cuestiones: el tema del "trabajo abstracto" y la diferencia entre "historia 1" e "historia 2".

El concepto de "trabajo abstracto" juega un papel determinante en la obra de Marx puesto que es el que forma el valor de las mercancías. Nuestro autor lo analiza como un "algo performativo y disciplinario", lejos de cualquier naturalismo que lo entienda como una sustancia[5] o una energía reducible a una cantidad determinada, ni como un segmento durativo de la actividad laboral. Para Chakrabarty es un concepto clave, pero lo es porque "permite organizar la vida bajo el signo del capital al actuar *como si* el trabajo pudiera abstraerse efectivamente de todos los tejidos sociales en los que siempre está inmerso y que tornan concreto todo trabajo particular" (p. 54). El trabajo abstracto es siempre "trabajo vivo" y esa contraposición, o ese conflicto, es clave en la dinámica del capital. En Marx esa consideración acentúa el carácter despótico del capital, mientras que Chakrabarty, en mi opinión, la suaviza al hacerla derivar hacia la incompatibilidad entre formas de trabajo que son a la vez formas-de-vida atravesadas por una espiritualidad determinada. El choque con el capital es entonces un choque más cultural que socio-económico.

5 El término "sustancia" reviste una enorme complejidad puesto que en Marx el término aquí empleado implica que la forma de ejercicio del trabajo crea un "plexo de relaciones sociales" que opera como una segunda naturaleza. Si nos planteamos cómo una actividad (el trabajo) genera una "sustancia", que parece justamente lo contrario de una actividad, tenemos que entender que el ejercicio normado y repetido de tal actividad crea un entramado de relaciones socio-materiales coaguladas en dispositivos específicos que tienen una propia y peculiar consistencia. Constituyen por tanto algo propio, no reducible a aquella actividad.

Reencontramos aquí el problema antes mencionado de las "abstracciones sociales". Chakrabarty plantea el tema de la abstracción a un nivel epistemológico, de tal modo que lo abstracto corresponde al universal y lo concreto a lo local y empírico. O en su defecto, a nivel hermenéutico, como un tema de interpretación. Reconoce que la abstracción actúa a nivel práctico, pero la trata como una "convención", como "una clave de las coordenadas hermenéuticas a través de las cuales el capital exige que interpretemos el mundo" (p. 91). En mi opinión en Marx el tema de la abstracción no se plantea básicamente a nivel epistemológico y/o interpretativo sino ontológico puesto que los "abstractos sociales" como el "trabajo abstracto" o el "dinero" no son solo conceptos resultado de un proceso epistemológico sino que son constructos, dispositivos que condensan relaciones sociales (y económicas). Funcionan como marcos conceptuales o categorías que permiten organizar las sociedades. Como las leyes y las Instituciones construyen una segunda naturaleza. Los seres humanos vivimos en ellas "acríticamente" porque constituyen nuestro mundo. La "mirada histórica", si es crítica, nos permite deconstruir su presunta naturalidad y tal vez en conjunción con las historias de las posibilidades sometidas (la(s) historia(s) 2) nos permita hallar nuevos caminos en situaciones aparentemente bloqueadas.

Ahora bien, más allá de la forma en que se ejerza, el trabajo siempre es expresión de las capacidades de los seres humanos en su interrelación con la naturaleza que permite producir lo necesario para la subsistencia y está siempre incorporado en la capacidad viva del trabajador ("trabajo vivo"). En sociedades no capitalistas estas capacidades, en vez de quedar subsumidas en el orden del capital, están ligadas al tejido de la subsistencia, por lo general en formas comunitarias. Chakrabarty señala justamente que ese tejido, cuya destrucción es necesaria para el dominio capitalista, se renueva constantemente, de modo que no cabe colocarlo en el origen de la dominación colonial sino como un corolario permanente de ésta.

En el segundo aspecto en torno al historicismo de Marx (y Engels) creo que se ciñe demasiado a la concepción marxista inaugurada por la Segunda Internacional y continuada por la tradición comunista.

Esa concepción imponía una idea excesivamente lineal de la historia que condenaba a los países colonizados a una larga espera hasta que se dieran las circunstancias adecuadas.

Con todo nuestro autor identifica, correctamente, la historia 1 con la historia del capital, no en tanto que concepto sino en tanto que fuerza y proceso social e histórico. En tanto que fuerza social y económica que subsume trabajo. La historia 1 nos narraría el proceso en el que esa fuerza social mundial se reproduce cíclicamente. La(s) historia(s) 2 son aquellas que interrumpen constantemente ese proceso arraigando en el trabajo vivo.

El matiz que el autor introduce se centra en mostrar que la historia 1 se sitúa al nivel de la abstracción, puesto que todo capitalismo histórico representa una combinación particular de las dos, lo cual haría doblemente necesario el trabajo de analizar su genealogía específica. De lo contrario opone un relato estereotipado, la historia de Europa hecha coincidir con la historia 1 (historia del capital) con la historia local (la historia 2); eso implica una desigualdad en los términos de la oposición que no mantienen el mismo rango epistemológico. A su vez yo añadiría que la historia 2 tiene que ser plural puesto que las diversas sociedades que se han topado con el capitalismo tienen diferentes características y ritmos.

Añadiría también que, si bien la historia 1 no se corresponde con la historia europea *desde la perspectiva intraeuropea*, en cuanto a su poder colonial o sea *visto desde las colonias,* puede corresponderse con la expansión del sistema-mundo capitalista centrado en las potencias imperialistas y sustentado en la cultura universalista de matriz europea. Es este proceso el que sustenta la "Europa hiperreal" que desde Europa es invisible. La preeminencia geopolítica y económica es retraducida en la cultura legitimadora como preeminencia cultural y civilizadora, obviando su carácter de dominación imperial. A la inversa el proyecto de Chakrabarty nos permitiría introducir las historias 2 en el contexto europeo, sacando a la luz los procesos de subalternización en el propio continente.

En resumen, el trabajo de Chakrabarty nos recuerda la necesidad de romper la línea dura y reductiva de un único tiempo histórico here-

dado de la Ilustración y el historicismo pero, por eso mismo, es necesario abrir los nudos de las temporalidades que abren posibilidades derrotadas que en cierta forma siguen estando disponibles. Abandonar el historicismo implica dejar de pensar la política como un futuro a advenir, resultado de su génesis en el pasado, para abordarla a partir de la idea de que los devenires temporales son abiertos y no están predeterminados.

Nos propone también que tratemos el estudio del pasado como un repertorio de elementos que nos hablan de otras posibilidades y nos enseñan a ver el presente como un "irreductible no-uno" atravesado por la dualidad – que preferiría pensar como multiplicidad – del encuentro o desencuentro entre "historia 1" e "historia(s) 2". La primera la historia del proyecto del capital que se convirtió en mundo y las segundas fragmentos de lo que fue, de lo que sigue siendo y de lo que será, pues cualquier sistema histórico es una combinación de ambos.

Sin embargo la conclusión arroja un balance ambivalente. No parece que podamos desembarazarnos de una vez de esa historia del capital, de esa historia 1 aunque tampoco cabe esperar su dominio indiscutido. Las historias 2 mantienen la tensión de las posibilidades constantemente reabiertas y nunca cerradas definitivamente en un presente interminable.

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Manuela Ribeiro Sanches

Traduzir "o que ainda não compreendo." Um diálogo com *Provincializing Europe*

Propõe-se uma abordagem a *Provincializing Europe*, a partir da prática da tradução, conceito também central na referida obra, para se assinalar o modo com essa prática e esse conceito podem constituir um ponto de partida para uma leitura empática das "ambiguidades" que atravessam o texto, salientando-se o modo como este oscila e dialoga com tanto com os universais, herdados do legado iluminista, como com a particularidade dos mundos locais, ambos transfigurados, enriquecidos, por essa justaposição. Num segundo momento, ensaiam-se algumas breves notas contrapontísticas, com base seja na correspondência entre Chakrabarty e Amitav Ghosh, seja em algumas reflexões propostas por Siegfried Kracauer em *History. The Last Things before the Last*.
Palavras-chave: Tradução; diálogo; Luzes e pós-colonialidade; universais e particulares.

Translating "that which I do not already understand." A dialogue with *Provincializing Europe*

The essay proposes an approach to *Provincializing Europe*, drawing on the practice of translation, a central concept in the mentioned volume, so as to emphasise the way in which this practice and concept may offer a productive departing point for an empathic reading of the "ambiguities" that characterise the text, namely the way in which it oscillates and dialogues both with Enlightenment universals and the particularities of local worlds, that are thereby transfigured, enriched, by means of this juxtaposition. In a second moment, some brief contrapuntal notes are rehearsed, drawing on the correspondence between Amitav Ghosh and Chakrabarty on Provincializing Europe, as well as some reflections by Kracauer in *History. The Last Things before the Last*.
Keywords: translation; dialogue; Enlightenment and post-coloniality; universals e particulars.

Traduzir "o que ainda não compreendo." Um diálogo com *Provincializing Europe*

Manuela Ribeiro Sanches*

"Onde dois seres se encontram separados por um abismo total, não há ponte que leve à compreensão de um a outro e, para se compreenderem reciprocamente, têm de já se ter compreendido em outro sentido."

Wilhelm von Humboldt."[1]

"Um dos prazeres mais subtis de se envelhecer é o de se compreender o verdadeiro sentido do provérbio árabe 'ad-dunia wasa'a', 'o mundo é grande.' Ser capaz de compreender e apreciar ideias que são diferentes das nossas é um dom em si mesmo: procurar o acordo é realmente vão, uma vez que – enfrentemo-lo – a maior parte das vezes é bem difícil concordarmos connosco mesmos."

Amitav Ghosh[2]

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1 "Where two beings are separated by a total gap, no bridge of understanding extends from one to the other; in order to understand one another they must have in another sense, already understood each other." Wilhelm von Humboldt, "The Task of the Historian." Citado por Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008 [2000]), 109."Wo zwei Wesen durch gänzliche Kluft getrennt sind, führt keine Brücke der Verständigung von einem zum anderen, und um sich zu verstehen, muß man sich in einem anderen Sinne schon verstanden haben." Wilhelm von Humboldt, "Die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers," in *Humboldts ausgewählte philosophische Schriften*, hrsg. von Johann Schubert (Leipzig: Felix Meiner Verlag, ca. 1933), 81-99, aqui p. 91.

2 "One of the subtler pleasures of growing older is that one comes to understand the true meaning of the Arabic saying, 'ad-dunia wasa'a'; 'the world is wide'. To be able to understand and appreciate ideas that are different from one's own is a gift in itself: to look for agreement is really futile since – let us face it – much of the time, it's quite a struggle even to agree with oneself." Amitav Ghosh e Dipesh Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence on *Provincializing Europe*," *Radical History Review* 83 (spring 2001): 146-172, aqui 169, aqui 166.

> "Poderemos não concordar em tudo. Mas sei que, mesmo quando estou em desacordo, a pressão dos teus pensamentos continuará a agir sobre mim. E, um dia, poderei ver algumas das coisas, partilhar a tua paixão, ou ser mais capaz de ver através dos teus olhos. Algo de semelhante poderá acontecer-te. Mesmo que eu nunca chegue a esse ponto, saber que alguém que respeito discorda de mim, entrelaçará o que penso e como o penso. Há um fragmento de uma frase de Heidegger que continua a intrigar-me: 'ouvir aquilo que ainda não compreendo.' Muitas vezes, ao ouvir alguém, tento decifrar aquilo que esta injunção poderá significar efetivamente na prática. Não estou absolutamente certo, mas ela como que opera como um horizonte ético para mim."
>
> Dipesh Chakrabarty[3]

1. Tradução e diálogo

Permitam que inicie este diálogo com *Provincializing Europe* com um pequeno excurso autobiográfico. Foi no ano de 2003 que, ao organizar um volume com o objetivo de divulgar, em Portugal, algumas tendências daquilo a que se convencionou chamar de perspetiva pós-colonial[4] – mas que reunia contributos que em muito excediam o horizonte do que na altura era designado de estudos pós-coloniais no mundo anglófono – , tomei conhecimento de *Provincializing Europe.*

A leitura da obra foi uma revelação e provocou em mim uma espécie de vertigem.[5] Perder o pé, experimentar a desorientação, não equi-

3 "You and I may not agree on everything. But I know that even when I disagree, the pressure of your thoughts will keep acting on me. And one day I may see some of the things you see, share your passion or be better able to see through your eyes. Something similar may happen to you. Even if I never get to that point, the knowledge that someone I respect disagrees will lace what I think and how I think it. There is a fragment of a sentence from Heidegger which continues to intrigue me: 'to hear that which I do not already understand. There is a fragment of a sentence from Heidegger which continues to intrigue me: "to hear that which I do not already understand.' Often in listening to someone, I try to work out what this injunction may actually mean in practice. I am not absolutely clear but it kind of works as an ethical horizon for me." Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 169.

4 Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, org., *Deslocalizar a Europa. Antropologia, Arte, Literatura e História na pós-colonialidade* e *Portugal não é um país pequeno. Contar o ''Império'' na pós-colonialidade* (Lisboa: Livros Cotovia, 2005).

5 Vertigem que ecoava a desorientação em que me encontrava, na altura, deslocada na Costa Oeste americana, que me dava a ver não o mundo ocidental, as Américas a que a minha posição geográfi-

valeu a abdicar da tentativa de ganhar o equilíbrio, optando-se, antes, por negociar sentidos e aceitar os desafios que questionavam, de forma subtil, a herança iluminista em que me revia, *ma non troppo*, educada a reconhecer a dialética inerente a todos os processos de racionalização e o modo como a racionalidade também pode ser transformada em mito destruidor de qualquer emancipação.[6]

Negociei esses sentidos, traduzindo, em sentido literal, um dos capítulos do livro de Chakrabarty, na esperança de que as teorias viajassem,[7] não sem os seus equívocos, domesticações ou radicalizações, transformações essas que essa tarefa me ia dando a ver, através desse processo hermenêutico que todo o ato de tradução constitui, revelando o que se compreende e o que fica por compreender, levando-nos a refletir não só sobre a língua que não é a nossa, mas também sobre aquela que habitamos, com maior ou menor conforto, em função do lugar e momento em que nascemos e vivemos.

Não terá sido por acaso que selecionei o capítulo "Histórias de minorias, passados subalternos," um dos textos mais enigmáticos, em meu entender, de *Provincializing Europe*, o que em mim provocou justamente a impressão de estar "ouvir aquilo que não compreend[ia] ainda."[8] Traduzir não equivalia, neste caso, a que a correspondência exata emergisse, a uma forma (iluminista?) de "transparência," nem tão pouco a "incomensurabilidades," mas antes ao emergir de uma forma de "translucidez," [9] a iluminar, foscamente, a relação entre línguas e

ca me habituara, mas o Oriente que esse novo Ocidente anunciava, vertigem que se vinha também plasmar num sentimento de "desocidentalização" que descobrira partilhar com outros ocidentais. Veja-se James Clifford, "Notes on Travel and Theory," *Inscriptions* 5 (1989), consultado em 4 de Junho de 2020 https://culturalstudies.ucsc.edu/inscriptions/volume-5/james-clifford/.

6 Ver, como será óbvio, Max Horkheimer e, Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung: philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983 [1944]) ou Max Horkheimer, *Zur Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft. Aus den Vorträgen und Aufzeichnungen seit Kriegsende,* hrsg. Von Alfred Schmidt (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag 1990 [1985]).

7 Não é por acaso que o volume se inicia com o texto "Reconsiderar a teoria itinerante" de Edward W. Said, também uma referência central no texto de Clifford acima citado. Edward W. Said, "Reconsiderando a teoria itinerante." trad. Manuela Ribeiro Sanches, in *Deslocalizar a 'Europa.' Antropologia, arte, literatura e história na pós-colonialidade*, org. Manuela Ribeiro Sanches (Lisboa: Livros Cotovia, 2005), 25-42.

8 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence on *Provincializing Europe*, 169.

9 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 17.

conceitos, dando assim a ver tanto a estranheza das propostas do texto que traduzia quanto a das minhas referências, que, assim, adquiriam novos contornos.

Dito de outro modo, traduzir implica tentar compreender um texto, na certeza de que a transparência nunca será total, sem sequer a tentar alcançar, num esforço por manter essa estranheza, essa "translucidez"[10] que, precisamente, nos desafia e interpela a pensar para além dos nossos limites. Mais, ao permitir que a diferença surja nesse processo, a tradução permite que as narrativas europeias de "transição" – aquelas que rejeitam que a maior parte da humanidade tenha de aguardar pacientemente, na "antecâmera, na "sala de espera da história,"[11] pelo seu momento de emancipação – possam ser substituídas, completadas por modos mais plurais de contar o passado e o mundo que todos habitamos.

Com efeito, como o próprio Chakrabarty escreve, o projeto de provincializar a 'Europa' não equivale a uma rejeição dessa entidade imaginada, mas antes a um esforço de tradução entre o pensamento 'europeu,' com as suas categorias analíticas, universais, e as "histórias não-ocidentais," a "diversidade dos mundos-de-vida humanos," através de uma abordagem "hermenêutica, afetiva, ligada intimamente a lugares e a modos particulares de vida."[12]

O que Chakrabarty propõe ao longo desse texto é precisamente a conjunção entre opostos que, à partida, teriam de se excluir reciprocamente – Marx e Heidegger serão um dos exemplos possíveis –, conjunção disjuntiva, que não prevê qualquer dialética de opostos a resolver segundo a melhor tradição hegeliana, mas antes se compraz numa "tensão permanente, num diálogo entre dois pontos de vista contraditórios,"[13] tensão que não desfaça, nem deslace, esses dois termos, segundo o princípio da exclusão, invalidando, assim, a possibilidade de uma ligação precária, translúcida, entre ambos.

10 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 17.
11 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 8-10.
12 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 18.
13 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 254.

Para Chakrabarty, trata-se de indagar acerca da possibilidade de "manter unidas abordagens secularistas-historicistas e não-secularistas e não-historicistas do mundo, levando a sério a questão dos modos diversos de 'ser-no-mundo' [14] "não tendo de se rejeitar nem Marx nem a 'diferença,'" [15] reconhecendo-se "a necessidade 'política' de se pensar em termos de totalidades," desestabilizando, ao mesmo tempo, o pensamento totalizante, recorrendo a categorias não-totalizantes." [16]

Em suma, trata-se de dar a ver o modo como "o pensamento europeu é, ao mesmo tempo, tanto indispensável quanto inadequado para nos ajudar a refletir sobre as experiências da modernidade política em nações não-ocidentais," pelo que "provincializar a Europa se transforma na tarefa de explorar o modo como este pensamento - que agora é legado de todos e nos afeta a todos – poderá ser renovado a partir das margens e em favor delas."[17] Essa tensão pode também constituir um ponto de partida para se pensar a "possibilidade de uma política e de um projeto de aliança entre as histórias metropolitanas dominantes e os passados subalternos periféricos, "[18] substituindo as narrativas de transição que o legado colonial disseminou, mesmo entre os (ex)colonizados, por um ato de tradução – esse ato necessariamente "obscuro," [19] com o seu quê de "escandaloso,"[20] mas tanto mais "imperativo," [21] quanto é ele que permite dar a ver os limites desses universais seculares, impostos, interiorizados, assimilados, embora também contestados, em contextos coloniais.

Tal procedimento também pode ser descrito como eminentemente dialógico, multivocal, em que a diversidade de vozes e histórias são justapostas, sem esconder tensões, mas também interdependências.

14 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 21.
15 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 95.
16 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 21-22.
17 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 16.
18 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 42.
19 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 86.
20 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 89.
21 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 90.

Ora, esse procedimento dialógico – não o quero designar de método – também se plasma na escrita de Chakrabarty, no modo subtil como apresenta, nunca esgrime, os seus argumentos, usando da persuasão e de um raciocínio demorado e minucioso, [22] pouco habitual na escrita académica, necessariamente apressada – aquela a que nos habituámos em tempos de publicação ou de perecimento, – permitindo, assim, ao leitor, o acompanhamento da argumentação em diálogo com um pensamento cristalino, mas particularmente complexo, com os seus momentos de opacidade e de translucidez, que a tradução do referido capítulo me levou particularmente a apreciar.

Traduzir, em sentido mais restrito e lato, *Provincializing Europe* possibilitou-me uma reflexão sobre o modo de articular uma ideia de racionalidade fundadora dos direitos humanos, da justiça social, com outros modos de se estar no mundo, com a diferença, uma diferença a ser não 'tolerantemente' 'incluída,' mas reconhecida, em termos de uma igualdade efetiva, como parte igual nesses processos de emancipação política, económica e social, que, entretanto, eu viera a saber terem-se concretizado de modo efetivo não só na Europa e na sua 'grande revolução,' mas também na Revolução haitiana, que, num gesto de apropriação, de "gratidão anticolonial,"[23] provincializara e radicalizara as promessas das Luzes. Ou seja, teorias e práticas viajavam[24] e adquiriam novos sentidos, através de um processo de tradução da modernidade, que assim deixava de poder ser reduzida a um mero processo de transição.

Modernidade que, por isso mesmo, não pode ser entendida – como muitos dos seus críticos ainda insistem em postular – como exclusivamente 'europeia' ou 'ocidental, para se poder reconhecer – o que aprendi também com Chakrabarty – que ela faz parte "da herança global"

22 Veja-se, por exemplo, o modo como escreve repetidamente "if my argument is right," assim criando como que um diálogo com o leitor implícito, admitindo as suas reservas, convidando-a à distância crítica, mas tentando persuadi-lo a um tempo. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 4, 67, 69, 109.

23 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 255.

24 Said, "Reconsiderando a teoria itinerante."

– não universal[25] – de todos os pensadores pós-coloniais." Pois "sem eles" – sem esses ideais, sem esses pensadores pós-coloniais – não haveria nem "ciência social" – nem alianças comuns que possam "aborda[r] as questões da justiça social moderna."[26] E, enquanto herdeira de um passado colonial e da sua violência intrínseca,[27] só posso subscrever a complexidade, também irónica, a "gratidão anticolonial," [28] deste texto escrito com uma elegância sofisticada que dificilmente se verte para o português.

2. Na melhor tradição enciclopedista ou uma *adda* virtual

Ora, terá sido precisamente esta complexidade que terá levado a leituras que não dão conta da subtileza dos argumentos expandidos em *Provincializing Europ*e e que levaram a nele decifrar [29] formas de nativismo quase fundamentalista ou de relativismo cultural, posições que o próprio Chakrabarty antecipa no texto.[30]

Isto tanto mais surpreendente se torna quando se considera a relação, ambígua, a um tempo distante e próxima, com a tradição iluminista, universalista. É essa tradição que, no texto, é convocada nas suas múltiplas manifestações, desde Stuart Mill a Marx, onde Chakrabarty lê uma tensão entre uma história 1, evolucionista e universalista, e uma história 2, local e particular. Marx é lido em conjunção com Heidegger,

25 Lembre-se a distinção entre globalização e universalização que Chakrabarty estabelece. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 71.

26 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 5.

27 Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* em *Œuvres* (Paris: La Découverte, 2011 [1961]), 419-681.

28 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 255.

29 Com efeito, *Provincializing Europe* tem dado azo a acusações de nativismo acrítico, um pouco à semelhança de *Orientalismo* de Edward W. Said, também este frequentemente lido como representando um maniqueísmo que o texto precisamente pretende desmontar. Como exemplo dessas leituras, de resto, frequentemente apressadas, veja-se Jean-Loup Amselle no livro com o expressivo título *L'Occident décroché. Enquête sur les postcolonialismes* (Paris: Stock, 2008) onde acusa, entre outros, Chakrabarty desse pecado, censurando-o também por um relativismo cultural que, com razão, a antropologia tem vindo há muito a desmontar e de que outro livro de Amselle, *Logiques métisses*, é um exemplo, se não mesmo um clássico. Estranha leitura esta que parece decorrer menos de uma leitura atenta, hermenêutica, o que requer um momento de constituição de um horizonte de entendimento comum prévio como o próprio Chakrabarty lembra, citando Humboldt, como se o leitor recuasse, receando qualquer contaminação.

30 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 83.

no recurso a teorias habitualmente tidas por incompatíveis, mas que aqui são justapostas num ato de tradução provocadoramente filológico, dialógico, dando lugar a uma pluralidade de visões comunicáveis entre si, menos mediante uma razão observadora, do que de processos de identificação inesperados. [31]

Ora, existe um belíssimo diálogo entre Chakrabarty e o escritor-antropólogo Amitav Ghosh[32] em torno de *Provincializing Europe* que, pese embora a importância dada à diferença, torna este apego ao legado universalista, o liberal ou o marxista, tanto mais evidente e em que o ato de tradução dialogante é um momento decisivo.

Estamos em dezembro de 2000, e Ghosh, que nunca se cruzou com Chakrabarty, embora possuam amigos comuns, escreve-lhe um longo email, depois da leitura de *Porvincializng Europe.* Saudando a importância do livro e o modo como ele lhe permitiu ter uma perspetiva renovada sobre a sua experiência pessoal, Ghosh não deixa de, numa prova de respeito pelo texto e pelo seu autor, introduzir algumas objeções que fundamenta longamente. Uma delas, porventura, a mais relevante – pelo menos na minha perspetiva – prende-se com o modo como Chakrabarty recorre a John Stuart Mill, e ao seu ensaio *On Liberty*, sem que, por um só momento, refira o facto de o autor desse manifesto liberal ter sido um representante de um império, cujo poder assenta, como mais à frente Ghosh vem a argumentar, numa visão eminentemente racializada do mundo enquanto um dos seus principais instrumentos de dominação, elemento que o escritor estranha não surgir devidamente destacado no texto.[33]

Chakrabarty responde-lhe da Austrália, onde se encontra para acompanhar o filho, gravemente doente, de um modo menos substanciado do que Gosh, pois, como escreve, não pôde imprimir o email, embora o tenha descarregado.[34] Reconhecendo as afinidades entre a sua

31 Refiro-me aqui ao capítulo "Two Histories of Capital," in *Provincializing Europe*, 47-71.

32 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence", 146-172.

33 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 148.

34 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 150.

obra e a de Ghosh, que diz admirar e ensinar aos seus alunos,[35] Chakrabarty lembra o modo como o iluminismo permitiu "a universalização de diferentes versões de igualdade, o que permitiu que se acusasse o colonizador de se contradizer a si mesmo",[36] para destacar que que o racismo funcionou de modo diferente no território indiano e noutras colónias– como será o caso, por exemplo, da Austrália, que lhe é mais familiar –, salientando o modo como ele teria sido menos violento e discriminador na Índia, na sequência de hierarquizações da espécie humana que viam nos orientais manifestações mais desenvolvidas, mas sempre imperfeitas, do processo civilizacional ,[37] cadeia evolucionista própria daquilo que se convencionou designar de ciência do homem ou de história da humanidade desde finais do século XVIII.

Seguem-se longas missivas, sobretudo por parte de Ghosh, que insiste na questão de a 'raça' estar no âmago de todo o projeto colonizador, mesmo quando matizada ou obnubilada por outros fatores, insistindo que as hierarquizações existentes na Índia, tais como as divisões entre castas e religiões, teriam sido de uma outra ordem, e que todo o projeto iluminista não pode ser dissociado desse racismo que lhe será inerente. E sublinha a correlação estreita entre Luzes e 'missão civilizadora,' 'raça' e racismo, vendo em todo o legado iluminista uma forma malsã de evolucionismo.[38] Não esquece ainda de mencionar o modo como, na Índia, os próprios colonizados interiorizaram essas novas hierarquias e discriminações aprendidas com o colonizador.[39]

Interessante é, neste debate, além do tom dialogante, a lembrar os diálogos elegantemente polémicos dos enciclopedistas – pensemos em Diderot, por exemplo[40] – ou os debates nos *adda*,[41] o modo como Chakrabarty se apega aos ideais iluministas, salientando precisamente

35 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 150.

36 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 154-155.

37 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 155-156.

38 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence,"156 ss.

39 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 159-160.

40 Veja-se, por exemplo, *Le neveu de Rameau* e *Supplément au Voyaage de Bougainville*.

41 Ver o capítulo VII de *Provincializing Europe*, "*Adda*: A History of Sociality", pp. 180-213, que Ghosh diz ter lido com "especial prazer." Ghosh and Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 147.

a sua "ambiguidade,"[42] o que Ghosh reconhece, mas entende não ser apenas caraterístico das Luzes, mas de muitas, se não a maior parte das tradições filosóficas.[43] E acrescenta que essa ambiguidade serviu menos para libertar do que para ludibriar os colonizados,[44] ao que Chakrabarty responde, espicaçado, que "baseado na sua leitura, que admite ser superficial, das suas próprias tradições," continuaria a defender que o "iluminismo – em combinação com o capitalismo – foi algo de especial. Foi especial no modo como ajudou a transformar a 'igualdade' numa categoria universal da vida secular, permeando todos os aspetos da atividade humana, introduzindo-a em todas medidas gerais da troca."[45] E invoca, para o efeito, a história 1, conceito que desenvolvera no capítulo VII de *Provincializing Europe* sobre as duas histórias do capital, para sublinhar o modo como, parafraseando, Marx "a lógica da mercadoria só pode ser praticada – e assim tornada visível – numa sociedade em que a ideia da igualdade humana atingiu a fixidez de um preconceito popular [...]." [46] E acrescenta ainda que, se é verdade que a moderna ideia de 'raça' pode ser associada à ciência moderna, o mesmo se pode dizer do modo como esta última pode também incluir "formas de conhecimento modernas tais como a sociologia, a antropologia, a demografia, etc. que os governos e as instituições usam quotidianamente." [47]

Dito de outro modo, pressionado pelas críticas de Gosh, o autor de *Provincializing Europe* enfatiza o que, para ele, poderá ser inadequado, mas não pode ser dispensado, no que diz respeito às Luzes e ao seu legado, a que há que, como escreve também na obra, recorrer, reconhecendo os seus limites e possibilidades, na tentativa de escrever "uma história diferente da razão." [48]

Ora, tentar escrever "uma história diferente da razão" equivale não a negar, mas a pensar uma razão que, mesmo que presumida como

42 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 155
43 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 156
44 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 158.
45 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 164.
46 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 164.
47 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence," 164.
48 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 236.

transcendental, não se limite a um "modo universalmente idêntico de se ser humano",[49] pelo que tentar contar outras histórias, que deem lugar e não apaguem a diferença, corresponde a lutar contra o tempo, vazio, homogéneo, evolucionista, aquilo a que Chakrabarty designa de historicismo.

Para tal, há que incorporar não só a dimensão afetiva dos mundos-de-vida a que estamos ligados localmente, mas também o desejo eminentemente modernista, voluntarista – decisionista, chama-lhe Chakrabarty – de se construir a partir do nada, momento inaugural que preside a todo o ato revolucionário, segundo Arendt,[50] a que corresponde, também, a *tabula rasa* de que Fanon falava relativamente a uma descolonização efetiva.[51] Mas este "decisionismo" terá de ser articulado com o anacronismo, por forma a que sejam possíveis "tanto a liberdade da história quanto a liberdade de respeitar aspetos da tradição considerados úteis para construir o futuro desejado," [52] a fim de se superar "o ressentimento para com o pensamento europeu".[53]

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Não pretendem este conjunto de reflexões lançar qualquer nova luz sobre o pensamento de Chakrabarty, nem tão pouco a sua defesa acrítica. Aquilo que, finalmente, aqui se apresenta são antes ruminações, porventura um pouco ensimesmadas, em tempo de retiro pandémico, que não nos pode, porém, roubar o desejo de pensar, num esforço por compreender um texto que, na sua complexidade, não convida a sínteses fáceis. Daí estas deambulações possíveis, em espiral, que

49 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 236.

50 Ver, por exemplo, o capítulo "Ideology and Terror" em Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Nova Iorque: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1962 [1958]), 460-479. E, numa versão, em que apenas parcialmente me revejo, os passos em que Arendt associa as revoluções ao início de uma ação em *On Revolution* (Londres: Penguin, 1990).

51 Fanon, *Les damnés de la Terre*.

52 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 247.

53 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 248--249.

também poderiam ser descritas como variações musicais em busca de uma polifonia, que possa ir para além de um mundo dividido em legados 'ocidentais' ou 'orientais,' na atenção ao imbricado que também carateriza os nossos modos de habitar um mundo, mesmo em tempos de isolamento forçado. O que não significa que eles não deixem de ser mais ou menos desiguais, assim replicando, mais uma vez, a violência das heranças coloniais. Também nas antigas metrópole de onde escrevo.

Esperando que estas ruminações ensimesmadas em torno de *Provincializing Europe* possam constituir um convite à sua (re)leitura. E tradução.

3. Notas finais, inconclusivas

Numa nota final, a última do livro, Chakrabarty cita uma outra nota da autoria de J. L. Mehta no seu livro *Martin Heidegger: The Way and the Vision* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), que, por sua vez, cita o Heidegger tardio, ao dizer que "o estar em casa é também sempre uma questão de se regressar a casa, ou seja, de viagem e de errância."[54]

São estes pequenos alçapões no texto, habilmente escondidos em notas finais, que nos dão a ver outras perspetivas sobre mundos que julgávamos familiares, o mundo traduzido assumindo, agora, uma forma de "translucidez" que nos permite ver o que julgávamos conhecido com outros olhos,[55] ajudando-nos, também na Europa, a ir para além de ideias feitas sobre a filosofia do 'sangue' e do 'solo,' a que Heidegger também pode, e com razão, ser associado.

Mais uma nota: retomando o método contrapontístico de Edward Said,[56] que requer que coloquemos em diálogo vozes que poderão não parecer as mais óbvias, ensaiando a dissonância que a comparação mais ousada tanto mais justifica, quero aqui evocar um outro texto por demais esqueci-

54 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 298.

55 Helmuth Plessner, *Mit anderen Augen: Aspekte einer philosophischen Anthropologie* (Estugarda: Reclam, 1982).

56 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (Londres: Vintage, 1994 [1993]).

do de Siegfried Kracauer, *History. The Last Things before the Last*[57]. Num passo com surpreendentes afinidades com o pensamento de Chakrabarty, Kracauer, fiel à sua crítica do historicismo, que partilhava, de resto, com Walter Benjamin, de quem foi amigo e colaborador próximo, fala da história como antecâmera, espaço intermediário,[58] caraterística que partilharia com a fotografia.[59] Com efeito, em ensaio anterior, Kracauer já chamara a atenção para essa afinidade,[60] a que regressaria neste último texto publicado postumamente. Para Kracauer, quer a realidade histórica, quer a fotográfica podem ser definidas como uma "antecâmera," pois "não se emprestam a serem abordadas de um modo definitivo."[61] Os materiais a que a história acede escapam ao pensamento sistemático, próprio do pendor universalizante da filosofia, não podendo ser configurados como uma obra de arte. Se a fotografia não deve ser interpretada como arte, também a história não passa de mera opinião, o que equivale a que ambas tenham de abdicar de qualquer *telos*, habitando, antes, um lugar efémero, uma antecâmara, que dá a ver "as coisas penúltimas," mas não a finalidade, o fim em si mesmo, "as coisas últimas" ("*the ultimate things*").[62] Dizer isto equivale, para Kracauer, a incorporar aquilo que de transiente existe no mundo exterior, redimindo-o, assim do esquecimento.[63] Contra aquilo que define como a tentação seja das abordagens transcendentais, seja das imanentistas ao passado, Kracauer opta por uma "área intermediária."[64] O que "requer que [os historiadores e outros residentes inveterados de antecâmeras] reconheçam a importância possível das verdades filosóficas com a sua pretensão a uma validade objetiva (o que exclui Heidegger e a sua safra existencialista) e que, ao mesmo tempo, tenham consciência das suas limitações em termos de caráter absoluto e poder controlador (aquele que exclui qualquer posição

57 Siegfried Kracauer, *History. The Last Things before the Last. Completed after the Death of the Author by Paul Oskar Kristeller* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers 1995).

58 Kracauer, *History*, 211.

59 Kracauer, *History*, 191.

60 Siegfried Kracauer, "Die Photographie," in *Das Ornament der Masse. Essays. Mit einem Nachwort von Karsten Witte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2017 [1977]), 21-39.

