

FORGING

*Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in Hispanic
American and Latino/a Thought*

PEOPLE

Edited by

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Preface

The discussion of race in the United States reflects to a great extent the situation in the country. The adoption of the one-drop rule, according to which anyone who has a drop of black blood is considered black, has too often been taken for granted, resulting in a polarization that characterizes both the formulation of problems related to race and the purported solutions to those problems: a person is either black or white but not both; there is no in between. It also has tended to move to the background the visible dimensions of race and to pay undue attention to biological and genetic conceptions of it; heredity, rather than appearance, has often been regarded as most significant. Finally, it has contributed to the widespread use of the metaphor of purity associated with whites and of impurity associated with blacks: to be white is to be uncontaminated, whereas to be black is to be contaminated. That a mixture is generally different from the elements that compose it but partakes of them, that races involve gradation and fuzzy boundaries, and that visible appearance plays an important role in racial classifications are facts too often neglected.

This model of race takes insufficient note of what much of the world thinks and illustrates the insularity that characterizes some segments of the U.S. community. Indeed, it is seldom that proper attention is paid to the views of other societies. Although the views

on race of some European philosophers, such as Kant and Hume, have been studied in some detail, treatments by Latin Americans or Africans, for example, are generally ignored by North American philosophers concerned with race.

The inadequacy of this parochial approach becomes clear when one considers how conceptions of race vary from place to place. In Cuba, for example, to be black entails a certain kind of appearance. A person who appears to have mixed black-white ancestry is not usually considered black or white but mulatto. In the United States, according to the one-drop rule, to be black requires only one black ancestor, even if physical appearance tells another story. But in Cuba persons of mixed black and white ancestry who look white are generally taken as white, whereas those who appear black are considered black. Clearly the criteria of racial classification used in the United States and Cuba are different. Similar differences can be found between the views of race in the United States and elsewhere in the world.

This neglect of points of view in other parts of the world also applies to ethnicity and nationality. Societies differ substantially in how they establish and think about ethnicity or nationality. Some societies use skin color and physical appearance to establish ethnic and national distinctions; others use lineage or culture. *Indian* is a racial term generally associated with ancestry in the United States, but in some contexts in South America it is used to refer to culture: to be an Indian indicates that one has not adopted the ways of Europeans, thus carrying with it the disparaging connotations that this entails in the eyes of those who are European or have adopted European culture. Nationality is taken in some cases to be a legal marker—whether involving birthplace or ancestry—and in others to be an indicator of kinship, race, or culture. As in the United States, in some parts of Latin America blacks and mulattoes were denied citizenship because of their race or racial mixture, whereas in other parts of that region it was denied on other grounds, including culture.

Considering these differences in conception, it would seem to make sense that theories of race, ethnicity, and nationality need to take into account as many of the various ways in which different societies use these notions as possible. But the tendency in the United

States has been to concentrate on Western European views. This has resulted in inadequate theories, based on cultural and social biases. If U.S. thinking is to make any progress toward an understanding of these phenomena, it needs to go beyond parochial boundaries and consider other societies where race, ethnicity, and nationality also play important roles. How are these notions used in the East, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America?

Latin America is especially important because it is the place where Africans, Amerindians, and Europeans first came together in substantial numbers. Indeed, some scholars have made the argument that the concept of race in particular developed in the context of the encounters between these peoples in the sixteenth century. The details of the story have still to be worked out, but one thing is clear: Latin America is significant in this development. And the significance is not restricted to the fact that Latin America is a meeting place of Europeans, Amerindians, and Africans; it involves also the complex subsequent history of racial, ethnic, and national mixture in the region. Scholars who have studied the pertinent populations do not tire of repeating that Latin America is one of the places in the world where mixing has been most prevalent.

Developments in Latin America are especially pertinent for the United States because of the large, and growing, population of Latinos/as in this country. Latinos/as constitute at present the largest minority group in the United States, surpassing African Americans by increasing margins. And their races, ethnicities, and nationalities are diverse. With regard to race, some Latinos/as consider themselves black, some white, some Asian, and some Amerindian, but most are mixed and view themselves as such. And the cases of ethnicities and nationalities are not very different. Some Latinos/as are Cuban or Colombian born but reside in the United States; others hold double, or even triple, citizenship. Some have parents that are ethnically the same, but others have a variety of ethnic roots. And most identify themselves, or are identified by others, in definite ways while rejecting others. All this creates a need for understanding not only how race, ethnicity, and nationality work in the United States and Latin America but also what Latin Americans and Latinos/as have thought and continue to think of them.

The aim of this book is to take a step in this direction by studying how Hispanic American thinkers in Latin America and Latino/a philosophers in the United States have posed and dealt with issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality. How have they thought of racial, ethnic, and national classifications? What have they made of the different divisions of people that developed in the Americas after the initial encounter in 1492? Before that year, Iberians, Africans, and Amerindians thought of themselves in various ways. Some Iberians regarded themselves as Catalan or Castilian; some Africans identified themselves as Mandinga or Cucuyo; and some Amerindians viewed themselves as Maya or Inca. Many of these labels continued to be used both in their places of origin and in Latin America, although meanings changed over time and under new conditions. However, the encounters, followed by the process of European conquest and domination, resulted in the use of other labels, revealing various ways of thinking about them. Consider, for example, *criollo/a*, *peninsular*, *español/a*, *negro/a*, *blanco/a*, *latinoamerican/a*, *hispano/a*, *hispanoamerican/a*, *indio/a*, *mestizo/a*, *mulato/a*, *cuarterón*, *venezolano/a*, *mexicano/a*, *argentino/a*, and *chileno/a*.

Labels such as these identify people, gathering them into groups and contrasting them with others. One of the most notorious efforts in this direction undertaken in Hispanic America was the classification of people into *castas*, using ancestry criteria. For example, a person whose father was Spanish and mother mestiza was classified as *cuarterón*, and the offspring of a male Spaniard and a *cuarterón* female was dubbed *quinterón*. These labels came about for reasons that are controversial and too many to list here, often having to do with power relations, struggles, conscious and unconscious forces, historical events, and a taxonomic spirit. In many cases they were imposed by some groups on others with particular intentions in mind, but in other cases they were influenced by uncontrollable historical events and forces. In most instances these labels divided people into groups that did not exist before, often reflecting force, coercion, and violence, whence the use of the term *forging* in the title of this volume. In cases of certain nationalities, for example, it is clear that there has been a concerted effort to create them out of situations that naturally may not have given rise to them.

Labels and classifications often point to real features of the people they name, such as a certain cultural heritage, or even a certain geographic origin. Nonetheless, we should not forget that they are human creations that establish boundaries between peoples, uniting some and separating others. When introduced, they also give rise to new historical realities. In Hispanic America to be classified as *peninsular*, regardless of whether you were Catalan or Castilian, male or female, established a distance between you and those who were not so considered, namely, the *criollos/as* on the one hand and the “Indians” on the other. Likewise, to be *hispanoamericanola* created a gap between you and anyone who was *angloamericanola* and those Latin Americans who came from lands that were not part of the Spanish empire.

