

# Post-continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources

NELSON MALDONADO-TORRES

It is no accident that the global geographical framework in use today is essentially a cartographic celebration of European power. After centuries of imperialism, the presumptions of a worldview of a once-dominant metropole has become part of the intellectual furniture of the world.... Metageography matters, and the attempt to engage it critically has only begun.

Martin W. Lewis and Kären W. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*.<sup>1</sup>

For several decades now the contours of legitimate philosophy have been drawn by advocates of so-called analytic and continental philosophies. Analytic philosophy is often referred to as a style of thinking centered on the question of whether something is true, rather than, as continental philosophy, on the multiple factors that constitute meaning.<sup>2</sup> Analytic philosophy is also said to be closer to the sciences, while continental philosophy has more affinity with the humanities.<sup>3</sup> One of the reasons for this lies in that while analytic philosophy tends to dismiss history from its reflections, continental philosophy typically emphasizes the relevance of time, tradition, lived experience, and/or social context. Fortunately, this situation is slowly but gradually changing today. A variety of intellectuals are defying the rigid boundaries of these fields. Some of the most notable are Afro-American, Afro-Caribbean, and Latina/o scholars using the arsenal of these bodies of thought to analyze and interpret problems related to colonialism, racism, and sexism in the contemporary world.<sup>4</sup> These challenges demand a critical analysis of the possibilities and limits of change within the main coordinates of these different styles or forms of philosophizing. Another reason for this kind of critical reflection is that there is much work in philosophy that does not correspond to what is considered legitimate philosophizing by adherents of these two fields. Along with that, there are new sciences and forms of study, such as African Diaspora Studies, Ethnic Studies and related programs, which demand a self-reflection of their own, without submitting their imperatives and unique approaches to the evaluation of analytic and continental philosophers. This essay in particular and this dossier on post-continental philosophy in *Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise* in general aim to provide at least some responses to these critical and constructive needs.

Since the intellectual production of third world peoples and people of color is often approached as if it were an appendix to European philosophy or as a variety of continental philosophy, we should first reflect on some of the pitfalls of continental philosophy. It is generally believed that continental philosophy receives its name because its main contributors happen to be continental Europeans. I have argued elsewhere, however, that the designation captures not only a contingent relation to Europe, but also a certain commitment with European continentality as a project as well as Eurocentric conceptions of space and time.<sup>5</sup> These skewed conceptions of geopolitical temporality and spatiality need to be radically critiqued, or better put, decolonized. Without such decolonization any kind of rapprochement between continental and analytic philosophies will be bounded to repeat the problems that they currently have.<sup>6</sup>

Similar considerations apply in regards to U.S. American pragmatism, which is often introduced as a distinctive form of philosophizing that can mediate, if not overcome, the tensions between the other two.<sup>7</sup> However, when U.S. American philosophy is presented in this way (as “post-analytic philosophy”, for example), it typically reproduces the problems in continental philosophy, but in different form.<sup>8</sup> It is true that its ground is not Europe, but the United States itself serves as a new national and quasi-continental foundation that adjudicates to itself the promise of the whole “New World.” Where “post-analytic philosophy” in the 1980’s took a patriotic turn that contributed to the marginalization of forms of thinking that defy multiple forms of colonization—particularly those articulated by colonized subjects themselves—, “post-continental philosophy” proposes to initiate the relation between analytic and continental philosophy as well as the process of their overcoming through a systematic decolonization of spatial imaginaries and conceptions of temporality that are grounded on what Lisa Lowe and Walter D. Mignolo refer to in their respective work as national and continental ontologies.<sup>9</sup> Such decolonization has to recur to a body of work that is hardly taken into consideration in analytic and continental philosophies. This body of work demands to be read philosophically and not only culturally or historically. Philosophy, in this sense, refers to an activity that humans do when they face their environment with a theoretical attitude, and not only to the legacy of a particular culture. I will refer later to the basis of this attitude as it appears in the world of colonized and people of color in modernity. What I want to make clear now is that I take “continentality” to signify a deep affiliation to national or continental ontologies, and that these are not restricted to Europe. The problems faced by patriotic renderings of pragmatism are not too different from other attempts to provide alternatives to the typical forms of European theorizing. Latin American philosophy, for instance, when it is not following all too closely Europe’s path, it posits itself as the Other of Europe.<sup>10</sup> The idea of Latin America as the Other of Europe, however, as Santiago Castro-Gómez has persuasively shown, is still caught in the logic of European being.<sup>11</sup> Like in European continental philosophy, the lived time and space of many peoples as well as of the liminal folk or condemned is subsumed into an organic and homogeneous temporality and spatiality.<sup>12</sup> Continentality may thus change its referent (Africa, America, Asia, Australia, or Latin America), but not necessarily its logic.

In this paper I seek to sketch pitfalls of some hegemonic expressions of continental philosophy as well as to articulate “temporal-spatial epistemic fractures” that open up the possibility of formulating a post-continental philosophical project within a de-colonial turn in philosophy, theory, and critique.<sup>13</sup> “Temporal-spatial epistemic fractures” appear, for instance, in the lived-experience and thought of subjects whose belonging to a continental spiritual formation is banned or made particularly difficult by hegemonic discourses. Cases in point are Caribbean subjects, especially French and English speaking peoples of African descent, but also all of those who occupy liminal spaces within any given continental discourse—especially in Africa, the disavowed continent *par excellence*, but in all the other continents and nation state forms with imperial aspirations or internal colonial structures as well. Racialized border subjects, migrants, indigenous peoples, and “second class citizens” everywhere also occupy a tense and fractured space that questions their belonging to any continent or nation. These are varied spaces where post-continental philosophy and what Jennifer Lisa Vest refers to as a ‘New Dialogic’ can be born.<sup>14</sup>

In the case of Afro-Caribbean French and English speaking subjects, it is especially difficult for them to claim belonging to Europe, Africa, or Latin America, which are the three continental constructs that are closer to them. Frantz Fanon’s intellectual itinerary offers a good example of this since, while he traveled from the Caribbean to Africa and Europe he resisted investing them with the power of giving meaning to his existence or providing the general framework for his reflections. On the one hand, Europe for him appeared more as a society of masters, than as a community of liberty and fraternity that allowed him to become part of it. Africa, on the other hand, offered to

him the possibility of refuge, and indeed, he made of Algeria a home, but the African continent never represented for Fanon an ontological construct or ground of being. First of all, as an Afro-Caribbean subject dislocated from Africa through a painful history of tragedy and loss, he could consider himself part of the African Diaspora, but could not embrace the idea of continental unity per se as his own—or else, it was more difficult for him to do it than for African subjects. African unity was for him strictly a political project driven by interests in decolonization, not an ontological reality, and it involved lines of solidarity and affiliation with all the *condemned of the earth*. In a similar way, his ardent defense of nation building was based on his idea that “national consciousness,” which, according to Fanon, “is not nationalism,” has to facilitate a consciousness of social needs and a new humanism, instead of leading to the reification of space, history, or culture.<sup>15</sup> It was in this same spirit that Fanon expressed a desire to become an Algerian ambassador in Cuba, in addition to serve as a representative of the Algerian government in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere.