61 Kracauer, *History*, 191.

62 Kracauer, *History*, 191.

63 Kracauer, *History*, 192.

64 Kracauer, *History*, 211.

ontológica definitiva). A ambiguidade é essencial nesta área intermediária." Dos historiadores é, assim, requerido um "esforço constante" a fim de fazer face às "necessidades em conflito com que se deparam a cada curva da estrada" que percorrem. A braços com uma "situação precária que os convida a apostar em absolutos, com todo o tipo de ideias quixotescas sobre a verdade universal," esses seres de antecâmara revelam afinidades com Sancho Pança, esse "homem livre, [que] acompanhou filosoficamente Don Quixote nas suas cruzadas, porventura, por um sentido da responsabilidade, delas obtendo, finalmente, um imenso e edificante entretenimento até ao fim..." Esta definição da autoria de Kafka, citado por Kracauer, corresponderia a uma utopia, não ao "ainda não" de Ernst Bloch, por demais ou tão só historicista, acrescentaria, na senda de Chakrabarty, mas a uma utopia dos "entre-lugares – uma terra incógnita nos vácuos entre as terras que conhecemos." [65]

Não poderá ser esta uma outra forma de se pensar o "ainda não" que Chakrabarty rejeita no historicismo, opondo-lhe uma localidade menos enraizada do que a do mundo provinciano e, finalmente alheio ao mundo político, de Heidegger[66]? Poder-se-ia, com Enzo Traverso,[67] ver nessa antecâmara de Kracauer, como na sala de espera de Chakrabarty, uma representação hiper-realista dessa espécie de não-lugar,[68] versão americanizada e modernista de um *lounge* e ou de um *lobby*, a anunciar a condição pós-moderna. Prefiro ler nelas menos a "ambiguidade" do nómada universal, que no século passado tanta tinta fez correr, do que a expetativa de um tempo, porventura não totalmente novo, mas feito de inesperados, um tempo menos messiânico do que aquele que Benjamin e Kracauer, este com mais modéstia e menos fragor, previam. Mais um estar em casa, feito de regressos e de errâncias, do que uma expansão infinita em nome de civilizações destruidoras.

65 Kracauer, *History*, 216-217.

66 No ensaio "Heidegger the Fox," in *Essays in Understading. 1930*-1954, ed. Jerome Kohn (Nova Iorque: Harcourt & Brace, 1994), Hannah Arendt utiliza uma fábula inspirada em Esopo para apontar para os perigos do enredamento heideggariano em construções teóricas, assim se tornando vítima das suas próprias armadilhas.

67 Enzo Traverso, *Siegfried Kracauer, itinéraire d'un intellectuel nomade* (Paris: La Découverte, 1994).

68 Traverso, *Siegfried Kracauer*, 187.

Permita o leitor que teve a paciência de acompanhar estas ruminações só mais uma pequena nota final, nesta conclusão inconclusiva, já demasiado longa.

Curiosamente, na sua correspondência com Chakrabarty, Gosh sublinha um paralelismo entre indianos e judeus Ashkenazy, que teriam experimentado o ódio de si mesmos, perguntando como se terão sentido Paul Celan ou Walter Benjamin ao usarem – magistralmente – de uma língua que os rejeitava e ao mesmo tempo lhes pertencia.[69] Comentário que lembra Jean Améry – esse outro grande mestre da língua alemã –, ao descrever o momento de estranho reconhecimento que experimentou, quando, durante o seu período de clandestinidade – pouco antes da prisão que o haveria de levar ao Forte de Breendonk, onde seria torturado pela Gestapo –, reconhece nas ameaças de um membro das tropas de ocupação nazi a intimidade do dialeto da sua região natal.[70]

O que muito nos poderia dizer acerca das línguas maternas e do modo como, em contextos de violência discriminadora, elas nos podem recusar o conforto e a segurança por que optei ao escrever este texto. Em português.

69 Ghosh e Chakrabarty, "A Correspondence on *Provincializing Europe*," 160.

70 Jean Améry, "Wieviel Heimat braucht der Mensch?," in *Jenseits von Schuld und Sühne. Bewältigungsversuche eines Überwältigten* (Munique: Szczesny 1966), 74–101, aqui 82.

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Patrícia Martins Marcos

Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time

In *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty laid out a systematic critique of historicism as a marker of essential, racialized difference. Unquestioned assumptions of universal time and *telos* were instrumentalized by colonial power to rank and rule subaltern others. This paper builds on Chakrabarty's decolonizing project by seeking to denaturalize the legacies of imperialism inscribed in ideas about place (Europe or the nation-state) *and time* (the universal chronology of modernity). By provincializing political chronology, I challenge sovereign periodization as the key rubric of historical expertise by focusing on *corporeal chronologies*. This analytic stresses the role of embodiment in Amerindian expressions of colonial resistance; the somatic instantiation of categories of laggard time – the primitive, the savage, the child – produced in imperial knowledge-making imaginaries and projected onto racialized bodies; consider how the past is embodied and reiterated through memory, trauma, and disability; and the everyday spaces of intimacy and interpersonal rapports where categories about self and empire are recapitulated, reified, and lived.
Keywords: Portuguese colonialism and postcolonialism; history of the body; trauma and history; Brazilian history.

Descolonizando o Império: Cronologias Corpóreas e os Emaranhados do Tempo Colonial e Pós-Colonial

Em *Provincializing Europe*, Dipesh Chakrabarty apresentou uma crítica sistemática do historicismo enquanto elemento de uma diferença racializada e essencialista. Na sua análise, os pressupostos inquestionáveis do tempo universal e do *telos* foram instrumentalizados pelo poder colonial para hierarquizar e governar os outros subalternos. Este texto baseia-se no projeto descolonizador de Chakrabarty ao tentar desnaturalizar as heranças do imperialismo inscritas em ideias a respeito do lugar (a Europa ou o Estado-nação) *e do tempo* (a cronologia universal da modernidade). Ao provincializar a cronologia política, questiono as periodizações soberanas enquanto chave do conhecimento histórico focando-me, ao invés, em *cronologias corpóreas*. A partir desta análise, sublinho o papel da corporização na resistência colonial dos Ameríndios; a instanciação somática de categorias de atraso – o primitivo, o selvagem, a criança – produzidos pelos imaginários de produção de conhecimento imperial e projetados nos corpos racializados; analiso como o passado é corporizado e reiterado através da memória, do trauma e da invalidez; e os espaços quotidianos de intimidade e as ligações interpessoais onde categorias relativas ao ser e ao império são recapituladas, reificadas e vividas.
Palavras-chave: Colonialismo and pos-colonialismo português; história do corpo; trauma e história; história brasileira.

Decolonizing Empire: Corporeal Chronologies and the Entanglements of Colonial and Postcolonial Time

Patrícia Martins Marcos*

POSTCOLONIAL

Madalena and Débora knock on my door in two thousand seventeen.

Madalena and Débora are, respectively, four and nine years old and they ask me what's my name, "Patrícia, and you?". It is two o'clock in São Paulo, the cat juggles the fish for lunch, "my name is Débora and she's Madalena."

Madalena and Débora fix their gaze upon me, without moving. I spare both theirs and my time, we share the entrance to the building, "I speak a strange Portuguese, huh?".

Madalena and Débora nod with their expressive heads, they smile with an immense and mute "you do," they lower their eyes, grabbing the handrail while they swing two of their four legs in-between the steps. "I am from Portugal."

Madalena and Débora listen to me intently, they exchange looks between each other and while walking down the stairs, they release a terribly shy *tchauzinho*, step after step. Only after the first leap, slightly hesitant and somewhat hurried, Débora whispers in Madalena's ear. "We have to ask mommy where that is."

(Patrícia Lino)

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Colonial Endings and Imperial Afterlives

Empires cast exceedingly long shadows. Specters of imperial might project the imperial past well into (post)colonial modernity.[1] Reverberating into the present, coloniality and its afterlives persist in the habits of mind, legal scaffolds, institutions, disciplinary formations, and historical narratives through which human difference is conceived. The case of the Portuguese colonial empire emblematizes this process of colonial durability.[2] In a now notorious tale of spitefulness about the bitter, colonial end, following the 1975 declaration of Mozambican independence, the last Portuguese to leave the newly minted independent nation poured concrete down the toilets of their soon-to-be former homes.[3] This powerful, symbolic gesture – rendered in solidified cement – signifies the conduits and material debris propelling the enduring past into an unending sequence of (post)colonial afterlives.

When Portuguese colonists were physically removed from Mozambique, they also cast perpetual scars upon a land they could no longer claim as theirs. Their resentment was manifold. The loss of Portuguese state sovereignty entailed the concomitant squandering of a middle-class life accessible only by virtue of their relocation to Africa.[4] Colonial life was, for that reason, a slow-moving revolution. It started with sundry items – access to shoes, clothing, basic necessities – it moved to infrastructural projects – sanitation, agriculture, irrigation infrastructures–, and it was finally epitomized in the alchemy of a situational elevation operated *only* in colonial settings. Suddenly, with a

1 Postcoloniality is not merely the predicament of former colonies: it is also in a major way a predicament of former colonial powers," Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, *"Culture" and Culture: Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Rights* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2009), 1-2. Also: Yuko Miki, *Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

2 Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Time* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

3 I story I personally heard many times, but which can be found also in: Pamila Gupta, *Portuguese Decolonization in the Indian Ocean World: History and Ethnography* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 2.

4 Cláudia Castelo, "Village Portugal" in Africa: Discourses of Differentiation and Hierarchization of Settlers, 1950s-1974," in *Rethinking White Societies in Southern Africa*, eds. Duncan Money and Danelle Van Zyl-Hermann (London: Routledge, 2020), 115-133.

mere tilt in geography, race was rendered relevant and whiteness forefronted as the key organizing principle of social rank and collective life in Africa.

Colonial relocation metamorphosed the pauper into a master. Why would anyone willingly–or cheerfully–give that up? If sanitation was a mark of the civilizing mission's progress in Africa, what better denouement than to render extant colonial infrastructures absolutely obsolete? The gesture was powerful and perennial at once. The destruction of sewer lines reassured colonizers that the formerly colonized could never again access any structures of civilization; that their future was forever bygone and backward. Empire, as the historicist proposition that it was, cast its last act in the deliberate ossification of its subaltern subjects into a perennially uncivilized past. Decolonization wrought loss but did not bring an unequivocal end. Empire did not die in 1974/75. Rather, it was reinvented into a collective imaginary where selective silences, alluring nostalgias, and belabored mythologies became entangled. After 1975, colonial phantasmagorias continued to prowl; the weight of the past lurking still in monuments, memories, bodies, family accounts, and material culture.

Upon their compulsory return to Portugal, former colonists ("retornados") carried with them both memorabilia and memories. Yet, the reconfiguration of sovereignties and political regimes impelling this jilt cannot be overdetermined. The end of colonial rule and the institution of independent governance did not – and could not – change everything; especially not articulations of intimacy, sentiment, and kinship. Thus, despite empire's nominal end, neither war nor revolution managed to subdue coloniality altogether. Shifts in sovereignty, institutions, legal and political regimes altered the ethos and structures of collective life but could not transform what lay before: the modes of thought, rationalizations, and racialized hierarchies underpinning the rearing of an entire country educated and conscripted to see empire as destiny.

Imperialism is a regime of the imaginary. It mobilizes technology, bureaucracies, material culture, and bodies to administer its fabulist figurations. Here, I follow Ariella Aïsha Azoulay and submit that the knowl-

edge-making fictions wielded by political power can be read as "a performance of the naturalization of the imperial premise."[5] Taxonomies of rule hinge on a theory of temporal difference – with time organized through a developmental and evolutionary grid – that is empirically instantiated in bodies othered through ableist, racialized, classist, and gendered hierarchies of being. In Portuguese America, this logic enabled the collapsing of Amerindian plurality into a reductive set of oppositional binaries: either ally or enemy; Tupi or Tapuia; convert or cannibal. All these classificatory schemas presuppose an administration of difference premised on the intersection between physical embodiment, symbolic visuality, and a sequential ranking of embodied temporalities postulated on the heuristic of incremental progress.

But imperial imaginaries also summon the mnemonic and material to colonize bodies and minds. *Corporeal chronologies* explores the tension between the imperial objectifying gaze and subaltern, agential resistance. Excavating the numerous ways in which colonialism is constituted as praxis; a system enacting physical and symbolic corporeal control, with race mapped onto geographies of subalternity and laggard time. Thus, while empire entailed imaginary, desire, and projection, colonization demanded operations wielding imperial fantasies into being. In colonial settings, conversely, in geographies far removed from the corridors where metropolitan hubris was fabricated, distance entailed some latitude. While bulwarks of colonial power realized their discretionary power to punish, subdue, and enslave by carrying on unsupervised and unsanctioned; colonial subjects ingeniously used embodiment to resist by fleeing, maintaining ritual performance, kinship making beyond bloodlines, or adopting other-than-human relatives.[6]

Provincializing Time, Place, Land, and Bodies

To think about the ongoing legacy of Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* entails considering the ability that teleological, historical time had

5 Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London: Verso, 2019), 3.

6 Kim Tallbear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sex and Family," in *Making Kin Not Population*, ed. Adele Clarke and Donna Haraway (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2018), 145-164.

to subjugate and racialize. In what follows, I unpack a series of moments exemplifying the rippling reverberations of the colonial past and its many (post)colonial afterlives. This gesture connects Chakrabarty's account of modernity with Jodi Byrd's *Transit of Empire*, thus exposing how shared discourses of "Indianness," savagery, and infancy prefigured "the present everydayness of settler colonialism."[7] By engaging with moments of repeated tropes and "stock scripts," I lay bare the temporal logic undergirding the reproduction of colonial structures of power, legal regimes, and ways of governing indigenous life across colony, empire, republic, and contemporary Brazil. Given this temporal span, stress laid on echoes, continuities and imperial debris deemphasizes rupture in order to recognize how contemporary, colonial leftovers are "deferred through repetitions," and articulated through intimacy, embodiment, and identity.[8] Without losing sight of how change and contingency are constitutive of historicity, this paper centers embodiment to capture the unrelenting "presentness" of the colonial past, while considering "histories that yield neither too smooth continuities nor too abrupt epochal breaks."[9]

As noted in *Provincializing Europe,* chronology is heterotemporal. Along this present replete with layered, superimposed pasts, extant cement not only prefigures an archive of residues documented through "material memories" but also conjures traces of events, lives, and experiences.[10] Hence, the materiality of *pipes-turned-into-concrete-tubes* intimates the fallibility of political and legal regimes as the principal scaffold of historical knowledge-making. Instead, the physical endurance of matter accentuates continuity rather than rupture, thus probing the deep colonial roots of the present. Through this framework, the case of Brazil as a settler colonial state is presented,[11] while Portugal is interpreted as a not yet decolonized empire.

7 Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2011), xxi.

8 Byrd, *Transit of Empire*, xviii.

9 Stoler, *Duress*, 6.

10 Laurent Olivier, *Sombre Abîme du Temps: mémoire et archéologie* (Paris: Seuil, 2008).

11 Michael Goebel, "Settler colonialism in Postcolonial Latin America," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016), 139-152.

By engaging with the problem of hierarchies of time, I connect the chronology of embodiment, personal temporality, and lived experience (infancy versus adulthood) to the colonial and historicist idea of "civilization" that emanated out of 19th century thought.[12] The imperialist innuendo of age performed a simple metonymic function. As "savages," Brazilian Amerindians exhibited a lack of preparedness for self-government and sovereignty.[13] This situation only came to a formal end in 1988, with the approval of the new Brazilian Constitution, the end of assimilationist policies, and the acknowledgement of originary rights to land and self-determination.[14] Still, despite the Portuguese Crown and the Brazilian State's best attempts to govern strictly from above, all legal regimes and frameworks were also persistently resisted from below. For centuries, the colonial desiderata of Portugal and Brazil were met with Amerindian resistance, defiance, and skillful negotiation techniques.[15] Thus, the limits and possibilities of any legal scaffold must be understood as a *contact zone* where the ambitions of central planning always had to contended with subaltern agency and strategies of resistance.

The colonial ranking of temporalities and the racialization of historical difference – first understood within a biblical timeline, and subsequently taken as a single, linear telos – discussed at length by Chakrabarty, readied the colony for extractivist economies. From the very start, Brazil was named after its prime, exportable commodity: *pau-brasil* (brazilwood). Fecund nature and pliable natives were frequently foiled together in a metonymic contrivance designed to sub-

12 On 19th century Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

13 For Alcida Rita Ramos, the Brazilian state regards Amerindians as "nearly juvenile," since they remain "frozen" in this condition since 1916 (Civil Code), being deemed as "relatively incapable" ("*relativamente incapazes*"), until 1985, along with married women and minors below 21 and above 16 years old. *Os direitos do índio no Brasil: na encruzilhada da cidadania* (Brasília: Universidade de Brasília, 1991), 1. On the mechanisms of *compadrio*, "paternalist" Crown administration, and the deprivation of self-government as a device separating indigenous body from land, John M. Monteiro, "De índio a escravo. A transformação da população indígena de São Paulo no século XVII," *Revista de Antropologia* 30/32 (1987-89): 151-174.

14 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, Índios no Brasil: História, Direitos e Cidadania (São Paulo: Claro Enigma, 2013).

15 Seth Garfield, *Indigenous Struggle at the Heart of Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001) and Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

sume mastery over one into the domination of the other. Yet, the heathens depicted as naked and faithless *tabula rasa* ready to be shaped, dressed, baptized, and domesticated were not quite as pliant as the clay conjured by Jesuits.[16] Indeed, the intransigent persistency of native resistance to Portuguese colonial efforts, led to a dichotomous split in the representational tropes used to depict Amerindians between intelligent and docile converts or a cannibal heathens.[17]

Owing to a shifting geometry of native interests and their rapports with Europeans, resisting Amerindian polities were collapsed into a dualistic, racializing schema. Essentialized readings of time, place, and phenotype played instrumental, legitimating roles because native enslavement necessitated a supporting logic and jurisprudence: "just war."[18] Thus, the savage and inimical Tapuia resisting colonization into the *sertão,* was a creation of colonial necessity. The collapsing of multiple native polities into a dualistic schema afforded rationales for the dispossession of Amerindian life, bodies, and territory. In separating the universal human from the non or nearly human, "Nature" was crafted by the Portuguese Crown and the Brazilian State as an empty, uninhabited, and eminently unexploited space awaiting conquest and mastery.[19]

Similar logics continue to materialize in Brazil's (post)colonial model of natural resource, capitalist extractivism. According to Patrick Wolfe, "[l]and is life."Despite assurances to land sovereignty inbuilt into the 1988 Constitution, indigenous land and body remain subject to predation.[20] Hence, contests for land are not only conflicts *for* life, but

16 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, "Imagens dos Índios do Brasil: O Século XVI," *Estudos Avançados* 4, no. 10, (1990): 91-110; John M. Monteiro, "The Heathen Castes of Sixteenth-Century Portuguese America: Unity, Diversity, and the Invention of the Brazilian Indians," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80 (2000): 697–719.

17 Cunha, "Imagens" and Monteiro, "The Heather Castes".

18 Monteiro, *Blacks.*

19 Tracy Devine Guzmán, *Native and National in Brazil: Indigeneity after Independence* (Chapel Hill: University of South Carolina Press, 2013), Garfield, *Indigenous Struggle* and Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of the Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

20 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, *Cultura com Aspas* (São Paulo: Ubu Editora, 2018); *Martírio: Indigenous Brazilians Struggle to Survive*, directed by Ernesto De Carvalho, Tatiana Almeida and Vincent Carelli (Brazil: Video das Aldeias, 2016).

also battles *against* erasure. For, as Deborah Bird Rose noted, "all the native has to do is stay home." Exactly because "Indigenous peoples obstructed settlers' access to land," the primary reason for their elimination was not race *per se*, "but access to territory." This rationale of elimination—tethered to land control—not only "destroys to replace," but dispossesses to extract and commodify.[21] In Brazil, both historically and today, the repeated killings of indigenous leaders, pollution, toxicity, predatory mining, fires, and deforestation, all recapitulate (settler) colonial processes through the extirpation of life from bodies and lands. It is in this sense also that the Amerindian body configures a *corporeal chronology.* As noted by Walter Mignolo, "one feels the weight of the modern-colonial world in the body as that body dwells in the legacies of colonial histories."[22] Thus, either through historical resistance or the appropriation of bodies "forced to live inside someone else's imagination," Amerindians found "historical time inscribed onto flesh."[23] The production of such meanings determines both biological fates and collective trajectories today.

Embodied Time and the Other

In *Provincializing Europe,* Chakrabarty centered his critiques of historical difference on the purported universality of time and theory. The moments naturalized as pivotal in the staccato of historical time – 1789, 1848, 1917 – defined key rhythms in the apportioning of progress from Europe to the world. The model was unchanging and universal. The imprimatur of a universal telos determined that "civilization" had uncomplicated, unified meanings, and a single goal. Revolutions, liberal democracy, science and technology, biomedicine, the rise of the individ-

21 Patrick Wolfe, "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409, particularly 387 and 388; Deborah Bird Rose cf. Patrick Wolfe, 388.

22 Walter Mignolo, "Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis," in *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*, ed. Katherine McKittrick (Durham, Duke University Press, 2015): 106-123, particularly 111.

23 Respectively: Ruha Benjamin, "The New Jim Code?" (lecture presented at the Science Studies Student Choice Speaker, UCSD, May 31, 2018); Didier Fassin, *When Bodies Remember: Experiences and Politics of AIDS in South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007): xv.

ual, not to forget Marxist theory, offered some examples of universal time and telos.

Failing at the checklist of civilized progress – modeled exclusively on European political sovereignty and institutions – intimated a state of backwardness. Here, individual and collective embodiment were conjoined. The state of guileless infancy endured by colonial populations legitimated British colonial rule. Left to their own devices, autochthonous peoples inevitably succumbed to innate idleness, allowing nature to run its course without industry, agriculture, or technology.[24] But the lessons drawn from Marx's inherent particularism were also valid elsewhere. Beneath the surface, the universal always was highly contingent. Moreover, the historicist telos of political modernity, i.e. the very reason India had to submit to British rule, was not just provincial, but also parochial. In the end, even a portable theory like Marxism conversed with the situated time and place of an industrializing, capitalist Europe embroiled in political turmoil. Such was the high time of historicism.

But the idiom of infancy and laggard time was not unique to the British Empire. In colonial Brazil, both the Portuguese Crown and religious missionaries also had its go at classifying Amerindians as humans *in potentia*.[25] In 1757, the *Directório dos Índios* –instituted by the Marquis of Pombal and pursued in Brazil, operated an alchemy of subjecthood.[26] Brazilian Amerindians, whose slavery was outlawed in 1755, were subsequently, through legal sleight of hand, turned into Portuguese subjects – with the aim of creating a singularly Brazilian race.[27] To this end, the Crown deployed every technology necessary to

24 David Arnold, *The Tropics and the Travelling Gaze: India, Landscape, and Science, 1800-1856* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015) and Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

25 Amerindians as savages and childlike humans *in potentia* see Pagden, *The Fall*, 57-108.

26 *Directório que se Deve Observar nas Povoações dos Indios do Pará e Maranhão* (Lisboa: Na Officina de Miguel Rodrigues, 1758). Law was passed in 1757 and printed in 1758. Previous laws decreeing the end of indigenous slavery approved in 1609 and 1680.

27 Patrícia Alves-Melo, "The Portuguese Crown's Policies Towards Indians in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Latin American History* (Oxford University Press, 2020). https://tinyurl.com/y4xgkcrp; Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

transmogrify Indians into vassals:[28] a patriarchal household, interracial marriages, a Portuguese surname, commerce, clothing, agriculture, sedentary life, different diet, and the Catholic faith.

But this Amerindian transmutation also required a controlled environment. With that intent, the Crown set up a critical laboratory of humanity in the Amazon: the *Vila*, a secular recasting of the missionary *Aldeia*.[29] This time, instead of a religious headmaster, Amerindian populations now followed the secular rule of a "Director." In a well-tried argument familiar to natural slavery debates, Amerindians were portrayed as not yet able to self-govern.[30] Placed under "tutelage status,"[31] the "director" occupied the role of an overseer whose mission was to "direct them [the Indians] in the means of civility [...] [and] persuade them in the precepts of rationality."[32]And, just like that, legal and political subjecthood – operationalized through the title of "vassal" (*vassalo*) – was at once both granted and suspended. The theory was fairly simple, (on the surface, at least): Amerindians were redeemable as humans, constituting pliable human matter, but their *modus vivendi* was only "civilized" *in potentia*. Thus, while capable of becoming subjects, they had not yet achieved their human telos: agriculture and the capacity to transform and tame their natural environment through labor.[33]

Undergirding the edifice legitimating the interim position of the director as "tutor" of all Amerindians *en route* towards adult subjecthood, was a form of historicist reasoning.[34] According to Chakrabarty,

28 Ângela Domingues, *Quando os Índios Eram Vassalos*: *Colonização e Relações de Poder no Norte do Brasil na Segunda Metade do Século XVIII* (Lisboa: Comissão Nacional Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 2000).

29 The Jesuit Order was expelled in 1759. Previous laws e.g. the 1755 law abolishing indigenous slavery, claimed to free the "Indians" from their Jesuit enslavers, see Alida Metcalf, "The Society of Jesus and the First *Aldeias* of Brazil," in *Native Brazil: Beyond the Convert and the Cannibal, 1500-1900*, ed. Hal Langfur (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014), 29-61.

30 Pagden, *The Fall*.

31 Tutelage was codified in Portuguese Law in 1603, Ordenações Filipinas, in Title 102, Book IV. It was linked with the status of orphans which determined "the duty of administering the person and the possession of a minor, imposed by Law or by the will of man." See Cunha, Índios.

32 *Directório*, 1.

33 Pagden, *The Fall*.

34 *Directório*, 37.

"the politics of historicism" fundamentally "posited historical time as a measure of cultural distance (at least in institutional development)."[35] Thus, in the absence of institutions recreating the scaffolding of Portuguese metropolitan life, the *Vila* became a field station; a site for the historical process to be expedited towards its inextricable telos. This precipitation of civilized life within the patriarchal household, engendered a quotidian manufacturing of subjects. Day after day, the household meant to tame Amerindian elusiveness and inconstancy.[36] Rendered monogamous, sedentary, no longer cannibal, and appropriately dressed, Amerindian women bore the onus of reproducing empire, thus singularly embodying the contours of a new colonial frontier.[37] Despite rhetorical flourishes, however, the Índias were not fully fledged historical subjects but mere objects of historicist time who existed to be governed through their reproductive bodies, the household, and the *vila*.

Power is pragmatic. And, unlike what subsequent appropriations of the *Directório* would claim, miscegenation *was* colonization. By the twentieth century, the fictive and overly sexualized version of Amerindian womanhood presupposed in the *Directório*, was fully codified in Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala*.[38] While insisting on the Portuguese propensity to, unlike their Spanish counterparts, overlook *limpeza de sangre*, Freyre restated the idiom of infancy to validate Portuguese colonialism. According to Freyre, "the environment in which Brazilian life began was one of near sexual intoxication."[39] Freyre assured his reader that the indigenous groups encountered by the Portuguese were "primitive" seen as they had no "palaces, human sacrifices

35 Dispesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 6-7.

36 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2011).

37 On discussions of interracial marriages and the role of Amerindian women under the *Directório*, see Barbara A. Sommer, "Cupid in the Amazon: Sexual Witchcraft and Society in Late Colonial Brazil," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 12, no. 4 (2003): 415-446 and Hal Langfur, ed., *Native Brazil: Beyond the Convert and the Cannibal, 1500-1900* (Albuquerque: New Mexico University Press, 2014).

38 Gilberto Freyre, *Casa Grande e Senzala: Formação da Família Brasileira Sob o Regime da Economia Patriarcal,* (São Paulo: Global Editora, 2003 [1933]), 351-514.

39 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 296.

to the gods, monuments, bridges, or irrigation infrastructures and the exploitation of mines."[40] In short, Brazilian Amerindians had no "mature or exuberant culture." Rather, they were like "flocks of big children; [with] an incipient and unripe culture; still in their milk teeth."[41] In historicist terms, childhood became a bio-temporal metaphor for race and difference; instantiating the corporeal antithesis of universal, civilized time.

For Freyre, like the historicists critiqued by Chakrabarty, time was not just linear and progressive, but explicitly hierarchical. Civilization was instantiated in white, European bodies. From the Portuguese viewpoint, objects substantiated social and colonial hierarchies both through production and purchase. Racial difference and social rank – coded into architecture, commerce, and the strictures of the patriarchal household – made Amerindian indifference to feather caps and other dictates of Portuguese taste, legible *only* as barbarity. After 1798, when the *Directório* was abolished, a new regime of kinship, community, and labor relations was introduced by Crown fiat. While non-village Indians were ruled by an expanding orphan statute, those without a permanent abode were forced into compulsory services. The introduction of contracts binding individuals to specific Índios, resource to land leases in sites where Indians were traditional, "natural lords," and the introduction of free trade concessions ultimately curtailed the historical indigenous capacity to mobilize collectively in order to resist.[42] Consequently, despite all assurances included in colonial and (post)colonial law — rights following European models of property and land sovereignty — the commodification of territories and its mutation into property became a *fait accompli* while land plunder turned systematic.[43]

40 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 290.

41 Freyre, *Casa Grande*, 291.

42 Patrícia Melo Sampaio, "'Vossa Excelência Mandará o que for Servido...' Políticas Indígenas e Indigenistas na Amazônia Portuguesa do Final do Século XVIII," *Tempo* 12, no. 23 (2007): 39-55; Domingues, *Quando os Índios*; Mauro Cezar Coelho, *Do Sertão para o Mar: Um Estudo sobre a Experiência Portuguesa na América, a Partir da Colônia: O Caso do Diretório dos Índios (1750-1798)* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 2005).

43 For a Quilombola perspective Antônio Bispo dos Santos, "Somos da Terra," *PISEAGRAMA* 12 (2018): 44-51. https://piseagrama.org/somos-da-terra/. Cunha, Índios no Brasil.

Embodying Time and Telos: infancy and racial hierarchy

The rhetoric of infancy and the insistence on Amerindian incompetency enter political and economic adulthood became a recurrent, 19th century historicist trope. The models used to depict originary peoples as primitive were naturalized, becoming biological – with racialized, historicist time ranked according to age.[44] This argument was articulated in Varnhagen's *General History of Brazil* (1854), when he noted: "of such peoples still in their infancy, there is no history: there is only ethnography."[45] Such statements, contemporaneous to the Brazilian Empire's *brandura* policy, recapitulated colonial molds by repeating the *Directório*'s civilizing methods.[46] The deployment of the patriarchal household as a technology of colonization and interracial marriages. Much like under the *Directório*, citizenship debates in imperial Brazil centered the problem of legal equality, assimilation, and civilized convergence (all epitomes of historical progress). Yet, the very first Brazilian constitution (1824) deliberately excluded Amerindians precisely because of another historicist conundrum. To enter the social pact, "Indians needed to be civilized, and in doing so, they were no longer Indian."[47] Amerindian status precluded the possibility of being and becoming a future subject.

In the eyes of settler elites, historicist time was a marker of difference and a key racializing feature. Amerindians embodied a chronology of laggard time. Thus, both in imperial and republican Brazil, discrepancies about perceived chronological hierarchies of progress doomed Amerindians — now seen as an unfit, lesser biological species — to disappear. In this representational iteration, framed by scientific racism, infancy and laggardness were juxtaposed with cranial size and evolutionary thought.[48] The same way a child's brain was smaller and less

44 For a detailed discussion of scientific racism and age as a trope utilized to rank "inferior races," Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996).

45 Cf. Cunha, Índios no Brasil, 8.

46 Miki, *Frontiers*.

47 Miki, *Frontiers*, 34.

48 Detailed discussions about polygenism and monogenism, Darwinism and Lamarckian evolutionary biology in 19th century Brazil in Lilia Moritz Schwacz, *The Spectacle of the Races* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993); Nancy Leys Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics* (Ithaka: Cornell University Press, 1991) and Gould, *The Mismeasure*.

evolved than that of an adult, Amerindians ranked below Europeans. Historicist hierarchies began coalescing with biology, turning subjugation into an inexorable fact of "Nature."[49]

Indigenous extinction and racial inferiority became biological facts and natural outcomes of the historical progress. For that reason, 19th century ethnographic writings about Brazilian Indians insisted on their incompatibility with modernity.[50] How could the demands of civilized, modern, and urban life be in any way congruous with Amerindian inconstancy and nakedness? Throughout the 19th century, the conjoining of evolutionary thought with degeneration theory informed a new reinvention of the *Directório*'s principal tool: miscegenation. (Post)colonial Brazil's *indigenista* policy gained particular coherence after 1845, during D. Pedro II's reign (1841-1889).[51] Yet, contradicting Freyre's *luso-tropicalismo*, miscegenation was neither benign nor tolerant. In fact, racial mixing represented "the opposite of racial inclusion": ultimate extermination.[52]

After 1845, the explicit aim of *indigenismo* was Amerindian extinction.[53] Social evolutionists equated a universal model of progress with racial fitness, classed Indians as a "degenerate" and "doomed race," and used those schemas to legitimate violent incursions into the hinterlands – in continuity with colonial *bandeirantes*.[54] Thus, the myth of Amerindian eradication aligned words with deeds; providing the empirical soil needed to make a rhetorical production pose as scientific

49 Darwin travelled to Brazil aboard the Beagle. Under the auspices of Emperor D. Pedro II, many foreign scientists were invited to Brazil. The most notorious was the polygenist Louis Agassiz who visited Rio de Janeiro in 1865.

50 Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 1.

51 1845 was when the *Regulamento ácerca das Missões de catechese, e civilisação dos Índios* (Regulation concerning the Missions of Indian Catechism and Civilization), was passed.

52 Warwick Anderson, Ricardo Roque and Ricardo Ventura Santos, eds., *Luso-Tropicalism and its Discontents: The Making and Unmaking of Racial Exceptionalism* (New York: Berghahn, 2019). Cláudia Castelo, *Um Modo Português de Estar no Mundo: O Luso-Tropicalismo e o a Ideologia Colonial Portuguesa (1933-1961)* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 1998); Gilberto Freyre, *O Mundo que o Português Criou* (São Paulo: É Realizações, 2010) and Schwarcz, *The Spectacle.*

53 Miki, *Frontiers.*

54 Langfur, *Forbidden Lands*; Monteiro, *Blacks of the Land*; Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Spectacle* and Miki, *Frontiers.*

fact. In the 20th century, as Claude Lévi-Strauss prepared to leave for Brazil, the "production of extinction," was consummated.[55] Before his departure for Brazil, upon encountering the Brazilian ambassador in Paris, Claude Lévi-Strass was swiftly assured by the diplomat that there was no job at all for him in Brazil since all the "índios" were eradicated.[56] Suffice it to say, the Indians were still there; resisting and disproving every settler fantasy about their "degeneracy." However, their deliberate exclusion from the text of the 1824 constitution, citizenry, and the body politic exacerbated the racializing heuristics of temporal difference. By turning extinction into the *status quo*,the settler imaginary denied indigenous life any chance of futurity. Amerindians became symbols of a deep, pre-historical past – their image being deployed only as the ancestral kernel of Brazilian nationhood. Cast as incommensurable with modernity and incapable of bio-cultural evolution, Indians became foregone relics and impossible future citizens.

The crux of the plotline of produced extinction was once again temporal; concerning, at its core, the very organization of linear, historical time. While the modern, Brazilian nation deployed the image of the ancestral índio to legitimate its existence, the language of miscegenation justified ethnogenesis and Amerindian incompatibility with modernity. The promissory telos of the nation-state – which lay in the future – and the timelessness bound to indigeneity – which lay in the past – proffered a narrative of utter incompatibility. This temporal mismatch also propitiated the conditions needed to manufacture Indians into museum objects.[57] Any expressions of idiosyncratic, material culture – quotidian objects, adornments, even bodily remains – were recast by "civilized" scientists into anthropological collectibles and artifacts. As beings became objects, life was reconfigured into mere knowledge. Caged behind Plexiglas, natural history museum dioramas froze the native in time. Museum displays curated a flattened, fetishized, and

55 Miki, *Frontiers*, 100-134.

56 Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, *Race in Translation: Culture Wars Around the Postcolonial Atlantic* (New York, NY: NYU Press, 2012), 34; Claude Lévi-Strauss and Didier Eribon, *Conversations with Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 38.