The task of this book is to show how particular thinkers interpreted the meaning of some of the most significant racial, ethnic, and national labels used in Hispanic America and what they contributed to their understanding and development. Why were Bartolomé de Las Casas and Simón Bolívar especially interested in the labels they used to talk about people in Latin America? What did they mean by these labels? What did they think about *negros/as* and *indios/as* and their relation to nationality? What labels did they favor, and what was historically and philosophically significant in their views?

Latin America is a vast region that includes Brazil, where people speak Portuguese, and the Caribbean, where some populations speak English, Dutch, and French, in addition to various dialects and Creole languages. To try to cover all these areas, with the particular complexities they pose, in a volume of this sort would not have been feasible. For this reason I have left out the parts of Latin America that were not integral to the Spanish empire and have concentrated on those areas that Latin Americans themselves generally refer to as Hispanic America (Hispanoamérica). Even making this major concession to space, I had difficulty coming up with a final list of thinkers to be discussed. Some are obvious: Las Casas, because he was the first author who faced issues of race when he tried to address the rights of Amerindians and Africans; Bolívar, because he struggled with the question of how to forge nations out of the various populations present in Hispanic America after independence; and Zea,

because of his understanding of the identity of a heavily mixed Latin American population. But I had to leave out such important authors as Samuel Ramos, whose thinking was enormously important in the context of Mexican identity, and José Ingenieros, whose ideas about Argentinians were quite influential.

I have referred to the authors included in this volume as “thinkers” to distinguish them from philosophers. This book is about philosophical thought understood broadly, but not all the authors discussed would be classified today strictly as philosophers. In a good number of cases they were activists, and in others their philosophical thought lacks the rigor that is often taken as characteristic of the discipline. Yet all of them made significant and historically influential philosophical claims about the topics with which this book is concerned.

The focus on race, ethnicity, and nationality accounts for the exclusion of gender in the overall discussion. Gender affects members of the same and different races, *ethne*, and nationalities, whether before or after 1492. This makes it a different kind of category, and one that would require the sort of special treatment in each case that would be impossible in a volume such as this. Still, gender may figure importantly in the discussion of particular thinkers, and so I have left this matter to the discretion of the contributors.

The idea for this book arose during a National Endowment for the Humanities Institute on Latin American philosophy that took place at the State University at Buffalo in summer 2005. The institute was an introduction to Latin American philosophy for American college and university teachers. The last topic explored at the institute had to do with identity, and this led to a discussion of race, ethnicity, and nationality. The great interest that this topic elicited and the insufficient time to deal with it during the institute led me to think of inviting a group of scholars to explore it further. Once the initial drafts of the contributions were completed, we gathered in Buffalo for a two-day workshop to discuss them in more detail before final revisions were undertaken.

A work of this nature is possible only because of the cooperation of those who contribute to it, their devotion to scholarship, and their commitment to the project. My thanks, then, go most of all

to the contributors who cooperated fully throughout the process. I am also grateful to Diego von Vacano, who helped with the planning of the workshop that took place in 2007. Finally, I thank the University at Buffalo and its George Hourani Endowment Fund for providing the financial support that made possible the workshop.

Jorge J.E. Gracia

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Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in Hispanic American and Latino/a Thought

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Race, ethnicity, and nationality pose many and complex problems. Some of these are practical and others conceptual, but each kind tends to lead into the other. Most of these problems are evident in Latin America, and they have been addressed by a good number of Hispanic American and Latino/a philosophers. In order to understand the views of these authors it is helpful to begin with a conceptual map of some relevant issues that may be raised concerning race, ethnicity, and nationality before we turn to the historical context. Because Hispanic American thought has a long history and displays great variety in periods and approaches, we must say something about its development as well. Finally, we must try to pull together the main strands in the discussion from the chapters in this volume.

PROBLEMS POSED BY RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONALITY

Some of the most important problems surrounding race, ethnicity, and nationality may be gathered into five general groups: social and political, moral, epistemic, metaphysical, and boundaries and relations.

Social and Political Issues

The social and political issues are perhaps the most controversial. Two sets of them in particular have been repeatedly noted. One concerns the role of racial and ethnic groups within nations; the other has to do with the usefulness of nations within a larger, regional or global, context.

Among the questions that arise concerning the first are the following: What attitude should nations adopt with respect to internal racial and ethnic diversity? Should such diversity be accepted and encouraged, should it be tolerated but discouraged, or should a nation make every effort to eliminate such differences, either by force or persuasion? How can nations maintain political and social unity while being racially and ethnically diverse? Does the political and social unity of a nation require a racially and ethnically homogeneous population? Should political and social decisions and actions be dictated by racial and ethnic considerations?

One issue that has attracted considerable attention in the United States has been framed in terms of “the politics of difference.” This expression refers to attempts to make room in U.S. society for groups, including racial and ethnic ones, that do not fit prevailing views of the American nation. It has been common throughout history to think of nations as being composed of racial and ethnic elements. Some nations see themselves as white or Asian, whereas others see themselves as Christian or Muslim. Some Germans set out to purify the German nation of Jews and Gypsies under the leadership of National Socialism, and some Latin Americans have claimed their Spanish and Christian heritage as part of their national identity, thereby excluding black and Amerindian populations. The politics of difference is an attempt to oppose such moves.

Opponents of this kind of politics see it as threatening and destabilizing factors to national unity insofar as they assert the identity of certain groups over those of others and undermine the unity of nations. In the United States this has translated into calls to make English the official language of the country and to stop the immigration of non-Europeans because languages other than English and peoples of non-European origin do not fit the ethnic and racial

profile considered characteristic by the dominant group of U.S. citizens. Similar arguments have been made in other nations, including Hispanic American nations.

Other issues have been associated with such questions: Does it make sense to have different nations when they have common racial and ethnic populations? Should nations be divided according to racial and ethnic lines, or should other criteria of division be used? In increasingly closer regional and global contexts, does it make sense to have different nations that have common racial and ethnic populations?

Internationalists frequently raise these kinds of political and social issues. They point out that the national political structure is outdated and needs to be changed; nations create more problems than they solve and should be eliminated. Globalization requires the development of new political realities that are more encompassing. The concept of a nation as a sovereign entity, they argue, is as dated in the contemporary world as the concept of the Greek *polis*. Nations stand in the way of progress and advancement, and the artificial boundaries they establish between peoples interfere with the effective functioning of human societies. The future of the world depends on the development of larger and more comprehensive political systems, for the survival of humanity is contingent on the eradication of conflicts that could escalate and produce a human holocaust, but wars are waged by nations and result from conflicts between nations.