Fanon’s relation with diverse peoples and bodies of thought was therefore primarily defined by an ethics and politics of decolonization, and not by national and continental ontologies. These ontologies transform imperial and neo-colonial political projects into ideologies of monolithic nations or supposedly natural continents, which acquire their precise meaning in a hierarchy that correlates space and race. This hierarchy is established through and helps to establish modern imperial projects. In this sense it is possible to say that the “myth of continents” is part of a larger racial myth in modernity formed in relation to imperial enterprises, in which continents denote not only space but also a well ordered hierarchy of customs, habits and potentials that are said to inhere in the people who live in them. Spaces thus become gendered and colored, just as the forms of rationality, tastes, and capabilities of the peoples who occupy them.<sup>16</sup> Decolonization, as I am using it in this essay, refers to the action that aims to undo this complex matrix of power. Post-continental philosophy, in its turn, aims to assist in this task as well as in the enunciation of the conditions of possibility for the emergence of a different reality. Fanon’s work is central for the tasks of epistemic and material decolonization that post-continental philosophy advances. His geo-political location and the pressures of the time when he lived facilitated a path of thinking that helped him to evade Eurocentrism, Afrocentrism, and Latinamericanism—and that, along with the powerful contributions of people of color in the United States, can help us to evade Americanism today as well.<sup>17</sup> Any possible identification with Europe, Africa, and Latin America was severed by histories, ideologies, and political projects that put him in a different existential and geo-political situation than the one confronted by subjects who could claim belonging to continents more easily—as if it were natural. Post-continental philosophy builds on this departure from the continental logic, thus helping to demythologize the idea of continents and put forward decolonized conceptions of space, time, subjectivity, lived experience, theory, and other relevant topics for philosophical reflection. This transformation suggests that philosophy today has to rethink itself in relation to metageography and the scholarship produced in Ethnic Studies and related fields, among other groundbreaking areas in the natural and human sciences. It also has to engage seriously conceptual and artistic works that offer alternatives to continental imaginaries without necessarily making reference to Europe, to colonization, or to hegemonic philosophies of any kind.

While Fanon’s post-continental theorizing was informed and to some extent made possible by his spatio-temporal (dis)location, it should be nonetheless clear that his opposition to a continental positioning as ground for being or thought was not merely a natural result of his biography or his fractured *locus* of enunciation. Caribbean existence provides an occasion, so to speak, and even a demand, one might add, to reflect about thinking and being human in ways that are not delimited by the enchantment with continentality. But an occasion and a demand are not necessities, and it might be even possible to identify a continental impetus in some Caribbean populations, particularly in the Hispanic Caribbean where linkage with Latin American liberation

processes and resistance against U.S. American imperialism has reinforced ideological links with different forms of Latinamericanism.<sup>18</sup> In Fanon's case, abandoning and attempting to overcome continental thought was not only the product of a geo-political and historical juncture, but also a conscious choice based on insight into the realities of colonized contexts and lived realities. We should not forget that in his study of Black Martiniquean subjects Fanon comes to the conclusion that ontology cannot explain the lived reality of the colonized, and that it cannot offer a solution to them either.<sup>19</sup> Only sociogeny can do the first, and decolonial forms of theory and ethics as well as different expressions of political activism the second.<sup>20</sup>

The situation that Fanon and others with similar predicaments and perspectives confront is conveyed by the classical figure of Caliban, who not only occupies a liminal space with regard to the possibility of assuming a continental identity, but also in regards to being human.<sup>21</sup> Caliban is a monster of sorts in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, who becomes the prisoner and slave of Prospero. Prospero, a duke who escaped by boat from certain death in Milan, arrives in an island where he finds Caliban and makes him his slave. Since Caliban cannot speak, Prospero teaches him his own language. The relationship between Prospero and Caliban in many ways reflects practices in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as well as anticipates much of what has characterized European modernity since then. In this sense one could take Prospero's return to Naples and Milan, not so much as the return to an aristocratic world defined by medieval formulas as the play has it (at least in its surface), but as the introduction of an experience, an imaginary, and a conception of power (gained in his relationship with Caliban) that would gradually destroy the vestiges of aristocracy and feudalism and open up a new conception of European civilization and of its relationship with the rest of the world. But for this to happen, Prospero had to change his clothes. This reading of Prospero's future in Europe (or of Europe's Prosperous future, one in which, as Wynter has it, the world is conceived in terms of a new poetics of the *propter nos* as being "for the sake of Prospero" alone) implies the combination of his character with another figure that occupied a pivotal role in the unfolding of European modernity and its distance from the feudal Christian world from which Prospero emerged: the Cartesian *cogito*.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, Prospero, Caliban and the *ego cogito*, introduced by Shakespeare and Descartes less than thirty years apart in the first half of the seventeenth century (in 1610-11 the first, and 1637 the second), arguably provide the basic coordinates or matrix for the unfolding of European modernity in Europe and abroad. While Descartes's *ego cogito* provided the foundation for the new image of European Man, Caliban—a name that makes reference to Cannibalism and the Caribbean—represented its polar opposite.

European modernity thus unfolds as if upon his return to Europe, Prospero took on the characteristics of the Cartesian *cogito*. Defined fundamentally as reason, Caliban appeared in this context as the opposite to reason. Or, one wonders, following intellectuals like Enrique Dussel and Anibal Quijano, the extent to which previous contact with Caliban and his description as a linguistic being without the capacity of innovation in thought inspired the idea of Prospero itself, or European Man, as pure reason.<sup>23</sup> These varied assertions and suspicions indicate that European Man was constituted by features that combined aspects of Shakespeare's Prospero and Descartes's "I think". Caribbean subjects and those in the periphery of Europe came to represent a savage creature without the power to think or give themselves rational laws—an idea that would continuously be used in the history of modernity to justify slavery, colonialism, or dependency.<sup>24</sup> Caliban, in short, is not the Other of Europe, but the constitutive sub-other of (Continental) Man. Post-continental philosophy, in this sense, emerges from the positionality and attitude of subjects who defy the ontological unity of continents, or continents as the ground of being, and who give priority to Caliban's material, epistemic, and symbolic liberation.