57 Schwarcz, *Spectacle.*

static image of *every* "native," reduced into an essentialized and universal exemplar of a "barbaric" *modus vivendi*. Thus, the diorama became a visual technology essential to codify racialized, historical difference. Outside museum walls, conversely, the aesthetics of temporal difference thrived in archaeological and anthropological knowledge-making methods. Ethnographic observation and description inscribed social structures onto bodies, presenting Amerindians as anachronistic, live specimens of the deep past.

Over time, as the move to decolonize museums and repatriate looted items gained momentum, museum advocates defended its role as a site of preservation.[58] Get rid of the museum, so the argument went, and artifacts from defunct "civilizations" would find no refuge or progenitor to care for them. Conversely, if the "civilization" on display was not yet dead, but facing financial strain or armed conflict, the museum could guarantee a caring custodian.[59] The fire at Rio de Janeiro's *Museu Nacional*, on 2 September 2018, defied this discourse[60] At the root of the museum's formation lay an encyclopedic ambition of collecting totality to attain universal knowledge. With 20 million items – the British Museum holding about eight – the fire consumed the last remaining records of many indigenous cultures. Amerindian polities, once casualties of colonization and *brandura*, faced in 2018, what many called a "new genocide."[61]

58 Amy Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums* (Charlotte: UNC Press, 2012). Sabrina Alli, "Ariella Aïsha Azoulay: "It is not possible to decolonize the museum without decolonizing the world." *Guernica*, March 12, 2020. https://rb.gy/msrwls ; Julia E. Rodriguez, "Decolonizing or Recolonizing? The (Mis)Representation of Humanity in Natural History Museums," *History of Anthropology Review,* January 10, 2020 https://rb.gy/hfeqaa

59 James Cuno, *Museums Matter: In Praise of the Encyclopedic Museum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Mirjam Brusius and Kavita Singh, *Museum Storage and Meaning: Tales from the Crypt* (London: Routledge, 2018); Margaret M. Miles, "War and Passion: Who Keeps the Art?", *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law* 49 (2017): 5-21; Boris Jardine, Emma Kowal and Jenny Bangham, "How Collections End: Objects, Meaning, and Loss in Laboratories and Museums," *British Journal for the History of Science* 4 (2019): 1-27.

60 Cassia Roth, "Up in Flames: The Death of Brazil's Museu Nacional," *Nursing Clio*, September 11, 2018 https://nursingclio.org/2018/09/11/up-in-flames-the-death-of-brazils-museu-nacional/.

61 According to José Urutau Guajajara, a member of the Tenetehára-Guajajara, see Manuela Andreoni and Ernesto Londoño, "Loss of Indigenous Works in Brazil Museum Fire Felt 'Like New Genocide'", *New York Times*, September 13, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/world/americas/brazil-museum-fire-indigenous.html

After the fire, only 40.000 artifacts survived by happenstance and irony.[62] They happened to be in Brasília, at an exhibit called *The First Brazilians*.[63] Judging from the title, the 2018 exhibit insisted on a well-trod script: the originary narrative. In its own words, the exhibit "incorporated [Amerindians] into the process of national formation."[64] And, while the curators were careful to place indigenous experience squarely in the present – devoting one of the five temporalities to contemporary experiences – ancestry and the deep, pre-colonial past were recapitulated as the locus of Amerindian legitimacy to land and citizenship. These conditions, as stated in the catalogue, were legal in nature. The scaffold of rights foreseen in the *Statute of the Indian* ("Estatuto do Índio") of Brazil's 1988 democratic Constitution, granted indigenous communities, for the first time, the right to exist as a differentiated polity – with manifestations of specific social organization, customs, languages, worldviews, and traditions. Yet, as well intended as the gesture may have been, it remained assimilative in nature – *lusotropical*, even – because it legitimated the Indian's place in the Brazilian imaginary through the unquestioned telos of Western sovereignty and the settler nation-state.

This move imposed a colonial grid of space as property, and of land as nation. Thus, it inflicted a colonial conceptual schema tethering transborder kinship ties – e.g. like the Guarani or the Huni Kuin – exclusively to the confines of the Brazilian nation-state.[65] Despite its best intentions, this deliberate curatorial gesture echoed Eduardo Viveiro de Castro's casting of Brazilian Amerindians as the *The Unwitting of the Nation*.[66] According to the anthropologist, Indians were involuntarily assimilated into the settler colonial

62 "Únicas peças do acervo indígena do Museu Nacional estão em Brasília," *R7*, September 8, 2018 shorturl.at/dtK01

63 João Pacheco Oliveira, *Os Primeiros Brasileiros: Catálogo* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2019), http://www.arquivonacional.gov.br/images/Catalogo_exposicao_OPB.pdf

64 Oliveira, *Os Primeiros Brasileiros*, 2.

65 The Guarani, for example, are scattered across territories claimed by modern day Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Bolivia.

66 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Os Involuntários da Pátria", *Caderno de Leituras* (Belo Horizonte: Edições Chão de Feira, 2017). https://chaodafeira.com/catalogo/caderno65/. Paper presented at the conference "Questões indígenas: ecologia, terra e saberes ameríndios", in Teatro Maria Matos in Lisbon, 5 may 2017. An earlier version was presented during the event "Abril Indígena", at Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, 20 april 2016.

nation-state; "a nation which fell on their heads and which they did not ask for."[67] This imposition hinged on the consecration of a human/non-human dualism, the blurring of temporal difference with degrees of development, and the resulting institution of a colonial and Western hierarchy of being.[68]

In extremis, this move led to what indigenous scholar and activist Ailton Krenak called the institution of a limiting conception of universal humanity. As Krenak pointed, it was in "this blender called humanity" that a discrete separation between human and land–and an equivalency between land and extractable capital–was facilitated.[69] Echoing Krenak, Viveiros de Castro concurred that "the Land is the Indian body, as the índios are part of the body of the Land."[70]

According to the colonial grid of space as property and of land as nation, Amerindian kinship was not only cut and colonized by the imposition of imperial and state borders, but also by the expropriation of land, the excavation of mountains, and the killing of rivers. Nature as commodity entailed indigenous extinction. Thus, the colonial desideratum of useful nature – the same goal animating Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira's "philosophical travels" (1783-1792) in the Amazon, persisted all throughout colonial, imperial, republican, and contemporary Brazil. The valorization of land as promissory surplus severed the fundamental Amerindian land/body continuum, "animating and de-animating certain beings" to justify hierarchies.[71] Indian life and corporeality threatened the ambitions of Portuguese and Brazilian settler colonialism.[72]

67 Castro, "Os Involuntários da Pátria", 2.

68 The idea of "hierarchies of being" comes from Native American scholar Kim Tallbear, see Kim Tallbear, "Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary: A Feminist Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms," in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, ed. Joanna Radin and Emma Cowal (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017), 179-202.

69 Krenak, *Ideias*, 11.

70 Viveiros de Castro, "Os Involuntários", 3.

71 Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, *Memory of Amazónia: Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira and the Viagem Philosophica in the Captaincies of Grão-Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuyabá (1783-1792)* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1994). On animation and de-animation, see Mel Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

72 Kittiya M. Lee, "Cannibal Theologies"; Michael Goebel, "Settler Colonialism in Postcolonial Latin America", *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016), 139-152.

Today, the scripts crafted about Brazilian Amerindians in the colonial past continue to linger and continue to perform their insidious labor. In January of 2020, the Brazilian President declared that "the Indian is changing, it is evolving. Increasingly, the Indian is becoming more like a human being equal to us."[73] The indigenous body that was first infantilized, then incorporated into a universal, albeit protracted, conception of humanity – only to be subsequently extricated from the land to become governmentally legible as expandable as life; was now, according to Jair Bolsonaro, not even a full universal human anymore. The economy, as an ecosystem of fungible beings, had no place for the índio.[74]

Colonial stock scripts persist today in insidious ways.[75] Still, Amerindians resist, enduring death, dispossession, toxic exposure, land and water contamination. While deforestation in Brazil reached an all-time high, the number of fires, environmental disasters, toxic lands, and polluted waterways also increased. Additionally, at a time when the national number of assassinations fell by 19%, homicides that specifically target indigenous communities increased by approximately 20%.[76] Echoes of coloniality continue to reverberate, enduring like extant debris. In February of 2020, the Bolsonaro government nominated a Christian evangelical missionary, Ricardo Lopes Dias, as FUNAI (*Fundação Nacional do Índio*) director. The nomination was halted by the Brazilian courts in May of 2020, but the haunting echoes of old colonial methods returned. The Brazilian government's persistent unwillingness to demarcate indigenous lands restaged, once more, the colonial imperative of utility and profit. In statements to the press, the Bolsonaro declared his admiration for the "North American cavalry,

73 João Ker, "'Cada vez mais humano', 'fedorentos' e 'massa de manobra': as declarações de Bolsonaro sobre índios", *O Estadão*, January 24, 2020, https://rb.gy/wug9hy.

74 On the idea of the economy as ecosystem, see Michelle Murphy, *The Economization of Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

75 Giovana Girardi, "Desmatamento consolidado da Amazônia em 2019 superou 10 mil km², afirma Inpe", *O Estadão*, June 9, 2020 https://rb.gy/fy2lcf

76 "Em 8 meses, assassinatos no Brasil caem 22%; mapa mostra índice nacional de homicídios atualizado até agosto", *Globo*, 22 October, 2019, https://rb.gy/bxkqdb ; Patrícia Figueiredo, "Número de mortes de lideranças indígenas em 2019 é o maior em pelo menos 11 anos, diz Pastoral da Terra", December 10, 2019, https://rb.gy/xecwvq ; "Número de assassinatos de indígenas cresce 20% no Brasil em 2018", *O Globo*, September 24, 2019, https://tinyurl.com/y2cokr9a

which decimated their Indians in the past, and, for that reason, does not have this [Indian] problem in their country, today!" He then added, "I don't recommend doing the same thing to Brazilian Indians, only that [...] indigenous reservations are demarcated with a size compatible with that of their population." Concluding by noting that "increasingly, fewer and fewer lands would be demarcated. [Because] in the future, they would be taken and [...] explored by foreign capital."[77]

Be it through missionary work, the body/land binary, and the valorization of land over life, colonial stock scripts echo past changes to national institutions and political regimes. Despite transformations in status – from Brazilian colony to independent nation – colonial modes of thought and praxis endure and linger. The Indian – severed from the land and assimilated by law into a universal humanity – continued to embody an epistemology of racialized, laggard time. Mere Amerindian corporeal appearance – nakedness, adornments, phenotype, and skin color – attested to their need to be expedited in time. And, as in former scripts, the future meant incorporation into whiteness and a time without Amerindians. Today, the índio still embodies the weight of coloniality. The racialization of bodies and their underlying temporal hierarchies demand a provincialization of time and political chronology. If the official chronologies of the nation state are demarcated by the rhythms of specific moments of regime change, corporeality and embodiment shift the *locus* of attention to the capacity human experience has to cross-section the illusory discreteness of singular moments, both by existing before and persisting afterward. Bodies, lives, and experiences vividly link past and present.

Postcolonial Traumatic Disorder

Across the Atlantic, the specters of coloniality soak the fabric of everyday life in Lisbon, heart of the old imperial metropolis. Everywhere,

77 "'Cada vez mais humano', 'fedorentos' e 'massa de manobra': as declarações de Bolsonaro sobre índios", *O Estadão*, January 24, 2020, https://rb.gy/wug9hy.

remnants of imperial performativity persist.[78] Imperial debris too ubiquitously bestrewn to become either visible or noticed was naturalized *in situ* as both ancestrally there and destined for eternity.[79] The projection and performance of the mythos of empire entailed concretizing in monumental form an ideology of power and colonial possession whose only real, effective nature was discursive.[80] Empire was an ambition staged in the metropolis.[81] A spectacle produced for the consumption of local elites hoping to naturalize their own power and establishing universal history as destiny.[82] In Portugal, throughout several centuries, the resolute commitment to empire was politically transversal.[83] Irrespective of political regime – absolute or constitutional monarchy, republic or dictatorship – each new set of elites evoked the deep past of "discoveries" and "arrivals" to cast themselves as the protagonists of the new, modern future. Monuments, thus, materialized an ideology of rule and social order that was stubbornly unmatched by the precarious realities of life in the colonies. In stark contrast to the indigenous body, the universal man chiseled into monumental form was corporealized by the ideal of the male, upper class, subject/citizen – a literate, affluent, and land-owning paterfamilias. An imaginary was thereby crafted where

78 Inês Beleza Barreiros, "Heritage of Portuguese Influence as Erasure: Cultural perspectives on the recreation of the past in the present," *Portuguese Literary & Comparative Studies* [forthcoming]; Elsa Peralta, *Lisboa e a Memória do Império. Património, Museus e Espaço Público* (Lisboa: Le Monde Diplomatique/Outro Modo, 2017).

79 Ann Laura Stoler, *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

80 My definition of *imperial performativity*. On the contrast between the ideal of empire etched by Jesuits and the difficult realities on the ground, see Ananya Chakravarty, *Empire of Apostles: Religion, Accomodatio, and the Empire in Early Modern Brazil and India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

81 Barreiros, "Heritage".

82 Márcia Gonçalves, "Of peasants and settlers: ideals of Portugueseness, imperial nationalism and European settlement in Africa, c.1930-c.1945," *European Review of History,* 25, no. 1 (2018): 166-186; Orlando Raimundo, *António Ferro: O Inventor do Salazarismo* (Alfragide: Edições Dom Quixote, 2015) and Marcos Cardão, "Allegories of exceptionalism. Luso-tropicalism in mass culture (1960-1974)", *The Portuguese Journal of Social Science* 14, no. 3 (2015): 257-273.

83 Cláudia Castelo, "Novos Brasis" em África: desenvolvimento e colonialismo português tardio," *Varia História* 30, no. 53 (2014): 507-532; Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo. *The 'Civilising Mission' of Portuguese Colonialism, 1870-1930.* (London: Springer, 2015). Ricardo Roque, *Headhunting and Colonialism: Anthropology and the Circulation of Human Skulls in the Portuguese empire, 1870-1930* (London: Springer, 2010) and Valentim Alexandre, *Velho Brasil, Novas Áfricas: Portugal e o Império (1808-1975)* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 2000).

some subjects embodied domination, while others corporealized the duty to obey. Monuments materialized this performance of dominion through a grammar of ambition that posed as a *fait accompli*. Empire was a production, colonialism the "leave-no-stone-unturned" effort to will those fantasies into being.[84]

In the bustling city center, pedestrians, tourists, and commuters striving for punctuality venture to and fro across the *Marquês de Pombal.* The towering monument presents a loaded stratigraphy of meaning. An enormous statue of the Marquis stands with a watchful eye, surveying over the city whose reconstruction he oversaw following the great 1755 disaster. Yet, this colossus first ideated in 1917, by a republican regime struggling to navigate the tenuous waters of the Great War whilst precariously trying to sustaining its African colonies, was only inaugurated in 1934, by Salazar, one year after a new Constitution sanctioned his undisputed rise to power (where he remained until 1968). Both regimes, the *República* and the *Estado Novo,* invested their own set of ideological commitments in the Marquis. Respectively, a symbol of secularism and modernization, or, as Salazar would rather have it, the emblem of what a visionary, reformist minister could do: rebuild the empire anew and restore the metropolis to its former glory. Below the figure of the great man, each of the four sides of the monument list a generous menu of great feats wrestled by the 20th century from the 18th. Prominently featured among "great deeds" stands the "liberty of the Indians;" recast in monumental perpetuity for a modern, metropolitan audience. The trope of miscegenation, racial harmony, and of the production of the *mestizo* as a sign of benevolent rule returned also to serve the political expedient of a colonial shift from Brazil to Africa. Yet, despite the change in geographies of subjugation and regardless of who ruled and how, the themes, scripts, and logics of colonization continued to replay unperturbed.

On a different site of the same city, in 2017, another old colonial trope made a comeback. In a statue dedicated to the seventeenth-cen-

84 Margarida Calafate Ribeiro and Ana Paula Ferreira, org., *Fantasmas e Fantasias Imperiais no Imaginário Português Contemporâneo* (V. N. Famalicão: Campo das Letras, 2003).

tury Jesuit missionary in Brazil, António Vieira, Amerindian infancy was redeployed to render the violence of forced conversions to Catholicism in Brazil, into a palatable discursive production of imperial harmony and tolerance. The eternal infancy of Brazilian índios in need of salvation and "civilizing" was, this time, rendered into bronze and transplanted onto the city's urban fabric. The statue articulates today a paradox of historical embodiment and aesthetic erasure: while labeled as a portrait of Vieira alone, the statue also depicted three Amerindian children – invisibilized and rendered into figurative accessories because only the Jesuit could conceivably embody "History." Since its induction, the statue drew continuous critiques and resistance. From the depositing of red carnations – a symbol of democracy in Portugal – to white flowers – a symbol of Brazilian abolitionism – to graffiti exhortations, articulated in the simple imperative: "decolonize" (*descoloniza*). These inscriptions constitute acts of resistance against hegemonic narratives about the past and its presupposed, fixed meanings; demonstrating, at the same time, how cities and monuments are palimpsestic, susceptible to new interventions and layers of signification.[85]

Those of us who grew up in (post)colonial Portugal – I, personally, having been born on the cusp of the first decade of democracy – were educated to speak about empire in the past tense. But our socialization into a specific verbal temporality only highlights the imperfections of history writing. We were far from a simple past. Beyond such verbal mismatches, there were also the negated words: colonialism, for example. It was as if empire was not colonial at all; but rather a simple, linear sequence of dates, conquered ports, goods traded, and countries that today spoke "our" language. Years later, in high school, when engaging in the futile exercise of comparison between more and less violent empires, I remember the short, rhetorical question posed by my history teacher: "who invented the *mulatto*?" By then, the answer

85 Inês Beleza Barreiros, Patrícia Martins Marcos, Pedro Schacht Pereira and Rui Gomes Coelho, "O padre António Vieira no país dos cordiais," *Público,* February 2, 2020. https://tinyurl.com/wpd998e; Elsa Peralta and Nuno Domingos, "Lisbon: reading the (post-)colonial city from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century," *Urban History*, *Urban History* 46, no. 2, (2019): 246-265; Peralta, *Lisboa e a Memória.*

was all too predictable: Portugal. However, what was truly interesting about that moment was how, in spite of our (then) unfamiliarity with the argument, we all shared a collective, unspoken intuition about the answer. So much had tacitly seeped into our unconscious. The explanation offered would become all too familiar: the Portuguese allowed the races to mix while the Spanish did not; in fact, our historical antagonists had "killed all the Indians." By this point, we were in the 1990s. Yet, the race-mixing mythos animating discourses of benevolent conquest centering child-like Amerindians still ran their course.

But my imperfect ethnography of memory started several years earlier, in primary school. It was in the classroom commanded by "Professora C.," a woman whose career started during *Estado Novo*, as she insistently reminded us, at any minor sign of misbehavior. It was then that the silences and imperceptible colonial erasures of our everyday life began. Under her command we learned how to read, write, and perform essential arithmetic operations. Then, at a later point, as we began delving into Portuguese history, we also heard that, yes, Portugal was indeed small, but, in fact, it was also much vaster. After all, "we" were once a great empire with colonies scattered all across the globe.

We learned all this in a classic *Escola Primária*, a school built under Salazar's political and architectural aegis. The same school attended both by mother and older brother before me – respectively, in the 1960s and 1980s. Despite those two decades of distance, they shared the same schoolteacher, "Professora S." Having reached the height of her career, she eventually retired during my second year in that school. How to account for all these unaccounted continuities? Narrative inertia settles precisely at the sites of quotidian allocution and unproblematic reiteration. Generation after generation, the repetition of the same *vademecum* assured the unquestioned perpetuity of empire as an ideology of fellowship and community. Concomitantly, colonial violence, slavery, corporal beatings, forced labor, and the segregation needed to enforce the illusion of dominance as destiny remained occluded from our sights.

Nevertheless, assertions on the dogmatic catechism of empire were not left to the classroom alone. Outside, even as we played, seem-

ingly carefree, we were still undergoing a silent, routinized training in the tacit mechanics of imperial ideology. My colleagues N., H. and B., all had fathers who fought in the Colonial War (1961-1974) in either Angola, Guinea-Bissau, or Mozambique. According to the stories freely relayed by the boys, their fathers had "to kill rather than be killed." Young boys in the 1990s, between the ages of 6 and 10, nearly two decades after the war ended and the former colonies became independent, still vicariously absorbed the mundane violence lurking under the shiny patina of empire.

My colleagues N., H., and B. were neither abnormal nor unique. Over the years, at every new stage of schooling, many more boys – yes, especially, although not exclusively, the boys – recapitulated their fathers rationalizing defense of the pain and trauma they, too, had endured. But that was not all. Not everyone spoke. My friend S., for instance, mentioned, almost in a leisurely manner, her father's sudden outbursts of violence – the screams, broken dishes, and the angry, uncontrollable utterances. Others, on the other hand, like my friend A., spoke of the silence – the enraged soundlessness to which the war was committed. She mentioned her father's erratic comportment when the war came up, as if, echoing Patrícia Lino's *ANTICORPO*: "I don't speak, but I scream inside."[86] Her father was deployed to Mozambique – and, according to the narration imparted by older relatives, "when he returned, he was not the same person." Many years later, when we met again, A. told me over drinks about the life she built in Maputo (Mozambique) for seven years. She mentioned, the culture, the food, the neocolonialism of Portuguese expatriates, but also "the guilt" – these were her exact words – she felt, living somewhere not too distant from her father's place of military deployment, and how she, too, felt the embodied weight of colonial violence.

From a very young age, either willingly or not, consciously or unconsciously, we had all internalized the justifications, the tacit logics,

86 "Não falo mas grito por dentro," see Patrícia Lino, *ANTICORPO*: *Uma Paródia Do Império Risível* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Garupa, 2020), chap. 7

and the needed rationalizations about our personal genealogies with colonialism and our family's participation in it all. These exercises were intensified by the enforced silences inflicted by either policy or simply trauma. Just like when in 1951, the regime banned the word "Empire" (*Império*) and replaced "Colony" (*Colónia*) with "Overseas Provinces" (*Províncias Ultramarinas*), our education was riddled with euphemisms and intentional omissions because it remained deeply colonial. The official past, on the other hand, focused entirely on the celebration of imperial fictions – the "discoveries," "conquests," and "arrivals" in far-away places – whilst never uttering the words "colonialism," "violence," or even "slavery."[87] This is understandable, I think. As someone who today reads archival sources loaded with casual, mundane violence, I know first-hand how unpalatable colonialism is. The brute force and bestiality contained in those documents hardly constitutes a source of boastful pride. It is difficult to sugarcoat rape.

But there were many more absolutely banal examples of embodied coloniality pervading through our carefree, 1990s everyday lives. My French high school teacher, "Professora F.", was one of the "returned" (*retornados*). She was rigorous, sardonic, and possessed the kind of gravitas imparted only by an intimate mastery of French grammar such as hers. Once, we debated in class whether African countries' sovereign debt should be forgiven. "Professora F." starkly opposed any pardon. Her dissent was violent and vociferous; and we were left aghast.[88] When exposing her rationale, she described the great Mozambican farm she had grown up in. Her family had cattle, and a lot of land, inferring from her descriptions. "Professora F's" expressions combined sorrow with shades of nausea – contempt, even – when she described the killing of all the cattle following the Portuguese revolution (1974) and Mozambican independence (1975). After this debate, this story returned to our classroom many more times. At every new return, the narrative

87 Lei Nº 2048, *Diário da República*, June 11, 1951, https://rb.gy/fkzrk6.

88 Sovereign debt forgiveness debates were a theme du jour in 1990s Portugal. Then, Jonas Savimbi (1932-2002), UNITA's leader, an insurgent guerrilla group in Angola, was still alive. The Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) was ongoing, in a long-continuing guerrilla insurgency against the post-independence Angolan government.

followed similar motions: Africa was immensely prosperous and fecund, just like the farm she grew up on; if only Mozambicans knew what to do with it, they would prosper. Unfortunately, she added, since independence, all its wealth was squandered.

From a very young age, all of us grew up surrounded by and inured to the aestheticized public performance of empire. Empire was ubiquitous in all our cities and monuments. Privately, however, we lived with the intimate reality of trauma, silence, and with personal stories about life in Africa. These two versions of the past – the public and the private – cohabitated under the same roof, side by side, and in very tight quarters. Unlike some of my school friends and colleagues, my father did not fight in the war. He was drafted in 1964, began his instruction in 1966, and trained to become an officer. In 1969, in a retelling that became very familiar to our family, he opted to leave the army and return to his former job as a technical designer – the office located in the same building, a few floors apart from *Casa dos Estudantes do Império*. In recounting his experience, I could see the counterfactual scenarios that played out in his head at that time, returning once more. The pros of benefiting from a seemingly stable and well-paid military career were cast against the great unknown the war posited. His conclusion restaged the decision-making process decades later: "the war was ramping up. It was only going to get worse." Unlike him, many did not have a choice. My 9th grade math teacher, for example, had very publicly put on a show, feigning madness at the recruitment center, hoping to be declared "unfit for service." I cannot recall whether his elaborate spectacle worked or not, but I recall he was far from the only one. Like him, many other men became protagonists of stories they either shared or silenced. Exile was the only option when it came to avoid conscription.

None of these accounts were abnormal or extraordinary. In fact, their absolute banality rendered them all the more powerful. From a very early age, all of us who grew up both white and Portuguese, internalized the rationalizing imperative of "kill or be killed." Death and war were so tacitly routinized no one even thought of asking *why* all

that even happened. The war was as ubiquitous as the silence about it. A great white noise lulling away the pain, the trauma, as well as our very own personal entanglements with colonialism. But silences cannot restore or relieve; they dither and delay. Extant war debris lingered in the bodies and minds of the conscripted, either in the relationships they built or those they rekindled upon returning.[89] But, more than that, the war remained *visible* on their corporeal surface. Embodied colonial violence persisted, linking past and present, in the disabilities acquired and the tattoos many pressed upon their skin, in defiance of higher military rank.[90] When the regime that drafted them collapsed and the war ended, post-imperial Portugal could not, in its system of reality, accommodate the past they still embodied and that remained visible everywhere they went.

In schoolbooks and classrooms empire emerged as a distant entity, both in time and place. Yet, the colonizing of presumptions and imaginaries happened every day, in broad daylight. It was curricular, state sanctioned, routinized, and by design. It hinged on a mismatch between the official narrative of the nation-state and the personal past. History, it seemed, was embodied only by the stone chiseled statues of ideal, great men, not in the lacerated flesh and maimed bodies of veterans, housewives, and everyday people. The personal offered just "stories;" "History," on the other hand, pledged an all-encompassing narrative of universal destiny. Thus, "Empire" and "History" was what Vasco da Gama did in 1498, arriving in India, not us; not the past lurking in monuments and corporeal debris, haunting every cell of our lives. The war was a private affair. It belonged to our lives, and to us alone; it was no matter of national, historical interest.

89 Ângela Campos, *An Oral History of the Portuguese Colonial War: Conscripted Generation* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

90 João Cabral Pinto, *Guerra na Pele: As Tatuagens da Guerra Colonial* ([S.l.]: Edição de Autor, 2019); Bruno Sena Martins, "Guerra e Memória Social: a deficiência como testemunho", *Fractal: Revista de Psicologia* 25, no. 1 (2013): 3-22 and Bruno Sena Martins, "The suffering body in the cultural representations of disability: the anguish of corporal transgression," In *Disability Studies: Emerging Insights and Perspectives*, eds. Thomas Campbell, Fernando Fontes, Laura Hemingway, Armineh Soorenian and Chris Till (Leeds: The Disability Press 2008), 93-107.

Corporeal Chronologies: Embodying colonial trauma, void, and visibility

"I have weapons from the colonies [*Ultramar*] at home, and I am going to kill you!," was the threat made by Bruno Candé's murderer, a 76-year-old former nurse's assistant and a veteran of the Portuguese Colonial War. According to witnesses, these words were accompanied by a recurring deluge of racial slurs that became all too familiar for Candé, a 39-year-old Black man and Portuguese citizen. On 25 July 2020, the harassment escalated, reaching a point of no return. The murderer aimed four point-blank bullets at Candé's neck and chest as he screamed: "go back to the *senzala* [slave quarters]." The crime happened in broad daylight, at a café in the outskirts of Lisbon where Candé frequently sat with his dog. His death was instant and on the spot.

The murderer's assertions recalled and rendered visible Portugal's long history of colonial violence. Despite the political class's silence on the murder and the denialism that ensued, articulated in the media and through a police spokesperson, the reproduction of plantation brutality lay, unequivocal and intentional, in the murderer's words and deeds. While the past of racist violence and colonial conflict was silenced and invisibilized in contemporary Portugal, it was neither foregone nor resolved. Rather, it persists; sanitized and unreckoned with. Archival voids and racist denialism permeate across colonial past *and* present. They are manifested in the selective amnesia through which the exclusion of Black bodies from the historical and citizen imaginary is curated.

Blackness and indigeneity, thus, link colonial and postcolonial time by animating and embodying – through skin and flesh – the inextricable tie between past and present. Or, put differently, Black and Indian physical bodies make archival voids visible. Life as presence and resistance. Black, Amerindian, and veteran corporeal chronologies undo the conceit of sovereign time and defy the seeming universality of official history. They challenge the discrete power of any "great man," moment, or law because bodies cut across the curated tempo of the nation-state, illustrating the complex textures of human experience. Bodies legible as racialized, marginalized, or expendable carry in their

flesh the weight of coloniality, manifesting the entrenchment of the past in the present through structural racism, prejudices, and inequalities. Political regimes may change institutions and laws but cannot not enforce a gestalt switch in tacit belief systems, worldviews, legal structures, and quotidian systems of praxis.

Thus, either the 1974 revolution or the 1975 decolonization were not epitomes but new starts; the inauguration of a new process. In Portugal, that entailed the assimilation of about 800.000 war veterans and 500.000 "*retornardos*". Suddenly, democracy entailed the end of the war, loss of utility, and rupture with the past they continued to signify and embody. Much like the imagined incompatibility of Amerindians with settler colonial modernity, both blackness and bodies maimed by war demanded erasure. Cast out of the universalist telos of progress, the formerly colonized and those conscripted to rule over them became illegible to official history. They were anachronism personified; disruptors of the mythos of decolonization and democracy.

Invisibility can shun and silence but cannot extinguish. In order to decolonize empire – and with it, history writing – the overdetermined centrality of sovereign chronologies, arranged according to political regimes, must be upended. Not only is memory embodied, but bodies – especially those historically marginalized, racialized, and maimed to serve imperial ends – have the power to physically signify and elaborate upon historical representations and narratives. Archives need not be either paper-based or logocentric. Written accounts constitute only a limited universe of documentary sources available to historians. Bodies, lives, their meanings, memories, and intimate networks of affect and interaction also have stories to tell. Under Portuguese colonial rule, Amerindian and Black enslaved bodies subjected to branding and whipping, could be entered as court evidence, sidestepping procedural impediments for them to provide legal testimony. Centering corporeal chronologies, therefore, rather than the imperious categories of the nation-state offers novel narrative and chronological possibilities. Bodies carry meaning and memory through presence, resistance, their defiance of disciplined time and of the discrete boundaries of professional histo-

ry. This move both provincializes time and place but contributes also to denaturalize the present. However, neither history nor empire can be decolonized while the predicaments of Black and Amerindian lives continued to be erased and denied under the banner of universalism. Empire and colonialism *can* be unlearned. After all, in São Paulo, in 2017, Madalena and Débora did not know where Portugal was.

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Réal Fillion

Reading *Provincializing Europe* as a Missed Opportunity

This essay explores Chakrabarty's introduction of the expression "provincializing Europe" as a privileged way of understanding history in modern conditions. The theoretical challenge it presents is to make sense of a commitment both to universality and to the particularity of its forms of expression through an appeal to history. While Chakrabarty invokes Marx and Heidegger in order to meet this challenge, developing a distinction between a (universal) History 1 and (particular) History 2s, I argue that Hegel's philosophical history – as recently discussed by Terry Pinkard – provides a better account of how to theorize the way universality particularizes itself in individual efforts to instantiate it (something that Chakrabarty's own case studies seem to illustrate). Hegel's work seems especially relevant when we consider how he can be seen to be explicitly "provincializing Europe" in his jurisdictional concern with the universal claim of justice as freedom.
Keywords: Universality; particularity; modernity; Hegel.

Ler *Provincializing Europe* como uma Oportunidade Perdida

Este ensaio explora a introdução de Chakrabarty da expressão da "Europa provincializante" como um caminho privilegiado para a compreensão da história nas condições modernas. O desafio teórico que articula consiste em dar sentido ao compromisso com a universalidade e à particularidade das suas formas de expressão através de um apelo à história. Enquanto Chakrabarty apela a Marx e Heidegger para enfrentar este desafio, desenvolvendo uma distinção entre uma História (universal) 1 e (particular) História 2, argumento que a história filosófica de Hegel - como recentemente discutido por Terry Pinkard - fornece um melhor relato de como teorizar como universalidade particulariza-se em esforços individuais para instanciar isto (algo que os próprios estudos de caso de Chakrabarty parecem ilustrar). O trabalho de Hegel parece especialmente relevante quando nós consideramos como pode ser visto para ser explicitamente "provincializando Europa" na sua preocupação jurisdicional com a reivindicação universal de justiça como liberdade.
Palavras-chave: Universalidade; particularidade; modernidade; Hegel.

Reading Provincializing Europe as a Missed Opportunity

Réal Fillion*

This reading only gradually took on the shape of contemplating a missed opportunity, as the expectations I had invested in the title gave way to the actual text. Coming to the book via its title, the idea of "provincializing" Europe had particular resonance for me as a "Canadian" settler (twice over, given that my mother tongue is French). To call myself a "settler" rather than a "citizen" is a belated recognition that I inhabit Indigenous lands and not the "New World" of the history I was taught as a child. In the face of surrounding Indigenous mobilization and self-affirmation, it is an invitation to reconsider the givenness of my own sense of place.

The resonance of the notion of a "provincializing Europe" only increases when one considers how, in what is now called "Canada," Indigenous lands were colonized and settled jurisdictionally as confederated "provinces." Add to this the fact that the terms of the particular "province" I was born into and grew up in were originally negotiated by the Métis inhabitants of the land who had set up a provisional government in order to do so, thereby reconfiguring what was otherwise shaping up as a mere transfer by sale of the claimed proprietary rights to a huge swath of lands of a private corporation (the Hudson's Bay Company) to the confederated provinces of a newly constituted "state" calling itself Canada, itself engaged in distinguishing or particularizing itself within

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the British empire. From the perspective of the Indigenous and Métis inhabitants, the notion that the land was the Hudson's Bay Company's to sell out from under their feet no doubt appeared ludicrous.

I am somewhat haunted by this history of dispossession and colonization of Indigenous lands because as a minority French-speaker growing up in that "province" (my great-grandfather having left the majority French-speaking province of Québec to settle in this newly constituted "bilingual" province), I was constantly reminded of the ghostly presence of its ostensible "founder," the Métis leader Louis Riel. Following the creation of the province of Manitoba and despite being elected three times to the Parliament of Canada, he nevertheless lived in exile because of a bounty placed on his head from within the neighboring province of Ontario for his role in sanctioning the execution of a prisoner of his provisional government as well as the languishing promise of amnesty that formed part of the negotiations establishing the new province.[1] He nevertheless came out of his exile and returned to what was called the Northwest Territories at the request of his fellow Métis when Canada was once again intent on securing Indigenous land for its privileged modes and patterns of settlement. After having their own petitions ignored, the Métis sought him out because of his experience in dealing with "Canada." But Riel's arrival, armed Métis resistance to an invading colonial army, a battle at Batoche, eventually led to Riel surrendering himself to Canadian authorities, after which he was accused of treason, tried and sentenced to hang as per the laws selected to try him[2], and despite the jury recommendation of mercy, was executed on November 16, 1885.

These paragraphs are all too brief but they speak to a way of viewing the consequences of a "provincializing Europe" that continues to inform settler practices.

1 For a recent discussion of Riel's role in shaping early confederated Canada, see M. Max Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise: Louis Riel and the Métis Nation That Canada Never Was, 1840-1875* (Montreal & Kingston : McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019).