Moral Issues

Racial and ethnic categories pose moral problems because their use can be harmful to some persons. For example, racial and ethnic labels often have negative connotations, and their use can create a hostile atmosphere for those to whom they are applied, leading to discrimination and oppression. These classifications can privilege some groups over others, giving them an unfair advantage. The use of racial and ethnic categories tends to perpetuate situations of inferiority and domination for certain groups that can then be more easily identified and manipulated. Racial and ethnic classifications contribute to the homogenization of diverse social groups, ignoring

appropriate differences among them and suppressing these differences in both groups and individuals. And racial and ethnic characterizations often contribute to wars, destruction, and bitter conflicts, because they serve to exacerbate divisions among peoples. In short, the classification of people along racial or ethnic lines raises moral concerns insofar as doing so may cause harm to them.

Some of the moral problems of nationality mirror closely those concerning race and ethnicity. National classifications serve to place some people below others and to attribute what are considered undesirable features to them. But there are also problems idiosyncratic to nationality. For example, the breakdown of humans into nations may serve the aims of dominant elites who, by controlling the national power structures, are able to exploit certain members of the populations for their own benefit. Moreover, the limited sovereignty accorded to nations today allows horrendous crimes to go unpunished. Sovereignty stops nations from interfering in the internal affairs of other nations, precluding the effective opposition to abuses, including genocide, taking place within those nations. In addition, national obligations often conflict with universal duties, which poses serious moral dilemmas.

Epistemic Issues

The epistemic problems posed by race, ethnicity, and nationality are related to the lack of clear and consistent criteria for distinguishing these categories. The case of race is perhaps most evident, because the criteria used to determine it varies from individual to individual, group to group, context to context, place to place, country to country, and time to time. Differing epistemic racial criteria preclude agreement as to who qualifies as a member of a race and provide the grounds for the argument that racial categories are subjective and hinge on context.

The epistemic difficulties posed by the instability of racial criteria are not restricted to the variability of the criteria. There is also the problem of accessibility to the conditions used to satisfy the criteria. For example, the epistemic situation of blacks in the United States is unclear because there are no definite rules concerning degrees of

mixing. Consider that the one-drop rule commonly used to determine whether one is black is imprecise, for it cannot be effectively and practically determined. Indeed, many racially mixed persons join the white population in the United States every year, because in many cases it is impossible to determine that they had a person of color in their ancestry. Racial criteria generally used are ineffective, whether they involve color, lineage, or culture.

The case of ethnicity is even more controversial than that of race, for the epistemic criteria applied to *ethne* are very often contextual. Consider the case of Latinos in the United States. What is it that we can use to identify them? That they speak Spanish? No, for obviously many persons regarded as Latinos do not speak Spanish at all, or only as a second language. Food? Again no, for there is no food that is common to all Latinos; Cubans and Mexicans, for example, have very different cuisines. Music? Not possible, for similar reasons. Religion? Latinos belong to all sorts of faiths, from Roman Catholicism to Judaism and Islamism to voodooism. Lineage? No, because not all Latinos are tied by descent, and many Latinos have no Latino ancestors, being children of non-Latino immigrants to Latin America. So what universal criteria, or criterion, can be applied to identify Latinos?

The epistemic problems posed by nationality are less obvious but still present. Although there are often markers of citizenship for particular nations, there is no uniform set of criteria of nationality across the board. This puts in doubt the possibility of establishing judgments about national identity that apply to every nationality on firm grounds. In some countries nationality is determined by blood relation, but in others it is determined by birthplace, and in others it is established by a combination of the two. But most countries allow a process whereby persons can be naturalized if they fulfill certain requirements that do not have to do with blood or land. Obviously, there is considerable latitude in what determines nationality.

Metaphysical Issues

Racial, ethnic, and national categories pose metaphysical problems because they appear to be too narrow, skewed, or inaccurate. Do

they reflect anything real outside the mind, or are they imaginative creations resulting from special interests and cultural mores?

In the case of race the question comes up because much scientific evidence suggests that race is not a biological reality. It appears to be a social construction and not a characteristic of anything in the world. Some authors go so far as to argue that it is a meaningless and groundless concept, a remnant of archaic science; race is a fictional concept, along the lines of unicorns and centaurs. Racial taxonomies appear to lack objective bases and often reflect personal and social preferences.

Until precise genetic studies became possible in the past thirty years, the data on which to base racial classifications were too inaccurate and unstable to support any clear conclusions. Skin pigmentation, cranial configuration, and even blood profiles, among others, proved unreliable. But recent, more accurate genetic studies have not fared much better. To this, some scientists and philosophers add that racial categories arbitrarily place unwarranted emphasis on certain physical features, providing misleading descriptions of people. Why should skin color, for example, be given priority in most racial classifications? Moreover, racial categories homogenize; they make us think of all members of a race as being the same, or very similar, whereas in fact racial groups are diverse, not just because of the differences among their individual members, but also because they contain what appear to be many subgroups.

The case of ethnicity is similar. In the first place, it is questionable that clear-cut definitions and understandings of particular ethnic groups are possible. And ethnic categories seem to privilege some at the expense of others. Some argue, for example, that a category such as Hispanic, as used in the United States, seems both inaccurate and to privilege a Spanish, Iberian, and European component. The term *Hispanic* connotes Spanish or Iberian, and therefore European, giving prominence to this cultural element, in contrast to Amerindian and African elements that are clearly at work in the population so labeled. Finally, ethnic categories, like racial ones, tend to homogenize those to whom they refer, ignoring significant differences.

The metaphysical problems posed by nationalities originate in that nationalities appear to be artificial and changing and, therefore,

more a matter of perception and perspective than of facts. Nations are contrived entities whose boundaries are the result of historically contingent events that are subject to change; they are artifacts produced by humans and therefore subject to human manipulation.

Relations between Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Another set of difficulties concerns the relations between race, ethnicity, and nationality, for they are so mixed that it is not easy to distinguish them. This has led some to argue that they cannot be distinguished and that it is futile to try.

The attempt to eliminate the distinction between race and ethnicity comes from two sides: from race, insofar as it is seen as including ethnic elements and therefore as fundamentally ethnic; and from ethnicity, insofar as this is taken to be so permeated with racial elements that it cannot be clearly separated from them. The first might be described as trying to substitute the notion of ethnic race for the notions of race and ethnicity; the second, as doing the same with the notion of racial ethnicity.

At least three important considerations complicate the issue. First, historical discussions of race have always included ethnic elements and vice versa. From the very beginning racial and cultural divisions have been intertwined. Blacks have generally been described as being different from whites not only in terms of their physical and genetic characteristics but also in terms of their customs, attitudes, and achievements. Second, race cannot be separated clearly from ethnicity because the physical phenotypes on which it is often based are not easily distinguishable from cultural ones. Most phenotypes in fact are the result of both physical and environmental forces, and racial phenotypes are notoriously so. Third, whenever one tries to separate the notion of race from the notion of ethnicity, race becomes entangled with ethnicity. We need not do more here than refer to the case of the change of name from “black” to “African American” in the United States. In spite of the efforts of blacks to develop a conception of themselves and an identity based on ethnicity through the change of the name, race gets into it so that in fact “African American” has come to mean racially black. In short, race and ethnicity seem to be

hopelessly intertwined and not capable of distinction apart from each other. Unfortunately, matters are not very different when it comes to ethnicity and nationality, or race and nationality.