As I have argued elsewhere, one must consider here that in Caliban's struggle for existence and in those who assume that position as well there emerges a theoretical, ethical, and political

“decolonial attitude” in response to the “imperial and racist natural attitude” of subjects in the modern/colonial world.<sup>25</sup> Decolonial theory and praxis do not emerge from “wonder” in face of a strange world, but out of scandal and horror in face of the “death world” of coloniality. In a similar way, the origin of post-continental philosophy cannot be traced back to Plato’s allegorical cave, as Husserl would have it, but to the very concrete reality of “hell” in which the condemned of modernity are made to live even today.<sup>26</sup> From a more cultural and linguistic angle it is possible to contrast, as Walter Mignolo suggests, the “decolonial attitude” that emerges in subjects who are scandalized by the “death world” of modernity/coloniality with the “Roman attitude” that, according to Rémi Brague, characterizes European civilization.<sup>27</sup> Philosophical accounts fixed with tracing the roots of European civilization in Athens, Jerusalem, Rome, or any other specific “house of being,” tend to collapse into different versions of continental philosophizing.<sup>28</sup> Continental belonging and its homogenizing impetus replace in these projects the primacy of a responsible response to colonialism and listening to the cries of the wounded that emerge in the spatio-temporal fractures that this impetus creates. In post-continental philosophy, in contrast, decolonial ethics, politics, and theory take priority over a continental ontology of belonging, and a new set of metaphors and lived realities begin to acquire existential and epistemological significance, such as the border, the archipelago and the sea, among others. The contributions in this dossier offer varied examples of this set of priorities.

My goal here is to identify some problems in continental philosophy that must be overcome and to call attention to overlooked places where one might find solutions to them. It does not follow from my brief analysis of continental philosophers that their entire work is vitiated by the problems that I am going to highlight, or that what is usually identified as continental philosophy cannot offer important elements to post-continental thought. The same goes for analytic philosophy and pragmatism. The idea is rather that the framework or general horizon of continental philosophy, and its provincial tension with analytic philosophy and pragmatism, must be abandoned and exchanged for something else. Post-continental philosophy is the designation of an area of theoretical reflection that aims to bring together formulations of the true, the good, and the politically necessary from a perspective or point of view that aims to further a still unfinished project of decolonization.<sup>29</sup>

The theoretical impulse in post-continental philosophy is a central part of African Diaspora Studies, Ethnic Studies, and related fields.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, it is possible to assert that post-continental philosophy is as integral to these relatively new fields in the academy, as European modern philosophy is and has been with respect to the modern sciences. Post-continental philosophy acquires a formal character precisely when it begins to reflect on the limits and possibilities of these fields of study, which implies a critical analysis on the existing natural and human sciences as well.<sup>31</sup> Just like the modern sciences demanded and still demand a modern (and no longer theologically driven) form of reflection, the sciences and forms of study that emerge from the existential, historical, and geo-political situation of Caliban require forms of self-reflection and critique that are appropriate to it—by which I mean that reflect about the conditions of possibility for Caliban to be liberated and about the forms of knowledge needed for the modern world to be decolonized. This contrast becomes clearer in the comparison between, for example, René Descartes *Discourse on Method* and Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*. Just like Descartes’s *Meditations* and *Discourse on Method* provided—willingly or not—the basic coordinates for the unfolding of Prospero’s development in modernity, Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*—written by an intellectual from the former French colony of Martinique—offers similar tools to Caliban and its allies. From here that one could talk of Cartesian inspired sciences, on the one hand, and Césairean sciences on the other. The former tend to be locked in a modern dynamic and replicate a continental imaginary, whereas

the second aim to overcome the contradictions of modernity and open up a transmodern future and a “decolonial imaginary,” as Enrique Dussel and Emma Perez have it in their respective works.<sup>32</sup>

My exposition will proceed in the following manner: I will first indicate what I conceive to be the problematic common ground of continental philosophy in relation to the work of three of the most influential figures in this area of thought: G.W.F. Hegel, Edmund Husserl, and Martin Heidegger. Then, I will provide a description of post-continental philosophy with primary reference to the work of a different triad: Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Gloria Anzaldúa. The final section focuses on the project of a European intellectual who turned critical of the Eurocentric premises of his philosophical predecessors and teachers and became an ally of decolonial thinkers: Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre’s life and work demonstrates the extent to which subjects who belong to groups considered to be normative can contribute to the unfinished project of decolonization and become fundamental figures in post-continental philosophy. Approaching Sartre’s contributions from the angle of post-continental philosophy leads me to reflect on European (but not necessarily Eurocentric) forms of “double consciousness” and “border thinking,” which offer a decolonizing path to Europe beyond the search for roots in an exclusively Greek, Christian, Judaic, or Roman past. It is in the fight against anti-black racism, anti-Semitism, and capitalism, in dialogue with subjects who are their primary victims, rather than on celebrations of cultural roots, that Sartre finds the main coordinates of his thought. It is in relation to such struggles that his “double consciousness” is “potentiated” and that his work becomes an effective weapon in the struggle against different forms of colonization.

## **I. Continental’s Philosophy Typical Ground**

G.W.F. Hegel is one of the most central and distinctive figures in the canon of continental philosophy. Analytic philosophers usually consider his work as rubbish, while continental philosophers tend to celebrate his contributions to the theorizing of the self, society, reason, ethics, esthetics, history and the state, among other areas in which he focused. Some of Hegel’s achievements include the elaboration of a renewed conception of dialectics, a strong philosophical articulation of the relation between subjectivity and modern community, law, and state institutions, and, related to dialectics, a restatement of the value of negativity in thought. But, as it has been recognized by many, Hegel’s groundbreaking reflections were contained, limited, and sometimes responded to skewed views of temporality, spatiality, and non-Western peoples.<sup>33</sup> These views come very explicitly together in his reflections on history, which bring to the fore some underlying ideas in continental thought.

In his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, Hegel provided both the most consistent and grandiloquent philosophical elaboration of European centrality and superiority in the modern world, as well as one of the most pristine formulations of the link between racialized peoples and geo-political (colonized) areas.<sup>34</sup> His philosophy of history brings together a progressive vision of time with a racially inspired differentiation of lands and peoples. He accounted for the emergence and gradual development and realization of the idea of freedom in a way that legitimized conceptions of Europe as the one geo-political site where reason and freedom could find their most consistent expression. As Enrique Dussel has pointed out, Hegel’s intervention occurred at a moment when, for the first time in history, Europe was truly achieving world centrality gained through colonization and industrial explosion.<sup>35</sup> His philosophy made the new reality appear more as a necessary outcome of an ineluctable progress of rationality and freedom, than as the result of a contingent history inspired in large part by a project of imperial expansion and the control of nature. The philosophy of history also arguably undermined revolutionary political agency within Europe and the possibility of an appropriate response to the problems created by industrial development, the scientific racism

of the moment, and colonialism.<sup>36</sup> It functioned as a self-imposed veil that generated the misrecognition of humanity, fomented self-deception, and legitimated colonization. The philosophy of history provided conceptions of temporality and spatiality designed to maintain alive the idea of the superiority of European peoples and to justify their centrality in an expanding world-system.