2 For a settler colonial reading of the legitimacy of the legal context of the trial, one that uses the notion of "anachronism" in a way that Chakrabatry allows us to question, see Thomas Flanagan, *Riel and the Rebellion: 1885 Reconsidered.* Second Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

In introducing the expression, Chakrabarty meant something distinctly different, however. Whereas my concern with history has increasingly become "unsettled" in the face of continuing settler colonial practices and attitudes in my part of the world, Chakrabarty's own concern with "provincializing Europe" is professedly *post*-colonial, intent on reshaping an insistent European presence while nevertheless engaging with its ruling ideas and their distinctive appeals to universality. In a word, he is interested in *particularizing* the universality that issues from "Europe," not by reducing it abstractly to its own particularity but by attempting to see how it interacts with ideas issuing from other places. This, of course, is part of the appeal to "difference" referenced in the subtitle of the book. Chakrabarty is interested in probing the "political modernity" issuing from "Europe" as it engages, transforms, and is transformed by its continued presence in places like India. As he puts it in the Preface to his work: "The universal concepts of political modernity encounter pre-existing concepts, categories, institutions, and practices through which they get translated and configured differently."[3]

Thus, for Chakrabarty, to "provincialize Europe" is to particularize its pretension to universality by examining how it is transformed locally. One of the more interesting things about his approach is the way its spatial or geographical sense informs and reconfigures our sense of the temporality of history, refusing the uniformity of historical time presumed by "Europe" which both treats the past as past and treats itself as everyone's future. This is the "developmentalist" picture of Europe that he seeks to "provincialize." He puts it quite succinctly when he writes: "Historicism—and even the modern, European idea of history—one might say, came to non-European peoples in the nineteenth century as somebody's way of saying "not yet" to somebody else."[4] His critique of such a developmentalist historicism certainly applies to nineteenth century "Canada" as a fledgling settler state and its presumption to appropriate the North-West Territories. But of course there is an important difference.

3 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), xii.

4 Ibid., 8.

James Tully captures this quite well in his discussion of the persisting imperial roles within modern constitutional democracies.[5] Identifying the major ways of exercising imperial right over non-European societies, the one most relevant to my part of the world is of course "settling," where the focus is on "dispossessing [Indigenous peoples] of their territories and usurping their governments, by force or dishonoured treaties."[6] This contrasts with what he calls "indirect colonial rule" which operates "by establishing a formal infrastructure of imperial law and *lex mercatoria* while also preserving and modifying the existing indigenous customary constitutions and constituent powers so that resources and labour are privatized and opened to trade, labour discipline, and investments and contract law dominated by the European trading companies."[7] It is this "indirect colonial rule" that Chakrabarty wishes to probe by "provincializing" its continued postcolonial presence in order to reconfigure, it would seem, his own commitment to universalism.[8]

The book accomplishes this by dividing itself into a first largely theoretical part and a second part focused on certain case studies, as it were. My focus is on the first theoretical part because it is here that the sense of a "missed opportunity" arose and lingered, given that I had my own "provincial" case study in mind. Because the theoretical challenge is to make sense of a commitment both to universality and to the particularity of its forms of expression through an appeal to history, one would think an important interlocutor would be G.W.F. Hegel whose philosophical efforts were concentrated in just this way. It is true that Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of history are notorious-

5 James Tully, "Modern Constitutional Democracy and Imperialism," *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 46, n o. 3 (2008), 461-493.

6 Ibid., 481.

7 Ibid., 482.

8 Chakrabarty's commitment to universalism is also given interesting expression in his later attempts to theorize the Anthropocene but already here it is clearly stated (even if, as he immediately points out, it does not define *this* particular project): "As moderns desirous of social justice and its attendant institutions, we, whether decisionist [for whom the past is primarily usable] or historicist [for whom the past is primarily knowable], cannot but have a shared commitment to it [the universal and necessary history posited by the logic of capital] (in spite of all the disagreements between liberalism and Marxism). It is through this commitment that is already built into our lives that our jousting with European thought begins. The project of "provincializing Europe" arises from this commitment." Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 250.

ly Euro-centric, not to say "orientalist," and in that sense perhaps less interesting to Chakrabarty, who instead appeals to a, in my view somewhat problematic, combination of Marx and Heidegger. I would like to first examine this combination as a way of the tackling the challenge of thinking universality through particularity before revisiting the "missed opportunity" of engaging Hegel's work in this context through a discussion of Terry Pinkard's recent re-reading of Hegel's lectures on the philosophy of history.[9]

Chakrabarty's theoretical combination of Marx and Heidegger is most evident in his articulation of the two senses of history he calls History 1 and History 2, both seen as "necessary" but also opposed and pulling away from each other. While the distinction seems important to me, I also find it problematic inasmuch as Chakrabarty insists that we *maintain* the tension between both approaches to history. This is made explicit in his conclusion:

> To provincialize Europe in historical thought is *to struggle to hold in a state of permanent tension* a dialogue between two contradictory points of view. On one side is the indispensable and universal narrative of capital—History 1, as I have called it. This narrative both gives us a critique of capitalist imperialism and affords elusive but necessarily energizing glimpses of the Enlightenment promise of an abstract, universal but never- to-be-realized humanity. Without such elusive glimpses, as I have said before, there is no political modernity. On the other side is thought about diverse ways of being human, the infinite incommensurabilities through which we struggle—perennially, precariously, but unavoidably—to "world the earth" in order to live within our different senses of ontic belonging. These are the struggles that become—when in contact with capital—the

9 Terry Pinkard, *Does History Make Sense? Hegel on the Historical Shapes of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2017).

> History 2s that in practice always modify and interrupt the totalizing thrusts of History 1.[10]

This imperative to *maintain* a dialogue in "a state of permanent tension" seems to be to an overdetermined appreciation of, and concern with, how various struggles shape our sense of history. It also leads to a very selective and questionable use of Marx (though that is not my primary concern here). The appeal to Marx seems to stand in for, as noted in the above paragraph, the "critique of capitalist imperialism," but less *as* a critique than as a way to theorize History 1 as an "indispensable and universal narrative." Chakrabarty's concern with and commitment to universality and universalism enter here, via Marx, to be sure, but mostly it seems as a way to ensure the continuance of the Enlightened, cosmopolitan universalism that undergirds our "political modernity." However, against the abstract, asymptotic, *but* totalizing tendency of History 1, he appeals to Heidegger and the concrete "worlding" of non-totalizable possibilities – History 2s - which he posits "in practice always modify and interrupt the totalizing thrusts of History 1." But do they? I believe Chakrabarty does, in his case studies, show how they do "modify" the ruling narrative of "political modernity" in interesting ways. That they can be seen to be also "interrupting" its "totalizing thrusts" perhaps requires more attention to the concrete struggles at the heart of those particularizing histories.

Perhaps a way to illustrate the overdetermined relation between History 1 and History 2s is to consider the way Chakrabarty criticizes Fredric Jameson's "Always historicize!" This is the injunction that opens Jameson's preface to his *The Political Unconscious*[11] and Chakrabarty, ignoring its prefatory place[12] takes the occasion of its utterance to say

10 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 254. My emphasis.

11 Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act* (London and New York: Routledge, 1983), ix.

12 Arguably a preface is not the "beginning" of a book, that is more properly the role of its Introduction. Prefaces, though placed before the body of the book, in spirit and intent tend to reflect the author's sense of its outcome or result. Jameson's sentence runs as follows: "Always historicize! This slogan—the one absolute and we may even say "transhistorical" imperative of all dialectical thought—will unsurprisingly turn out to be the moral of *The Political Unconscious* as well." I bid.

the following: "historicizing is not the problematic part of the injunction, the troubling term is "always." For the assumption of a continuous, homogeneous, infinitely stretched out time that makes possible the imagination of an "always" is put to question by subaltern pasts that makes the present, as Derrida says, "out of joint.""[13] This seems slightly disingenuous to me. The "always" of Jameson's imperative is far from *assuming* a "continuous, homogeneous, infinitely stretched out time" but rather commits itself to *investigating*, through interpreting the cultural texts of past and present, how the struggles contained in history speak to something like the emancipatory logic that Marx attempted to articulate. Jameson's "indispensable and universal narrative" is neither continuous or homogeneous but to be discerned in its various particularizing texts in what they both reveal and conceal. The "Always historicize!" is an interpretive commitment to "something like an ultimate *semantic* precondition for adequate literary comprehension" where, according to Jameson, "such semantic enrichment and enlargement of the inert givens and materials of a particular text must take place within three concentric frameworks, which mark a widening out of the sense of the social ground of a text through the notions, first, of political history, in the narrow sense of punctual event and a chronicle like sequence of happenings in time; then of society, in the now already less diachronic and time-bound sense of a constitutive tension and struggle between social classes; and, ultimately, of history now conceived in its vastest sense of the sequence of modes of production and the succession and destiny of the various human social formations, from prehistoric life to whatever far future history has in store for us."[14] I think we can readily see in this particular appeal to an "indispensable and universal narrative" all of the needed tension between local struggles and the "totalizing thrusts" of a peremptory "developmentalist" History 1 without feeling the need to *maintain* that tension theoretically by appealing to distinct History 2s as "non-totalizing."

13 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 111.

14 Ibid., 60. Interestingly, Chakrabatry's later work on the Anthropocene and Climate Change address the challenge of thinking such a "far future." But that will need to be taken up at another time.

I might put this otherwise. I certainly endorse the fundamental idea of "provincializing Europe," especially in the following formulation: "European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought—which is now everybody's heritage and which affect us all— may be renewed from and for the margins."[15] Indeed, from my part of the world, beyond the division between "Western" and "non-Western " nations, there are nations "*within*" so-called "Western" nations challenging and resetting the terms of such renewal.[16] And, in considering the relation between History 1 and History 2s, I was reminded of Raymond Williams' distinction between dominant, residual and emerging cultures: the dominant culture does not exhaust all cultural possibilities even as it incorporates what it can from those alternative and oppositional cultures that contest its dominance. Furthermore, those alternative and oppositional cultures can have, according to Williams' categorisation, either *residual* or *emergent* features. By the former, he means "some experiences, meanings and values which cannot be verified and cannot be expressed in the terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue – cultural as well as social – of some previous social formation."[17] And by emergent, he means to point to the fact that "new meanings and values, new practices, new significations and experiences, are continually being created."[18] Surely, Chakrabarty's own particular studies of History 2s resonate with Williams' approach, right down to its basic point, which is to affirm that "no mode of production, and therefore no dominant society or order of society, and therefore no dominant culture, in reality exhausts human practice, human energy, human intention."[19]

15 Ibid., 17.

16 For example, as James Tully has put it with reference to Indigenous peoples, theirs is an effort "to live creatively in accord with their own ever-changing customary constitutional forms and constituent powers within the interstices of imperial constitutional formations." Tully, "Modern Constitutional Democracy", 491.

17 "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," in *Problems in Materialism and Culture* (London: Verso, 1980), 39.

18 Ibid., 40.

19 Ibid., 43.

Of course, part of the significance of Chakrabarty's conceptualization of History 2s is the manner in which he appreciates how the diversity of "human practice, human energy, human intention" *includes* the more-and-other-than human and rejects the assumption that would reduce them to "social facts." Much of the originality of his approach resides here when he says: "I take gods and spirits to be existentially coeval with the human, and think from the assumption that the question of being human involves the question of being with gods and spirits."[20] I would agree that here there is a *creative* tension to maintain between History 1 and History 2s inasmuch as and where the former presses upon the latter or, in Williams' terms, where the dominant culture tries to incorporate residual and emergent alternative and oppositional cultural practices.[21] Maintaining that creative tension does indeed involve the work of "provincializing Europe" in the sense of no longer ceding to it as the seat of imperial (intellectual) power while recognizing *de facto* its global reach.

And thus we come back once again to the notion that "European" thought is at once "indispensable and inadequate" in thinking through our (all of us) "political *modernity*." Here is where engagement with Hegel's thought seems appropriate. That Hegel is an important figure for thinking modernity is fairly well accepted (at least amongst philosophers), especially from within the tradition of critical theory.[22] His philosophy of history has been less well accepted, though we should remind ourselves that the text we read are notes from lectures and

20 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing* Europe, 15.

21 I am reminded here of the words of my one-time colleague Indigenous Elder Jim Dumont when, speaking for and from a distinctive Indigenous (Anishinaabe) spirituality, talks of Indigenous *intelligence* and comments: "Choosing to see and accept as reality only that which can be validated by the five senses, is not an *intelligent* way of seeing. Adopting and forwarding a way of living that is destructive of the environment and upsets the balance of life itself, is not an *intelligent* way of being. Opting for a worldview that closes the avenues to the counsel of wisdom of the heart and the spirit is to choose a paradigm that deliberately retards the total capacity of human *intelligence*." Jim Dumont, *Indigenous Intelligence* (Sudbury: University of Sudbury Press, 2006), 22.

22 For example, Hegel's thought sets up Jürgen Habermas' discussion in his *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick G. Lawrence (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987). See also Axel Honneth's recent engagement with Hegel's political philosophy in his *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

they are not so much about an independently conceived philosophy *of* history (taking history as an independent object of concern, as it were) than an extension of his philosophical concern with what he calls "objective spirit" which articulates a realm of *right*, understood as an ordered system of justice. If such an "objective spirit" calls for a philosophical *history*, it is because "spirit" (*Geist*), i n Hegel's account, is its own distinct natural manifestation, one that understands and accounts for *itself* in that very manifestation. A *philosophical* history is one that assesses the forms or shapes of such self-accounting in the ordering of the justice of self-conscious interactions.

This is the continuing interest of Hegel's lectures, according to Terry Pinkard, who has recently revisited them. In his *Does History Make Sense?* he argues:

> Hegel's social and historical view of the nature of subjectivity, when properly articulated, shows (according to Hegel) that there is indeed an "infinite" end at work in history—that of securing justice—which in modern times has transformed itself into a concern with justice as freedom. Freedom was not the original goal of history, but it has become the principle of modern life.[23]

Chakrabarty's concern with the inevitability of political modernity as a concern with justice is arguably addressed by Hegel's work. All the more so when we consider how, like Chakrabarty, Hegel was concerned with comprehending the universal through the particular. But perhaps even more significantly for our purposes here, Hegel's concern with explicating historical development in terms of justice can be said to be *explicitly* engaged in the project of "provincializing Europe", where "Europe" has come to stand in for the notion that "all are free," captured for example by the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of

23 Pinkard, *Does History Make Sense?*, 3.

the Citizen in the initial stages of the French Revolution. This notion, for Hegel, was not merely an abstract ideal, to be asymptotically held up as something to strive for, but needed to be connected to the Idea of "spirit" that particularized itself precisely in the work of reshaping (most immediately for him, the German) "provinces," as it were, those *places* where freedom "realizes" itself, that is, understands itself to be doing so (this is Hegel's "subjective" conception of reason). "Provinces" might be said to be (particular) jurisdictional spaces for the realization of justice as freedom (universality) under "modern" (historical) conditions. Within this manner of interpreting the notion of "provincializing Europe" justice, then, is not an abstract ideal but, as Pinkard puts it, an "infinite" end, something that perpetually needs to be realized in actual conditions.[24] It is in this sense that one should understand the "end" of history that is associated with Hegel's thought.

> The infinite "end" of history is more like health than it is like learning a determinate skill. One may achieve various levels of health (one may get sick and recover, or one can get sick and never recover), but health is not something you achieve and then cross it off the list as you move on to other things. Nor is health something that is always there at the front of one's mind when one acts. All those who argue for an "end in the sense of completion" to history confuse infinite with finite ends, including all those who think or thought history ended in either 1806 or 1989.[25]

24 Pinkard describes the difference between "finite" and "infinite" ends in this useful way: "Finite ends may simply add up, but infinite ends are never exhausted by the actions that manifest them. Finite ends—such as drinking the water—expire, but infinite ends have no intrinsic limit. They require a continual sustaining activity for them to be effective. Justice, for example, is not something that a collective enterprise can establish and then tick off the list of things still needing to be done. It must be realized over and over again. An infinite end has no limit at which it has finally been accomplished. One comprehends such an infinite end not when one has added up all the actions that manifest it but when one has comprehended the principle that is at work in the way those actions manifest it." Ibid., 42.

25 Ibid., 43.

To see history as the concrete pursuit of the "infinite end" of justice in the particular and concrete conditions of a "modernity" that claims that "all are free" does, it seems to me, offer a description of the "tension" that Chakrabarty insists should be maintained. His insistence, I have suggested, is "theoretical" in the sense that he sees a reigning European "historicism" as effacing the "difference" otherwise evident in the plural modes of "worlding" across the planet. Hegel shares this concern with "worlding" the otherwise abstract universals of the Enlightenment, though his "worlding" is distinctly more "provincializing" in the sense that it sees in history distinct realizations of forms (jurisdictionally-speaking) of justice and in that sense, perhaps, more fully captures the connotations of Chakrabatry's evocative expression.

But, of course, the expression is also meant to capture a challenge to strictly Euro-centric conceptions of the universality at the heart of "modernity." And Hegel's philosophical history is decidedly Euro-centric (even as it "provincializes" itself, as it were). Negatively put, this means that its treatment of what is not Europe misses what is distinctive about it. And surely this is the case in his treatment of China, India, and Africa. Somewhat more positively, his understanding and treatment of "Europe" itself, though, remains a striking and compelling account of its "spirit" and the spirit of modernity itself, whose inevitable relevance Chakrabarty also argues for.

What accounts for Hegel's failed attempts to comprehend the world outside of Europe? The question, of course, answers itself, inasmuch as the "world" is hardly graspable by an individual mind. Having said that, as Pinkard notes, his philosophical history demands it; that is, "Hegel realized that, by his own principles, he had to make his full case in light of world history and not just the story of how the Eurasian peninsula developed from Hellenic Athens to nineteenth-century Europe."[26] Those principles, as they were tied to his conception of a developing spirit (understood as a self-conscious appreciation of the manner in which the "world" was in effect shaped by the effort to "know" it; that

26 Ibid., 51.

it was not merely a given to self-conscious beings), were also shaped by what Hegel took to be *logical* considerations. The complexities posed by Hegel's *Science of Logic*[27] cannot be addressed here but we can examine briefly how the key categories of universality and particularity are worked out within what Hegel calls the Doctrine of the Concept, that is, that part of logic that explicitly takes up thought's own conceptual self-determinations. The first thing to note is that the two terms actually call out for a third if we are to work them out fully. Richard Dien Winfield captures the point most succinctly:

> The concept is the universal and universality relates itself to its particulars, whose own plurality depends upon the individuality that enables particulars to be differentiated. Without relation to particulars, the universal forfeits its identity as one over many, whereas without relation to individuality, particulars lose their distinction from one another, collapsing into one, and depriving the universal of any instantiation to encompass. Accordingly, if mind is to grasp the universal, it must equally be aware of its particularization.[28]

Hegel's *philosophical* history is one that deploys the concept and, as we have seen, the universal in modern conditions affirms that "all are free." This is not an abstract, asymptotic universal but one that necessarily particularizes itself jurisdictionally, as it were, and finds itself challenged individually in our concrete efforts to be free within those particularizing terms. Hegel's decision to frame his lectures on world history narratively as a movement from "one" being free in a despotic "China" or "India" to "some" being free in Ancient Greece to "all" being free in modern Europe in many ways seems to be a caricature of the

27 Hegel, G. W. F. *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (New York: Humanities Press, 1976).

28 Richard Dien Winfield, *Hegel and Mind: Rethinking philosophical psychology* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 83.

logical point articulated above, an overly hasty approach to grasp the world historical reality of *Geist*.[29]

But the logical point remains and Chakrabarty, building on Marx's insights into the form of the struggles involved, renews it in his conception of the idea of *provincializing Europe*. If theoretically Chakrabarty limits himself to a posited tension between the universal and the particular, it might be because his conception and critique of historicism leads him to (mis)place the logical space of individuality as a distinct kind of singularity. He writes: "To critique historicism in all its varieties is to unlearn to think of history as a developmental process in which that which is possible becomes actual by tending to a future that is singular."[30] As against this, he makes use of Heidegger's discussion of possibility in order to theorize a non-totalizable present that interrupts such a developmental process. This non-totalizability is evident in the plural ways of "worlding" that nevertheless do not deny the commitment to modernity. He cites as examples those he developed in his case studies, where

> Kenyatta's relationship to his grandfather's magic, Appiah's relationship to his father's habit of offering scotch to ancestors, and Kosambi's relationship to the saddle-quern all point to the same problem. They refer us to the plurality that inheres in the "now," the lack of totality, the constant fragmentariness, that constitutes one's present.[31]

Alternatively, one might theorize these examples not as forms of resistance to a totalizing historical process governed by a singular fu-

29 For a good discussion of the assumptions and limitations of Hegel's approach to "Oriental despotism," see Pinkard, *Does History Make Sense?*, 51-66. As Pinkard argues, however, "on his own terms, Hegel's mistake is not per se with his conception of subjectivity nor with his conception of freedom, but rather with his idea that entire civilizations in effect never move on to the right type of reflective subjectivity." (i bid., 67).

30 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 249.

31 Ibid., 243.

ture but see in them individual efforts to be true to the particularized universal of being free in modern conditions.[32] Here Hegel's understanding of history theorizes our individual efforts (understood as our combination of passion and principle as self-conscious natural beings) as connected to the "infinite" end of making sense of our lives, initially within the terms through which the world is opened to us, and then through the struggles we find ourselves thrown in to, as those very terms betray the universality they particularize. To quote Pinkard one final time:

> Hegel's philosophy of history is with what various things mean to subjects, individually and collectively, in the historical configurations into which they are thrown. Subjects may indeed be caught in the wake of forces that they cannot control or only vaguely understand, and they may be operating in terms whose implications they do not fully grasp or comprehend at all. However, the Hegelian concern is with what it means for those subjects to be caught in that vortex yet still be acting self-consciously, and not with determining the causal conditions of the vortex into which they might be thrown.[33]

As I mentioned in the beginning of this essay, I was drawn to Chakrabarty's work by the suggestiveness of its title. As a settler Canadian, I am implicitly, in the languages I speak, a conduit of "provincializing Europe," an individual instantiating of the particularizing of its universal appeal. However, as an "unsettled settler," I remain

32 Another one of his examples comes to mind: "Interestingly, practicing Indian scientists—and I suppose scientists else- where as well—often have not felt any intellectual or social obligation to find one single overarching framework within which to contain the diversity of their own life practices (as distinct from their practices as scientists). In other words, the practice of "science" does not necessarily call on the researcher to develop a "scientific temper" beyond the practice of science itself." Ibid., 253.

33 Pinkard, *Does History Make Sense?*, 166.

dissatisfied with a theoretical approach intent of merely maintaining the tension between the particular and the universal when it comes to grasping the significance of that history.

Again, perhaps because of the place I grew up in, and perhaps because of the individual efforts of the Métis leader Louis Riel to "provincialize Europe," combining "Catholic and Métis spirituality, French traditions, English culture, British legal understanding, and American political rhetoric"[34] to address the universality of justice as freedom against the vortex of settler colonial patterns of movement, it seems to me that Hegel's philosophical history recommends itself in attempting to understand those efforts and that overlooking it might count as a missed opportunity to explore Chakrabarty's suggestive phrase more fully.

34 Hamon, *The Audacity*, 22.

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Marianne Sommer

Scientific Humanisms and the Anthropocene, Or the Dream of Steering the Evolution of the Human and Natural World

This contribution engages with different forms of humanism coming out of the history of science and evolutionary biology, called *new, scientific, evolutionary*, and *ecological*, from the interwar years to the post-war period. The focus lies on issues of progress, teleology, universalism, and Eurocentrism in the associated conceptualizations of (evolutionary) history, the present, and the future. According to the grand narrative of Julian Sorell Huxley, transitions took place at the threshold of the inorganic to the biological and from the biological to the human or psychosocial phase of evolution that changed the rules of the game. As a leading figure of the modern synthesis, he strongly opposed notions of teleology. Yet the latter was paramount in maintaining the possibility for consciously steered development in the human phase. Combined with the science of ecology and applied-ecological programs, such humanisms amounted to a prefiguration of what today is called *Anthropocene*. They, alongside the Anthropocene, stand for the responsibility of universal humankind for the future of the planet. While it seems as if the real stewards of progressive evolution were scientific elites, it is therefore also the notion of *anthropos* inherent in such concepts that appears problematic.
Keywords: Humanism, Evolution, Teleology, Anthropocene.

Humanismos Científicos e o Antropoceno, ou o Sonho de Conduzir a Evolução do Mundo Humano e Natural

Este texto procura dialogar com as diferentes formas de humanismo, designadas como *novas, científicas, evolucionárias* ou *ecológicas*, que emergiram da história da ciência e da biologia evolutiva desde o período entreguerras até ao pós-segunda guerra mundial. O texto centra-se em questões relativas ao progresso, à teleologia, ao universalismo e ao eurocentrismo nas conceptualizações da história (da evolução), do presente e do futuro que lhes estão associadas. Segundo a grande narrativa de Julian Sorrell Huxley, as transições que tiveram lugar no limiar entre o inorgânico e o biológico e do biológico para a fase humana ou psicosocial da evolução transformaram as regras do jogo. Uma das principais figuras da síntese moderna, Huxley opunha-se fortemente à teleologia. No entanto, esta última era indispensável para manter a possibilidade de um desenvolvimento consciente na fase humana. Combinados com a ciência ecológica e com programas ecológicos aplicados, estes humanismos resultaram numa prefiguração do que hoje designamos por Antropoceno. Tal como o *Antropoceno*, estes humanismos assentam na responsabilidade universal da humanidade pelo futuro do planeta. Embora aparentemente os verdeiros guardiões do evolucionismo progressista fossem elites científicas, é então a própria noção de *Anthropos* inerente a estes conceitos que parece ser problemática.
Palavras-chave: Humanismo, Evolução, Teologia, Antropoceno.

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Marianne Sommer*

I had the pleasure of meeting Dipesh Chakrabarty for the first time in Finland in 2013 for an intellectual exchange on teleology and history. These were obviously key topics of his and central concerns in *Provincializing Europe* (2008). Within the context of my own research on the history of the human origin sciences, I tackled the diverse ways in which aspects of teleology intentionally or unconsciously entered texts and visualizations about human deep history. At the said conference and in this text, I address(ed) this in its extreme form: variations of humanism that amounted to utopias of global scientific planning along the lines of evolutionary mechanisms. I am particularly pleased to take up the topic in this journal issue, because in its stead, I contributed a paper on the nineteenth century to the publication resulting from the conference. Grand visions of the human past and future that arose in twentieth and twenty-first-century paleoanthropology, evolutionary biology, and human population genetics, their popular promotion and political application, was the theme of my book *History Within* (2016). In what follows, I focus on the second part and its key figure: the biologist Julian Sorell Huxley (1887-1975).

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The attempt to extrapolate regularities as well as aims for human development through the study of evolution led to a universalization of the past and the future, a universalization of the human – even if it was conceptualized as internally variable –, in a pronouncedly teleological metanarrative. This vision was techno-scientific, elitist, and – again despite the attempt to account for the local – Eurocentric. Proclamations of the universal goals of democracy in the sense of equality of opportunity, social improvement, optimized subjects, and human unity in diversity retained a certain paternalism and were based on arguments from biology. In this grand human history, the narration of fundamental transitions took place on another scale: at the threshold of the inorganic to the biological and from the biological to the human or psychosocial phase of evolution. As name-giver and a leading figure of the modern synthesis that strove to integrate biological fields under a Darwinism updated by new knowledge from genetics, Huxley strongly opposed notions of teleology as they had existed in what for him were obsolete evolutionary theories. However, while reconceptualizing evolutionary progress in the organismic stage in a non-teleological way, it was important to him to maintain the possibility for consciously steered development in the human phase.

Julian Huxley and the Question of Progress

The problem of progress was a topic of great concern throughout Huxley's career. In his early work *The Individual in the Animal Kingdom* (1912), he developed a notion of progress as an increase in the level of organization that consisted in an increase in the complexity of the division of labor between organs and body parts through differentiation and specialization with concomitant increase in their integration. By the 1930s, Huxley believed that all non-human evolutionary lines were over-specialized and had reached their endpoints. The human being was the sole "trustee, spearhead, or effective agent of any further evolutionary progress"[1]. Huxley made it clear that although humans were

1 For example, Julian Sorell Huxley, "New Bottles for New Wine: Ideology and Scientific Knowledge," *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 80, no. 1–2 (1950): 20.

the last stage in an evolutionary succession of dominant types, they, like any other organism, were a product of random and directional, but not goal-directed processes.

However, the contingent emergence of humans nonetheless signified something new that not only turned humans into very special animals but also altered the nature of evolution: "By means of tradition, man at last overcomes, if but partially, Nature's veto on the inheritance of acquired characters [...]"[2] The development of a new level of consciousness made possible the trans-generational transmission of experience and knowledge, to which Huxley also referred as a process of heredity[3]. As Huxley tried to communicate through all available media, through the London zoos during his secretaryship, as well as through UNESCO during and after his directorship, this opened up the possibility of teleology, of planned cultural evolution along progressive lines. At the same time, although Huxley conceived of evolution in the psychosocial phase, as he called it, as mainly cultural, he maintained the possibility of a goal-directed biological evolution, because the human-made environment was now the substrate against which natural selection 'measured' fitness.[4]

While teleology understood as evolution being steered towards predetermined aims could no longer be part of conceptualizations of the organismic world in the modern synthesis in general, teleology thus reentered through notions of human evolution such as Huxley's psychosocial stage. There, it was turned into an imperative: History had to become a conscious process developed along predefined lines.[5] For Huxley, the question of how progress in the psychosocial stage might

2 Julian Sorell Huxley – Papers, 1899–1980, MS 50, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University (hereafter JSH Papers), Series VI: Publications by Julian Huxley, Box 97: 1920–1935, Folder 3: 1922–1923, Huxley, "Heredity and Evolution", *World's Work*, Dec. 1922, 15–22, on 21.

3 Huxley, Julian Sorell, *The Uniqueness of Man* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1941), 1–33 [first published 1931], 4).

4 For another early expression of these thoughts see JSH Papers, Series VI, Box 97, Folder 1: 1920, Huxley, "Progress Resurrected", *The Athenaeum*, 30.7.1920, 150.

5 On the argumentations against evolutionary teleology and its simultaneous reintroduction into human evolution by evolutionary synthesists, see Marianne Sommer, "From Descent to Ascent: The Human Exception in the Evolutionary Synthesis," *Nuncius* 25, no. 1 (2010): 41–67.

be achieved could nonetheless be answered by looking at history from the perspective of evolution. In analogy to cladogenesis, anagenesis, and stasigenesis in the biological phase of evolution, Huxley observed that cultural evolution showed short-term optimizations through adaptation (one-sided specialization through differentiation), long-term optimizations through progress (general specialization), and non-adaptive moments (limitation). These processes were responsible for differences between cultures, progress in cultural entities, and the survival of obsolete cultural units. However, in psychosocial evolution, cladogenesis was counteracted by a high degree of convergence through the exchange of ideas and techniques between individuals, communities, religions, and cultures that produced a strong unity across the variability[6].

Before Richard Dawkins's *memes*[7], Huxley defined *mentifacts* – also called *memoids* – as components of human cultures that were not primarily of material (*artifacts*) or social (*socifacts*), but of mental function. They were materialized ideas that had a social life; they might comprise elements as diverse as machines, mass communication, scientific, legal, economic, and political systems, works of art, philosophy, social hierarchies, and styles of cuisine.[8] In front of the background of his thoughts about clado-, ana-, and stasigenesis, Huxley's point was that the selection of mentifacts had to become a conscious process. Their survival should depend on their fitness for adapting a particular culture to the increasing knowledge from the sciences. In general, adaptation in humans meant the adjustment of belief systems (rather than biological systems) to the steadily improving knowledge about the natural world (rather than to the natural world itself) through psychosocial selection. This was Huxley's new categorical imperative; the human being was "[...] the necessary agent of the cosmos in understanding more of itself"[9].

6 Julian Sorell Huxley, "Evolution, Cultural and Biological," *Yearbook of Anthropology* (1955): 2–25.

7 Dawkins, Richard, *The Selfish Gene* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1976), ch. 11.

8 See also Julian Sorell Huxley, *Evolutionary Humanism* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, [1964] 1992), chap. 1.

9 Huxley, "New Bottles," 20.

Huxley thus chaired the Idea Systems Group, in which he cooperated with journalists and writers, humanists, as well as social and natural scientists to tackle questions such as: How could ideas serve industrialism and the spread of its products as well as further inter- and supranational organization? Huxley felt that guided adaptation of ideas and societies was becoming more and more feasible because societies were increasingly self-conscious: They recorded their development in social, economic, demographic, and natural surveys.[10] In steering the evolution of idea systems on the basis of the knowledge thus gained, some world philosophy should be aimed at, but not uniformity. The goal was a cultural plurality grounded on common general beliefs. The study of idea systems and their components should eventually allow for intervention in their further development toward "[...] a new evolutionary view of man's relation to the cosmos at large and his destiny within it"[11].

Huxley saw anagenic progress at work in history in a series of systems of ideas that determined societal organization. Thus, tribal societies structured by magic belief preceded the god-centered systems of the Middle Ages. Although these were already organized around the notion of human progress, progress was considered to be under supernatural control. Even societies that focused on science in the hope for progress by means of its mechanistic and reductionist approach did not bring about true progress. Only Darwin opened the door to an evolution-centered ideological organization that allowed progress in the sense of a holistic development under human control.[12]

However, to change ideas systems, communication of adaptive knowledge was not enough. Walking through that door opened by Darwin depended also on Mr. and Mrs. Everyman. Huxley envisioned a 'fulfillment society' that provided the opportunity for an open, com-

10 JSH Papers, Series IX: Organizational Materials, Box 113: "Idea Systems Group", Folders 2–7: Idea Systems Group 1950–1956, n.d.

11 Ibid., Folder 4: Idea Systems Group, "Modern Systems of Ideas and Their Adaptation to a Changing Society", 1956, 1–13, on 5.

12 See for example Huxley, *Evolutionary Humanism*, 76–77.

plex, and holistic self-realization for those individuals who consciously strove for esthetic, intellectual, and spiritual perfection. The largest possible number of individuals would be given the broadest spectrum of possibilities to unfold their potentialities through education, accomplishment, adventure, cooperation, and meditation. Beyond personal initiative, incentives would be needed for social thinking and acting, so that cooperation, altruism, sensitivity, and sympathetic enthusiasm could spread.[13] As early as the 1920s, Huxley forced his audience to recall that humans were the embodiments of the evolutionary processes and as their apex the movers of evolutionary progress: "[...] remember that now in the fullness of time, the cosmic forces through whose agency we have been evolved, have made us the trustees of progress, and entrusted to our conscious free-will the future course of evolution"[14].

This was the core of what Huxley called *scientific humanism*. It was an idiosyncratic integration of the synthetic evolutionary science with a new humanism – a humanism that came out of the context of the institutionalization of the history of science.

Scientific Humanism and the History of Science

A central figure here was the chemist and mathematician George Sarton. The history of science was at the center of Sarton's philosophical and historical system, and he attempted to institutionalize it two years before the family emigrated from Belgium to the United States through the launch of the journal *Isis* (1913). As a home to the journal, the History of Science Society was founded in 1924. *Isis* should be the instrument of discipline building from Sarton's positions at Harvard University and the Carnegie Institute; but *Isis* should also stand for something else: for the lessons of tolerance and wisdom which history had to offer. Sarton's conception of history and the role of science therein were influenced by nineteenth-century thinkers such as Auguste Comte

13 See for example Huxley, *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1942), chap. 10.5.

14 Julian Sorell Huxley, *Biology and Human Life. Being the Second Annual Norman Lockyer Lecture* (London: British Science Guild, 1926), 24.

and Herbert Spencer, as well as Utopian and socialist ideas. Sarton's grand aim was a progressivist universal history that was founded o n positive science and that worked toward the brotherhood of man. If Sarton paid lip service to what at times appears as a strikingly contemporary conception of science in society, it was this liberal faith that guided most of his work.[15]

Sarton presented his program under the title "The New Humanism"[16], a French version of which was published as early as 1918. History of science should bring together the classical humanist and the humanized scientist. He defined science as the common thought of the whole world; as the organized body of all the facts and theories from which almost all arbitrariness had been excluded, and which were unanimously agreed upon by enlightened people. Because positive knowledge was the common patrimony of all humankind, the domain of science was internationalism. Moreover, science constituted the central axis of human advance and provided the fundamental method of social organization, and it was the role of the history of science to make this known. Although it was not only scientists but also artists who were the true creators and guardians of these ideals – the stewards of the future of humankind – Sarton *did* perceive a natural order of knowledge, with mathematics as the foundation, followed by physics and biology.[17] For Sarton, the new humanism was a program to understand and at the same time to increase the role of humans in cosmic evolution, and it was shared by a generation of historians of science who were internationally integrated into institutions such as *Isis* and the History of Science Society.[18]

Another key figure in this context was Sarton's British friend, Charles Singer, who had studied medicine and then focused on the history of his field. He would also be the driving force in the foundation of the British Society for the History of Science in 1947. Relying heavily on Sarton's new humanism, Singer defined a scientific humanism in his opening

15 Arnold Thackray and Robert K. Merton, "On Discipline Building: The Paradoxes of George Sarton," *Isis* 63, no. 4 (1972): 472–495.