The situation of race, ethnicity, and nationality in Latin America reveals many of the philosophical problems mentioned. The enormous racial and ethnic diversity present in the region raises serious challenges to the philosopher. What kind of political and social structure should be adopted, and what role should the various races and ethnics of the region play in it? What is the right course of action concerning these races and ethnics? What epistemic criteria should be used to distinguish them? And ultimately, what is it that separates these groups of people? Hispanic American thinkers have grappled with these issues for the past half a millennium, and Latino/a philosophers in the United States are beginning to take note of them. So let us turn to Hispanic American and Latino/a philosophy briefly before we discuss how race, ethnicity, and nationality have been treated in it.

HISPANIC AMERICAN AND LATINO/A PHILOSOPHY

The category “Hispanic” may be understood broadly to include the categories “Spanish,” “Spanish American,” “Iberian,” “Iberoamerican,” “Latin American,” and “Latino/a.” *Iberian* has to do with Spain or Portugal. *Iberoamerican* refers to the parts of the Americas that were conquered by Spain and Portugal and stayed under their control. *Latin American* refers to everything in the Americas that is not American (U.S.) or Canadian, even if strictly speaking it should include the French parts of Canada. Indeed, sometimes it even excludes those parts of the Caribbean and South America that were French, Dutch, or English colonies, such as Haiti and Jamaica. *Latino/a* is most often used to refer to anyone who has Latin American ancestry in the United States, although it usually excludes French, Dutch, or English. *Spanish* has to do with Spain. *Spanish American* or *Hispanic American* involves the parts of the Americas that were former colonies of Spain, although some, including me, argue that it extends to the Portuguese colonies since Hispania refers to the entire Iberian Peninsula, not just Spain. Here, of course, we are concerned

with Hispanic American philosophy in the restricted sense of the philosophy produced in the lands that at some point were Spanish dominions, and with Latino/a philosophy, that is, the philosophy produced by Latinos/as in the United States.

Identity

The notion of a Latin American philosophy has been the subject of heated controversy for most of the twentieth century, and in general the issues involved in the controversy apply as well to a Hispanic American philosophy. Five of the most hotly debated foci of the controversy are existence, identity, characteristics, originality, and authenticity. Is there such a thing as Hispanic American philosophy? In what does its identity consist? Does it have any distinguishing marks? Is it original? And is it authentic?

There are deep disagreements over the answers to these questions. There are at least three ways of looking at them depending on the approach used: universalist, culturalist, and critical. The universalist views philosophy as a universal discipline, not different from science. The fundamental issue for universalists turns on whether Hispanic Americans have been able to produce the kind of universal discipline that one expects when one has science as a model. Its problems are common to all humans, its method is also common, and its conclusions are supposed to be true, regardless of particular circumstances. Most universalists see Hispanic American philosophy as largely a failure in this respect.

The culturalist thinks that truth is always perspectival, dependent on a point of view, and that the method to acquire it is always dependent on a cultural context. Philosophy is a historical, non-scientific enterprise concerned with the elaboration of a general point of view from a certain personal or cultural perspective. Accordingly, the culturalist has no problem accepting a Hispanic American philosophy insofar as Hispanic Americans have engaged in developing views from their perspective as individuals or as Hispanic Americans, using whatever means they have found appropriate to do so. Whether these thinkers are original or authentic or have produced a kind of scientific philosophy are irrelevant matters.

Finally, the critical approach considers philosophy a result of social conditions and closely related to those conditions. Some conditions are conducive to the production of philosophy, or what is sometimes called authentic philosophy, whereas others are not. Unfortunately, proponents of this position see Hispanic American philosophy as a failure in this respect because of the conditions operative in Hispanic America. Hispanic American philosophy is inauthentic and therefore not true philosophy.

Some questions concerning the notion of Latin American philosophy were first raised in Latin America in the nineteenth century, but they were seriously explored only at the end of the first half of the twentieth century. By that time Latin American philosophy in general and Hispanic American philosophy in particular had already had a long history, going back four hundred years.

Development

The history of Hispanic American philosophy may be divided into four periods: the colonial period, the period of independentist thought, the period in which new nations began to function, and the twentieth century, which itself can be divided into several parts. Each of the first three periods is dominated by a particular ideological tradition: the colony by scholasticism, independence by the Enlightenment, and the new nations by positivism. The situation in the twentieth century is more complex and varied.

Philosophy began in Hispanic America with the controversy surrounding the rights of conquered Amerindians under the leadership of Bartolomé de Las Casas. Scholasticism, introduced by the Spanish and Portuguese *conquistadores*, was the dominant perspective. Among its most important representatives are Alonso de la Vera Cruz (ca. 1504–84), Tomás de Mercado (ca. 1530–75), and Antonio Rubio (1548–1615). But humanism also had some influence, as is clear from the work of Juan de Zumárraga (ca. 1468–1548) and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651–95), among others.

The eighteenth century, under the influence of modern philosophy and the Enlightenment, helped prepare the way for the revolutionary wars of independence. The liberal ideas based on the thought

of the French philosophes were imported to help consolidate independentist views. Authors such as Benito Díaz de Gamarra y Dávalos (1745–83) and Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731–87) were influenced by early modern philosophers such as Descartes, but the wave of independentist thought found its greatest inspiration in the Enlightenment. Among those who were most influential are Simón Bolívar (1783–1830), Miguel Hidalgo (1753–1811), and José María Morelos (1765–1815), as well as the late figure, José Martí (1854–95).

Once liberation from the colonial powers was achieved in most areas of Hispanic America, the newly constituted nations faced the challenges of making true political units out of the remnants of the Spanish empire. The ideology of choice for this purpose was positivism. This was an eclectic point of view that consisted in a peculiar mix of the thought of several European thinkers, among whom were Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Ernst Haeckel. The period of positivistic hegemony extended roughly from the mid-nineteenth century to the first decade of the twentieth century. During that time it became not only the most popular philosophy in Latin America but also the official philosophy of some countries. Among the most famous positivists are Gabino Barreda (1818–81), Justo Sierra (1848–1912), José Victorino Lastarria (1817–88), and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811–88). Andrés Bello (1781–1865) is a transitional figure between independentist thought and positivism, and José Ingenieros (1877–1925) and Enrique José Varona (1849–1933) prepare the way for the revolt against positivism.