It is true that appreciation of Hegel's work does not necessarily indicate an endorsement of his philosophy of history. But continental philosophy has tended to remain complicit with the basic idea of Europe as the one exclusive or most significant site where legitimate theory or critique emerges. There is also lack of critical engagement with Hegel's other concepts in light of the problematic assumptions of his philosophy of history. This critical work is part of what post-continental philosophy aims to do. To be sure, Eurocentric conceptions of time and space supersede Hegel's theorizing of them, but he help to give them a strength that they lacked previously. After Hegel, it would be much easier than before for European philosophers to believe in the world centrality of their civilization as a matter of common sense, or as an idea that survives what one would expect to be the most radical and consistent form of *phenomenological reduction*.

Edmund Husserl developed a very different phenomenology from Hegel but in many ways he still shared a similar image of the world.<sup>37</sup> In order to respond to the "crisis of European existence" after the First World War and the beginnings of Hitler's rise in Germany, he proposed a phenomenology of "Europe" aimed to "work out the *concept of Europe as the historical teleology of the infinite goals of reason*."<sup>38</sup> For Husserl, Europe embodies in an essential way a rational *telos* inspired in the true life of theory. He believes that this rational *telos* was "inborn in European humanity at the birth of Greek philosophy" and that it was reaffirmed once more radically in the European Renaissance.<sup>39</sup> The importance of philosophical reason for Husserl cannot be overstated: it ultimately represents "a new stage of human nature and its reason."<sup>40</sup> This means that if "according to the old familiar definition, man is the rational animal, and in this broad sense even the Papuan is a man and not a beast," there is a still a clear basis to differentiate the humanity of the European from that of the Papuan.<sup>41</sup>

For Husserl, first Greece and then the European nations served as the natural habitat of reason. He also includes European dominions (particularly English) in his conception of Europe as a spiritual shape, but makes clear that neither the Eskimos nor indigenous peoples in the United States, nor the Gypsies in Europe should be considered part of it.<sup>42</sup> To his favor, Husserl did not subsume these groups into his idea of Europe, but he did not leave space to consider any degree of belonging to it either. More problematically still is that he did not consider the extent to which philosophy could have been present in the lives and cultures of these groups before the Europeans had contact with them, or of hybrid forms generated after the violent imposition. Husserl also fails to raise the question about possible links between European reason and colonization. His phenomenology does not give space to listen to Eskimos and other indigenous peoples' impressions and conclusions about European civilization and rationality. As a consequence, his cure of the "crisis" of Europe does not address questions of colonization and racialization in any fundamental manner. According to him, the crisis of Europe is due to "the *apparent failure of rationalism*."<sup>43</sup> In order to revive the faith in reason, Husserl relates philosophical reason to the idea of Europe in an essential way. Thus a failure of reason can only become a failure of Europe itself. Likewise, an overcoming of the crisis must involve a return or a reaffirmation of Europe's task defined as it was in ancient Greece and the Renaissance, the latter of which incidentally represents the starting point of European expansion in modernity.<sup>44</sup>

As much as Husserl's view of Europe fell prey to the civilization discourse of his times, it was his student Martin Heidegger who became more instrumental in spreading and giving more substance to the commitment with Europe as a project in the twentieth-century.<sup>45</sup> Partly due to their different visions of self, rationality, and (French) liberalism, Heidegger's cultural

Germanocentrism was more conservative than Husserl's Eurocentric cosmopolitanism. His view was closer to Hegel than to Husserl in this respect. Heidegger saw the decay of Europe in terms of the effects of metaphysical conceptions of world and self that dominated the West from Plato to Nietzsche. For Heidegger, metaphysics erodes the possibility of true thinking, which can only emerge by *letting beings be*.<sup>46</sup> This form of thinking is found in pre-Socratic philosophy as well as in German poetic forms. Heidegger believes that Greek and German are uniquely endowed with the possibility of doing philosophy and overcoming metaphysics.<sup>47</sup> Europe's salvation did not depend for him in a new renaissance of truth and rationality, but in Germany's leadership and respect to its unique possibilities in preserving and continuing the legacy of European culture—beyond French liberalism. As it is widely known now, Heidegger cultural and philosophical nationalism led him to support the Nazi regime, under which he served as Rector of Freiburg University and to which he dedicated some of his most passionate speeches. While some have argued that there is no fundamental relation between his philosophical work and his politics, others have pointed out to ideas that seem to connect both very strongly.<sup>48</sup>

This short excursion into Hegel, Husserl, and Heidegger does not pretend to be a summary of philosophical difficulties in the work of these figures. It only seeks to give plausibility to the idea that continental philosophy does not denote a purely contingent relation among certain philosophers, but that it involves a certain commitment with Europe as the primordial site of philosophy and critique. Commitment with Europe involves peculiar conceptions of geo-political space and history as well as of European and non-European peoples. These ideas are evident in the three figures just named notwithstanding their fundamental differences. Hegel, Husserl, and Heidegger privilege reflection on history, tradition, temporality, and continental space, over the fractures of the continent, the significance of borders, and the violence of colonialism—understood here as the darker side of modernity and civilization.<sup>49</sup> By doing this they invisibilize forms of thinking that cannot be encapsulated into and that defy the Eurocentric conception of time and space that they hold, which is also fundamental for the ideological defense of European modernity and for the sustenance of the coloniality of power.<sup>50</sup> This does not mean that Hegel's dialectics, Husserl's phenomenology, or even elements of Heidegger's ontology cannot be utilized in a radical critique of coloniality. What it means is that these "tools" cannot be the only ones and that they probably should not be the most central either.<sup>51</sup> It also means that we should avoid taking European continentality as a model for how to conceive of decolonized space and time. We need to use a wide variety of tools and make our own design of a decolonized humanity. This is the prime goal of post-continental philosophy.