16 George Sarton, "The New Humanism," *Isis* 6, no. 1 (1924): 9–42.

17 See also George Sarton, "The Faith of a Humanist," *Isis* 3, no. 1 (1920): 3–6.

18 George Sarton, *The History of Science and the New Humanism* (New York: Henry Holt, 1931).

of the first issue of *The Rationalist: A Journal of Scientific Humanism* in 1929.[19] It was essentially an attack against historians who neglected the true *movens* in the history of humankind – science – and against the educational system that did not convey the transformative power of science and the history of science. For Singer, acquaintance with the craft of science would help a student to live his life, but the knowledge of the history of science would show the student why his life was worth living. It would acquaint him with the purpose of human existence.

Singer taught history of biology and medicine at Oxford and University College London, and formed a network around him that connected the three main centers for the teaching of the history of science and medicine, which included Cambridge.[20] Among Singer's acquaintances, friends, and collaborators was Huxley, who for example partook in a summer school on science and civilization that Singer co-organized in 1922. Like Sarton's and Singer's, Huxley's thinking was imbued with nineteenth-century values. His grandfather Thomas Henry Huxley had been a strong believer in the progress of civilization through the advancement of science. However, in Julian's family, there were important exponents of British idealism as well as empiricism. The Huxleys and Arnolds brought together a scientific and literary elite that represented both, the cultivation of intellect and feeling, science and religion, truth and beauty.[21] From the early 1920s, Julian Huxley recognized in history a tool to integrate these opposites; history could discover what he called "the soul of science".[22]

19 Charles Singer, "Scientific Humanism," *The Rationalist: A Journal of Scientific Humanism* 1, no. 1 (1929): 12–18. For Singer's own interpretation of Sarton's new humanism and the history of science, see Dorothea Singer and Charles Singer, "George Sarton and the History of Science," in "The George Sarton Memorial Issue ", special issue, *Isis* 48, no. 3 (1957): 306–310.

20 Geoffrey Cantor, "Charles Singer and the Early Years of the British Society for the History of Science," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 30, no. 1 (1997): 5–23.

21 Colin Divall, "From a Victorian to a Modern: Julian Huxley and the English Intellectual Climate," in *Julian Huxley. Biologist and Statesman of Science. Proceedings of a Conference Held at Rice University 25–27 September 1987*, ed. C. Kenneth Waters and Albert Van Helden (Houston: Rice Univ. Press, 1992), 31–44; John R. Durant, "The Tension at the Heart of Huxley's Evolutionary Ethology," in *Julian Huxley. Biologist and Statesman of Science. Proceedings of a Conference Held at Rice University 25–27 September 1987*, ed. C. Kenneth Waters and Albert Van Helden (Houston: Rice Univ. Press, 1992), 150–160.

22 Julian Sorell Huxley, *Essays in Popular Science* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1926), 165–169; see also Anna K. Mayer, "When Things Don't Talk: Knowledge and Belief in the Inter-war Humanism of Charles Singer (1876–1960)," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 38, no. 3 (2005): 325–347.

Evolutionary Humanism and the Meaning of Diversity

As for Sarton, for Huxley some scientists were more equal than others. However, in Huxley's thinking, biology was more relevant to the project than the physical sciences, and the study of evolution was key. Due to the centrality of evolution, Huxley also made use of the term *evolutionary humanism*.[23] Huxley and fellow biologists like J. B. S. Haldane and Lancelot Hogben were part of a wider movement in 1930s Britain that was driven by an interest in the relations between science and society, the social responsibility of the scientist, the relevance of biology to human values and to the human present and future, the paradox of individuality in mass society, and problems of integration and progress.[24] From Hogben's anti-elitist, anti-classist, and anti-imperialist perspective, science appeared as good science only if it was for the good of the people, if it answered to the common needs of the entire humankind. It had to be concerned with moral as well as material advancement. Hogben shared with Huxley and Haldane the belief that progressive science could not thrive on its own. It depended on a favorable social context.[25]

In the interwar years, Huxley, Hogben, and Haldane entered the public sphere to advocate for social reform and against laissez-faire capitalism, nationalism, and fascism. They especially undermined what they perceived as a eugenics and racial anthropology that relied on false understandings of biology. Huxley, Hogben, and Haldane drew on the Mendelian process of heredity transmission and the importance of environment for genetic expression to argue for equality of social opportunity. On the basis of the new insights into heredity and her-

23 On Huxley's scientific and evolutionary humanism, see in particular Huxley, *Uniqueness*, ch. 13; Id., *Evolutionary Humanism*, chs. 4–5.

24 For a scholarly treatment of the phenomenon see Roger Smith, "Biology and Values in Interwar Britain: C. S. Sherrington, Julian Huxley and the Vision of Progress," *Past and Present* 178 (2003): 210–242; see also Paul Gary Werskey, "British Scientists and 'Outsider' Politics, 1931–1945," *Science Studies* 1, no. 1 (1971): 67–83.

25 E.g. Julian Sorell Huxley, "The History of the Science," and "Science and General Ideas," in *More Simple Science: Earth and Man,* Julian Sorell Huxley and Edward Neville da Costa Andrade (Oxford: Blackwell, 1935), 296–348; John Burdon Sanderson Haldane, *The Inequality of Man and Other Essays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1932), 50–68 ("Is History a Fraud"), 119–139 ("The Place of Science in Western Civilization") and 191–201 ("Science and Invention").

itability they counteracted attempts to biologically found the social groups of class and race. Central in this process was a reevaluation of variation. Haldane had worked on mathematical formulations of the effects of selection and other mechanisms on genetic variability, and he explained that "[a]s I come to the study of society from that of genetics, it is natural enough that I should be prejudiced in favour of human diversity and should hope that my country will not try to suppress it"[26]. Genetic variability in humans of course meant genetic inequality, but seemingly paradoxically, Haldane and his peers used the fact of genetic inequality to argue for political, economic and social equality. Biological inequality was turned from a problem of conservative politics into a purpose in progressive evolution. Political systems that cajoled or forced people into homogeneity lost their potential for further advance, and classical eugenics and racial anthropology were perceived as in the service of such systems.

Huxley relied on Hogben's work on gene-environment interaction to the degree of reasoning that in order to allow every individual in a human society to take the place that best suited his or her genetic potential, the social conditions and economic resources had to be levelled – and levelled up.[27] In the 1920s, Huxley still thought that negative eugenics was scientifically possible and socially practicable by means of consultation and voluntary sterilization, at least in cases of single recessives such as deaf-mutism. Positive eugenics seemed on the verge of being scientifically cognizable and socially feasible by encouraging the particularly endowed to reproduce. However, at that time he was already skeptical about the possibility to improve the existing highest quality of the population by directed mating. To this end, one would need much more knowledge. Differences in environment first had to be abolished to bring to light the genetic differences between individuals and stocks; until then, general conclusions could only be guesswork.[28]

26 Haldane, *Inequality*, 48.

27 Huxley, *Uniqueness*, 34–84, 45.

28 E.g. JSH Papers, Series VI, Box 97, Folder 1, Huxley, "Eugenics and Eugenicists", *The Athenaeum*, 31.12.1920, 895.

Therefore, eugenics was essentially a social science. Even though Huxley, Haldane, and Hogben continued to support voluntary sterilization, and in particular contraception, as a means to social justice, eugenics as a biological tool to steer evolutionary progress mostly receded into the future.[29]

Hogben directed his criticism not only at eugenics but also at racial anthropology; the same year, Haldane, too, took issue with that field, as well as eugenics, in *Heredity and Politics*[30]. In *Dangerous Thoughts* of 1939, Hogben reinforced the vicious attack on British, German, and American eugenics and physical anthropology as targeting such scapegoats as the working classes, Jews, and colored people, as well as certain kinds of immigrants in the interest of the upper classes, 'the Aryans', and 'the Nordics', respectively.[31] Finally, Huxley also used the new understanding of heredity and of the nature-culture relation to argue against existing notions of race in popular talks and articles such as "The Concept of Race in the Light of Modern Genetics". He attributed 'racial', national, as well as class differences in IQ, aptitude, and character, and the claimed sexual differences mostly to natural, social, economic, and educational environments.[32] This obviously did not mean that there were no genetically co-determined differences between humans, but they were unlikely to correlate with social groupings; as such, they had to be valued favorably.

Because of Hogben's, Haldane's, and Huxley's awareness of the complex relations between science and society, the conditions under which a reformulated eugenic project would be acceptable were severe. At the outbreak of WWII, they were among the signatories of a statement published in *Nature* that expressed the hope that eugenic concerns would guide the reproductive choices of individuals in a future in which social conditions were improved and just, in which community

29 See also Haldane, *Inequality*, 211.

30 John Burdon Sanderson Haldane, *Heredity and Politics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1938).

31 Lancelot Hogben, *Dangerous Thoughts* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1939).

32 JSH Papers, Series VI, Box 97, Folder 16, Huxley, "The Concept of Race in the Light of Modern Genetics", *Harper's Monthly Magazine* (May 1935), 689–698, on 691.

concerns took center stage, and a federation of the world had come into reach, thus rendering it possible to make beneficial use of what would by then be a much better knowledge of heredity.[33]

It was toward such a federation of the world that Hogben increasingly worked. In "The Creed of a Scientific Humanist" of 1939, democracy in its present form seemed doomed, communism perverted, and even a certain brand of socialism insufficient.[34] Salvation lay in the scientific humanist program that opened up the possibility of a world-government by federating nations with simultaneous increase in local self-organization with the help of expert knowledge.[35] Societal advance would be modeled on scientific practice as the prototype of all common human action. Well into the war, Hogben made another contribution to this now pronouncedly global project of scientific humanism with his *Interglossa: A Draft of an Auxiliary for a Democratic World Order* (1943): "The writer believes that the alternative to barbarism is repudiation of national sovereignties in greater units of democratic co-operation, and that day-to-day co-operation of ordinary human beings on a planetary scale will not be possible unless educational authorities of different nations agree to adopt one and the same second language"[36].

Huxley propagated his most exhaustive plan for the future of democracy in a series of radio talks he gave when touring the US in early 1940 in the service of American war intervention and collaborative postwar reconstruction. On the basis of an analysis of history and the present situation, he elaborated his belief that democracy within a nation and ultimately a democracy of nations had to find the balance , natural to life itself, between individual and community or state, bet-

33 Francis Albert Eley Crew et al., "Social Biology and Population Improvement," *Nature* 144, no. 3646 (1939): 521–522; for more on these issues see also Marianne Sommer, "Biology as a Technology of Social Justice in Interwar Britain: Arguments from Evolutionary History, Heredity, and Human Diversity," *Science, Technology & Human Values* 39, no. 4 (2014): 560–585.

34 Hogben, *Dangerous Thoughts*, 13–24.

35 Ibid., 21–24.

36 Lancelot Hogben, *Interglossa: A Draft of an Auxiliary for a Democratic World Order, Being an Attempt to Apply Semantic Principles to Language Design* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1943), 11.

ween rights and responsibilities, between local organization and central planning, between layperson and expert, and between freedom and security. Because the expansion of social services, scientific planning, development policy, and international collaboration could also take place in totalitarian and fascist states, these natural balances were crucial for guaranteeing civil liberties. Contrary to political fanaticism and scientific dogmatism with their reinforcement of mental unity and biological homogeneity, the natural processes of balancing demands that were only seemingly antagonistic ensured the persistence of the diversity that was so essential for progress in social as well as natural evolution.[37]

In fact, just as Huxley had discerned progressive and limiting trends in the phase of organic evolution, he observed such trends in recent human history. He contrasted revolutions, mostly toward totalitarianism (Italy, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and 'a pale sort' in Vichy France, Japan, China, Russia), with transformations that were evolutionary, as in Scandinavia, the British Dominions, the United Kingdom, and the US under the New Deal, where measures of social security had been introduced. In such evolutionary change and in international convergence through the League of Nations, Huxley recognized certain progressive trends on a global scale: a trend away from laissez-faire toward planning and governmental control; a trend to take non-economic motives and aims more seriously; an increasing concern with the material and human resources of developing regions, and a growing realization of the necessity for some strong international organization. Huxley condemned the developments in Japan and Germany, but overall he appreciated the effort to embark on the mission of a new world order. He hoped that the US and other democratic nations would strive toward a new world order of another kind. Because these nations stood for a balance of individualistic and communistic interests, and because they esteemed diversity, such an attempt would ultimately prove progressive rather than a shortcut to an evolutionary dead-end.[38]

37 Julian Sorell Huxley, *Democracy Marches* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1941); see for example also JSH Papers, Series VII, Box 102, Folder 7, Harold B. Hinton, "Huxley Sees Us All Still Undeveloped", *The New York Times*, 3.12.1939.

38 Huxley, *Democracy*. Also JSH Papers, Series VI, Box 98, Folder 9: 1942, Huxley, "The War: Two Jobs, Not One," *The Fortnightly*, Oct. 1942, 221–228.

Ecological Humanism and the World Heritage

Early on, humanism also acquired a decidedly ecological bend. In a celebrated textbook of Huxley and the Wells brothers, *The Science of Life*[39], ecology was brought to bear on the scientific humanist goal of consciously steered progress along the lines of evolutionary principles. The authors observed that in the past, human interference with the ecological web had mostly happened without sufficient insight and foresight, as when new organisms like pests were brought to colonized countries, soil was exhausted through monoculture, or finite resources were exploited. Such human interventions upset the natural balances; species had been exterminated and the environment polluted. In contrast, Huxley and the Wellses called for applied ecology. In the future, a concerted effort by the sciences of life would be needed to develop ecological webs in a beneficial direction, by controlling pests and diseases, by genetically improving organisms, and by creating the desired ecological interdependencies.

Hogben saw a role for genetics in the creation of new types of plants and animals in such a future (for example by combining genes for resistance and high yield of fruit through selective breeding/crossing). And ultimately, the evolution of the human species itself would be brought under the control of "biotechnics" or "biotechnology"[40]. Huxley's applied ecology was particularly close to what Hogben called *planned ecology*: "Man has it in his power to become an active and intelligent directive agent in the evolutionary process, using his knowledge of the diversity of living creatures to decide which are essential to his own welfare as objects of use or of aesthetic satisfaction, and using his knowledge of the properties of living matter to adjust the environment of the species he chooses as members of a rationally planned ecological system"[41]. Humans had long since begun to turn the world into their

39 H. G. Wells, Julian Sorell Huxley, and G. P. Wells, *The Science of Life* (New York: Literary Guild, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1934), 961.

40 Lancelot Hogben, *Science for the Citizen: A Self-Educator Based on the Social Background of Scientific Discovery* (London: George Unwin, 1938), 1005.

41 Hogben, *Science*, 971.

own ecological system, but the process now had to be subjected to conscious scientific planning.[42]

In order to steer the global ecology, knowledge of the workings of evolution and of the contemporary diversity of living organisms that was their result was the sine qua non. If this knowledge were implemented in interdisciplinary efforts to engineer ecological systems worldwide and integrated into idea systems globally, humans would finally shoulder their responsibility. Scientists therefore had to survey the natural diversity, work toward its preservation, and toward making it accessible to everyone by means of efficient management and modern media technologies. Within a scientific humanist and human ecological framework, the same was true for cultural diversity. Huxley saw his best chance in helping to bring this about with his involvement in UNESCO.

In 1945, Huxley was asked by the Head of the Education Office if he wanted the post of full-time secretary of the Preparatory Commission with the possibility of becoming director-general of the organization once it was formally set up – a possibility that materialized at the UNESCO conference in 1946 (10.12.). Earlier that year, Huxley had submitted a pamphlet on "UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy" to the Preparatory Commission. He proclaimed that UNESCO – through education, the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, the arts, and mass media – should aim at a single world culture, at a synthesis of E ast and W est in scientific humanism, and at psychosocial progress on the basis of the knowledge gained from the science of evolution. The evolutionary approach "[...] shows us man as now the sole trustee of further evolutionary progress, and gives us important guidance as to the courses he should avoid and those he should pursue if he is to achieve that progress. An evolutionary approach provides the link between natural science and human history [...] it not only shows us the origin and biological roots of our human values, but gives us some basis and external standards for them among the apparently neutral mass of natural phenomena"[43].

42 Ibid., 964–970, 971–1009.

43 Julian Sorell Huxley, "UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy," Preparatory Commission of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1946), 7-8.

One such collaborative project that arose from Huxley's directorship of UNESCO was the 'History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind'. It was to contain the entire memory of humankind from prehistory to the present and emphasize the cultural achievements of the human race, dealing with war and politics only in so far as they influenced cultural and scientific progress.[44] As vice-president of the UNESCO commission for the endeavor, Huxley intended to show that this history could only be understood within the evolutionary framework. As sole trustees of evolutionary progress, humans had to protect their own diversity as well as that of their living and inanimate environments. The International Committee on (respectively, Institute for) Intellectual Cooperation, in which Huxley had been engaged, had already demanded that the preservation of the natural as well as cultural heritage should be part of the League of Nations' responsibility.[45] In his program for UNESCO, Huxley now broadened the understanding of heritage along these lines. It was the beginning of a process that culminated in the foundation of the WWF in 1961.

The same year, in a confidential interim report of his discussion circle, the Idea Systems Group, the term *ecology* had been proposed as a substitute for a concept of evolution that was still too tightly associated with the struggle for existence, the survival of the fittest, and the notion of a missing link. There was still a need in the eyes of the group to replace outdated methods and ideas with quantitative approach and population thinking, and notions of competition and absolute values with reasoning along the lines of adaptation, equilibrium, and relativism. *Ecology* stressed interrelatedness, cooperation, conservation, and constructive development of resources; it implied careful surveys of all the elements in a given situation and their interdependencies. With the development of human ecology that focused on economics and sociolo-

44 JSH Papers, Series IX, Boxes 118 and 119; also communication with Ralph Edmund Turner in JSH Papers, Series III, see Index to Selected Correspondents in Guide to JSH Papers.

45 On the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and the Intellectual Institute for Intellectual Cooperation as precursors of the UNESCO heritage conservation efforts, see Anna-Katharina Wöbse, *Weltnaturschutz: Umweltdiplomatie in Völkerbund und Vereinten Nationen, 1920–1950* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2012), 278–287 on Huxley's role in them.

gy, it seemed possible to bridge the gap between the natural, the social, and the psychological sciences. In the ecological garb, the distinctive mark of Huxley's psychosocial phase of evolution consisted in the fact that the cultural kind of ecological climax was no fixed endpoint of development. Idea systems like habitats may replace each other successively, but there was no given final state to a system because new ideas or changes in outlook could always be introduced and a new equilibrium reached by planned development of natural and social environments.[46]

The Rise and Fall of Scientific, Evolutionary, and Ecological Humanism?

An evolutionary scientific humanism, which had humans at its center as the apex of evolution and the agents of history, also gained the support of important American biologists. George Gaylord Simpson and Theodosius Dobzhansky increasingly took up the torch of evolutionary humanism for the cause of progressive human development. Indeed, Huxley, Simpson, and Dobzhansky retold and rewrote the narrative of human evolution, the history of its conception and its meaning within the broader evolutionary synthesis, for diverse academic and non-academic publics, as if to inscribe it deep into the scientific and wider historical cultures. Their publications built a tight network of intertextuality. In a letter to Huxley, Simpson described the interdependence of their ideas as follows: "Much of it [a paper Huxley prepared for the American Genetical Society] says more successfully rather nearly what I tried to say in my recent book 'The Meaning of Evolution.' The parallel is not particularly coincidental, since I have of course studied your work with care and have been profoundly influenced by it [...]".[47]

46 JSH Papers, Series IX, Box 113, Folders 2–7. Ibid., Folder 6: Idea Systems Group, "Notes on the Idea of Ecology as Applied to Man" and "Note on Ecology". For conservation and ecology in a humanist frame see also Edward Max Nicholson, "The Place of Conservation," in *The Humanist Frame: The Modern Humanist Vision of Life*, ed. Julian Sorell Huxley (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961), 385–397.

47 JSH Papers, Series III, Box 19, Simpson to Huxley, 2.8.1950.

It can be observed that, in general, scientific and evolutionary humanism gained momentum in the postwar years, and it was also increasingly internationally organized. H. J. Blackham, who was one of the driving forces behind the postwar institutionalization of British and international humanism, observed that "[t]here is undoubtedly a new and interested public for these ideas"[48]. Huxley presided over the first congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union in 1952. The IHEU was to incorporate humanist organizations that had been sprouting internationally. It was recognized as an organization that had consultative status with UNESCO. In 1963, Huxley became the first president of the British Humanist Association (it had been preceded by the Humanist Council as a representation of the Ethical Union, the Rationalist Press Association, and the National Secular Society). In 1962, he had been elected Humanist of the Year by the American Humanist Association.

But while scientific and evolutionary humanism were increasingly consolidated, the changed international political situation also presented a challenge, even if Huxley was less negatively affected by the Cold War than such early scientific humanist allies as Haldane and Hogben. As a long-time member of the Communist Party and supporter of the agrarian program under Trofim Lysenko that led to the prosecution of geneticists in the Soviet Union, Haldane found himself in a difficult situation and moved to India in 1956. Hogben, too, was alienated, though not to the same degree as Haldane, since he was not a party member but had pursued his own brand of socialism (or indeed scientific humanism).[49] Huxley had been an important critic of Lysenkoism[50], and it was his liberal democratic ideals that were most in harmony with postwar western liberal orthodoxy. However, with decolonialization, civil and minority rights movements, the mandate of affirmative action in the US, the second wave of feminism, the youth movements,

48 JSH Papers, Series III, Box 35, Folder 5, Blackham, Director of the British Humanist Association, to Huxley, 18.10.1963.

49 Paul Gary Werskey, *The Visible College* (London: Allen Lane, 1978), 313–314, 321–322.

50 For example Julian Sorell Huxley, *Soviet Genetics and World Science. Lysenko and the Meaning of Heredity* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1949).

etc., the developments in many ways outran Huxley's ideal of equality of opportunity. The notion of a meritocracy, in which the development of the biology and culture of as many individuals as possible was optimized, stood squarely in the landscape of demands for the insurance of equality of performance through socio-political measures.[51] In an international climate that wanted equality as a fact rather than as mere possibility, the strong emphasis on the reality of biological variability (or rather inequality), even if context-dependent, was set against what Huxley perceived as misguided cultural determinism.[52]

Huxley's vision of a world society remained indebted to the enlightenment tradition and thus Eurocentric. Through his engagement with the Colonial Office and UNESCO, Africa took a special place in Huxley's utopia: Africa carried the hope for planned evolutionary success, if only it would learn from the mistakes that other regions had made in their development. This patronizing stance has been criticized by Glenda Sluga[53] in her analysis of the concepts of 'the world citizen' and 'the one world' that were central in the early years of UNESCO. She identifies Huxley's influence as general-director in steering the organization toward an imperialist and liberal development stance vis-à-vis (former) colonies. Focusing mainly on the African policy Huxley laid out for UNESCO – as opposed to the late 1920s –, Sluga classifies him as reactionary.[54] In 1960, 17 independent African nations joined the UN, holding close to 20% of the votes in the General Conference. The organization and the world at large were undergoing significant changes, while Huxley, no longer a young man, maintained his evolutionary humanist philosophy of common global development.

In general, Huxley's evolutionary humanism was a totalizing project: e verything from the individual personality, to science and techno-

51 Perrin Selcer, "Beyond the Cephalic Index: Negotiating Politics to Produce UNESCO's Scientific Statements on Race," *Current Anthropology* 53, supplement 5 (2012): 173–184.

52 Marianne Sommer, "From Descent to Ascent," 41–67.

53 Glenda Sluga, "UNESCO and the (One) World of Julian Huxley," *Journal of World History* 21, no. 3 (2010): 393–418.

54 For a more positive evaluation see Gregory Blue, "Scientific Humanism at the Founding of UNESCO," in *Comparative Criticism.* Vol. 23, *Humanist Traditions in the Twentieth Century*, ed. E. S. Shaffer (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001), 173–200.

logy, the mass media, natural and cultural resources, and national and international political systems had to be developed in small local to global organizations along the lines of a planned ecology, and his motivation for conservation was anthropocentric. In the applied-ecological programs discussed above we clearly encounter earlier manifestations of what later came to be subsumed under the heading of the Anthropocene. They are therefore associated with the same problems as the Anthropocene, with which Dipesh Chakrabarty has engaged in more recent times. They have been the topic of our last encounter, a conference in Berne in 2018: the problematics of different understandings of time, of history, and of the human in evolutionary science, history, and everyday experience, and last but possibly not least, of the feasibility of techno-scientific solutions to environmental problems globally.[55] Scientific humanism in the above sense, as well as the Anthropocene, are not purely descriptive terms, they rather represent programs – a responsibility of all humankind for the further development of the globe. Today, the astrobiologist David Grinspoon, for example, demands that humankind act as a conscious geological force.[56] At the same time, these programs are associated with a scientific elite as the real "effective stewards of the planet"[57], and – despite their ostensible interdisciplinarity – possibly with the humanities as auxiliary fields.

It is thus also the notion of *anthropos* inherent in the concept of the Anthropocene that appears problematic. Historians do not think in terms of one shared history of all humankind, and they, as well as other scholars and social scientists, may ask whether everyone is equally responsible for climate change and equally shares in the profit of the planets exploitation. Rather, there are demands for a new kind of climate justice.[58] The scientific-humanist outlook, too, seems to have merged

55 E.g. Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Anthropocene Time," *History and Theory* 57, no. 1, (2018): 5–32.

56 David Grinspoon, *Earth in Human Hands: Shaping Our Planet's Future* (New York: Grand Central, 2016), 242.

57 Chakrabarty, "Anthropocene Time," 27.

58 E.g. Elmar Altvater, "Kapitalozän. Der Kapitalismus schreibt Erdgeschichte," *Luxemburg. Gesellschaftsanalyse und linke Praxis* (February 2019), accessed 1 July 2020, https://www.zeitschrift-luxemburg.de/kapitalozaen/. On these issues see also Marianne Sommer, "Die Wissenschaftsgeschichte lässt sich nicht abschreiben: Der Fall *Anthropozän*," *Nach Feierabend* (forthcoming).

natural history into human history, or – with regard to the definition of patterns of development and aims – the other way around. But such total grand stories with clearly defined epochs that signify major transitions are no longer the yarn of historians. That is not to say that the scientific humanists I have been concerned with here were devoid of sensitivity for diversity, inequality, exploitation, and violence – to the contrary, these were central issues with which they grappled. History nonetheless often appeared as one large, governable process growing out of biological evolution, and diversity as its necessary bio-cultural substrate.

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Bo Stråth

Provincializing for a Planetary Perspective

The article takes its point of departure from the dynamics between Enlightenment modernity as it unfolds from the perspective of Marx (History 1 in *Provincializing Europe*) and the corrective counter-narratives, in the form of a protest against the former, as in the view of Heidegger (History 2 in *Provincializing Europe*), the dynamics that provides the central argument in *Provincializing Europe*. On this basis, the present article explores how and why these dynamics were severed by a growing polarization between the globalization narrative, the new History 1 after 1990, and the new-old brutal ethnic nationalism emerging after the neoliberal collapse in 2008, the new History 2. The article ends by discussing the question of how the modernity-protest dynamics between History 1 and History 2 can be reformulated from a planetary perspective.
Keywords: Enlightenment, modernity-protest, planetary perspective, ecology-economics.

Provincializar por uma Perspectiva Histórica

Este artigo toma como ponto de partida as dinâmicas entre a modernidade iluminista, tal como esta se desenvolveu na perspetiva de Marx (História 1 em Provincializing Europe), e as contra narrativas que a ela se opuseram, como no pensamento de Heidegger (História 2 em Provincializing Europe), dinâmicas essas que formam o argumento central de Provincializing Europe. Neste sentido, o artigo explora o como e o porquê de estas dinâmicas terem sido interrompidas por uma polarização crescente entre a narrativa da globalização, a nova História 1 depois de 1990, e o novo-velho nacionalismo étnico que emergiu, com toda a sua brutalidade, na sequência do colapso neoliberal de 2008, a nova História 2. O artigo conclui com uma reflexão em torno da questão do modo como as dinâmicas de modernidade-protesto entre a História 1 e a História 2 podem ser reequacionadas numa perspetiva planetária.
Palavras-chave: Iluminismo, modernidade-protesto, perspetiva planetária, economias ecológicas.

Provincializing for a Planetary Perspective

Bo Stråth*

Provincializing Europe was, when it appeared in 2000, an immediate success in its brave approach and bold arguments. It renewed the post-colonial debate and took it out of the shadow of the neoliberal globalization narrative that had prevailed since the 1990s. It provided a new perspective on the world after formal colonialism, where the structures of inequality remained but were repressed by the powerful globalization discourse of the time. The book reintroduced Karl Marx into a debate from which he had more or less disappeared since the early 1990s at the latest. The revival of what had become a historical relic occurred in a surprising but fruitful comparison with Martin Heidegger, another marginalized figure in the mainstream debate after his allegiance to national socialism from the 1930s. The book emphasized the role of the nation as a framework for human agency in a time which played down the importance of national borders, and it drew attention to the manner in which nations were situated in the North–South framework of rich and poor, a theme that had disappeared in the neoliberal narrative of equal opportunities after decades of debate on development and development aid.

Provincializing Europe brought together macro and micro perspectives, history and philosophy in an innovative methodology focusing on the role of language, culture, and norms. The analysis drew on fiction

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literature and poetry as sources. The book explored the preconditions of modernity in an era that referred to itself as postmodern. It was complex in its emphasis on, and exposure of, ambiguities and contradictions. At the same time, it was clear in its argumentation. *Provincializing Europe* was not a project of persistently avoiding or getting rid of Europe. On the contrary, at the end of European imperialism, European thought as it had been formed in the Enlightenment program was a gift to the world, Dipesh Chakrabarty argued. It was a gift through the invitation to critique and social reform for a better world built into the Enlightenment program, however such a better world was conceived in practice. A key dimension of European thought could be turned against Europe as an instrument in the struggle for more global justice and equality. "We can talk of provincializing it only in an anticolonial spirit of gratitude," as the final sentence of the book concluded.[1]

In the prevailing language of globalization at the time of the book's publication, the market was celebrated as an ahistorical and automatic force of change. The future, which since the emergence of Enlightenment philosophy had been imagined in terms of progress driven by human plans and actions, had become vaguer and its contours more shrunken as open-ended human agency was increasingly downplayed as a driving force of history. The book circumvented the vocabulary of global and globalization. It used the term 'universal' in reference to the Enlightenment, but, of course, 'universal' was not equated to Europe.

Chakrabarty retained the older view of human agency as the primary driving force of social change in the world. The focus of *Provincializing Europe* on modernity and progress through social critique and protest again gave the future a more distinct profile of progress towards a fairer world of diversity, but through a shifting of perspectives beyond the Western world, and opposed to the imaginary of the self-propelled market. The future was human-made on the basis of common experiences and their translation into the critique of existing institutions and

1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 255.

norms in the process of forging action-orientated horizons of expectation. This was a clear break with the mood of the time.

Chakrabarty operated with two levels of historical time. History 1 was the progressive history of Marx towards ever higher developmental stages, which led Eric Hobsbawm to refer to the subaltern peasant peoples as pre-political. It was the history of the unfolding of the logic of capitalism and its structures. History 2 was the man-made modification of, and resistance to, History 1 by means of myths, religious beliefs, normative cultural orders, traditions, conventions, and everyday practices that did not comport with the unfolding reason at level 1. This was the domain of Heidegger. It was a domain that Chakrabarty took seriously, instead of rejecting it as the world of superstition. A history of political modernity could not be written only along the lines of progressive history. Neither could one build a story of repressive colonialism and confront it with a robust native nationalism and traditionalism as a program because capitalism, as Marx conceived of it, was not regressive. The problem was the same as that faced by social protest movements in Europe: how to influence and control modernity building on experiences without rejecting the idea of progress.

Chakrabarty argued against the view of modernity and human autonomy as a ceaseless unfolding of unitary historical time along a teleological developmental line. He challenged the idea of a single, secular, progressive historical time and the idea that the human is ontologically singular. What was explained away as superstition was existentially coeval with the human and had to be integrated into histories in the plural. The u niversal was plural. History 1 and 2 were entangled or had to be entangled in the writing of history. History 1 was not integral but continuously out of joint because of History 2. Time out of joint in Shakespeare's Hamlet was a metaphor likening historical progress to a shoulder out of joint. As we know, Hamlet hesitated and failed to twist it right again . Like Hamlet, the historians have failed because it is impossible to find a time in equilibrium. A master narrative on modernization or globalization does not help. History 2 continuously modifies and disturbs History 1. More precisely, the question is what interrupts and defers capital's self-realization when History 2 confronts it.

Chakrabarty frames History 1 as the European story of the unfolding of capitalism, and History 2 as the story of comments on it by the formerly colonized peoples. However, in principle one might also attribute opposition to History 1 to European protest movements acting alone, in parallel or in solidarity with the anticolonial protest movements of History 2. The main point is that the former colonized peoples are not just passive lookers-on but active shapers of the world from their normative points of departure.

Provincializing Europe was not about rejecting European thought but dealt with the problem of how to cope with the fact that it was both inadequate and indispensable in the writing of histories of political modernity in non-Western nations.

The argument here is that the most innovative long-term implication of Chakrabarty's approach was that it opened up a planetary perspective. He develops the contours of a non-Eurocentric Enlightenment legacy as a kind of overall framing of global coexistence on the basis of political strife and struggle for social improvement in terms of more justice in a universal perspective. As opposed to the globalization perspective of free-floating individuals on automatically- proceeding markets without boundaries, the planetary perspective emphasizes the boundedness of the planet as an entity along with human responsibility and human agency in the struggle over the distribution of limited resources. In so doing it draws attention to the potential of cohabitation on earth by national populations challenging and transcending differences between poor and rich peoples dissolving oppositions like the modern and the traditional. Chakrabarty's world was bounded and the future he envisaged was shaped by expectations of social and political change.

There is a continuity from this perspective to his more recent works on humans in the Anthropocene exposed to environmental and resource constraints that establish boundaries for the action potential of human collectivities and at the same time initiating action that has led to an entanglement between human historical time and the geological time of the planet. However, there is, of course, with the time difference of 20 years, also a new accentuation of the argument advanced

in 2000, and a development of it in new directions. The question of the preconditions of human agency has been given a new twist and the philosophy of time has shifted its focus from the problem of trend progression and teleology in modernity to the tension between geological time and world-historical time in the Anthropocene. The planetary perspective was rather implicitly conceptualized in contrast to market-automatic globalization in *Provincializing Europe* and is much more explicit in the exploration of the Anthropocene. The climate and environmental problem has become the central issue, as opposed to the problem of global resource distribution and power, although the climate and environmental crisis is to a considerable extent a problem deriving from the unequal distribution of resources. Human agency in the Anthropocene is ambiguous. It can mean human agency as a collective, anonymous general power influencing the earth in relation to geological time, and it can mean human agency in contention over the resources of the earth in relation to world-historical time, human agency as an anthropological or a historical force.[2]

The problem of the limitations and restrictions of cohabitation on earth underlined in Chakrabarty's recent works dealt, in *Provincializing Europe*, rather with the failing of Western social science in explaining the historical experiences of political modernity in South Asia (and implicitly other parts of the poor South). Chakrabarty confronted the Enlightenment pretension to apprehend European human experience as universal and to understand modernity as a Western teleology of secularization. However, his project was not about rejecting European thought straight out but of renewing it "from and for the margins" (16), integrating a plurality of histories of human being and belonging into an overall framework of universal coexistence. Chakrabarty's mission was history – rather than histories – in the plural and the pluralization of planetary political modernity. The continuous challenging of the existing order in the struggle for a fairer and less unequal world was a non-teleological struggle for improvement without an end. Through

2 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Anthropocene Time," *History and Theory* 57, no. 1 (March 2018): 5–32.

this struggle the contours of a world kept together by the work on improvement emerged.