The situation in the twentieth century may be divided into three periods: from about 1910 to 1940, when the foundations were laid for future developments; 1940 to 1960, when a degree of normality was achieved; and from about 1960 on, when maturity was reached. Contemporary Hispanic American philosophy began around 1910, when positivism declined drastically. By about 1930 the remaining positivists in Latin America were looked on more as museum pieces than as proponents of a viable philosophy that merited attention.

The generation of thinkers that followed positivism and rebelled against it constitutes the first phase of contemporary Hispanic American thought. The principal members of this generation, called “the generation of founders” by Francisco Romero and later renamed

“the generation of patriarchs” by Francisco Miró Quesada, are well known: Alejandro Korn (1860–1936) in Argentina, Alejandro Octavio Deústua (1849–1945) in Peru, José Vasconcelos (1882–1959) and Antonio Caso (1883–1946) in Mexico, Enrique José Molina (1871–1956) in Chile, and Carlos Vaz Ferreira (1872–1958) in Uruguay.

Positivism was superseded with the help of ideas imported first from France and later from Germany. The process began with the influence of Émile Boutroux and Henri Bergson and of French vitalism and intuitionism, but it was cemented when José Ortega y Gasset introduced the thought of Max Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann, and other German philosophers in Latin America. The impact of this philosophy and of Ortega’s thought was substantial, in particular on the generation that followed that of the founders, called by Miró Quesada “the generation of forgers.” Samuel Ramos (1897–1959), Francisco Romero (1891–1962), and the other members of this generation followed the founders’ course, attacking positivist ideas and favoring in many instances a rather poetic philosophical style that contrasts with the scientific emphasis of positivism.

The main preoccupation of the founders and the following generation was the absorption of European ideas; they wanted to be philosophically up to date. In contrast to the objectives of the philosophers that preceded them, which were for the most part religious, political, or economic, the concern of these thinkers was mostly philosophical. This indicates a radical change in the Hispanic American philosophical tradition, insofar as scholasticism, Enlightenment liberalism, and positivism had objectives that in general were alien to the philosophical enterprise: for scholastics, the primary objective was the apologetic defense of the faith; for liberals, the end was political emancipation; and for positivists, the goal was economic and social progress. In all cases, European ideas were adopted with preestablished ends.

With the generation of philosophers born around 1910, self-criticism entered Hispanic American philosophy. The limitations on originality characteristic of previous generations were also in part the result of the practical difficulties involved in pursuing a philosophical career in Latin America. The contribution of those generations was restricted to a large extent to the importation of foreign thought; originality, therefore, was not achieved except

occasionally, and in a majority of cases there was no effort to address philosophical problems or relate foreign ideas to the local context. There were exceptions, of course. In *Theory of Man* (1952), Francisco Romero developed a philosophical anthropology that went beyond the thought of the philosophers in whom he found inspiration, but it was not until the generation of Risieri Frondizi, Eduardo García Máynez, Francisco Miró Quesada, and Leopoldo Zea, among others, that originality began to surface more regularly among Hispanic American philosophers and philosophical practice was “normalized,” as Romero would say.

This generation’s full impact was not felt until the 1940s. Hispanic American philosophy underwent a fundamental change at this time, similar in many ways to the one it experienced under the founders. Ideas were not just imported; they were also critically examined, and some were discarded while others were modified. There was still plenty of imitation, but in general Hispanic American thinkers did not restrict themselves to the adoption of foreign views, going further and actually developing them. More important still, in many cases they appropriated problems rather than ideas.

Another significant development at this time was the appearance of the Pan-American philosopher. Before 1910 the pattern of philosophical exchange in which Hispanic American philosophers were engaged was linear and unidirectional. It consisted in lines drawn between Europe and each Hispanic American country or region in which there was some philosophical activity. The pattern did not involve exchange: ideas came from Europe and were absorbed in Latin America, with little dialogue between the extreme points of the lines; the vector generally pointed in only one direction, toward Latin America. But certain changes were introduced in this pattern with the generation of founders and especially with the next generation. Although the pattern of communication between Europe and Latin America could still be characterized as a one-way street, the philosophical work of Hispanic American thinkers began to draw attention beyond national boundaries. The thought of Deústua, Caso, Romero, and Ramos, for example, began to be known not only in the countries of origin of these philosophers but also in other places in Latin America. Nevertheless, the thinkers themselves remained for

the most part isolated internationally, and the philosophical dialogue in which they participated was national or even local.

This situation changed with the generation born around 1910. Some of these philosophers moved easily among the Hispanic American countries; they traveled throughout Latin America, giving lectures and establishing dialogue with other philosophers. I do not want to give the false impression that philosophical Pan-Americanism was very strong during this period. Even today isolation is one of the most pervasive characteristics of the situation in which Hispanic American philosophers find themselves. Still there was a change for the better, so that, although the pattern of communication characteristic of the period of the founders was still in force, new lines of communication began to develop.

Philosophical Pan-Americanism was the result of many factors, at least one of which should be mentioned: the progressive development of the consciousness of a Hispanic American philosophical identity, in turn a result in part of the consciousness of the growing importance of Latin America in the world and, on the philosophical side, of the introduction in Hispanic America of Ortega's perspectivism. The preoccupation with an autochthonous Hispanic and Latin American philosophy that began to develop with the founders and gelled, by the time of Ramos and Zea, in a controversy in which practically all important philosophers of the period participated gave impetus to the study and dissemination of the philosophical work of Hispanic Americans in other countries.

An important result of philosophical Pan-Americanism was a growing acquaintance among Hispanic American philosophers and an increase in their exchange of ideas. All of this resulted in international agreements among diverse institutions and in publication projects in which philosophers from various countries have cooperated. The decade beginning with 1940 was especially important, because during that time philosophy became institutionalized in most Hispanic American countries. The number of national philosophical societies and centers, institutes, faculties, and departments that had as their exclusive end the teaching and investigation of philosophy increased substantially. Some faculties of philosophy and letters, or of humanities, where philosophy was taught, had existed before, but

many others were established at this time. The result was that most important universities had philosophy faculties after 1960.

The philosophical orientation of the period 1940–60 does not reveal drastic changes. The generation of the founders used French vitalism as an instrument to reject positivism, and the following generation, with Ortega's help, took charge of the process, incorporating German philosophy and the new ideas introduced by phenomenology and existentialism. In this period Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre constituted the dominant philosophical force in Latin America. To this must be added the renewed impetus of scholasticism. There were few philosophers who worked outside these currents, and the ones who did had no institutional power. The number of sympathizers of philosophical analysis and Marxism continued to grow, but in general Thomism, phenomenology, and existentialism dominated.