## II. An Outline of Post-continental Philosophy

Post-continental philosophy primarily refers to the critical thought that is found in the interstices of continental spiritual formations. It finds its locus in the cracks of the continent, in borders, in the global south, in diaspora, in movements of peoples as well as in the death and suffering that many face at the violent hands of defenders of violent nation states. Post-continental philosophy attempts to renew thought after suspending the honor of the Eurocentric philosophies of history and common sense which tend to shape academic training. In this sense, it is, or at least aims to be decidedly post-Eurocentric. It takes as its priority, not the nation or the continent, but questions of identity, liberation, and epistemic decolonization.

As it has been made clear already, the critique of the continent as the spatial metaphor that serves as ground for the unity of a philosophical corpus and the rejection of its implied Eurocentrism entails neither the rejection of theory that happens to come from Europe, nor the lack of appreciation of theoretical achievements in European philosophy or critical theory. Post-

continental philosophy aims to signal a conceptual and theoretical horizon in which reflections on reality can take into consideration the entire weight of time (past, the present, and the future, as well as non-linear conceptions of temporality) and the vibrant movement that occurs in space. Space, in this regard, following Gloria Anzaldúa, begins in the “borderlands” between two people, between the people and those regarded non-people, and, between the non-people themselves—not in the continent or the nation.<sup>52</sup> The “borderlands,” from the intimate space between two to the creation of what Anzaldúa refers to as “la rajadura”—the tense space and division created between two opposing tendencies—are the point of departure here. Post-continental philosophy is focused on the problems and questions that emerge when one considers time and space in this way, which indicates that it pays particular attention to the different forms of “border thinking” that emerge in between intimate human or geo-political spaces.<sup>53</sup>

Post-continental philosophy became more visible and gained strength when Europe began to decline in the twentieth century. This decline, which had its climax in the Second World War and the struggles for decolonization in now its former colonies, intensified the disenchantment with Europe that was on-going since at least the sixteenth century—particularly in colonized and racialized communities. This period saw the emergence of what Chicana theorist Chela Sandoval refers to as a “theory uprising” that still continues today with the formulation of ever fresher and more sophisticated methodologies of the oppressed, which includes her own.<sup>54</sup>

The text that probably made the case more clearly and strongly for an explicit “decolonial turn” in philosophy and critique soon after the Second World War was Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*.<sup>55</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, this essay can be read as a direct response to René Descartes’s *Discourse on Method*.<sup>56</sup> In it, Césaire seeks to establish the possibility of a new beginning for a world that has been traumatized by European modernity. Such reflection must consider seriously the nature of Europe’s enormous failures:

The fact is that the so-called European civilization—“Western” civilization—as it has been shaped by two centuries of bourgeois rule, is incapable of solving the two major problems to which its existence has given rise: the problem of the proletariat and the colonial problem; that Europe is unable to justify itself either before the bar of “reason” or before the bar of “conscience”; and that, increasingly, it takes refuge in a hypocrisy which is all the more odious because it is less and less likely to deceive.<sup>57</sup>

For Césaire, the demise of Europe leaves the world with a varied number of connections and possibilities, but also with a set of common problems. Césaire claims that these problems—the problem of the proletariat and the colonial problem—can be related to Europe’s very *existence*, and thus that Europe has only been able to sustain itself through hypocrisy. Césaire sustains that Europe can no longer justify itself neither by appealing to “reason” nor “conscience,” theory nor morality. Rather he suggests that both European “theory” and “morality” may be part and parcel of Europe’s project of flight from itself through hypocrisy. Thus Césaire, the theorist, poet, and politician, invites us to re-think the theoretical and the moral, as well as the political and the aesthetic, in order to elevate our ideas about these areas beyond the limits of European identity politics and their characteristic hypocrisy.

If one follows Césaire’s lead one would have to indicate that the “de-colonial turn” in general, and post-continental philosophy in particular, are fundamentally existential, and this in a twofold way. Post-continental philosophy is existential first in that it explores the problematic assumptions and implications of Europe’s very existence and the existence of any similar imperial continental or national formation. These are problems that concern issues of deception and self-

deception: Europe's efforts to deceive itself and others about its own existence and the problems to which it gives rise—e.g., justifying colonization in terms of its supposedly civilizing influence. This deception becomes the central aspect of a project that produces science, morality, politics and a whole symbolic universe tailored to transforming the world according to its purposes and to prevent realization of the problematic aspects of Europe's own existence. In this light, the central problems investigated in post-continental philosophy have to do with the critical revision of European theories as well as Europe's moral and political conceptions. These investigations take into consideration at least two basic elements: strategies for deception and self-deception, and means of creating or sustaining *damnation*—understood in the sense that Fanon gives to the term in *Les damnés de la terre*, that is, as a project that involves the systematic dehumanization of colored folks.<sup>58</sup> This form of analysis not only applies to the critical investigation of European being, but to any ideology that adopts its problematic features or attempts to take its place.<sup>59</sup>

Damnation points to the second existential element in the “decolonial turn” and post-continental philosophy. *If the first element refers to the dilemmas that emerge in relation to the existence of normative subjectivities or communities (e.g., the European), the second has to do with the lived experience of dehumanization and the affirmation of existence by the damnés.* Existence comes from the latin “*exsistere*” which means to stand forth, appear; to spring forth, arise, or come into existence. It is related to “*exstoare*” which means to stand out, project, or to be visible.<sup>60</sup> As Lewis Gordon has noted, standing out or coming to exist is perhaps the most fundamental problem or challenge for those human beings who inhabit, in Fanon's words, a “zone of non-being.”<sup>61</sup> Fanon used the concept of damnation to refer to the ontological invisibility and perverse ultra-visibility of racialized and colonized men and women in modernity.<sup>62</sup> To live in the “zone of non-being” means to be damned, and thus the challenge for post-continental philosophy becomes that of advancing the understanding of that underworld and of helping to build pathways to a different reality. Post-continental philosophy also carefully analyzes the different modes of deception and self-deception in the underworld of coloniality. Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* still stands as one of the most groundbreaking texts in this area. As Fanon indicates toward the conclusion of this text, and as he also repeats in *Wretched of the Earth*, where he focuses on new sets of difficulties as the colonized intensify the process of “standing out” collectively in revolutionary struggles, the ultimate goal of such analysis is to articulate new concepts, ideas, and projects that can help “build the world of the YOU.”<sup>63</sup> Building this world entails the creation of *an-other* humanism, both in the sense of being different from European humanisms and anti-humanisms, and in the sense of being a humanism of the Other, as Emmanuel Lévinas proposes.<sup>64</sup> The *other* or *alter* humanism that I have in mind here is one that seeks the emergence of the *damné* as both a self and as an other in the world, which means that I am not strictly following Lévinas here.<sup>65</sup> This project requires political activism, in addition to a decolonial ethical perspective focused on the gift of one slave to another and the subsequent possible mutual recognition and joined liberation efforts.<sup>66</sup>