Provincializing Europe was a challenge to the globalization narrative and the previous teleological discourse on development and development aid. The hegemony of globalization prevailed for a decade after the publication but eroded rapidly after 2008.

Europe at the time of the book's publication was like what has been said about Karl Marx's communism: a specter walking the world, feared by many and welcomed by many, unclear as to its more precise shape and substance. As Chakrabarty notes, Europe at this time had taken to provincializing itself because nobody believed in it as embodying a universal human history, as the Enlightenment claim had been. Fukuyama's vulgarization of Hegel's end of history in his comment on the collapse of the Soviet system – one world-historical stage before Marx – was not taken seriously by professional historians, although it spurred the neoliberal ideology builders. The European specter was the idea of Europe, the imaginary of political modernity based on modern states and institutions and an expanding capitalism hand in hand with imaginaries of democracy and the vocabulary of citizenship, civil society, the public sphere, human rights and individual rights based on equality before the law. Social rights were a historical claim by increasingly marginalized groups who wanted full membership, but the claim was never as central as other rights. On this point the neoliberal approach demarcated itself from the Keynesian decades after the Second World War when the welfare state became a guiding principle. The neoliberals opposed the principle in the 1990s, when the concept of the welfare state shifted to public service supplied as a commodity on a market.

The discourse on these and other key concepts that built up the idea of Europe and modernity laid out a universal and secular version of humanity and humanism despite the fact that since the nineteenth century its practical embodiment had come to reside in a cluster of nations and practices of colonialism. As Chakrabarty observes, the European colonizers preached Enlightenment humanism at the same time as, in

practice, they denied the colonized peoples access to the vision to which they were invited. This was the weak point that he, in the wake of Fanon, wanted to exploit. The colonized peoples should invite themselves to shape their own versions of the Marxist and liberal thought that constituted the core of the Enlightenment project, was his conclusion.

In the globalization discourse, the capitalist market society's imaginary of the New Economic Man, independent and free, went hand in hand with that of civic individuals emancipated from suffocating state ties and bureaucracy in their market-orientated civil societies. The ex-colonized countries were freed from humiliating aid packages and invited to become partners on global free trade markets to the benefit for all. The questions of social equality, redistribution of scarce resources through progressive taxation, power and hierarchy disappeared in the language of networking, equal opportunities, and partnership in the one world of formally (but not really) equal individuals and peoples, although the language of competition, efficiency and struggle for survival rumbled on in the background. Marx was out but there was a lingering debate on whether postcolonialism might best be understood as neocolonialism.

The social and political Europe which around 1990 seemed headed towards a federation became ever more the market Europe of competition between its nations guided by concepts like benchmarking, best practices, and 'the method of open coordination.' The nations were still based on civic citizenship resembling Giuseppe Mazzini's liberal imaginary of the 1830s, where nationalism and cosmopolitan Europeanism mutually reinforced each other. The nations that Dipesh Chakrabarty referred to as collective agents of historical change were still the nations which Benedict Anderson famously portrayed as imagined communities united by the spread of civic education in historical learning processes of emancipation from the feudal order of birth privileges.[3] Chakrabarty

3 Chris A. Bayly and E. F. Biagini, *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Globalisation of Democratic Nationalism, 1830–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Stefano Recchia and Nadia Urbinati, ed . , *A Cosmopolitanism of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini's Writings on Democracy, Nation Building, and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

critically explored this order by posing questions about how the ex-colonized but still poor peoples could claim their rightful place in it.

In the 1990s, the European model's central point of reference became ever more the market. The European Union increasingly became a market as opposed to a federal project. Democracy was ever more understood in terms of market-compliance. This was a development towards what later was described as low-intensity democracy.[4] The promises of mutually reinforcing dynamics between capitalism and democracy in the 1990s became ever more the practices of a new phenomenon that Edward Luttwak has called turbo capitalism, which was ruthless and laissez-faire, speculative and exorbitant.[5]

These developments were obviously different from what Chakrabarty observed in his analysis of the tension between Marx's promise of progress and the accommodation of religious and cultural experiences in Bengal to the progressive worldview and vice versa. The development towards market excesses with an ever more speculative punch blossomed out in the 2000s after the publication of *Provincializing Europe.* A first culmination of the trend occurred in 2008 with the collapse of the global financial markets which, in turn, eroded neoliberal credibility. In response to this development, the benevolent civic nationalism that accompanied the globalization narrative shifted to a more aggressive, xenophobic and exclusive ethnic-based nationalism. The dynamic interplay between History 1 and History 2 lost force.

The rest of this chapter will a) explore the growing polarization between the globalization narrative, the new History 1 unfolding since 1990, and the new-old brutal xenophobic nationalism emerging after 2008, and b) discuss the preconditions of a planetary re-establishment of the dynamics between Chakrabarty's History 1 and 2.

4 Peter Mair, *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy* (London: Verso, 2013); Susan Marks, *The Riddle of All Constitutions: International Law, Democracy and the Critique of Ideology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

5 Edward Luttwak, *Turbo Capitalism: Winners and Losers in the Global Economy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998).

The Dynamics between History 1 and History 2 Escaping Chakrabarty

The ever-louder xenophobic nationalism all over the world is different to the Heideggerian corrective to Marxian modernity that *Provincializing Europe* lays out. The rather robust nationalism that we have begun to see is not so much ranged against the regressive colonialism that Chakrabarty warns of (15) as it is against a regressive capitalism running out of self-control. Otherwise put, we could say that the protest embodied in this rising tide of nationalism has shifted character from a civic and inclusive to an ethno-xenophobic and exclusive nationalism. We might also do well to read this transformation as a response to the mutation of Marx's progressive industrial-capitalist modernity – where the future was foreseeable, or at least believed to be – into the algorithmic finance capitalism which operates with nanoseconds day and night in every corner of the world. This new form of capitalism escapes the Heideggerian correctives at the same time as it provokes more robust reactions. Since 2010 it has been visible all over Europe and in the USA, in particular on their southern borders, where the free movement of capital has triggered the unfree movement of people looking for a better life, which, in turn, has provoked a more brutal nationalism. Isn't Modi's Hindu nationalism a version of this robust kind, too?

This xenophobic ethno-nationalism has a history in Europe, with the 1870s as its birth and the 1930s as a peak period, and now again a resurgence from 2010. The history of this nationalism is embedded in Romanticism, a term that Chakrabarty only briefly refers to (12), however, as an expression of anachronism and backwardness (peasants as premodern, in Hobsbawm's conceptualization) from the perspective of the Marxian History 1 of progressive modernity. In *Provincializing Europe* historicism frames the outline of progressive modernity as the unfolding of a general developmental trend along with the benevolent civic nationalism à la Anderson.

Historicism – like nationalism – is a concept with several meanings, however. It is the translation of the German *Historismus* "nurtured by the German historical school and by the many facets of the Romantic

movement."[6] *Historismus* was hermeneutics in search of *Sinn*, meaning, developing a search for the generic, for the true nature of development. The groundwork for what was to become Heidegger's nationalistically infused historicism is prepared here against the neoclassical economists such as Carl Menger and the historian Karl Lamprecht, who argued in a positivist vein that history conformed to law. Menger accused hermeneutics of taking the definition of historicism away from the economists. Then there was Karl Popper, who in a famous book criticized historicism and what he saw as its two main strands – the pro-naturalistic application of the methods of physics in a nomothetic manner and the anti-naturalistic, idiographic approach – with both approaches holding that history is predictable.[7]

Chakrabarty's definition and application of historicism clearly conforms to the first of Popper's two versions but it is unclear whether there is a connection between his History 2 and the Historicism (*Historismus*) of the historical school and Romanticism; that is, whether the protest/correction/moderation of modernity along History 2 can or must be thought not only as a narrative source of emancipation from without Europe but also as a warning example from within it. *Historismus* is where the beginning of xenophonic ethno-nationalism must be sought. Deviating from his teacher, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottfried Herder developed Romanticism as a mode of distance-taking from, and reaction to, the rationalizing, systematizing and individualizing Enlightenment philosophy at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The critique of the Enlightenment emerged at German universities in several academic disciplines such as law, philology, literature, ethnology, theology, philosophy, economics and political science. Law was particularly prominent, where Friedrich Carl von Savigny developed the historical school which emphasized the historical tradition as opposed to the speculation that characterized natural right philosophy. The historical school criticized the classical economists for describing the economic process as an auto-

6 Calvin G, Rand, "Two Meanings of Historicism in the Writings of Dilthey, Troeltsch, and Meinecke," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 25, no. 4 (1964): 503–18.

7 Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge 1957).

matic cycle of equilibriums and disequilibriums around individuals with a society but without community, and developed responses to the growing social critique in the wake of industrial capitalism and wage labor, focusing on the question of social community.

This was the historical legacy which supplemented the liberal Enlightenment program by lending it a social dimension and at the same time criticized it. However, the German historical school and its *Historismus* took on a new focus in the 1870s. Romanticist nationalism became not only nation- but also state- building. The German war against France in 1870–71 triggered the revolutionary Paris Commune, which shook the European establishment, who feared a Marxist world revolution. The collapse of world capitalism in a speculative bubble in 1873, causing what soon was called the Great Depression with an extended economic crisis and unemployment, underpinned the perception of a deep systemic crisis with a potentially revolutionary dimension. The threat animated conservative and liberal regimes all over Europe, who launched social politics aimed at better integrating the workers into the nations under the motto of state or national socialism against the class-struggle socialism of the workers. Academic knowledge production in the social sciences supported the politics of social integration. The German Association for Social Policy (1873) was paradigmatic. It was a professorial society for the development of a social policy program, the *Kathedersozialisten* as their liberal adversaries condescendingly called the members referring to their academic chairs. Bismarck and Disraeli were two of the main protagonists driving this approach. Another response to the economic crisis, which after the next Great Depression in the 1930s began to be referred to as the Long Depression, was armament and intensified colonialism. State-sponsored imperialism, armament and growing capital concentration tied Europe and the colonies together into increasingly menacing conflicts in the colonies and then in Europe itself. The supporting nationalism that accompanied the politics of welfare and warfare became ever more ethnic and xenophobic. This nationalism was embedded in a romanticist program that was more state-orientated than the romanticism in the early nineteenth century.[8] Its development paved the way to 1914.

8 Bo Stråth, *Europe's Utopias of Peace: 1815, 1919, 1951* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

The cycle running from crisis to world war recurred a second time in the 1930s. The memories of these two cycles disappeared from public debate under the hegemony of the neoliberal globalization narrative. The rupture in 1989–91 cut the connection to the history of welfare and warfare, economic crisis, and xenophobic nationalism. The connection became just history, without any further relevance. This long history was off-frame when Dipesh Chakrabarty wrote and published *Provincializing Europe*. Nobody foresaw a new deep crisis or the return of a more brutal nationalism a decade later. The economic crisis after 2008 promoted xenophobic ethno-nationalism again. The question is how to reestablish his model again, which assumed a check on/corrective to capitalism through the critique from History 2, while taking into account our new historical experience since 2008 with the different experiences of both capitalism and nationalism.

The Power of Discourse and the Shifting Conceptualization of Time

In the discussion of this question it might be important to think of History 1 as a discourse as much as History 2. History 1 is not a capital logic unfolding as a natural force driven by the imaginary of progress towards ever higher development stages. For no more than Hegel's world spirit did Marx' capitalism operate according to its own self-contained logic. What matters is the narrative and the extent to which people believe in it. Marx's working class and bourgeoisie are fictions as much as Hegel's world spirit. Of course, there are really existing workers and capitalists of flesh and blood, but they do not proceed according to a pre-written screenplay. Rather, they move in unpredictable historical contexts of conflicts and compromises, navigating between opportunities and constraints, conditioned by changing power relationships. Their actions can only be evaluated in retrospect. These meetings and confrontations of historical forces are, in the case of capitalism, recognizable as discursive struggles about the definition of concepts like profit, wage, employment, unemployment, reform, wealth, poverty, climate and the environment.

The neoliberal globalization narrative that became hegemonic in the 1990s came close to a liberal version of Marx's logic of capital; or, better, to the academic logic-of-capital interpretation of Marx: a powerful unfolding history of capitalism and democracy in mutually reinforcing dynamics. Hegel had defeated Marx. This was not seen as a discourse but as a new historical logic – the end of history, in some arguments. As structuralist and filled with reason as the Marxist story once had been.

History disappeared in this discourse, though it did not end, even if this was what some people believed. The globalization language about a borderless global market performing automatically and hierarchies transformed into horizontal networks with hidden power relationships made the future open; indeed, it became borderless, too. A wide-open future meant a vaguer future. Its guiding key term, 'progress,' became fuzzier and the idea that the future could be shaped through political plans surrendered to the idea that automatically operating markets created the future. Previously the dynamics between the perceptions of the future and the past had formed the present. The continuously moving present, as constituted by this dynamic tension, lay at the core of the progressive time regime. Now the future collapsed into the present and as this happened the past began to underpin the emerging presentism.

François Hartog referred to 'the presentism of our time' and the emergence of a new 'regime of historicity,' the way in which the relationships between past, present, and future are understood in times of crisis. Before 1789 the past informed the present in a cyclical perspective, which originated in Aristotle's political theory. Soon after 1789, a temporalization of time emerged. The onset of modernity meant that expectations of the future began to connote a planned but unknown future with the help of the term 'progress.' Modernity opened a gap between experiences and expectations in the making of the future. The conception of progress was, of course, contentious. It was not discernible *ex ante* which interpretations were better: this could be determined only in retrospect, although never as a matter of consensus. The experience

of time after 1989 shifted back to an emphasis on the present opening onto endless opportunities for the future, but few new horizons of expectation emerged. At the same time as the narrative on global markets performing like a self-playing piano broke through, the contours of the future began to grow indistinct and its twin concept, progress, receded from the debate. The end of what Hartog labeled the regime of progressive time was marked by the end of history euphoria in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, with the presentism that followed from that collapse invoking the past and the future only to confirm the present in a manner that did away with any pretension to learn from the past or shape the future.[9] This collapse of the future and the past into the present was in a certain sense the end of history, and underpinned the belief in it, but differently than what Fukuyama thought.

The presentism of the time undermined Reinhart Koselleck's identification of social dynamics under the motto of progress. In his critique–crisis scenario social protest and critique brought societies into crisis, which provoked reforms as attempts to respond to the critique. The critique–crisis cycle was continuous. It rested on the almost anthropological human capacity to reflect on experiences and translate them into mobilizing horizons of expectations. This translation nurtured the belief in progress. Koselleck was skeptical of the wide horizons of expectation brought about by the global political and social radicalization around 1970 ('1968') and the social crisis it resulted in. This was the occasion when the Third World stood up and demanded a New International Economic Order (NIEO) based on global equality and redistribution of resources. If radical expectations were not redeemed one day but instead were to become experiences of great disappointment it might be difficult to develop new mobilizing expectations, Koselleck thought. One might assume that he had in mind the expectations that the crisis in the 1930s provoked in Germany. The denial of the expectations of the 1970s twenty years later did not generate disappointment, however, but euphoria. However, the peaking expectations that this

9 François Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps* (Paris: Seuil, 2003).

euphoria expressed collapsed in the extended financial crisis after 2008. The euphoric core of the expectations made them vague and unprecise. This was perhaps why the experiences of disappointment became particularly deep. It was not a particular project that collapsed but a whole worldview.[10]

The crisis that began in 2008 changed the presentism that had prevailed since the 1990s. No other great horizon of expectation has emerged. So far, ongoing disappointing experiences of crisis are firm and persevering because there is no new master narrative, no breakthrough of social critique through a new language of progress. There are no new horizons of action-oriented expectations in progress. In a certain sense the historical time regime of presentism continues. However, the lack of a mobilizing future goes hand in hand with the strong discursive construction of an idealized past. Xenophobic nationalism, racism, and right-wing populism and extremism are at the heart of this radicalization and form a pattern that is the foremost expression of the failure of progress and the lack of viable horizons of expectation.

The Planetary Perspective

There are obvious connections between Koselleck's critique–crisis and experience–expectation dynamics and Chakrabarty's account of the dynamics between History 1 and 2. The question is how to revitalize them in a truly planetary perspective, meaning that the critique is not of a Western model from without but of a global capitalism from within, that is, from within the whole world, the planet. There might be potential pivots for the planetary launching of critique and requests for reform of the prevailing system. These are, however, potentials that need to be activated. They center on the growing global differences in

10 Reinhart Koselleck and Carsten Dutt, *Erfahrene Geschichte. Zwei Gespräche* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag, 2013); Reinhart Koselleck, "Die Verzeitlichung der Utopie," in *Utopieforschung. Interdisziplinare Studien zur neuzeitlichen Utopie*, ed. Wilhelm Voßkamp (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1985 [1982]), 1–14; Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1959), English translation: *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Oxford: Berg, 1988); Reinhart Koselleck, *Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000).

the wake of the practices of neoliberalism since the 1990s with regard to the distribution of resources, incomes and fortunes, which Thomas Piketty has mapped in great empirical detail and Samuel Moyn has addressed from a moral perspective. The neoliberal bottom-up redistribution of resources and incomes from the poor to the rich is, as Piketty emphasizes, not the consequence of some logic of capitalism but ideologically legitimized and politically implemented. Moyn argues on moral grounds not only for a global income floor but also a ceiling and a global redistribution regime.[11]

The second potential pivot for new global critique would be the environment and climate issue, which the Coronavirus crisis has silenced. It is an open question what impact the pandemic will have once it is somewhat under control, but fears of a new pandemic might be widespread and trigger a new concern for wellbeing on the planet for all rather than a few. Observing the situation from within the eye of the pandemic storm when writing this article, it is possible at least to think of, to imagine possibilities to activate critique and call for correction of the world order along the lines just outlined. Dipesh Chakrabarty has been delivering arguments for a critical planetary perspective on the climate crisis in his recent publications and his new book in print, and this work remains essential to any such critical project.[12]

Following the spirit of Chakrabarty's earlier work on historical retrieval, as discussed above, one might also revisit the 1970s in the search for a different past for a different future than that which the propagators of the vibrant xenophobic nationalism of our time have found and are consolidating. In 1971 the post-1945 Western order based on the dollar collapsed. The breakdown signaled a decrease in power for

11Thomas Piketty, *Le capital au XXIe siecle* (Paris: Seuil, 2013). English translation: *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); Thomas Piketty, *Capital et idéologie* (Paris: Seuil: 2019); Samuel Moyn, *Not Enough: Human Rights in an Unequal World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

12 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *The Crisis of Civilization: Exploring Global and Planetary Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2018); Chakrabarty, "Anthropocene Time."; Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Planet: An Emergent Humanist Category." *Critical Inquiry* 46 (Autumn 2019), 1-31; Dipesh Chakrabart, *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2021).

the old European industrial economies, which failed to arrest the fast erosion of their dollar-based Keynesian welfare economies, alongside a growing scope for action by the raw material-producing countries of the so-called 'Third World', which had already begun to self-identify as the poor South. The South stood up, with the UN General Assembly as their forum for resolutions requiring "redistributive justice, colonial reparations, permanent sovereignty over natural resources, stabilization of commodity prices, increased aid, and greater regulation of transnational corporations."[13] This was the substantive content of the demands for the NIEO mentioned above.

Decolonialism had mutated into neocolonialism through private investments from the rich world, the voices of the rising South argued. The proponents of the NIEO argued that Europe and the US could no longer unilaterally determine the global terms of trade in the established neocolonial way. The Vietnam War played a particularly decisive role in propelling this shift through its financial burden on the dollar and the massive global protests against the American war makers.

The 1973 to 1974 period looked like an almost revolutionary situation, not in the sense of violent revolution, but rather a *kairos* situation of winning or losing with everything at stake. Southern critique, as expressed in agitation for the NIEO, called for a more radical, top-down redistributive embedding of capitalism globally and superimposed a new division between North and South upon the East–West division of the Cold War. The aim of the NIEO was to close the gap between the North and the South through planetary consensual top-down redistribution from the rich to the poor. Developments in the 1960s had built up structures that seemed to explode now. The socially embedded welfare capitalism in a small part of the world was exposed to pressures and critique in the rich industrial as well as the poor, raw materials-producing world for not being equal enough, for polluting the environment and exhausting the natural resources of the world. The backdrop of the

13 Quinn Slobodian, *Globalists: The end of empire and the birth of neoliberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 219.

protest was also the 1972 Club of Rome Report on the limits of growth and the exhaustion of the resources of the earth, which attracted much public attention and debate. The report was a plea for a new knowledge regime by seeking to correct the assumptions of permanent growth, with the planet's air, water and environment conceived as free and infinitely replenishable resources in economic theories. The Club of Rome argued for more ecological perspectives on growth and consideration of the limitations of natural resources in economic reasoning.

At the same time, the neoliberals began to challenge the Keynesian view of top-down redistribution within nations. The neoliberals did not want to make Keynesianism global, as the Southern protest movement did, but to abolish it. The neoliberal knowledge regime was radically reductionistic and economistic, with economics elevated to a superior form of knowledge. Neoliberal economics competed with the potential of an ecological economic knowledge regime, both globally conceptualized.

The problems that the global protest of the time and the Club of Rome highlighted have not disappeared. Indeed, they are still very much with us. The 1970s is the period that set the course towards many of the problems of our present, while also retrospectively highlighting the lost opportunities that the *kairos* situation of the time contained. By returning to the 1970s we can throw into relief both the architectonic features of today's world and the hidden potentialities it contains.

The contours of new global power relationships emerged then, and Europe feared being on the losing side. With these tensions rising, the 1970s witnessed a general reformulation of the optimism of the 1960s in both the North and the South, which had been based on the imaginary of cooperation for development through aid between the ex-colonies and their former (and in many respects remaining) masters. It was an intellectual reformulation that saw North and South as permanent antagonists. However, there were also serious attempts to cope with these challenges in constructive ways. There was a tension between warding off the claims from the poor countries and the Club of Rome and responding to them in affirmative ways. The Brandt Commission,

chaired by Willy Brandt, was initiated in 1977 by Robert McNamara, the Director of the World Bank, with the mission of bridging the gap and finding ways of forging a new start in relationships between the North and the South in a bid to replace the disturbed relationships that had emerged during the 1970s.

The Brandt Commission, officially the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, delivered two reports: *North–South* (1980) and *Common Crisis* (1983).[14] The reports emphasized the biases built into North–South relationships in terms of economic power, food and agricultural development, the exploitation of natural resources, energy provisions, and the rules of global trade, and underlined the need for aid, for international monetary and financial reform and for global negotiations. The Club of Rome report helped to establish the parameters within which these recommendations were made. The Brandt reports also addressed problems they considered common to both the North and the South, such as natural resource exploitation, environmental degradation, the arms race, population growth, and the uncertain prospects of the global economy. These problems ultimately concerned the survival of all nations, the Commission concluded. Its recommendations were presented as a structural program to address the world's problems collectively, as a global Marshall Plan. The work of the Brandt Commission and its failure is an essential historical landmark to return to in order to shed new light on our own time and reconfigure the dynamics between the discourses of History 2 and 1, critique and crisis, and experiences and expectations.

14 *North–South: A Programme for Survival*. Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, with an introduction by Willy Brandt (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1980); *Common Crisis North–South: Cooperation for World Recovery*. Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, with an introduction by Willy Brandt (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

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A póscolonialidade e o artifício da história

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Expande o pensamento até ao extremo
- Louis Althusser

Recentemente, o projeto pós-colonial dos *Subaltern Studies* foi elogiado por ter mostrado, "talvez pela primeira vez desde o momento da colonização", que "os indianos estão a mostrar sinais claros de se reapropriarem da sua capacidade de autorrepresentação [no seio da disciplina da história]".[1] Como historiador e membro do coletivo dos *Subaltern Studies*, considero este elogio gratificante, mas prematuro. O objetivo deste ensaio é problematizar a noção de "indianos" a "autorrepresentarem-se na história". Ponhamos momentaneamente de parte os complexos problemas de identidade inerentes a um projeto transnacional como os *Subaltern Studies*, onde os passaportes e os compromissos esbatem as diferenças de etnia de uma maneira que alguns considerarem tipicamente pós-moderna. Eu tenho uma proposta mais perversa: que, no que diz respeito ao discurso académico da história – ou seja, a "história" como discurso produzido no espaço institucional da universidade – a "Europa" permanece soberana enquanto sujeito teórico de todas as histórias, incluindo aquelas que designamos como "indiana", "chinesa",

* Tradução de Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History", in Provincializing Europe. Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference, 27-46 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008 [2000]). Tradução por José Miguel Ferreira.

1 Ronald Inden, "Orientalist Constructions of India", *Modern Asian Studies* 20, n.º 3 (1986): 445.

"queniana", e por aí em diante. De uma forma peculiar, todas estas histórias tendem a tornar-se variações de uma narrativa-mãe que poderia ser denominada como "a história da Europa". Neste sentido, a história "indiana" está, ela mesma, numa posição de subalternidade e, em seu nome, só podemos articular as posições de sujeitos subalternos.

Embora o resto do capítulo desenvolva esta proposta, permitam-me fazer desde já alguns esclarecimentos. A "Europa" e a "`Índia" são utilizadas aqui como termos hiper-reais, no sentido em que se referem a certos elementos da imaginação cujos referenciais geográficos se mantêm, de alguma forma, indeterminados.[2] Como elementos imaginados estão, naturalmente, sujeitos a contestação. Mas, por agora, tratá-los-ei como se fossem dados adquiridos, categorias reificadas, opostos emparelhados numa estrutura de dominação e subordinação. Reconheço que ao tratá-los desta forma fico sujeito a acusações de nativismo, nacionalismo ou, pior ainda, do pecado dos pecados: nostalgia. Académicos de pendor liberal argumentariam imediatamente que uma ideia homogénea e incontestada de "Europa" não resiste à análise. É verdade. Mas tal como o fenómeno do Orientalismo não desaparece simplesmente por alguns de nós termos adquirido uma consciência crítica dele, também uma certa versão da "Europa", reificada e celebrada no universo das relações quotidianas de poder como palco do nascimento do moderno, continua a dominar o discurso da história. A análise, só por si, não elimina este facto.

Que a Europa serve como um referencial silencioso para o conhecimento histórico é algo que se torna frequentemente óbvio. Existem pelo menos dois sinais quotidianos da subalternidade das histórias não-Ocidentais, do terceiro mundo. Os historiadores do terceiro mundo sentem a necessidade de citar estudos sobre a história da Europa. Os historiadores da Europa não sentem qualquer necessidade recíproca. Quer se trate de um Edward Thompson, um Le Roy Ladurie, um George Duby, um Carlo Ginzburg, um Lawrence Stone, um Robert Darnton ou uma Natalie Davis – para mencionar aleatoriamente alguns

2 Devo a Jean Baudrillard o conceito de "hiper-real", mas a minha utilização do mesmo é diversa. Ver as suas *Simulations*, trad. Paul Foss, Paul Patton e Philip Batchman (Nova Iorque: Semiotext[e], 1983).

nomes contemporâneos – os "grandes" que servem como modelos para o trabalho dos historiadores são sempre, pelo menos culturalmente, "europeus". "Eles" produzem os seus estudos permanecendo numa relativa ignorância a respeito das histórias não-Ocidentais e isto não parece afetar a qualidade do seu trabalho. Este é um gesto, contudo, que "nós" não podemos retribuir. Nós não nos podemos sequer dar ao luxo de uma ignorância equivalente ou simétrica a este nível, sem correr o risco de parecer "antiquados" ou "datados".

O problema, se me é permitido o parêntesis, não é exclusivo dos historiadores. Um exemplo cândido, mas ainda assim revelador, desta "desigualdade de ignorâncias" no campo dos estudos literários é o seguinte excerto a respeito de Salman Rushdie num texto recente sobre pós-modernismo: "Apesar de Saleem Sinai [de *Os Filhos da Meia-Noite*] narrar a sua história em inglês... os seus intertextos, tanto no que diz respeito à escrita da história como à escrita de ficção, são duplos: são extraídos, por um lado, de lendas, filmes e literatura indianos, e, por outro, do Ocidente – *O Tambor de Lata*, *Tristram Shandy*, *Cem Anos de Solidão* e por aí em diante."[3] É curioso observar como esta frase concretiza apenas as referências "ocidentais". O autor não se sente obrigado ao esforço de explicitar com clareza nenhuma das referências "indianas" que formam a "dupla" intertextualidade de Rushdie. Esta ignorância, partilhada mas não assumida, faz parte do pacote predefinido que torna "fácil" incluir Rushdie nos programas académicos dedicados ao pós-colonialismo no âmbito dos departamentos de língua e literatura inglesa das universidades.

Este problema de ignorância assimétrica não é apenas fruto de um "complexo de inferioridade cultural" (para deixar falar a minha costela australiana) da nossa parte ou de arrogância cultural da parte dos historiadores europeus. Estes problemas existem, sim, mas podem ser resolvidos de forma relativamente simples. E tão pouco quero com isto retirar mérito aos trabalhos dos historiadores que mencionei. As nossas notas de rodapé são testemunho de quanto devemos ao seu conheci-

3 Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (Londres: Routledge, 1989), 65.

mento e criatividade. A supremacia da "Europa" como sujeito de todas as histórias é parte de uma patologia teórica muito mais profunda, que rege a forma como o conhecimento histórico é produzido no terceiro mundo. Esta patologia tende a manifestar-se de forma paradoxal. É este paradoxo, que diz respeito à própria natureza dos enunciados das ciências sociais, que irei descrever como o segundo sintoma quotidiano da nossa subalternidade.

Há gerações que os filósofos e pensadores que moldam as ciências sociais produzem teorias que abarcam a humanidade no seu todo. Como sabemos, estas afirmações têm sido produzidas numa relativa, e por vezes até absoluta, ignorância a respeito da maioria da humanidade – isto é, daqueles que vivem em culturas não-Ocidentais. Isto, por si só, não é paradoxal, uma vez que os filósofos europeus mais conscienciosos procuraram sempre justificar teoricamente esta posição. O paradoxo das ciências sociais no terceiro mundo é que *nós* consideramos estas teorias úteis para compreender as nossas sociedades, apesar de serem intrinsecamente ignorantes a "nosso" respeito. O que terá permitido aos modernos sábios europeus desenvolver esta clarividência relativamente a sociedades que empiricamente desconhecem? Porque não podemos nós, uma vez mais, retribuir o olhar?

Existe uma resposta a esta questão nas obras de filósofos que entendem a história da Europa como uma entelequia da razão universal, se encararmos esta filosofia como uma forma de autoconsciência das ciências sociais. O argumento seria então que só a "Europa" é passível de ser conhecida *teoricamente* (ou seja, ao nível das categorias fundamentais que moldam o pensamento histórico); todas as outras histórias se reduzem a uma questão de investigação empírica que possa revestir um esqueleto teórico que é, essencialmente, "europeu". Existe uma variante deste argumento na palestra que Husserl apresentou em Viena, em 1935, onde propôs que a diferença fundamental entre as "filosofias orientais" (mais concretamente, a indiana e a chinesa) e a "ciência greco-europeia" (ou, como acrescentou, "universalmente falando: a filosofia") residia na capacidade que esta última tinha de produzir "leituras teóricas absolutas", ou seja "*theoria* (ciência universal)", enquanto as

primeiras mantinham um caráter "prático-universal" e, consequentemente, "mítico-religioso". Esta filosofia "prático-universal" abordava o mundo de uma maneira "ingénua" e "linear", enquanto para a *theoria* este mesmo mundo surgia como uma "temática", possibilitando assim uma *praxis* "cujo objetivo é elevar a humanidade através de uma razão científica universal".[4]

Uma proposta epistemológica semelhante está na base do uso que Marx faz de categorias como "burguês" e "pré-burguês" ou "capital" e "pré-capital". Neste caso, o prefixo "pré" significa uma relação que é tanto cronológica, como teórica. Como Marx argumenta nos *Grundrisse* e noutras obras, o advento da sociedade burguesa ou capitalista origina, pela primeira vez, uma história que pode ser apreendida através de uma categoria filosófica e universal: "capital". Pela primeira vez, a história passa a poder ser entendida *teoricamente*. Todas as histórias passadas podem agora ser encaradas (em termos teóricos) a partir do ponto de vista desta categoria, ou seja, em relação à maneira como dela diferem. As coisas revelam a sua essência categórica apenas quando atingem o seu estado de desenvolvimento mais avançado, ou para citar um célebre aforismo de Marx nos *Grundrisse*: "a anatomia humana é a chave para a anatomia do macaco".[5] A categoria "capital", como já argumentei noutro texto, contém em si mesma o sujeito jurídico do pensamento iluminista.[6] Não por acaso, no mui hegeliano primeiro capítulo do primeiro volume de *O Capital*, Marx afirma que o segredo do "capital", enquanto categoria, "não pode ser decifrado até que a noção de igualdade humana tenha adquirido a mesma firmeza que tem um preconceito popular".[7] Para continuar a citar Marx:

4 Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Philosophy*, trad. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 281-285. Ver ainda Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Nova Iorque: University of New York Press, 1988), 167-168.

5 Ver a análise em Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trad. Martin Nicholas (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 669-512 e em Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (Moscovo: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1971), III: 593-613.

6 Ver o meu *Rethinking Working-Class History: Bengal, 1890-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), cap. 7.

7 Marx, *Capital*, I: 60

> "Até as categorias mais abstratas, apesar da sua validade para todas as épocas – e precisamente por causa da sua abstração – são, no entanto... elas mesmas... o produto de relações históricas. A sociedade burguesa é a mais complexa e desenvolvida organização histórica da produção. As categorias que exprimem as suas relações, e que permitem compreender a sua estrutura, permitem ao mesmo tempo vislumbrar a estrutura e as relações de produção de todas as formações sociais desaparecidas, sobre cujas ruínas e elementos se ergueu, cujos vestígios ainda por dominar continua a transportar consigo, cujas meras nuances desenvolveram no seu seio significados específicos, etc... Os sinais de um desenvolvimento superior entre as espécies animais subordinadas... só podem ser entendidos depois de este desenvolvimento superior já ser conhecido. A economia burguesa fornece assim a chave para entender as antigas..."[8]

Em vez de capital ou burguesa, sugiro, leia-se "Europa" ou "europeu".

O Historicismo como narrativa de transição

Pelo menos nos excertos acima citados, nem Marx nem Husserl estavam imbuídos de um espírito historicista. Convém, todavia, não esquecer que a visão de emancipação de Marx pressupunha uma viagem para além do jugo do capital, na realidade para além da noção jurídica de igualdade que é tão cara ao liberalismo. A máxima "de cada um de acordo com as suas capacidades, a cada um de acordo com as suas necessidades" é contrária ao princípio de "a trabalho igual, salário igual", e esta é uma das razões pelas quais Marx permanece – apesar do muro de Berlim (ou da sua queda) – uma voz fundamental da crítica tanto do capitalismo como do liberalismo e, consequentemente, central para qualquer projeto pós-colonial e pós-moderno de escrita da história. No

8 Marx, *Grundrisse*, 105.

entanto, os enunciados metodológicos/epistemológicos de Marx nem sempre resistiram com sucesso a leituras historicistas. Estes enunciados mantiveram sempre uma nota de ambiguidade que tornou possível a emergência de narrativas históricas "marxistas". Estas narrativas centram-se no tema da transição histórica. A generalidade das histórias contemporâneas do terceiro mundo são escritas no âmbito dos debates suscitados por esta narrativa de transição, cujos temas dominantes (se bem que frequentemente implícitos) são o desenvolvimento, a modernização e o capitalismo.