After 1960 new philosophical currents acquired importance in Hispanic American philosophy. Three stand out: Marxism, philosophical analysis, and the philosophy of liberation. Socialist thought was not new to Latin America. Its introduction can be traced to the nineteenth century. The impact of the socialist ideas of Claude Henri de Saint-Simon (1790–1825) and Charles Fourier (1772–1873), for example, can be clearly seen in the treatise *Dogma socialista* of Esteban Echevarría (1805–51). In the twentieth century, Emilio Frugoni (1880–1969) in Uruguay and José Carlos Mariátegui (1895–1930) in Peru, among others, adopted a Marxist perspective. Until relatively recently Marxism was a marginal philosophical movement in Hispanic America, but in the past few decades it has acquired importance not only politically but also ideologically. The popularity of the Marxist perspective has made possible its increasing institutionalization and its impact on other philosophical traditions.

In contrast to Marxism, philosophical analysis arrived late in Hispanic America and, owing to its technical and academic character, has not yet become as popular as other approaches among Hispanic American philosophers. Nonetheless, it has become one of the most forceful philosophical currents in the region.

The “philosophy of liberation” is an autochthonous Latin American movement that mixes the philosophical nationalism to which I

have already referred with some Catholic and Marxist ideas. Among its initial important proponents were Enrique Dussel and Horacio Cerutti-Guldberg. Although it is not always clear that proponents of this viewpoint have a common goal, it is obvious that the notion of liberation is one of their fundamental concepts: liberation from the slavery imposed on Latin America by imported ideologies and the development of a genuinely autochthonous thought that results from reflection on the Latin American reality.

To this must be added an appendix concerning Latino/a philosophy in the United States. Latino/a philosophy is a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, and it is not until very recently that some Latino/a philosophers have begun to work in areas related to Hispanic/Latino issues and to identify themselves as Hispanics or Latinos/as. A few distinguished philosophers of Hispanic or Latin American descent had worked in the United States, including George Santayana and Héctor-Neri Catañeda, but their philosophical approaches and loyalties followed mainstream developments. However, in the late twentieth century a new sense of Latino/a identity in philosophy developed among a growing group of philosophers. Among those who have been identified with this movement are Linda M. Alcoff, J. Angelo Corlett, Jorge J.E. Gracia, Susana Nuccetelli, Eduardo Mendieta, and Ofelia Schutte. These are also the philosophers who have contributed more to the discourse on issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality, in particular through an analysis of identity.

Hispanic American and Latino/a Views

Each of the periods of development mentioned above makes an interesting and different contribution to the discussion of race, ethnicity, and nationality in Hispanic America. Some of the problems addressed are idiosyncratic to each period, but others persist throughout all periods. Likewise, some of the philosophical perspectives from which these problems are viewed and the kind of solutions offered to them are unique to the periods, but some extend beyond them.

The history of Hispanic American thought opens with the controversy raised by Bartolomé de Las Casas concerning the native

inhabitants of the Americas, whom he referred to as “Indians.” His main concern, as pointed out by Ted Humphrey and Janet Burke, is the rights of these people. Spaniards had come to the Americas as conquerors and had subjugated and enslaved the native populations and forced them to accept Christianity. This subjugation and force was justified in the eyes of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda and others through the use of Aristotle and the concept of the barbarian. For Aristotle, barbarians are natural slaves and do not have the same rights as fully human beings.

This is the ostensive nature of the issues raised by Las Casas. Underlying these issues, however, is another not explicitly addressed by him, the question of the status of Indians in the Spanish empire. The issue has two dimensions: should they become part of that empire and members of it, and if so, under what conditions are they to be allowed to do so? The first issue is clearly related to the nature of Indians. If they are fully human, then they have to be treated as such, and their possible integration or assimilation into Spanish society should not be in dispute. After all, the Iberian Peninsula was a medley of different “nations”—Jews, Muslims, Galicians, Basques, and so on—and the Catholic Kings were precisely involved in the process of integrating them into a new nation, Spain. But if Indians are not fully human, then they are not entitled to the same rights as humans.

The second issue concerns the condition of integration and assimilation. How can Indians become part of the Spanish empire, and perhaps ultimately of the Spanish nation, when they have different customs and religions? Some authors argued that this integration and assimilation was not possible insofar as Indians were naturally slaves. Their status was to remain slaves, or something very similar to that. As such, it is appropriate to impose on them the ways of the Spaniards, in particular, Catholicism. But Las Casas disagreed, arguing that Indians are to be treated with the proper respect owed all members of humanity. So, yes, their assimilation into Spanish society is possible and desirable, but it has to be accomplished appropriately, and their conversion to Christianity has to be through persuasion as prescribed by the Gospels.

Finally, for Las Casas, these questions have a paramount moral dimension. Indians had been treated abominably by Spaniards, and

as human beings they deserved better. This accusation is put in highly rhetorical terms intended to change the situation for the better, helping to create the black legend about Spain and its treatments of Amerindians. But it also raises the ethical/legal issue of the proper place for the laws of conquered peoples, and perhaps we could even say of dependent and dominated groups.

The topics of national and cultural assimilation are first posed indirectly by Las Casas, and they continued to be a source of discussion and controversy in the history of Hispanic America. From his time on, questions were raised about how to conceptualize the peoples of the Americas and how to find a place for them in the new social and political order. These topics are central to the thought of authors concerned with the political independence of Hispanic America from the Spanish empire, as made clear in the chapters on Bolívar by José Aguilar, on Bello by Iván Jaksić, and on Martí by Ofelia Schutte.

By the time these thinkers, inspired by the Enlightenment, were writing, Hispanic American society was clearly divided into at least five groups of people: native-born Spaniards residing in the Americas (*peninsulares*), descendants of Spaniards born in Hispanic America (*criollos*), Indians (*indios*), blacks (*negros*), and mixes of these. The mixed group was itself divided into many subgroups, including *mestizos/as*, persons of mixed Indian-Spanish heritage, predominant in the Andean regions and Mexico, and *mulatos/as*, persons of mixed black-Spanish heritage, predominant in the Caribbean and the western coast of South America. Most *peninsulares* were content with the status quo, which favored them over the other groups. But *criollos* were dissatisfied with their situation in that they wanted to be treated as equal to native-born Spaniards. Some of them, disillusioned with their second-class status, concluded that the only way to achieve parity was through political independence, although this did not resolve the situation of Indians, blacks, and those of mixed blood. What was to be done with them? The questions that underlay the issues Las Casas had raised at the beginning of the sixteenth century regularly resurfaced in the history of Hispanic American thought.

The Enlightenment had put an emphasis on universality and reason, so independentist thinkers saw their task as adapting these

ideas in ways that would serve to meet the challenges in Hispanic America. Interestingly, they did not adopt a uniform solution and dealt with the problems posed by race, ethnicity, and nationality in different ways. As Aguilar makes clear, Bolívar's main concern was the forging of nations out of the diverse populations of Hispanic America, but the conditions of this process were fundamentally political. Bolívar did not think that ethnic or racial homogenization was necessary for the unity of Hispanic American nations. Indeed, he did not even think that a particular culture was required. What was necessary was that different elements, brought together by history, be integrated into a harmonious whole. He optimistically believed this was possible in Hispanic America because of the character of the different populations that entered into the mix: Spanish indolence, Indian peacefulness, and black dependence could work together to create an equilibrium in spite of the inequality of numbers between these groups of people, for the aim was political unity, not homogeneity of language, culture, religion, race, or ethnicity. The spirit required to unite a nation was a political inclination toward the general will and a limitation of public authority.