In short, post-continental philosophy focuses on the description and critical analysis of manifold forms of normativity (racial/sexual/gender/spatial/spiritual/aesthetic/temporal/epistemic/economic/etc.), on the one hand, and on the study of socially produced liminality and the challenges as well as possibilities for transformation that are found in such a space, on the other. Its aim is, as Fanon puts it, to participate in the liberation struggle of the condemned, or, in Sylvia Wynter's terms, to bring about a more humane world which requires no less than a social, material, as well as an epistemic upheaval.<sup>67</sup> In this sense, the definition of post-continental philosophy is open, since one cannot define in advance what we or future generations will find necessary to forge liberation. The project of post-continental philosophy itself must also be only tentative and preliminary since its main function is to forge radical activities and dialogues that will give it new definitions and conceptualizations. These activities and dialogues require the participation of

everyone, including Europeans, which means that we have to reflect on manifold sources and possibilities for decolonization.

### III. Sources of Post-continental Philosophy: On European “Double consciousness”

Post-continental philosophy requires a radical rupture with Eurocentrism and an opening to the many unusual spaces where thought emerges. Anzaldúa, Césaire, Fanon, and other intellectuals of the colonial world enunciate the basic ideas of this form of theorizing and set an initial agenda of work. This does not mean that they invented post-continental philosophy. They just brought it to light and expanded on it at the point when or after disenchantment with Europe reached its highest point. As Chela Sandoval insists, such disenchantment was not exclusive to colonized folks.<sup>68</sup> Europe’s crisis and fall in the Second World War and the force of decolonization throughout the world soon after that punctured the colonial logic and made possible new forms of critical thinking and dialogical projects. One of them stands out among the canonical figures of continental philosophy: Jean-Paul Sartre. Having established the axis of post-continental philosophy with reference to contributions by Anzaldúa, Césaire and Fanon in the previous section and elsewhere, I will highlight here Sartre’s relevance to this project.<sup>69</sup>

It could be said that post-continental philosophy emerges with a certain “bracketing” of the assumed validity and general legitimacy of European traditions of thought and of European modernity as a project. This “bracketing” is most powerful not when it arises out of purely theoretical or speculative intentions, but when it is motivated by an existential realization or intimation of a contradiction between a set of ideas or expectations and reality. Such realizations can be traced back to particular intellectual or existential trajectories or to historical moments—to shifts in situations that reveal unsuspected meanings or dimensions of reality. In a civilization that perpetuates systematic dehumanization, the realization of the contradiction can often be traced back to the “double consciousness” of the dehumanized subject.<sup>70</sup> But one might speak of a “double consciousness” of sorts in the normative subject as well. This “double consciousness” resides in the split between the self who, with the help of an impressive cultural, symbolic, material, and epistemological arsenal, posits itself as normative, and the self who knows itself to be purely a self. This means that even white faces have to wear white masks.<sup>71</sup> This condition gives rise to contradictions between a self who knows itself as a self and a self who faces the demand—which entails a privilege but also a step to dehumanization—to occupy the center of the world. This demand functions as a regulative ideal and constant temptation that, as Sylvia Wynter does not cease to remind us, is all the most devastating in a Man-centered episteme, in which a certain conception of the human takes the place of the divine.<sup>72</sup> But not everyone is destined to such glorious vocation in this “system of symbolic representations.”<sup>73</sup> The new world of modernity includes the secular heaven of Man (capital and the state), the earth of the normative proletariat (e.g., the white worker vis-à-vis the racialized proletariat), and the hell of the condemned (dispensable subjects in the death-world of modernity/coloniality; men and women of color considered to lack the features of competitive and autonomous humanity). This three-partite division evokes but complicates Marx’s differentiation between the political state and civil society, which he compares to the distinction between heaven and earth.<sup>74</sup> What he ignores in his analogy is the existence of an underground reality or hell created by colonialism and its multiple hierarchies. In this structure earthly subjects and those who live in hell are structurally motivated to desire heaven. In the modern/colonial context this desire refers to admission into the ranks of the allegedly superior race, and not so much to other-worldly salvation. But the doors to this heaven are secured by ironies and paradoxes as well as by innumerable murders that make its own promises null, particularly to subjects in hell. This heaven, though, cannot live with good conscience, at least not in all its quarters, which feeds

dissatisfaction, provokes a sense of horror and scandal, increases the possibility of radical dissent, and can even lead to defection, betrayal, and decolonial insurgent activity. The scandal in the face of systematic dehumanization and the resistance to willfully adopt masks of supremacy is what effectively splits the consciousness and creates the doubling effect on it. The heavenly self is exposed to contradictions when it implicitly or formally recognizes the humanity of other people when it either approaches them gently or when it witnesses or participates in their systematic and unequal exclusion, erasure, or marginalization.

The concept of “double consciousness” has been elaborated by Ralph Waldo Emerson and W.E.B. Du Bois, among others. Ralph Waldo Emerson observed a form of “double consciousness” in subjects with Transcendentalist aspirations.<sup>75</sup> He noted a split between the ordinary demands of the world and the highest aspirations of the spirit; between life in society and communion with the divine. This split is different from the divide of the normative subject introduced above, but at least the symbols and imagery could be related to the previous discussion, particularly through Du Bois. He used and, one might say, expanded the idea of “double consciousness” to refer to the lived experience and forms of consciousness of subjects who inhabit the hell of racism and coloniality. In this site, the split comes into being by virtue of the contradiction between the first person point of view and the abnormal superimposition of the point of view of the “other world” that claims one’s inferiority.<sup>76</sup> In this context, instead of access to racial heaven or transcendence from daily affairs, what emerges as an imperative is liberation from hell, the difficulty of which lies in that it cannot take for granted established meanings or even the colonized multiple desires.<sup>77</sup> The path of liberation from modern/racial/colonial hell involves nothing less than the radical reinvention of existence. It also requires new critical theories as well as the creation of a new cosmo-social and epistemic universe—in short, a decolonized world—to be forged by the insurgent ethico-political and theoretical activity of the *damnés* and their allies.