Exemplos desta tendência podem ser encontrados no nosso próprio trabalho no seio do projeto dos *Subaltern Studies*. O meu livro sobre a história da classe operária debate-se com este problema.[9] O livro *Modern India*, de Sumit Sarkar (outro colega no projeto dos *Subaltern Studies*), escrito principalmente para ser lido nas universidades indianas e justamente considerado como um dos melhores manuais de história da Índia, principia com as seguintes frases: "Os cerca de sessenta anos que vão desde a fundação do Congresso Nacional Indiano, em 1885, e a conquista da independência, em agosto de 1947, testemunharam aquela que foi provavelmente a maior transição na longa história do nosso país. Uma transição, contudo, que permanece em grande medida penosamente incompleta, e é a partir desta ambiguidade que parece mais apropriado começar o nosso inquérito".[10] Que tipo de transição foi esta que permaneceu "penosamente incompleta"? Sarkar sugere a possibilidade de terem sido várias, e identifica três: "tantas das aspirações que emergiram no decurso da luta nacional permaneceram por cumprir – quer o sonho ghandiano do camponês que assumiria o seu lugar de direito no *Ram-rajya* [o reino do lendário e idealizado deus-rei Ram], quer os ideais de esquerda de uma revolução social. E, como a história da Índia e do Paquistão pós-independência (e do Bangladesh) mostraria uma e outra vez, mesmo os problemas de uma completa transformação burguesa e de um desenvolvimento capitalista bem-sucedido não foram

9 Ver Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History*, cap. 7.

10 Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947* (Deli: Macmillan, 1985), 1.

plenamente resolvidos pela transferência de poder de 1947".[11] Nem o sonho do camponês a respeito de um reino mítico e justo, nem o ideal esquerdista de uma revolução social[ista], nem a "completa transformação burguesa" – é no seio destas três ausências, destes quadros "penosamente incompletos", que Sarkar situa a história da Índia moderna.

Foi também com uma referência semelhante a "ausências" – o "fracasso" de uma história em ir ao encontro do seu destino (mais uma vez um exemplo da "preguiça do nativo", poderíamos dizer?) – que anunciámos o nosso projeto dos *Subaltern Studies*: "é o estudo deste *fracasso histórico da nação em atingir a maturidade*, um fracasso provocado pela *desadequação* da burguesia e da classe operária em liderar esta nação numa vitória decisiva sobre o colonialismo e a uma revolução burguesa-democrática oitocentista de tipo clássico... ou [do tipo] da nova democracia – *é o estudo deste fracasso que constitui a problemática central da historiografia da Índia colonial".*[12]

Esta tendência para ler a história da Índia em termos de uma falta, uma ausência ou uma incompletude que se traduz numa "desadequação" é notória nestes excertos. Este tema está longe de ser novo, remontando ao início do domínio colonial na Índia. Os britânicos conquistaram e representaram a diversidade dos passados indianos a partir de uma narrativa homogeneizante de transição de um período medieval para a modernidade. Os termos mudaram com o tempo. O medieval foi anteriormente definido como "despótico" e o moderno como "estado de direito". "Feudal/capitalista" tem sido uma variante tardia.

Quando começou a ser formulada nos relatos coloniais sobre a história da Índia, esta narrativa de transição era uma celebração ostensiva da aptidão imperial para a violência e para a conquista. Nos séculos XIX e XX, gerações de nacionalistas oriundos das elites indianas delinearam as suas posições e a sua subjetividade no seio desta narrativa

11 Sarkar, *Modern India*, 4.

12 Ranajit Guha e Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (Nova Iorque: Oxford University, 1988), 43. A ênfase é minha. As palavras citadas são de Ranajit Guha. Mas penso que representam um sentido de responsabilidade historiográfica que é partilhado por todos os membros do coletivo dos *Subaltern Studies*.

de transição que, em diferentes momentos e dependendo da ideologia de cada um, entreteceu a "história indiana" a partir de um conjunto de dicotomias: despótico/constitucional, medieval/moderno, feudal/capitalista. Dentro desta narrativa, partilhada pelos imaginários imperialista e nacionalista, o "indiano" era sempre um sujeito falhado. Por outras palavras, existiu sempre espaço nesta história para personagens que corporizassem, em nome do nativo, os temas da desadequação e do falhanço.

Não precisamos de ser recordados de que esta visão continuou a ser a pedra-de-toque da ideologia imperial durante muitos anos – o nativo estava condenado a ser um súbdito e não um cidadão, uma vez que nunca se poderia adequar completamente a este último papel – até se tornar eventualmente numa corrente da própria teoria liberal.[13] Era neste ponto, claro, que os nacionalistas divergiam. Para Rammohun Roy, tal como para Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, dois dos mais proeminentes intelectuais nacionalistas da Índia oitocentista, o domínio britânico era um período de tutela necessário para preparar os indianos precisamente para aquilo que os britânicos lhes negavam, mas que simultaneamente exaltavam como a finalidade absoluta da história: o estado-nação e a cidadania. Anos mais tarde, em 1951, um indiano "desconhecido", que vendeu esta "obscuridade" com sucesso, escreveu a seguinte dedicatória para a história da sua vida:

> "Para a memória do
> Império Britânico na Índia
> Que nos conferiu a distinção de súbditos
> Mas nos negou a cidadania;
> Ao qual, porém
> Cada um de nós lançou o desafio
> '*Civis Britanicus Sum*'

13 Ver L. T. Hobhouse, *Liberalism* (Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 1964), 26-27.

Porque tudo o que era bom e vivo
Em nós
Era feito, moldado e estimulado
Pelo mesmo Domínio Britânico."[14]

Nas versões nacionalistas desta narrativa, como mostrou Partha Chatterjee, os camponeses e os operários, as classes subalternas, tiveram que carregar a cruz desta "desadequação", porque, segundo esta versão, eram eles que precisavam de ser educados para se libertarem da ignorância, do paroquialismo ou, dependendo das preferências, da falsa consciência.[15] Mesmo hoje, a palavra anglo-indiana "*communalism*" refere-se àqueles que falharam em corresponder aos ideais seculares da cidadania.

Que o domínio britânico tenha consagrado as práticas, instituições e discursos do individualismo burguês em solo indiano é inegável. Exemplos precoces deste desejo de ser um "sujeito jurídico" – isto é, antes do início do nacionalismo – mostram que, para os indianos das décadas de 1830 e 1840, ser um "indivíduo moderno" era tornar-se europeu. A revista *The Literary Gleaner*, impressa na Calcutá colonial, publicou em 1842 o seguinte poema escrito em inglês por um estudante bengali de dezoito anos. Este poema foi aparentemente inspirado pela imagem dos navios que deixavam a costa de Bengala "para as gloriosas margens de Inglaterra":

"Frequentemente como uma ave triste suspiro
Por deixar esta terra, apesar de ser a minha própria;
Os seus verdes prados, - flores alegres e céus límpidos
Apesar de belos, têm pouco encanto para mim.
Porque tenho sonhado com climas mais luminosos e livres

14 Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (Berkeley e Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968 [1951], dedicatória.

15 Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Londres: Zed, 1986).

Onde reside a virtude e a liberdade nascida dos céus
Faz felizes até os mais humildes; - onde a vista
Não sofre por ver um homem ajoelhar-se
Perante o interesse sórdido; - climas onde a ciência prospera,
E o génio encontra a sua justa recompensa;
Onde o homem no seu todo vive a verdadeira glória,
E a face da natureza é requintadamente doce:
Por esses belos climas suspiro impacientemente,
Lá me deixem viver e lá me deixem morrer."[16]

Com os seus ecos de Milton e do radicalismo inglês seiscentista, este poema é obviamente um exemplo de uma *pastiche* colonial.[17] Michael Madhusudan Dutt, o jovem bengali autor deste poema, apercebeu-se eventualmente da impossibilidade de ser europeu e regressou à literatura bengali para se tornar um dos nossos melhores poetas. As gerações seguintes de nacionalistas indianos abandonaram este desejo abjeto de ser europeus, uma vez que o projeto nacionalista se baseava precisamente numa crença na universalidade da possibilidade de se tornarem indivíduos, na noção de que os direitos individuais e a igualdade, num sentido abstrato, eram categorias universais que podiam encontrar espaço em qualquer lugar do mundo, de que era possível ser "indiano" e cidadão ao mesmo tempo. Exploraremos em breve algumas das contradições deste projeto.

Muitos dos rituais públicos e privados do individualismo moderno tornaram-se visíveis na Índia ao longo do século XIX. Podemos vê-los, por exemplo, no súbito florescer neste período dos quatro géneros em que se baseia a moderna expressão do ser: o romance, a biografia, a

16 *Mudhusudan rachanabali* (em bengali) (Calcutá: Sahitya Samsad, 1965), 449. Ver ainda Jogindranath Basu, *Michael Madhusudan Datter Jibancharit* (em bengali) (Calcutá: Ashok Pustakalay, 1978), 86.

17 A minha compreensão do poema foi enriquecida pelas trocas de ideias com Marjorie Levinson e David Bennett.

autobiografia e a história.[18] A par destes, veio a indústria moderna, a tecnologia, a medicina, um sistema legal semi-burguês (embora colonial) apoiado por um estado que viria a ser capturado e apropriado pelo nacionalismo. A narrativa de transição que tenho vindo a discutir subscreveu, e teve simultaneamente por base, estas mesmas instituições. Pensar esta narrativa era pensar em termos destas instituições, no topo das quais assentava o estado moderno.[19] E pensar sobre o moderno ou o estado-nação era pensar uma história cujo sujeito teórico era a Europa. Gandhi chegou a esta conclusão logo em 1909. Ao referir-se às exigências dos nacionalistas indianos por mais caminhos-de-ferro, medicina moderna e leis burguesas, no seu livro *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi comentou argutamente que isto era "tornar a Índia inglesa" ou, na sua formulação, ter "um domínio inglês sem ingleses".[20] Esta Europa, como mostrava a poesia pueril e ingénua de Michael Madhusudan Dutt, não era mais do que uma história de ficção contada pelo colonizador ao colonizado no próprio processo de construção do domínio colonial.[21] A crítica de Gandhi a esta Europa é frequentemente prejudicada pelo seu nacionalismo e não pretendo fetichizar o seu texto. Mas considero o seu gesto útil na reflexão sobre o problema das histórias não-metropolitanas.

Uma outra leitura sobre a "falta"

Regresso agora aos temas do "fracasso", da "falta" e da "desadequação" que são ubíquos na caracterização do sujeito que protagoniza a história "indiana". Tal como na prática dos camponeses insurretos da Índia colonial, o primeiro passo de um esforço crítico deve partir de um gesto de

18 Não estou a afirmar que estes géneros tenham emergido necessariamente com o individualismo burguês. Veja-se Natalie Zemon Davis, "Fame and Secrecy: Leon Modena's *Life* as an Early Modern Autobiography)", *History and Theory* 27 (1988): 103-118 e "Boundaries and Sense of Self in Sixteenth-Century France", in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, eds. Thomas C. Heller et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), 53-63. Ver ainda Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, trad. Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 163-184.

19 Ver Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, capítulo sobre Nehru.

20 M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (1909), vol. 10 de *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Nova Deli: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963), 15.

21 Ver a análise em Gauri Viswanathan, *Mask of Conquest: Literary Studies and British Rule in India* (Nova Iorque: Columbia University Press, 1989), 128-141.

inversão.[22] Comecemos pelo fim da narrativa de transição e coloquemos "plenitude" e "criatividade" onde esta narrativa nos tem obrigado a ver "falta" e "desadequação".

De acordo com a fábula contada pela sua constituição, todos os indianos são hoje "cidadãos". A constituição incorpora uma definição liberal clássica de cidadania. Se o estado moderno e o indivíduo moderno, o cidadão, são duas partes indestrinçáveis do mesmo fenómeno, como William Connolly defende no seu *Political Theory and Modernity*, poderia parecer que o fim da história estaria ao nosso alcance na Índia.[23] No entanto, este indivíduo moderno, cuja vida política/pública é vivida em cidadania, pressupõe também a interiorização de um eu "privado" incessantemente refletido em diários, cartas, autobiografias, romances e, é claro, no que dizemos nas nossas sessões de análise. O indivíduo burguês não nasce até ter descoberto os prazeres da privacidade. Mas isto implica um tipo muito específico de "eu privado" – ou seja, na verdade, um eu "público" em diferido, porque este eu privado burguês, como lembra Jurgen Habermas, está "sempre orientado para uma audiência [*Publikum*]".[24]

A vida pública indiana pode mimetizar no papel a ficção jurídica burguesa da cidadania – na Índia esta ficção é frequentemente encenada como uma farsa – mas e quanto ao eu privado burguês e à sua história? Qualquer pessoa que tenha tentado escrever história social "francesa" com documentação indiana sabe quão impossivelmente árdua esta tarefa é.[25] Não é que a fórmula burguesa do eu privado não tenha chegado à Índia com o domínio europeu. Desde meados do século, existiram romances indianos, cartas, diários e autobiografias, mas estes raramente proporcionam um vislumbre de um sujeito verdadeiramente inte-

22 Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Deli: Oxford University Press, 1983), cap. 2.

23 William E. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Oxford e Nova Iorque: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

24 Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trad. Thomas Burger e Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989), 49.

25 Ver Sumit Sarkar, "Social History: Predicament and Possibilities", in *Fresh Perspective on India and Pakistan: Essays on Economics, Politics and Culture* (Lahore: Book Traders, 1987), 256-274.

riorizado. As nossas autobiografias são notoriamente "públicas" (com construções da vida pública que não são necessariamente modernas) quando escritas por homens, e, quando escritas por mulheres, contam a história das suas famílias alargadas.[26] Seja como for, as autobiografias confessionais estão ausentes. O único parágrafo (entre 963 páginas) que Nirad Chaudhuri dedica à descrição da forma como viveu a sua noite de núpcias, no segundo volume da sua célebre autobiografia vencedora de vários prémios, é um bom exemplo e merece ser citado na totalidade. Devo referir que este foi um casamento arranjado (Bengala, 1932) e que Chaudhuri estava ansioso, preocupado que a noiva não apreciasse o seu recente e extremamente dispendioso *hobby* de comprar discos de música clássica ocidental. A nossa leitura de Chadhuri é afetada, em parte, pela nossa falta de conhecimento a respeito da intertextualidade da sua prosa – talvez tenha estado presente, por exemplo, uma certa repugnância entranhada em estar a revelar "demasiado". No entanto, esta passagem não deixa de ser um exercício revelador do modo como a memória é construída, porque gira em torno do que Chaudhuri "recorda" e "esquece" sobre a "experiência da sua noite de núpcias". Ele oculta a intimidade com expressões como "não me recordo" ou "não sei como" (para não referir o extremamente freudiano "abrir o peito") e este véu autoconstruído é sem dúvida revelador do sujeito que fala:

> "Sentia-me terrivelmente nervoso perante a perspetiva de conhecer como futura esposa uma rapariga que me era completamente estranha, e quando ela foi trazida... e deixada especada à minha frente eu não tinha nada para lhe dizer. Vi apenas um sorriso envergonhado na sua face e, timidamente, ela aproximou-se e sentou-se ao meu lado na beira da cama. Não sei ao certo como é que, entretanto, nos deixámos os dois cair nas almofadas, deitados lado

26 Por uma questão de espaço, vou deixar esta afirmação por aprofundar, embora espere ter a oportunidade de a desenvolver noutro lugar. Devo, no entanto, referir que esta afirmação diz respeito sobretudo às autobiografias publicadas entre 1850 e 1910. Quando as mulheres se juntaram à esfera pública, no século XX, as suas autorrepresentações assumiram dimensões diferentes.

> a lado. [Chaudhuri acrescenta em nota de rodapé: 'Claro que completamente vestidos. Nós hindus... consideramos os dois extremos – totalmente coberto e totalmente nu – modesto, e tudo o que está no meio grosseiramente imodesto. Nenhum homem decente deseja que a sua mulher seja uma *allumeuse*.'] Então trocámos as primeiras palavras. Ela tomou um dos braços, sentiu-o e disse: 'És tão magro. Vou tomar bem conta de ti'. Eu não lhe agradeci, e não me recordo sequer se, para além de ouvir as palavras, lhe senti o toque. A horrível ansiedade em torno da música europeia tinha ressurgido na minha mente e decidi abrir o peito de uma vez, encarar de frente o sacrifício, se tal fosse necessário, e começar o romance nos termos em que ele me era oferecido. Perguntei-lhe timidamente ao fim de um tempo: 'Já ouviste alguma música europeia?" Ela abanou a cabeça para dizer 'não'. No entanto, fiz uma nova tentativa e desta vez perguntei: 'Ouviste falar de um homem chamado Beethoven?'. Ela acenou que 'sim'. Fiquei mais descansado, mas não totalmente satisfeito. Então perguntei-lhe de novo: 'consegues soletrar o nome?' Ela disse lentamente: 'B, E, E, T, H O, V, E, N.' Senti-me encorajado... e adormecemos."[27]

O desejo de ser "moderno" está latente em cada frase dos dois volumes da autobiografia de Chaudhuri. O seu nome é agora lendário na história do encontro cultural indo-britânico. No entanto, nas cerca de 1500 páginas que escreveu em inglês sobre a sua vida, esta é a única passagem em que a narrativa de Chaudhuri em torno da sua participação na vida pública e nos círculos literários é interrompida para dar lugar a algo que se aproxima da intimidade. Como é que lemos este texto, esta autoconstrução de um homem indiano que não tinha rival no seu entusiasmo pela vida pública enquanto cidadão, mas que, no

27 Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Thy Hand, Great Anarch! India, 1921-1952* (Londres: Chatto and Windus, 1987, 350-351.

entanto, raramente, se é que alguma vez, refletiu na sua escrita o outro lado do cidadão moderno, o eu privado interior que incessantemente procura uma audiência? Público sem privado? Mais um exemplo da "incompletude" da transformação burguesa na Índia?

Estas questões são elas próprias suscitadas pela narrativa de transição que, por sua vez, situa o indivíduo moderno no fim da história. Não quero atribuir à autobiografia de Chaudhuri uma representatividade que pode não ter. Os escritos femininos, como já disse, são diferentes, e os académicos só agora começaram a explorar o mundo das autobiografias na história indiana. Mas se um resultado do imperialismo europeu foi a introdução do estado moderno e da ideia de nação, com o seu inerente discurso de "cidadania", o qual, pela própria ideia de "direitos de cidadania" (isto é, o "estado de direito") divide a figura do indivíduo moderno em duas faces, uma pública e outra privada (como o jovem Marx assinalou na sua obra "Sobre a questão judaica"), estes temas têm existido – em conflito, aliança e miscigenação – com outras narrativas a respeito do eu e da comunidade, que não olham para o binómio estado/cidadão como a construção última da sociabilidade.[28] Esta afirmação, em si, não é controversa. Mas o meu ponto vai mais longe. É que estas outras construções do eu e da comunidade, ainda que documentáveis, nunca gozarão do privilégio de fornecer as metanarrativas ou teleologias (assumindo que não pode haver uma narrativa sem existir, pelo menos, uma teleologia implícita) das nossas histórias. Tal acontece, em parte, porque estas narrativas, em si mesmas, revelam frequentemente uma consciência anti-histórica, isto é, implicam sujeitos e configurações da memória que desafiam e minam o sujeito que fala em nome da história. A "história" é precisamente o palco onde se prolonga a luta pela apropriação, em nome do moderno (a minha Europa hiper-real), destas outras disposições da memória.

História e diferença na modernidade indiana

O espaço cultural invocado por este anti-historicismo não era, de alguma forma, harmonioso ou pacífico, muito embora o pensamento nacionalista se

28 Ver Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question", in *Early Writings* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), 215-222.

tenha esforçado por o apresentar como tal. A normatividade anti-histórica da família patriarcal alargada, por exemplo, teve sempre uma existência contestada, tanto pelas lutas das mulheres como pelas das classes subalternas. Mas estas lutas não seguiram necessariamente caminhos que nos permitam construir narrativas emancipatórias que coloquem o "patriarcado", de um lado, e os "liberais", do outro. A história da individualidade moderna na Índia está imersa em demasiadas contradições para se prestar a uma leitura como essa.

Não tenho aqui espaço para desenvolver esta ideia, pelo que bastará um exemplo. Este exemplo é proporcionado pela biografia de Ramabai Ranade, a mulher do famoso líder político reformista da presidência de Bombaim, M. G. Ranade. A luta de Ramabai Ranade para alcançar um certo grau de respeito próprio era, em parte, contra a "velha" ordem da família patriarcal alargada e em favor do "novo" patriarcado do casamento entre parceiros, que o seu marido, imbuído de ideias reformistas, via como a forma mais civilizada de laço conjugal. Em busca deste ideal, Ramabai começou a partilhar o compromisso do seu marido com a vida pública e tomou frequentemente parte (na década de 1880) em reuniões públicas e conferências de homens e mulheres reformistas. Tal como a própria afirmou: "foi nestas reuniões que aprendi o que era uma reunião política e como nos devemos comportar nela".[29] Curiosamente, no entanto, uma parte importante da oposição aos esforços de Ramabai (para além daquela que era movida pelos homens) partia das restantes mulheres da família. Não há dúvida que estas mulheres – a sogra e as cunhadas – falavam em nome da velha família patriarcal alargada. Mas podemos aprender com as suas vozes (tal como elas figuram no texto de Ramabai), uma vez que falam também do seu próprio sentido de respeito próprio e das suas próprias formas de luta contra os homens: "Não devias ir a essas reuniões [diziam elas a Ramabai]... mesmo que os homens queiram que tu faças essas coisas, devias ignorá-los. Não precisas de dizer que não, mas também não precisas de ir. Eles vão acabar por aborrecer-se e desistir... estás a ir mais longe até do que as mulheres europeias." Ou esta passagem:

29 Ramabai Ranade, *Ranade: His Wife's Reminiscences*, trad. Kusmavati Deshpande (Deli: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963), 77.

> "Ela [Ramabai] é que adora estas frivolidades de ir a reuniões. O Dada [Mr. Ranade] não gosta assim tanto. Mas ela não devia ter alguma noção do que é que uma mulher deve de facto fazer? Se os homens te dizem para fazeres cem coisas, uma mulher deve fazer no máximo dez. No fim de contas, os homens não entendem estas coisas práticas!... As mulheres de respeito [no passado] nunca se tornavam frívolas desta maneira... Era por isso que esta grande família... conseguia viver em conjunto de uma forma respeitável. Mas agora está tudo tão diferente! Se o Dada sugere uma coisa, esta mulher está preparada para fazer três. Como é que poderemos viver com algum respeito próprio enquanto isto continuar assim?"[30]

Estas vozes, combinando os temas contraditórios do nacionalismo, da ideologia clânica do patriarcado, e da luta das mulheres contra os homens, e opondo-se, ao mesmo tempo, à amizade entre maridos e mulheres, recordam-nos as profundas ambivalências que marcaram a trajetória da individualidade moderna, privada e burguesa, na Índia colonial. No entanto, os historiadores conseguem, através de manobras que lembram o velho truque "dialético" designado por "negação da negação", negar uma posição subordinada a esta voz ambivalente. A prova do que eu designei como a "negação da privacidade burguesa e do sujeito histórico" é reconhecida nos seus relatos, mas subordinada ao propósito supostamente superior de tornar a história indiana parecida com qualquer outro episódio da marcha universal (e, a seu ver, no final vitoriosa) da cidadania, do estado-nação e dos temas da emancipação humana afirmados pelo Iluminismo europeu e pelos seus sucessores. É a figura do cidadão que fala através destas histórias. E enquanto isso acontecer, a minha Europa hiper-real continuará a dominar as histórias que contamos. O "moderno" continuará, desta forma, a ser entendido, como Meaghan Morris argumentou acerca do seu próprio contexto australia-

30 Ranade, *Ranade*, 84-85.

no, "como uma *história conhecida*, alguma coisa que *já aconteceu noutro lado*, e que se limita a ser reproduzida, mecanicamente ou não, com um conteúdo local". Isto deixa-nos apenas com a tarefa de reproduzir o que Morris chama de "o projeto da falta de originalidade positiva".[31]

E, no entanto, a "originalidade" – e admito que seja um termo pouco apropriado – das linguagens através das quais as lutas têm sido conduzidas no subcontinente indiano situa-se frequentemente na esfera do não-moderno. Não temos que subscrever a ideologia clânica do patriarcado, por exemplo, para reconhecer que a metáfora da sacrossanta família patriarcal alargada foi um dos elementos mais importantes da cultura política do nacionalismo indiano. Na luta contra o domínio britânico, foi frequentemente o uso deste idioma – em canções, poemas e outras formas de mobilização nacionalista – que permitiu aos indianos construir um sentido de comunidade e recuperar para si próprios a subjetividade a partir da qual se podiam dirigir aos britânicos. Vou ilustrar este ponto com um exemplo da vida de Gandhi, "o pai da nação", para sublinhar a importância política desta jogada cultural por parte dos "indianos".

O meu exemplo refere-se ao ano de 1946. Tinham ocorrido terríveis motins entre hindus e muçulmanos em Calcutá, por causa da iminente divisão do país em Índia e Paquistão. Gandhi estava na cidade, jejuava em protesto contra o comportamento do seu próprio povo. E eis como uma intelectual indiana recorda a experiência:

> "Os homens vinham do escritório ao fim da tarde e encontravam o jantar preparado pela família [ou seja, pelas mulheres]; mas depressa era revelado que as mulheres da casa não tinham comido todo o dia. Elas [aparentemente] não tinham sentido fome. Pressionadas, a mulher ou a mãe admitiam que não conseguiam compreender como poderiam continuar [a comer] quando o Gandhiji estava a morrer pe-

31 Meaghan Morris, "Metamorphoses at Sydney Tower", *New Formations* 11 (Verão 1990): 10. A ênfase está presente no original.

> los crimes de todo o povo. Os restaurantes e os centros de diversão faziam pouco negócio; os proprietários de alguns deles fecharam voluntariamente os seus negócios... o nervo do sentimento tinha sido restaurado; a dor começou a ser sentido... o Gandhiji sabia quando começar o processo de redenção."[32]

Não temos que levar esta descrição à letra, mas a natureza da comunidade imaginada nestas linhas é clara. Mistura, nas palavras Gayatri Spivak, "o sentimento de comunidade que pertence à ordem dos laços nacionais e das organizações políticas" com "aquele outro sentido de comunidade estruturado em torno [do clã ou] da família [alargada]".[33] A história da Índia colonial está repleta de momentos em que os indianos se arrogaram da sua subjetividade precisamente através da mobilização, dentro do contexto das instituições modernas e por vezes em nome do projeto modernizador do nacionalismo, de dispositivos da memória coletiva que eram tanto anti-históricos, como não-modernos.[34] Isto não serve para negar a capacidade de os indianos agirem como sujeitos imbuídos daquilo que nós na universidade reconheceríamos como "um sentido histórico" (aquilo que Peter Burke denomina como "o renascimento do passado"), mas para insistir que existiam também tendências contrárias e que, nas inúmeras lutas que tiveram lugar na Índia colonial, as construções anti-históricas do passado forneceram muitas vezes formas poderosas de memória coletiva.[35]

Existe, portanto, este binómio através do qual o sujeito da história "indiana" se articula a si mesmo. Por um lado, ele é simultaneamente o sujeito e o objeto da modernidade, porque representa uma suposta

32 Amaiya Chakravarty citada em Bhikhu Parekh, *Gandhi's Political Discourse* (Londres: Macmillan, 1989), 163.

33 Gayatri Chakrovarty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson e Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana e Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 277.

34 Ver *Subaltern Studies*, vol. 1-7 (Deli: Oxford University Press, 1982-1991) e Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Deli: Oxford University Press, 1983)

35 Ver os ensaios coligidos em *Subaltern Studies* e ainda Guha, *Elementary Aspects*.

unidade designada como "povo indiano", que se divide sempre em dois – uma elite modernizadora e um campesinato por modernizar. Enquanto sujeito dividido, no entanto, fala a partir de uma metanarrativa que celebra o estado-nação; e o sujeito teórico desta metanarrativa só pode ser uma "Europa" hiper-real, uma Europa construída pelas lendas que tanto o imperialismo como o nacionalismo contaram aos colonizados. A forma de autorrepresentação que os "indianos" podem adotar aqui é a que Homi Bhabha justamente designou como "mimética".[36] A história indiana, mesmo nas mãos do mais dedicado socialista ou nacionalista, permanece uma mimese de um certo sujeito "moderno" da história "europeia" e está fadada a representar uma triste figura de falta ou fracasso. A narrativa de transição vai permanecer sempre "penosamente incompleta".

Por outro lado, são ensaiadas representações da "diferença" e da "originalidade" do indiano dentro do espaço da mimese – e consequentemente do projeto designado como da história "indiana" – e é neste sentido que os dispositivos anti-históricos da memória e as "histórias" anti-históricas das classes subalternas são apropriadas. Assim, as construções feitas pelo camponês/trabalhador a respeito de reinos "míticos" e passados/futuros "míticos" encontram lugar em textos designados como sendo de história "indiana" precisamente através de um processo que subordina estas narrativas a critérios de prova e à lógica linear e cronológica que a escrita da história deve seguir. O sujeito anti-histórico e anti-moderno, consequentemente, não tem uma voz "teórica" dentro dos mecanismos de conhecimento da universidade, mesmo quando estes mecanismos reconhecem e "documentam" a sua existência. Tal como sucede com o "subalterno" de Spivak (ou com o camponês imaginado pelo antropólogo e que só pode ter uma existência analítica como parte de um discurso mais vasto produzido por esse mesmo antropólogo), a narrativa da transição limita-se a falar sobre este sujeito, ou em seu nome, acabando sempre por privilegiar o moderno (isto é, a "Europa").[37]

36 Homi K. Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse", in *October: The First Decade, 1976-1986*, eds. Annette Michelson et al. (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1987), 317-326. Ver ainda Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (Londres: Routledge, 1990).

37 Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?". Ver ainda a entrevista de Spivak publicada em *Socialist Review* 20, no. 3 (Julho-Setembro 1990).

Enquanto operarmos dentro do discurso da "história" produzido a partir do lugar institucional da universidade, torna-se impossível escapar à aliança estreita entre a "história" e as narrativa(s) modernizadora(s) da cidadania, da vida pública e privada burguesa e do estado-nação. A "história", enquanto sistema de conhecimento, está profundamente enraizada em práticas institucionais que invocam a cada passo o estado-nação – veja-se a organização e as políticas de ensino, recrutamento, promoção e publicação dentro dos departamentos de história, políticas que sobrevivem às ocasionais tentativas heroicas de alguns historiadores, a nível individual, para libertar a "história" da metanarrativa do estado-nação. Bastaria perguntar, por exemplo: porque é que a história é obrigatória no currículo educacional de todos os países modernos, inclusivamente daqueles que viveram confortavelmente sem ela até ao final do século XVIII? Porque é que as crianças em todo o mundo são hoje em dia obrigadas a lidar com uma disciplina chamada "história", quando sabemos que esta obrigação não é nem natural, nem antiga?[38]

Não é precisa muita imaginação para compreender que o motivo está naquilo que o imperialismo europeu e os nacionalismos do terceiro-mundo construíram em conjunto: a universalização do estado-nação como o modelo mais desejável de comunidade política. Os estados-nação têm a capacidade de fazer valer as suas verdades e as universidades, apesar do seu distanciamento crítico, fazem parte do conjunto de instituições que colaboram neste processo. A "economia" e a "história" são as formas de conhecimento que correspondem a duas das principais instituições que a ascensão (e, mais tarde, a universalização) da ordem burguesa trouxe ao mundo – o modo capitalista de produção e o estado-nação (a "história" referindo-se aqui à figura do cidadão).[39] Um

38 Sobre as interligações entre as ideologias imperiais e o ensino da história na Índia colonial, ver Ranajit Guha, *An Indian Historiography of India: A Nineteenth-Century Agenda and its Implications* (Calcutá: K. P. Bagchi, 1988).

39 Sem querer, de forma alguma, implicá-los diretamente na formulação deste argumento, devo referir que esta minha afirmação encontra paralelos nas ideias propostas por Gyan Prakash e Nicholas Dirks. Ver Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32, no. 2 (Abril 1990): 383-408; Nicholas B. Dirks, "History as a Sign of the Modern", *Public Culture* 2, no. 2 (Primavera 1990): 25-33.

historiador crítico não pode senão negociar este conhecimento. Ela ou ele precisa, deste modo, de entender o estado nos seus próprios termos, ou seja, em termos das suas narrativas autojustificatórias da cidadania e da modernidade. Uma vez que estes temas nos levam sempre a regressar às propostas universalistas da filosofia política "moderna" (europeia) – até a ciência "prática" da economia, que nos parece agora "natural" às nossas conceções dos sistemas-mundo, se encontra (teoricamente) enraizada nas ideias éticas da Europa setecentista[40] – o historiador do terceiro-mundo está condenado a conhecer a "Europa" como o ponto de partida da "modernidade", enquanto o historiador "Europeu" não partilha a mesma responsabilidade em relação aos passados da maioria da humanidade. Assim se revela a subalternidade quotidiana das histórias não-Ocidentais com que iniciei este texto.

No entanto, a compreensão de que todos "nós" fazemos história "Europeia" com os nossos diversos arquivos, muitas vezes não-europeus, deixa em aberto a possibilidade de um projeto e de uma política de aliança entre a história metropolitana dominante e os passados subalternos periféricos. Chamemos-lhe o projeto de provincializar a "Europa", essa Europa que o imperialismo moderno e o nacionalismo (do terceiro-mundo), com os seus esforços conjugados e violência, tornaram universal. Filosoficamente, este projeto deve basear-se na necessidade de criticar, de forma radical, e transcender o liberalismo (isto é, a construção burocrática da cidadania, do estado moderno e da vida privada burguesa que foi produzida pela filosófica política clássica), um caminho que o Marx tardio partilha em alguns momentos com o pensamento pós-estruturalista e a filosofia feminista. Inspira-me, particularmente, a afirmação corajosa de Carole Pateman – no seu notável livro *The Sexual Contract* – de que a própria conceção do individuo moderno pertence a categorias de pensamento patriarcais.[41]

40 Ver Amartya Kumar Sen, *Of Ethics and Economics* (Oxford e Nova Iorque: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Uma leitura sugestiva desta questão é apresentada em Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *A History of Japanese Economic Thought* (Londres: Routledge, 1989). Agradeço a Gavan McCormack por me ter chamado a atenção para esta obra.

41 Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 184.

Provincializar a Europa?

O projeto de provincializar a "Europa" refere-se a uma história que ainda não existe: só posso, portanto, falar dele de uma forma programática. Para prevenir quaisquer mal-entendidos, no entanto, devo explicitar o que *não é*, ao mesmo tempo que esboço o que poderá ser.

Para começar, este projeto não reclama uma rejeição imediata e simplista da modernidade, dos valores liberais, das categorias universais, da ciência, da razão, das grandes narrativas, das explicações totalizantes, e por aí fora. Como Jameson observou recentemente, a equação simples que tende a equiparar "uma conceção filosófica totalizante" e "uma prática política totalitária" é "perigosa".[42] O que intervém entre as duas é a história – as lutas contraditórias, plurais e heterogéneas cujos resultados nunca se tornam previsíveis, mesmo retrospetivamente, de acordo com esquemas que procuram naturalizar e domesticar esta heterogeneidade. Estas lutas incluem a coerção (tanto a favor, como contra a modernidade) – violência física, institucional e simbólica frequentemente aplicada com um idealismo lírico – e esta violência tem um papel decisivo na criação de significado, na criação de regimes de verdade, em decidir, em certo sentido, qual é e a quem pertence o conceito de "universal" que sai vitorioso. Enquanto intelectuais que operamos na academia, não somos neutros nestas lutas e não podemos fingir que nos posicionamos à margem dos mecanismos de conhecimento das nossas instituições.

O projeto de provincializar a Europa não pode, assim sendo, ser um projeto de relativismo cultural. Não pode ter como ponto de partida a posição de que a razão/ciência/categorias universais que contribuíram para definir a Europa como o moderno são simplesmente "culturalmente específicas" e que, portanto, só pertencem às culturas europeias. Não é uma questão de afirmar que o racionalismo iluminista é sempre irrazoável em si mesmo, mas antes de documentar como – através de que processo histórico – é que a sua "razão", que não foi

42 Frederic Jameson, "Cognitive Mapping", in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson e Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana e Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 354.

sempre evidente para todos, foi transformada em algo aparentemente óbvio muito para além do campo em que se originou. Se uma língua, como alguém disse, não é mais do que um dialeto com um exército, o mesmo poderia ser dito das narrativas da "modernidade" que, hoje em dia de maneira quase universal, apontam para uma certa "Europa" como origem primacial do moderno.