Bolívar did not concern himself with issues of morality and rights or racial and ethnic groups, although he unambiguously opposed slavery. Nor was he interested in exploring the nature of race or ethnicity. He concentrated his efforts in the understanding of nationality, which he developed in political terms, making room for diversity, in opposition to the homogeneous model adopted by Mill, among others.

Bello's views differ in some important ways from those of Bolívar. As Jaksić suggests, Bello seems to have adopted an ethnic notion of race, conceived in terms of culture and history rather than heredity and phenotypical characteristics. Arguing against José Victorino Lastarria's view of the role of racial mixing, or *mestizaje*, in Hispanic America and the opportunity it presented to correct the abuses of the Spanish government and the Catholic Church, he emphasized the positive role that the Spanish conquest had in cultural terms in the formation of a homogeneous population in Hispanic America. He opposed the position according to which members of the native populations who did not assimilate to the prevailing culture should

be exterminated, but he did not hesitate to argue in favor of isolating and leaving them to self-destruct. This kind of argument appears callous and inhumane, but Bello considered his view a recognition of the inevitable: ideals are fine as such, but the reality in Hispanic America needed to be faced.

Another important element in Bello's view, echoed by others, is the conception of Amerindians as foreigners; the Chilean territory was their place of residence, but he considered them and their customs and culture alien. In order for Amerindians to become part of the nation, they would have to change their culture and adopt the language and ways of the prevailing culture in Chile.

With Bello, then, we have an interesting twist to the controversy raised by Las Casas in the sixteenth century. For Las Casas, the central issue was the rights of Amerindians, and these rights extended to laws and culture, because, as human beings, they were entitled to them. But for Bello, the native population did not have rights to maintain their own culture even in the territory they had occupied before the Spanish conquest. The force of history was against them, and their only way to survive was to abandon their ways and become assimilated into the national culture resulting from the conquest.

At the opposite end of Bello's position, and harking back to Las Casas's emphasis on the rights and dignity of Indians, is the thought of Martí. As Schutte suggests, Martí's overall emphasis on the dignity of human beings in the context of the struggle for political independence and the creation of the Cuban nation, led him to minimize, and even deny, the importance of racial differences among humans and to emphasize what all humans have in common.

Martí's view advances the discussion of race in Hispanic America in several ways. First, he adopts what appear to be two views of race. In one, race is real and identified with all humans: the human race. In another, race is not real, but as we would say today a social construction, which can be easily challenged when one carefully observes human beings in different contexts and societies. In this sense, race has to do with how people look or are perceived. Second, racism also comes in two varieties. In one, it is based on the wrong conception of race according to which there are different races of

human beings, and it is used to establish hierarchies of rights and values among them. In another, racism is based on phenotypical appearance, and it is used to set right the abuses committed against human beings who happen to look different from others.

Underlying these distinctions is the goal that Martí set for himself: to develop an inclusive conception of the Cuban nation in which no citizen is treated differently because of the way he or she looks. Echoing Bolívar, he believed that nations are political, united by concerns, aspirations, and interests, and harked back to some of the concerns and attitudes of Las Casas. The context of Martí and Las Casas was different, as were their styles of argumentation. Las Casas was preoccupied with the abuses of the conquest, the preservation of the rights of Amerindians and their evangelization, and used a scholastic model. Martí was concerned with the unification of a population in order to create a force for independence and eventually a nation composed of citizens who were treated with dignity and had rights as human beings, and his source of inspiration was the Enlightenment and German idealism. But both agreed that the human race is entitled to some basic rights that are universal and independent of cultural and racial differences. And they were instrumental in raising the issues of the nature of race and ethnicity, the moral questions concerning the rights of different peoples under governments, and the nature of nationality.

The motivation and perspective of the generation of thinkers that adopted positivism were different in some important ways. Their concern, unlike that of independentists, was not independence but rather the creation and development of new nations and the requirements for it that the diverse populations of Hispanic America entailed. Their views were not informed by the ideals of universality and rationality of the Enlightenment but instead turned to the pragmatic and scientific notions of positivism. In this view nations require order to make the kind of progress they envisioned. So how are they to be conceived, and what is the role of race and ethnicity in them?

As Burke and Humphrey point out, it is significant that Sarmiento uses a key term that is related to one that dominated the discourse of Las Casas: barbarism. Las Casas had argued that the

true barbarians in Hispanic America were the Spaniards and not the Indians, for they behaved inhumanly toward the native peoples of the Americas. Indians were civilized, gentle, fully human, and capable of understanding the message of Christ, but the Spaniards were greedy, ruthless, and exploitative and violated the moral code of Christianity.

Unlike Las Casas, Sarmiento was not interested in the abuses committed against the native peoples of the Americas by the Spaniards or their rights. His preoccupation was with the prospects for the new nations of Hispanic America. In this, unlike Bolívar, he was pessimistic, for various reasons. First, the geographic environment of the Americas forced the inhabitants to develop living conditions that militated against the development of civilization, which he understood in classical terms going back to Rome. Second, the racial components of Hispanic America also worked against the development of civilization. Sarmiento has a biological and phenotypical understanding of race, in which it is defined by physical characteristics and mental capacities. In his view, the “copper-colored” race of the natives of the Americas, to whom he referred as savages, is limited in its mental abilities, being characterized by feelings rather than rational thinking. Blacks also are regarded as inferior to whites, although Sarmiento seems to value them more than Amerindians.

The future of the Argentine nation in particular is, therefore, unclear and difficult, and the only way to deal with it is through education and Europeanization. This poses a kind of paradox for Sarmiento. For clearly his racial conception of Amerindians and blacks does not easily tolerate the improvement through education that he envisions. But it must be remembered that there is also an environmental aspect of his view that can, with time and proper direction, be modified.

The same emphasis on education that we see in Sarmiento, as noted by Oscar Martí, is the backbone of the other positivists included here, Justo Sierra. Sierra’s interest in history and his pessimism about the future of Mexico in particular and Latin America in general, also echo Sarmiento. As positivists, they saw the key to social progress in science, and the source of scientific development

and dissemination is education, which they both understood had to be insulated from the influence of the Catholic Church. Moreover, through education and the establishment of educational institutions such as a national university, Mexico and other Latin American nations could form the kind of social and national spirit that would resolve the divisions characteristic of their societies. How are we to forge nations out of societies that are racially and culturally mixed? Only by the development of a national continuity between the present and the past that will prepare the way for a unified future. The unity of a nation has to be forged out of the facts of its history and a proper knowledge of them.