If the “double consciousness” of the colonized subject emerges in the tension between the first and the imperial/racist/sexist third person point of view, that is between two forms of seeing oneself, the “double consciousness” of the normative self is brought to the fore by the contrast between the first person point of view of the normative subject and the “cry” of suffering and ethical revolt of the colonized, that is, between a form of seeing and one of listening.<sup>78</sup> As the subject is elevated to the heaven of supremacist consciousness it becomes complicit in the creation of hell, from where voices and pleads emerge. Ascension to heaven, though, creates divine deafness. This is partly explained in that, as the supposedly divinely and biologically selected self is elevated to racial heaven, the cries of the condemned augment but so also the distance from them.<sup>79</sup> The “cry” is heard but typically ignored. Ignorance leads to bliss—at least until the “boomerang effect” from systematic dehumanization of which Césaire spoke so brilliantly comes back to haunt heaven itself.<sup>80</sup> But listening, even to the silent judgment of the condemned, demands more listening, which at the same time requires the suspension of the heavenly pursuit and the constant rejection of what often appears to be like obligatory membership. The process of critique reaches its climax when the normative subjects joins in the political, epistemic, and symbolic liberation of the colonized, which entails the abrogation of heaven and hell as well as the creation of a new world. This moment coincides with the endpoint of the politicized potentiated “double consciousness” of the colonized, of which Paget Henry and Jane Anna Gordon write about in this dossier. I am suggesting here that politicized normative “double consciousness” can also be potentiated by the interaction and political participation with the condemned. At that moment the subject goes from having “bad consciousness” or “bad feelings” to engaging in decolonial activism. Jean-Paul Sartre not only seemed to have experienced these contradictions, but also provided concepts that help to understand and to solve them in the only way in which they can be solved—in a redefined project of

existence and an engaged political struggle that involves material, symbolic, and epistemological transformation.

The effect of “double consciousness” in Sartre is testified in that different from Hegel, Husserl, or Heidegger, he was not enchanted by Europe’s promises or attempted to reassert its supposed innate *telos* or destiny. His work focuses more on problems than on traditions or cultural roots of thought. For Sartre, like Descartes or Césaire, the main problem of modernity is one of deception and self-deception. Descartes was concerned about the deception of the senses and human rationality, while Césaire reflected on the deception and self-deception of subjects who, while positing themselves as or aspiring to be rational (by having “clear and distinct” ideas), systematically deny the status of humanity to others. Sartre was interested in a similar problems and paradoxes. For him, deception and self-deception are features of what he refers to as bad faith.<sup>81</sup> While bad faith is a feature of consciousness, it does not mean that it only occurs at the level of the individual. Bad faith can also occur at the level of the collectivity, and, indeed, of a civilization.<sup>82</sup> For Sartre, European modernity is a project of bad faith. Such bad faith is evinced not only in skewed existential patterns promoted by capitalism, but also in the European conception and systematic dehumanization of Europe’s racialized and colonized populations. *Inasmuch as Sartre endeavored to critically analyze and to seek to change modern subjects’ bad faith attitudes with particular attention to exploitation, domination, colonization, and genocide in dialogue with at least some European and non-European intellectuals who belonged to liminal groups of European society, he participated in post-continental philosophy and could be referred to as a post-continental philosopher.* He was also a “border subject” in the same sense that his work exhibits features of “double consciousness.” In this case the “border” is that between the two dimensions of his consciousness (racially normative and human) as well as that between himself and the liminal sub-others with which he enters in conversation and contact—a reality that was facilitated by the presence of the liminal sub-other (the Jew and the Black, among others) in the midst of French society, a presence that had increased in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sartre had Descartes and the French Revolution at one side of his intellectual and cultural sources, but through Césaire, Fanon, and his reading of Negritude, he was also exposed and to some extent drew from a different universe of ideas. It is true that Sartre could have gone further in his voyage south, learnt more from the sub-alter’s history and existential dilemmas of the damnés, and engaged more intensely in a horizontal dialogical relation with groundbreaking third world intellectuals that emerged in his time, but he did enough to gain their respect and admiration and contributed to their struggles.

Sartre’s departure from the civilization discourse of his predecessors and his openness to the “de-colonial turn” can be related to his disenchantment with Europe as it grew during the Second World War and the Jewish Holocaust. The crisis of genocidal Europe did not motivate for him a return to its roots, in Greece or the Renaissance, but a brave confrontation with the implication of Europe’s *existence*. Sartre’s existentialism is thus post-continental. The problem of meaning, defined through a post-continental lens such as it has been articulated with reference to Césaire, and not in relation to a hermeneutics of tradition or culture, became the axis of his existential phenomenology. This coincidence invites a systematic reading of Sartre’s work as a post-continental philosopher, a task that I can only begin to sketch here.

Sartre’s idea that humans are responsible for their very existence is arguably rooted in the perception of the implications of the existence of Europe and the problems to which it gives rise. We have already stated that post-continental philosophy is to a great extent existential because it focuses on the existence of both normative and liminal subjects. They live in situations where their very existence implies certain responsibilities and challenges. Sartre knew what Europe meant: less the climax of human civilization, as Husserl argued, and more a firm commitment with deceit and murderous violence. Sartre wished Europeans to face the truth about their own existence and to

accept responsibility for them. Nowhere else was this clearer than in his “Preface” to Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*:

You know very well that we are exploiters [the problem of the proletariat]. You know very well that we took the gold and the metals and then the oil of the ‘new continents’ and brought them back to the old mother countries [the problem of colonialism]. Not without excellent results: palaces, cathedrals, industrial capitals; and then whenever crisis threatened, the colonial markets were there to cushion or deflect it. Europe, stuffed with riches, granted *de jure* humanity to all its inhabitants: for us, a human being means ‘accomplice,’ since we all have benefited from colonial exploitation. This fat and pallid continent has ended up lapsing into what Fanon rightly calls ‘narcissism.’ Cocteau was irritated by Paris, ‘the city which is always thinking about itself.’ What else is Europe doing? Or that super-European monster, North America? What empty chatter: liberty, equality, fraternity, love, honour, country, and who knows what else? That did not prevent us from holding forth at the same time in racist language: filthy nigger, filthy Jew, filthy North Africans [the problem of race]. Enlightened, liberal and sensitive souls—in short, neocolonialists—claimed to be shocked by this inconsistency; that is an error or bad faith. Nothing is more consistent, among us, than racist humanism, since Europeans have only been able to make themselves human beings by creating slaves and monsters.<sup>83</sup>

This passage illustrates in concise form the main axis of Sartre’s work: the problem of self-deception and flight from freedom and responsibility in relation to the problem of the proletariat, the colonial problem, and the question of race, all of which are deeply implicated in Europe’s existence—in the sense that Europe’s life and its sense of identity are inextricably linked to these problems.