Esta Europa, como o "Ocidente", é demonstravelmente uma entidade imaginária, mas esta demonstração por si só não diminui o seu apelo ou o seu poder. O projeto de provincializar a Europa tem de implicar certas manobras adicionais: em primeiro lugar, o reconhecimento de que a aquisição pela Europa do adjetivo "moderna" para se representar a si mesma é uma parte integrante da história do imperialismo europeu no seio da história global; e, em segundo, a compreensão de que esta equiparação de uma certa versão da Europa com a "modernidade" não é inteiramente atribuível apenas aos europeus; os nacionalismos do terceiro mundo, como ideologias modernizantes por excelência, têm sido parceiros neste processo. Não pretendo desmerecer os momentos anti-imperialistas nos percursos destes nacionalismos; apenas sublinho a ideia de que o projeto de provincializar a Europa não pode ser nacionalista, nativista ou atávico. Ao desenlear o emaranhado da história – uma forma disciplinada e institucionalmente regulada de memória coletiva – com as grandes narrativas dos direitos, da cidadania, do estado-nação e das esferas públicas e privadas, não podemos senão problematizar a "Índia" ao mesmo tempo que desmantelamos a "Europa".

A ideia é inscrever na história da modernidade as ambivalências, as contradições, o uso da força e as tragédias e ironias que a caracterizaram. Que a retórica e as reivindicações da igualdade (burguesa), dos direitos dos cidadãos, da autodeterminação através de um estado-nação soberano tenham, em muitas circunstâncias, empoderado grupos sociais marginais nas suas lutas é inegável – este reconhecimento é indispensável ao projeto dos *Subaltern Studies*. Porém, o que nem sempre é reconhecido nas histórias que, implícita ou explicitamente, celebram o advento do estado moderno e da ideia de cidadania é a repressão e a violência que são tão instrumentais para a vitória do moderno, como

o poder de persuasão das suas estratégias retóricas. Esta ironia – os alicerces antidemocráticos da "democracia" – é particularmente notória na história da medicina moderna, da saúde pública e da higiene pessoal, cujos discursos têm sido determinantes para localizar o corpo do indivíduo moderno na intersecção entre o público e o privado (tal como definido, e negociado, pelo estado). O triunfo deste discurso, no entanto, dependeu sempre da mobilização, em seu favor, de meios efetivos de coerção física. Digo "sempre" porque esta coerção é simultaneamente original/fundacional (isto é, histórica), como pandémica e quotidiana. David Arnold dá um bom exemplo desta violência fundacional num ensaio recente sobre a história da prisão na Índia. A coerção da prisão colonial, como Arnold mostra, estava integrada em algumas das pesquisas pioneiras de estatística médica, alimentares e demográficas na Índia, porque a prisão era o lugar onde os corpos indianos se tornavam acessíveis aos investigadores modernos.[43] Um exemplo recente da coerção que continua a ter lugar em nome da nação e da modernidade é proporcionado pela campanha para a irradicação da varíola na Índia, na década de 1970. Dois médicos americanos (um deles presumivelmente de origem indiana) que participaram neste processo descrevem da seguinte forma as operações realizadas numa aldeia da tribo Ho, no estado indiano de Bihar:

> "No meio da gentil noite indiana, um intruso irrompeu pela porta de bambu da simples cabana de argila. Era um vacinador do governo, com ordens para vergar a resistência contra a vacinação da varíola. Lakshmi Singh acordou aos gritos e escondeu-se atabalhoadamente. O seu marido saltou da cama, agarrou num machado, e perseguiu o intruso até ao pátio. Lá fora, um esquadrão de médicos e polícias rapidamente dominaram Mohan Singh. No instante em que

43 David Arnold, "The Colonial Prison: Power, Knowledge, and Penology in Nineteenth-Century India", in *Subaltern Studies*, vol. 8, eds. David Arnold e David Hardiman (Deli: Oxford University Press, 1995). Analisei algumas destas questões num artigo publicado em Bengali, ver "Sarir, samaj o rashtra – oupanibeshik barate mahamari o janasangskriti," *Anustup* (1988).

> foi derrubado, um segundo vacinador injetou-lhes a vacina da varíola no seu braço. Mohan Singh, o rijo e magro líder da tribo Ho com cerca de quarenta anos, encolheu-se para fugir à agulha, o que provocou um sangramento no local da injeção. A equipa do governo manteve-o no chão até ter injetado vacina suficiente... enquanto dois polícias o repeliam, o resto da equipa dominou toda a família e vacinou-os à vez. Lakshmi Singh mordeu fortemente a mão de um dos médicos, mas em vão."[44]

Não há como escapar ao idealismo que acompanha esta violência. O subtítulo do artigo em questão reproduz ingenuamente tanto os aspetos militares, como os instintos caridosos da missão. Diz: "como um exército de samaritanos eliminou a varíola da terra".

As histórias que pretendam retirar a Europa hiper-real do centro em torno do qual todos os imaginários históricos gravitam terá de demandar incessantemente esta ligação entre violência e idealismo, que está no âmago do processo pelo qual as narrativas da cidadania e da modernidade encontraram na "história" o seu lar natural. Neste ponto, estou em desacordo completo com a posição de Richard Rorty no debate que travou com Jürgen Habermas. Rorty critica Habermas pela convicção deste último de que "a história da filosofia moderna é uma parte importante da história dos esforços das sociedades democráticas para se reconfortarem a si mesmas".[45] A afirmação de Rorty segue a prática de muitos europeístas que escrevem sobre as histórias destas "sociedades democráticas" como se fossem estanques, como se a autorrepresentação do Ocidente fosse algo que só acontece dentro das suas fronteiras geográficas autoproclamadas. No mínimo, Rorty ignora o papel que o "palco colonial" (tanto externo como interno) – onde o tema da liberdade, tal como definido pela filosofia política moderna, foi constante-

44 Lawrence Brilliant e Girija Brilliant, "Death for a Killer Disease", *Quest* (Maio/Junho 1978): 3. Devo esta referência a Paul Greenough.

45 Richard Rorty, "Habermans and Lyotard on Postmodernit", in *Habermas and Modernity*, ed. Richard J. Bernestein (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1986), 169.

mente invocado em apoio de ideias de "civilização", "progresso" e, por fim, "desenvolvimento" – desempenhou no processo de elboração deste "reconforto". A tarefa, tal como a vejo, será a de combater as ideias que legitimam o estado moderno e as suas instituições, com o objetivo de devolver à filosofia política – da mesma forma que as moedas suspeitas são devolvidas à proveniência num bazar indiano – as categorias cuja validade global já não pode ser tida como um dado adquirido.[46]

E, por fim – uma vez que a "Europa" não pode, no fim de contas, ser provincializada no seio do lugar institucional da universidade, cujos protocolos de conhecimento nos levam sempre de volta para um terreno moldado pela minha Europa hiper-real – o projeto de provincializar a Europa tem que admitir em si mesmo a sua própria impossibilidade. Neste sentido, parece ser uma história que corporiza as políticas do desespero. Já deve ter ficado claro que este projeto não é um apelo ao relativismo cultural ou a histórias nativistas e atávicas. Nem é um programa baseado numa rejeição simplista da modernidade, o que seria, em muitos casos, um suicídio político. Reivindico uma história que torne deliberadamente visível, dentro da estrutura das suas formas narrativas, as suas próprias estratégias e práticas repressivas, o papel que desempenha, em conluio com as narrativas de cidadania, na subordinação de todas as outras possibilidades de solidariedade humana aos projetos do estado moderno. As políticas do desespero requerem que esta história torne claras aos seus leitores as razões pelas quais este constrangimento é necessariamente inescapável. É uma história que tentará o impossível: olhar de frente a sua própria morte, rastreando aquilo que resiste e que escapa aos mais empenhados esforços de tradução entre culturas e outros sistemas semióticos, para que o mundo possa uma vez mais ser imaginado como radicalmente heterogéneo. Como disse, isto é impossível dentro dos protocolos de conhecimento da história académica, porque a globalidade da academia não é independente da globalidade que a Europa moderna criou. Tentar provincializar esta "Europa"

46 Para uma leitura revisionista de Hegel neste ponto, ver o diálogo entre Charles Taylor e Partha Chatterjee em *Public Culture* 3, n.º 1 (1990). O meu livro *Rethinking Working-Class History* procura dar alguns tímidos passos nesta direção.

é ver o moderno como uma inevitabilidade disputada, inscrever sobre determinadas narrativas privilegiadas de cidadania outras narrativas de relações humanas que se alimentam de passados e futuros sonhados, onde as coletividades não são definidas nem pelos rituais da cidadania, nem pelo pesadelo da "tradição" que a "modernidade" criou. Não existem, é claro, (infra)estruturas onde tais sonhos se possam alojar. No entanto, eles continuarão a ressurgir enquanto os temas da cidadania e do estado-nação dominarem as nossas narrativas de transição histórica, porque estes sonhos são aquilo que o moderno reprime para existir.

Um *post scriptum* (1999): este capítulo reproduz de forma resumida a minha primeira tentativa (em 1992) de articular o problema de provincializar a Europa. Esta afirmação original permanece o ponto de partida do que se seguiu. Vários dos temas abordados – a necessidade de criticar o historicismo e de encontrar estratégias para pensar a diferença histórica sem abandonar o compromisso com a teoria – são desenvolvidas no resto do livro. Mas as "políticas do desespero" que em tempos propus com algum ardor já não está na base do argumento mais vasto que aqui apresento.

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Dipesh Chakrabarty and the Global South: Subaltern Studies, Postcolonial Perspectives, and the Anthropocene

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Esta obra coletiva reúne ensaios em honra do trabalho de Dipesh Chakrabarty, registando diversas contribuições de antigos alunos de doutoramento do departamento de História da Universidade de Chicago. Em regra geral, os textos oferecem um breve resumo de algumas das ideias mais relevantes de Chakrabarty e acerca de como estas influenciaram o trabalho levado a cabo pelos autores, marcando o seu percurso intelectual e académico. Trata-se, nesse sentido, de uma obra de homenagem que combina alguns textos de Chakrabarty com dados biográficos do autor, alguns episódios referentes ao contexto académico de Chicago e à história social, política e cultural da Índia.

Alguns dos contributos teóricos de Chakrabarty incluem, por exemplo, a distinção estabelecida entre História 1 – o "passado interno à estrutura de ser do capital"[1] – e História 2 "futuros que já estão pre-

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1 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 66.

sentes, o futuro cujo alinhamento os humanos não conseguem evitar"[2] – desenvolvida na obra *Provincializing Europe*. Chakrabarty também se tem destacado através das suas recentes incursões nos debates sobre o Antropoceno, nomeadamente acerca das dificuldades em articular o tempo histórico humano e as temporalidades à escala geológica[3].

A obra está organizada em quatro partes. A primeira parte, "Affect and intellect", aborda questões relacionadas com o processo de escrita de história e a história constitucional e laboral da Índia. Miranda Johnson, em "Between critique and creativity: Some other politics of writing history in Aotearoa New Zealand", mencionando a importância da crítica pós-colonial, alerta para que as metodologias e epistemologias dos historiadores terem de reconhecer as vozes subalternas, ao invés de reproduzirem os discursos hegemónicos das elites. Arvind Elangovan, no capítulo "Rethinking Indian constitutional history", recorda a sua experiência como estudante de doutoramento na Universidade de Chicago, com Chakrabarty como supervisor, nomeadamente o impacto que este teve na forma como Elangovan refletiu acerca da história constitucional indiana, incluindo a desconstrução de alguns pressupostos associados à história colonial da Índia. Já no capítulo "The significance of Provincializing Europe: Memory, argument, and the life of the book", Dwaipayan Sen reflete acerca do eurocentrismo crítico e do alcance interdisciplinar da obra de Chakrabarty. Arnab Dey, também um antigo estudante de Chakrabarty, contribuiu com o capítulo "Labour history and 'Culture' critique - Reflections on an idea", em que reflete acerca da evolução da sua investigação sobre o trabalho nas plantações de chá de Assam, no nordeste da Índia, em contexto colonial.

A segunda parte do livro, denominada "Critical Conversations", inclui reflexões teóricas acerca da obra de Chakrabarty, assim como conversas com o autor. Em "Histories, Dwelling, Habitations: A Cyber-Conversation with Dipesh Chakrabarty", Saurabh Dube aborda os te-

2 Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 251.

3 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The climate of history: Four theses," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 2 (2009): 197-222.

mas da história e modernidade assim como as implicações interdisciplinares do Antropoceno. Já Homi Bhabha, uma figura incontornável nos estudos pós-coloniais, em "Writing the void", reflete acerca da relevância do corpo, da subjetividade, do mal e do vazio (entendido enquanto posicionamento epistemológico) para a linguagem das humanidades e do humanismo. O capítulo "A correspondence on Provincializing Europe" apresenta uma discussão entre Amitav Ghosh e Dipesh Chakrabarty em que foram abordados temas como o Iluminismo, o pós-colonialismo e a história a partir das margens.

A terceira parte do livro é intitulada "Global pasts and postcolonial diferences" e aborda a relação entre direitos laborais, castas, política e guerra fria na Índia, assim como o papel das vozes subalternas para a construção da história. Devleena Ghosh, no capítulo "Rights and Coercion: Adivasi Rights and Coal Mining in Central India", analisa as lutas laborais dos Adivasi, explorando a estreita interligação entre progresso e combustíveis fósseis, e demonstrando como o ecossistema sagrado da floresta Adivasi foi progressivamente destruído pela marcha extrativista da modernidade, colocando em causa a sobrevivência de cosmopolíticas indígenas. Partha Chatterjee, em "When victims become rulers. Partition, caste, and politics in West Bengal", recorre à noção de hegemonia de Antonio Gramsci para analisar a criação da classe média em Bengala Ocidental, estabelecendo comparações pertinentes entre a colonização britânica no século XVII e a criação de classes sociais no século XX. Já Arving Rajagopal analisou o impacto da guerra fria na Índia, no capítulo "The Cold War era as a rule of experts: a view from India". Rajagopal argumenta que os Estados Unidos da América e a União Soviética encaravam a Índia como um campo de batalha ideológico entre o capitalismo e o socialismo, analisando o papel das elites intelectuais indianas na gestão do conflito entre as grandes potências e o Sul Global. Bain Attwood, em "Historical wounds and the public life of history: the stolen generations narrative", explora uma importante questão lançada por Chakrabarty em *Provincializing Europe*, nomeadamente o tema dos *minority pasts,* isto é, o facto de existirem populações consideradas como *historypoor*, com um papel marginal e subalterno

na produção dos documentos considerados válidos pela disciplina da História, exigindo dispositivos não-hegemónicos – e colaborativos – de representação do passado. Esta questão é explorada através do estudo de caso das comunidades aborígenes em Nova Gales do Sul, Austrália, reforçando-se o papel de metodologias como a história oral – para além da pesquisa arquivística – para compreender o fenómeno das gerações roubadas, em que as crianças aborígenes eram retiradas das suas famílias devido a políticas governamentais australianas[4].

A parte quatro do livro, "Historical disciplines and modern universals", aborda temas como epistemologias eurocêntricas, questões associadas aos limites da representação, alteridade e histórias pós-coloniais. Em "Memory, historiography, and trauma: the limits of representation", Sanjay Seth argumenta que a memória, assim como os mitos, são formas válidas de representar o passado de grupos particulares, nomeadamente de comunidades indígenas, questionando a hegemonia da historiografia – e das metodologias convencionais – na representação e criação de um passado coletivo e homogéneo. Já Ajay Skaria, em "Thinking Freedom with Gandhi", reflete acerca do papel do humano na mensagem – e ativismo – de Gandhi, recorrendo à distinção de Chakrabarty entre História 1 e História 2 para analisar o papel de princípios como não-violência (ahimsa), resistência não violenta (satyagraha) e satya (verdade) no movimento de independência da Índia. Alf Lüdtke, em "Western thought as 'Indispensable and Inadequate'. Dipesh Chakrabarty and the paradox of postcolonial historiography", concentra-se em aspetos teóricos da obra de Chakrabarty, nomeadamente a influência de autores como Karl Marx e Martin Heidegger, assim como a sua formação em Física. Rajyashree Pandey, em "Translating the other: lessons from the world of medieval Japan", parte das propostas teóricas de Chakrabarty para abordar a problemática da alteridade e tradução, questionando as limitações impostas pelos dualismos modernos (corpo/mente; humano/não-humano; sociedade/cultura) na tradução de textos – e ontologias – do Japão medieval.

4 Bain Attwood, "The Stolen Generations and genocide: Robert Manne's 'In denial: The Stolen Generations and the Right'," *Aboriginal History* 25 (2001): 163-172.

A parte IV da obra – "The Anthropocene and other affiliations" – centra-se no Antropoceno, uma época geológica proposta para ilustrar a indissociabilidade entre ações humanas e eventos à escala planetária – como as alterações climáticas – e que tem sido alvo de reflexão por parte de Chakrabarty. Os capítulos que a integram abordam tópicos como a relação entre humanos e não-humanos, o papel da arte no Antropoceno e o seu impacto no desenvolvimento de representações indígenas e cosmopolíticas não ocidentais. Ewa Domańska, em "History, anthropogenic soil, and unbecoming human", dialoga com o trabalho de Chakrabarty sobre o Antropoceno. Este ensaio aborda algumas questões teóricas associadas à viragem ontológica e pós-humanista nas Humanidades e Ciências Sociais[5], refletindo acerca do papel do húmus enquanto metáfora para as necrohumanidades e ontologias suscitadas pelo Antropoceno. Em "Art in the time of tricksters and monsters: reflections on the Anthropocene", Bernd Scherer explora o papel da arte no Antropoceno, um tema que tem suscitado grande interesse académico[6], centrando-se no trabalho de artistas como Armin Linke e Xavier Le Roy e analisando as associações entre modernidade, dualismo entre humanos e não-humanos, capitalismo digital e performance. O capítulo de Stephen Muecke, "Indigenous histories and indigenous futures", recorre à metáfora do caleidoscópio para ilustrar o processo de representação e escrita da história, associado a modos de seleção e fragmentação que criam visibilidades e ausências. O livro termina com um texto de Saurabh Dube, "Figures of immanence", em que o autor recorre ao percurso bibliográfico de Chakrabarty para refletir acerca da relação entre história, teoria e modernidade, incluindo as contribuições mais recentes sobre o Antropoceno que problematizam as fronteiras entre agência humana e planetária.

Esta obra coletiva, centrada em torno da figura de Chakrabarty, carece por vezes de um fio condutor sólido, e como aborda uma gran-

5 António Carvalho, "Ecologies of the self in practice–meditation, affect and ecosophy," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 99, no. 2 (2017): 207-222.

6 Veja-se, por exemplo, o trabalho de Heather Davis e Etienne Turpin, *Art in the Anthropocene: Encounters among aesthetics, politics, environments and epistemologies* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015).

de diversidade de temas (refletindo também o percurso heterogéneo do autor) irá apelar principalmente a um público especializado e com interesse na obra deste historiador. Para além disso, e apesar do título incluir a expressão "Global South", a esmagadora maioria dos estudos de caso apresentados centra-se na história da Índia, o que não faz jus à heterogeneidade cultural, epistemológica e cosmopolítica do Sul Global. O teor de alguns ensaios – frequentemente reverencial/apologético – é problemático no âmbito dos estudos subalternos e pós-coloniais, no sentido em que parece reproduzir a subalternidade epistemológica dos discentes em relação aos docentes, similar à educação bancária tão criticada por Paulo Freire[7], suscitando também algumas questões em relação à produção de conhecimentos que se assumem como críticos.

Apesar das limitações acima mencionadas, esta obra é de potencial interesse para académicos/as na área das Humanidades e Ciências Sociais com particular interesse em teorias pós-coloniais, estudos subalternos, Antropoceno e metodologias de investigação qualitativa. O leque heterogéneo de contribuições ilumina diferentes aspetos da obra de Dipesh Chakrabarty, podendo constituir uma oportunidade para conhecer de uma forma mais aprofundada – e comentada/contextualizada – o trabalho deste relevante autor.

7 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1970).

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Vasant Kaiwar

The Postcolonial Orient. The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe

Leiden e Boston: Brill, 2014, 435 pp.

Sara Araújo*

Publicada em 2014, a obra *The Postcolonial Orient. The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe* constitui uma estimulante leitura marxista da variante pós-colonial dos estudos subalternos desenvolvida como projeto a partir das universidades metropolitanas. Vasant Kaiwar move-se entre múltiplos campos disciplinares (desde a filosofia, à economia política, à história, à sociologia, aos estudos culturais), apontando limites às abordagens pós-coloniais que resultam daquilo que designa como o improvável encontro entre o anticolonialismo do Terceiro Mundo e os estudos culturais americanos, sob o guarda-chuva protetor do existencialismo fenomenológico alemão, retrabalhado pelo pós-estruturalismo francês, que tem lugar em campus universitários higienizados[1].

A argumentação de Kaiwar é combativa e o discurso é mordaz. Não surpreende, pois, o assumido gosto pela controvérsia, que lemos já no último capítulo, quando argumenta que fazer uma crítica estrutural sem entrar em polémicas é uma espécie de sintoma de retirada pós-sec-

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1 Vasant Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient. The Politics of Difference and the Project of Provincialising Europe* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014), 27.

tarismo dos que, em algum momento, se envolveram no sectarismo com demasiada liberdade e promiscuidade[2]. Sob escrutínio, lúcido e detalhado, estão as condições históricas e as implicações teóricas e políticas dos desvios conceptuais da economia política para a cultura; do capitalismo para a modernidade (com a romantização do hibridismo, das alternativas, da autenticidade); da classe para a civilização; das lutas sociais dos/as trabalhadores/as pela terra e por salários para as dos intelectuais pela cultura; de Marx e Gramsci para Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault e Derrida[3]. A erosão da classe enquanto categoria central na viragem pós-colonial resulta, na interpretação do autor, da submissão dos estudos subalternos à "agenda de uma elite académica hiper-letrada em busca de um lugar respeitável no banquete do multiculturalismo"[4].

No centro da argumentação, encontra-se o conceito de "orientalismo pós-colonial", que aponta para lógicas de auto-exotização dos estudos pós-coloniais. De acordo com Kaiwar, na crítica cega ao historicismo, os estudos pós-coloniais perdem de vista o capital enquanto elemento estrutural e fetichizam a linha divisória que coloca a Europa de um lado e as modernidades híbridas e alternativas do outro, reproduzindo as dicotomias do orientalismo europeu, como Oriente-Ocidente, Europa-Outro[5]. Do lugar onde escreve Kaiwar, as contradições de classe e a classe como categoria analítica central parecem ter sofrido uma tomada hostil pela ideia de consciência civilizacional[6]. A simples crítica ao eurocentrismo e ao pretenso universalismo da missão civilizadora inspirada no Iluminismo é, para o autor, limitada, visto não explicar como, em contraste outras formas de etnocentrismo, conseguiu definir o rumo da história moderna e global[7].

A romantização da diferença é, na leitura de Kaiwar, não só fútil, como perigosa. Na reflexão sobre escravidão e trabalho forçado, migra-

2 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 326.
3 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, xiii.
4 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 99.
5 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 317.
6 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 95.
7 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 172.

ção e exílio, violência e resistência ou alianças políticas estratégicas no contexto de impérios e estados-nação, o debate principal não é, do seu ponto de vista, entre homogeneidade e heterogeneidade, mas sobre a economia política do capital, seja na configuração que assumiu na promoção do colonialismo, seja na forma contemporânea que sustenta a globalização neoliberal[8]. Kaiwar não é, de forma alguma, hostil à descolonização, mas defende a necessidade de resistir à sedução da diferença, do hibridismo e da multiplicidade e de apostar no desenvolvimento de solidariedade e reciprocidade, sob pena do capitalismo se transformar no horizonte insuperável da existência social humana.

Aos estudos pós-coloniais não falta apenas "totalizar", sendo imperativo historicizar[9]. A história intelectual não é prerrogativa exclusiva dos intelectuais metropolitanos e Kaiwar defende a necessidade de situar o *postcolonial turn* na narrativa historicista. O autor discute o lugar de enunciação dos estudos pós-coloniais, rejeitando uma leitura romantizada e essencialista no que toca à construção das identidades com base na nacionalidade dos intelectuais, bem como a ilusão de uma imunidade teórica aos impactos daquilo que Chakrabarty designa por História 1. São, pois, tidas em consideração condições relacionadas com a origem etnolinguística e de classe dos intelectuais, bem como as condições históricas em que os estudos pós-coloniais se desenvolvem: 1) o início dos estudos subalternos remonta a um grupo de intelectuais de classe média Bengali, o primeiro grupo asiático cujo universo mental foi transformado pela interação com o Ocidente[10]; 2) a viragem pós-colonial é desenvolvida na academia norte-americana por académicos na diáspora, num contexto em que a pós-colonialidade só pode ser desenvolvida em estreita ligação com a questão da imigração; 3) a expansão do sistema universitário norte-americano nos anos 1980 foi acompanhada pela promoção de currículos mais utilitários, pelo ênfase na análise quantitativa em disciplinas como a ciência política, a sociologia e a economia, e pelo desdém no que toca à investigação sobre as causas reais

8 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 29.
9 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 18.
10 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 8.

das crises económicas e sociais; 4) com o colapso da União Soviética, o desaparecimento da oposição fez-se acompanhar pela emergência de respostas pós-fundacionalistas, onde cabem os estudos pós-coloniais.

A discussão de Kaiwar sobre o conceito de colonialismo, familiar aos leitores marxistas, é essencial para compreender a reflexão. O autor questiona se a definição de colonização pode ser sustentada na ocupação estrangeira, isto é, na origem externa dos ocupantes à unidade política que invadem e posteriormente administram e dá, como se esperava, uma resposta cabalmente negativa. Fosse essa a definição de colonialismo, argumenta, a Índia teria sido colonizada muito antes da invasão britânica. A tendência para entender o colonialismo como ocupação estrangeira é vaga e pouco útil, seja do ponto vista teórico ou político. Para o autor, o ponto de partida para pensar o colonialismo é o desenvolvimento do capitalismo.

A Europa não carrega uma predisposição natural para a modernidade, nem qualquer desejo demiúrgico para a impor aos outros[11]. A transição do feudalismo para o capitalismo não foi orgânica ou pacífica, implicando o bloqueio de fontes de subsistência diretas, como a terra e outros recursos naturais, por parte de uma classe que conseguiu privatizar e concentrar propriedades, desenvolvendo formas de produção de larga escala, com recurso a tecnologias que aumentaram a produtividade. O colonialismo seguiu uma lógica semelhante, expropriando os produtores imediatos dos recursos, agora por via da conquista, da ocupação e da força bruta. Dois aspetos são aqui essenciais: o quantitativo (a acumulação primitiva, na linguagem marxista) e o qualitativo (a transformação dos recursos em capital, ou seja, numa forma social específica sustentada na competição sistemática entre os capitalistas por matérias-primas e participações de mercado). Assim, a brutalidade do colonialismo foi uma expressão direta dos horrores do capitalismo, que perde qualquer forma de respeitabilidade ao sair de casa. As ligações em que assentam as atividades económicas das colónias são interrompidas e, nesse sentido, desconectadas, permanecendo numa ligação

11 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 111.

de dependência com as atividades económicas do país colonizador. O colonialismo implica assim um tipo específico de geografia económica e não apenas uma ocupação externa[12]. São estas as condições estruturais que não se alteram com o fim do colonialismo e que assumem continuidade a par de outras, como trauma cultural, dominação racial, heterogeneidade no interior dos territórios[13]. Não se entenda desta leitura que Kaiwar não atribui importância ao colonialismo enquanto dimensão analítica: o colonialismo deve ser visto como um momento histórico de rutura. No entanto, o que promove essa rutura é a expansão de uma nova forma social, com o capital no centro[14]. Assim, a única forma de tornar o "colonial" num momento decisivo é trazer o capital para a estrutura analítica, não de forma ocasional e *en passant* para marcar uma posição sobre o secularismo ou o que quer que seja, mas como conceito central de estruturação e ancoragem[15].

As mais de 400 páginas do livro estão organizadas em seis capítulos, subdivididos em curtos subpontos, através dos quais o autor vai conduzindo o/a leitor/a. Construído de forma não linear, o texto assume três momentos principais: nos três primeiros capítulos, Kaiwar apresenta os principais argumentos, clarificando um conjunto de ideias, conceitos e dimensões analíticas, como as condições de chegada dos estudos pós-coloniais aos EUA; o conceito de diferença pós-colonial; os conceitos de colonialismo, capitalismo, modernidade e as variantes dos estudos pós-coloniais; o conceito subalterno e a diferença entre a história a partir de baixo (as lutas de classes) e a história a partir das margens (as lutas civilizacionais).

Nos capítulos V e VI, Vasant Kaiwar analisa de forma detalhada duas obras pós-coloniais à luz dos argumentos que foi desenvolvendo nos primeiros capítulos: 1) *Provincializing Europe* de Dipesh Chakrabarty e 2) *Domination without Hegemony*, de Ranajit Guha. A obra de Chakrabarty, à qual se refere como "o mais importante trabalho a

12 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 35-38.
13 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 39.
14 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 62.
15 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 138.

emergir da fase pós-colonial dos estudos subalternos"[16] recebe grande parte da atenção. O autor afirma que Chakrabarty está certo em distanciar-se do historicismo. No entanto, aponta-lhe problemas teóricos, metodológicos e políticos[17]. Para Kaiwar, a provincialização da Europa não é convincente enquanto projeto emancipatório e pode confundir-se com uma apologia sofisticada à polarização global e de classe, à estetização da pobreza e da miséria humana. Se a visão colonial sobre o "Terceiro Mundo" é uma visão homogeneizada, a visão que Chakrabarty apresenta da Europa é, de acordo com Kaiwar, caricatural ao ignorar o pensamento europeu contra-hegemónico, a crítica radical da economia política desenvolvida por Marx e sucessivas gerações de pensadores radicais, bem como as lutas sociais. A Europa a ser sujeita à crítica deve ser a Europa do imperialismo e do colonialismo e essa tarefa deve incorporar o legado marxista e assentar numa política que sustente um novo universalismo que extravase o universalismo eurocêntrico.

No que diz respeito ao trabalho de Guha, Kaiwar não põe em causa a precisão com que caracteriza a dominação e a estrutura social colonial, mas o *flirt* com temas e elementos do baú orientalista e a inclinação para uma narrativa de auto-exotização da Índia. A contraposição de Guha entre a dominação sem hegemonia do governo colonial e a dominação hegemónica burguesa da Europa contemporânea é para Kaiwar exagerada, na medida em que a diferença está mais no grau do que no tipo[18]. "Infelizmente", afirma o crítico, "Guha parece ter adquirido o mau hábito que se observa nas críticas pós-coloniais ao eurocentrismo de contrapor uma Europa ideal e hiper-real de um lado às formações sociais coloniais (e pós-coloniais) realmente existentes do outro"[19]. A análise concreta deve funcionar para os dois lados da linha colonial e o hibridismo – que Kaiwar prefere designar por desenvolvimento desigual-combinado – é uma característica transversal da modernidade quando observada no tempo e no espaço[20].

16 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 28.
17 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 165.
18 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 208.
19 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 209.
20 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 212.

No último capítulo, Kaiwar retira as consequências políticas da sua argumentação e acelera a fundo numa discussão que incendiaria qualquer rede social (não fosse a densidade teórica em que sustenta os argumentos), onde cabe o papel da esquerda contemporânea e Žižek (entre outros) assume protagonismo na argumentação. Nesta fase do livro, já não surpreende a seguinte afirmação: "Neste registo polémico, eu sustentaria que ocorreu qualquer coisa como um transformismo pós-colonial, com grupos inteiros de (ex)-esquerdistas a passarem para o 'campo moderado'"[21]. Para Kaiwar, celebrar as múltiplas formas de estar no mundo é o que resta quando a superação de uma economia opressiva desaparece da agenda política[22]. O capitalismo, lembra o autor, é uma força homogeneizadora, que coloniza todos os domínios, mercantilizando a diferença e fazendo da heterogeneidade uma mais-valia. Neste contexto, a celebração da diferença sem a luta de classes não só é incompleta, como pode sustentar a apologia do capital. O autor reconhece que a politização pós-moderna de domínios que, até então, não cabiam na esfera da política – feminismos, direitos LGBT, ecologia, entre outras questões – tiveram um impacto libertador e que o caminho não passa por regressar ao chamado essencialismo económico. No entanto, argumenta que a fragmentação e a despolitização da economia tiveram como efeito conceder demasiado espaço às formações de direita, frequentemente apoiadas pelo Estado[23]. Não adianta ficar pela superfície dos problemas, como as críticas à austeridade, sem promover uma luta de classes que combata os alicerces do capitalismo. E, para Kaiwar, essa batalha só pode ser travada com recurso às armas do próprio adversário. Ou seja, "os termos de um programa de 'emancipação pós-colonial' têm ainda que ser diretamente retirados do 'Iluminismo e do progressivíssimo racional: democracia, cidadania, constituição, nação, socialismo, e mesmo culturalismo'[24].

A sociologia das ausências (usando a linguagem das Epistemologias do Sul)[25] que Kaiwar desenvolve é estimulante e sustentada, mas o

21 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 326.

22 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 325.

23 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 359.

24 Kaiwar, *The Postcolonial Orient*, 371.

25 Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide* (London: Routledge, 2014).

mesmo tipo de exercício pode ser feito sobre o seu próprio trabalho e a acusação de fragmentação pode ser-lhe dirigida. Se o gosto pela polémica é apreciável quando eleva o debate, não faz sentido queimar pontes entre os/as que pretendem superar as várias dimensões da opressão estrutural. O longo e denso livro de Kaiwar tem muito a ensinar sobre a história dos estudos subalternos e dos estudos pós-coloniais, mas não deixa de ser evidente a ausência de diálogo com autores e autoras que não cabem no universo anglo-saxónico ou nos palcos mais mediáticos da discussão académica e política. Fica por clarificar como se posiciona o autor em relação aos intelectuais ativistas para quem o capitalismo, o colonialismo e o patriarcado são formas estruturais de opressão que atuam de forma combinada, sem que alguma assuma o lugar de variável independente. Estudiosos/as ativistas da (de)colonialidade/modernidade, como Ramón Grosfoguel, Santiago Castro-Gómez, Edgard Lander, Catherine Walsh,[26] entre muitos outros/as, ou os trabalhos desenvolvidos sob o chapéu Epistemologias do Sul, proposta desenvolvida por Boaventura de Sousa Santos e trabalhada em várias geografias, ficam de fora das mais de 400 páginas do livro.[27] Se nenhuma obra cobre tudo, esse diálogo poderia clarificar como Kaiwar vê os diferentes tipos de desigualdades e graus de opressão a que os cidadãos e as cidadãs estão sujeitos, bem como os diferentes tipos de comoção e mobilização que historicamente suscitam.

O argumento do elitismo intelectual dos estudos subalternos é convincente, mas não explica o derrube das estátuas, as mobilizações no âmbito do *Black Lives Matter* ou o ativismo do feminismo negro. A articulação do capitalismo e do patriarcado é outro grande ausente e fica a questão de se, para Kaiwar, autoras como Silvia Federici não são suficientemente marxistas ou ativistas, bem como todas aquelas que se

26 Por exemplo, Santiago Castro-Gómez e Ramón Grosfoguel, eds., *El giro decolonial. Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global* (Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores; Universidad Central, Instituto de Estudios Sociales Contemporáneos y Pontifi cia Universidad Javeriana, Instituto Pensar, 2007).

27 Por exemplo, Boaventura de Sousa Santos e José Manuel Mendes, eds., *Demodiversity: Toward Post-Abyssal Democracies* (London: Routledge, 2020); Boaventura de Sousa Santos e Maria Paula Meneses, eds., *Knowledges Born in the Struggle. Constructing the Epistemologies of the Global South* (London: Routledge, 2020); Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Sara Araújo e Maíra Baumgarten, "As Epistemologias do Sul num mundo fora do mapa", *Sociologias* 18 (43) (2016).

recusam a estabelecer uma hierarquia entre capitalismo e patriarcado. Se é bem fundamentado o argumento de que o capitalismo é o elemento estrutural do colonialismo, não são justificadas as razões pelas quais a alternativa é necessariamente socialista. Depois do fim do capitalismo, estaremos condenados ao silenciamento das vozes que não se expressam na linguagem da modernidade, eliminando do debate filósofos como Ailton Krenak, líder indígena, ou Mogobe Ramose, que fala a partir da filosofia Ubuntu? As ideias de ecologia de saberes e de aprendizagens recíprocas a partir de diferentes lugares, em que se sustentam as Epistemologias do Sul, não são uma questão apenas discursiva, são sobre alternativas para construir um mundo sem opressão nas suas dimensões económicas, sociais, culturais e políticas.

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