The twentieth century brings to the fore different concerns and attitudes on the part of Hispanic American thinkers who discuss race, ethnicity, and nationality. The problems of conquest and colonization, independence, and nation building recede to some extent, and issues of social justice, Latin American identity, and the role of mestizos in society take precedence. A revolt against positivism and its emphasis on order and progress was launched in various countries, and a new emphasis on values and the aesthetic directed much of the effort. Chapters on four key figures illustrate these concerns: on Rodó by Arleen Salles, on Vasconcelos by Diego von Vacano, on Mariátegui by Renzo Llorente, and on Zea by Amy Oliver.

Rodó is one of the early leaders of the new approach. His emphasis, as Salles notes, was on Latin American identity and what it had to offer to resist the power of the United States. At least two aspects of this are significant for the topics of this volume. One is the view that Latin Americans constitute a race, which Rodó understood variously in biological, cultural, and political terms. The other is that this race is characterized by moral values that contrast with the pragmatic and utilitarian perspective adhered to by Anglo-Saxons and is responsible for the growth of technology at the expense of spiritual ideals. True humanity is characterized by freedom and a moral sense characteristic of European culture, which has been influential in the development of Latin American civilization. Although Rodó recognized the indigenous and black components of Latin American populations, he did not work out their exact contributions to this civilization.

The themes of Latin American identity and its contrasts with Anglo-Saxon identity are also central to Vasconcelos's view, as von Vacano tells us. Vasconcelos developed a metaphysical system in which reality is understood in terms of a harmony of opposites, and multiple racial composition is another dimension of this principle, where harmony will be worked out among them. Leaving behind the emphasis on nations characteristic of thinkers in the previous century, Vasconcelos argued for the abolition of national boundaries and instead for the development of ethnic or racial associations.

In this context, the mission of Latin America is to give the world a new race that will combine the best elements from current races. This race, which he understood, like Rodó, in biological and cultural terms, will be characterized by an aesthetic sense that seeks harmony and greater homogeneity brought about from the integration of heterogeneous elements. This contrasts, as Rodó pointed out, with the utilitarian and pragmatic character of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Mariátegui's approach contrasts in significant ways with that of Rodó and Vasconcelos. Whereas the two latter thinkers put an emphasis on the international and Latin American, Mariátegui, turned to the particular problem of the Indian in Peru. And in contrast to their aesthetic and idealistic emphasis, Mariátegui adopted a Marxist perspective in which economics and materialism are essential. Finally, by raising and concentrating on the problem of the Indian, he put up front an issue that remained in the background for many Latin American thinkers until this time.

The problem of the Indian, according to Mariátegui, has to do with their moral and material misery. As Llorente points out, Mariátegui did not distinguish between the problem that the Indian poses for Peruvian society and the problem that the Indian faces because of his position in Peruvians society, and this creates difficulties for his position. The problem of the Indian results from an economic system that has oppressed Indians throughout centuries and becomes critical because of their large numbers. The problem is not racial or ethnic but economic, and its solution is not racial or ethnic mixing and progressive homogenization, as others had proposed, but rather changing economic conditions.

Like many of the authors discussed here, Mariátegui did not have a clear understanding of race and ethnicity or of their boundaries. Indeed, he often used the terms in ways opposite from how they are used today: race is a matter of culture, and ethnicity is a matter of biological and phenotypical constitution. Moreover, his views about the character of indigenous populations, blacks, and other ethnic or racial minorities, such as the Chinese, were not favorable. He even used the term *barbarism*, with its ominous history in Hispanic America, to refer to blacks. Following other Latin Americans of the time, he referred to Latin Americans as a whole as a race, and he did the same with the people of the United States and Spaniards. And he paid lip service to the ethnic notion of a nation and of Latin America to which Rodó and Vasconcelos subscribed. But his contribution, which is not always consistently held, was to argue for a nonethnic and nonracial conception of a nation based on politics and economics. The goal for him was not racial or ethnic homogenization but the elimination of an economically oppressive system and the adoption of views that promote it.

If Mariátegui saw no solution in ethnic and racial mixing and homogenization and discouraged it in favor of economic and political measures, Zea, as Oliver argues, made ethnic and racial mixing the central point of his understanding of Latin America and nationality. For him, *mestizaje* is the key to nationality, and it is the solution to the problem of national unity that had preoccupied political thinkers in Latin America. Indeed, it is the predisposition to mixing that Zea considers an important contribution of the Spanish to Latin America. For, unlike Anglo Saxons, who kept themselves apart as much as possible, Spaniards had a tolerant attitude toward mixing and freely intermingled the native populations racially and ethnically. National unity in Latin America requires the ethnic and racial assimilation of the indigenous population, which in fact they have accomplished themselves. Zea contrasts this with a process in which they would have been assimilated by others. Assimilation provides national unity and eliminates discrimination.

In Mexico, a factor other than *mestizaje* also helped to achieve that unity, according to Zea: the Mexican Revolution brought all parties together in a common goal. Any challenge to unity is to be

discouraged, and Zea explicitly argues against *indigenista* movements, such as the one that sprang up in Chiapas in the late twentieth century. These movements are a throwback to the situation that anteceded mestizaje and the Mexican Revolution. The Mexican reality is thoroughly mixed, racially and ethnically, and any attempt to see it otherwise is a step backward. Clearly, although Zea pays much attention to authors such as Vasconcelos and applauds their view with respect to Latin America, he is more of a nationalist than an internationalist or a Latin Americanist. Moreover, he stands in opposition to the main thrust of authors such as Mariátegui, for whom the problems of Latin America are fundamentally economic.

Latin Americans have lived and worked in the United States from the very beginning. But recently their numbers have increased substantially, and with that also the interest of Latinos/Hispanics in issues of identity, race, ethnicity, and nationality. Some of their concerns are similar to those of Latin Americans living in Latin America, but others are peculiar to their situation as immigrants, residents, or American nationals in the United States. One of their major concerns has been the question of their identity, who they are. Another, reflecting the interest in the philosophy of language that characterizes Anglo-American philosophy, is the question of the labels used to refer to this population. Finally, there is the question of the racial and ethnic composition of the Latino/Hispanic population. As Elizabeth Millán points out, the work of Alcoff and Gracia has opened up new directions in American philosophy, and as Velásquez argues, the work of these two authors and Corlett has initiated an important field of philosophical inquiry. Alcoff has proposed an ethnoracial view of Latinos/as in which their race is not separable from their ethnicity. Corlett rejects the biological view of race but argues for a genealogical criterion of Latino/a ethnicity in the context of public policy. And Gracia defends a familial view of Latino/a identity, in which Latinos/as are conceived in familial and historical terms in which historical facts yield common properties that, nonetheless, may not extend to all members of the group. When it comes to the terminology they prefer, Alcoff rejects *Hispanic* in favor of *Latino/a*, whereas Gracia argues in favor of the use of both labels for different reasons and distinguishes their connotations and denotations.

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