We see the clear presence of this axis in Sartre’s first massive philosophical treatise *Being and Nothingness*.<sup>84</sup> In it Sartre proposes a view of the self out of careful and detailed descriptions and analyses of consciousness in bad faith. He seeks to establish the conditions of possibility for consciousness to be able to lie to itself with the goal of providing a view of the self that facilitates the detection of hypocrisy. The ultimate aim is to formulate a view that makes “responsible agency” the most distinctive feature of humanity. It is true that Sartre returns to the Cartesian *cogito* through Husserl, but he does not do it in order to reassert the value of European identity. While learning much from it, Sartre corrected Husserl’s approach in that his philosophical discourse would be oriented not by the effort to show Europeans the real *telos* or entelechy of their civilization, but to allow them to realize the implications of their very existence in relation to the problems to which it gave rise and to assume responsibility for it. *In Sartre’s work, responding to the problems created by Europe in consortium with those affected by it takes primacy over recovering European roots. For him theory, the search for truth, and reason find their proper meaning in this work of decolonization and deracialization.*

While Marxists of the time believed that Sartre’s philosophy of freedom was complicit with, if not the direct expression of bourgeois values or ideals, he tirelessly sought to demonstrate that the opposite was the case. Christian philosophers and Marxists were Sartre’s primary (because more immediate) interlocutors in France. In his popular and widely read *Existentialism and Humanism* he sought to establish that existential atheism does not lead to nihilism, and that the defense of individual freedom does not do away with the possibility of social commitment.<sup>85</sup> Freedom and responsibility are for Sartre the ground of any commitment whatsoever. Sartre knew that no science or theoretical construct—call it theology, historical materialism, or anything else—by itself would rid the problems of deception and self-deception. His likely suspicion would become incontrovertible

as many of the Marxists who were critical of Sartre would find themselves to be the object of critique by intellectuals like Fanon who pointed out their lack of understanding and support for colonial problems, most particularly those that found expression in the French colony of Algeria.<sup>86</sup> Sartre, on the contrary, noted the extent to which the colonial problem was an inescapable problem for him, not only as a European, but quite simply as a free and responsible human being. At the same time, Sartre's account of freedom and responsible agency would change as he understood with more precision the gravity of both the problem of the proletariat and the colonial problem. What he would do is to articulate a philosophical vision that combined both freedom and society—along with the social constitution of the self—, very much as Fanon did in *Black Skin, White Masks* when he formulated the idea of sociogeny.<sup>87</sup>

Sartre explored the racial and the colonial problem in writings such as *Anti-Semite and Jew*, *The Respectful Prostitute*, “Black Orpheus,” and the “Preface” to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, among other writings.<sup>88</sup> Of *Anti-Semite and Jew*, the Lithuanian-French Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, remarks:

The most striking feature of Sartre's struggle lies less in his victory than in the arms he employs. They are absolutely new. He attacks anti-Semitism with existentialist arguments. This is not just an event for habitués of the Café de Flore. If one thinks that existentialism is something more than a fashionable philosophy, that it is in its broadest essence derived from the structure and angst of the modern world, Sartre's reflections bring the Jewish problem back from the outmoded horizons where it is often situated and up to the very heights where the true, terrible, and thrilling history of the twentieth century is unfolding. The anachronism is no more.<sup>89</sup>

Lévinas correctly relates Sartre's existential phenomenology to “the structure and angst of the modern world.” And what such angst uncovers to Sartre is not pure meaninglessness but a set of problems to which he must respond. Once again, it is a proper response to those problems, rather than the preservation of Europe or modernity that motivates his thought. Lévinas praises Sartre for elevating the Jewish problem to “the very heights where the true, terrible, and thrilling history of the twentieth century is unfolding.” Sartre did the same with respect to the colonial problem as well as with the so-called “black problem.” He puts it in dramatic form in the initial sentences of “Black Orpheus”:

When you removed the gag that was keeping these black mouths shut, what were you hoping for? That they would sing your praises? Did you think that when they raised themselves up again, you would read adoration in the eyes of these heads that our fathers had forced to bend down to the very ground? Here are black men standing, looking at us, and I hope that you—like me—will feel the shock of being seen.<sup>90</sup>

Sartre attempted to formulate a view of the self that facilitated both the act of seeing properly and of being seen, especially by those whose gazes raise questions about one's integrity. It is true that he misrecognized the problem of blackness and that he attempted to subordinate negritude to the dialectic, thus expressing a more general trend to give primacy to the problem of the proletariat over the problem of race and colonialism—a problematic point of view that is not unique to European intellectuals—, yet his openness to enter in dialogue with black intellectuals allowed for the correction of such errors—which does not mean that the conversation could not have been more intense, or that Sartre necessarily corrected his misunderstandings or mistakes.<sup>91</sup>

Conversation with racialized subjects along with the dislocation of the primacy of Europe is a legacy that few have taken up seriously after Sartre's passing. Without any doubt, the most notable efforts in this direction are those of the Portuguese theorist Boaventura de Sousa Santos, director of the Center of Social Studies at the University of Coimbra.<sup>92</sup> Sousa Santos advocates an "epistemology of the south" in order to respond to the basic problems of modernity.<sup>93</sup> His work on the World Social Forum and his intense dialogue with third world intellectuals in Africa and the Americas represents perhaps the most radical expression in Europe of Sartre's legacy today.<sup>94</sup> But it is not only Sartre who stands behind Sousa Santos's decolonial impetus, or oppositional postcolonialism. His work cannot be accounted for without taking into consideration his many travels south and his deep reflection about the implications of colonization for Portuguese identity.<sup>95</sup> In this sense he can also be considered a border subject who made a choice to struggle with and for the south. When looked at from the angle of post-continental philosophy, it appears that the originality and audacity of both Paris and Frankfurt have moved to the south of Europe in Coimbra, which is serving as a connector among projects in the global south as well as a decolonial bridge with the north—that is a bridge that does not promote simply crossing, but decolonization. Sousa Santos, like others in the United States, practice different forms of what I call epistemic *coyotismo*, the introduction in the universities and formal centers of learning of theories and ideas that are banned or excluded from the halls of academia. To be sure, other such sites exist in the south as well, where there are also a number of epistemic coyotes, both male and female. Fundamental for the understanding of the "de-colonial turn" today is not only Négritude but also women of color feminist theorizing and Latin American liberation thought, among other areas of radical theorizing in the Americas and elsewhere. The Caribbean Philosophical Association helps to set the agenda by calling for "shifting the geography of reason" by focusing on problems, instead of sacrosanct bodies of thought.<sup>47</sup> Post-continental philosophy today is, in truth, more than a proposal, a living and vibrant reality, and so should it continue as long as the avatars of Eurocentrism continue to live.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusion

As many gradually recognize today, continental philosophy is in crisis. William Schroeder remarks that "the edge has disappeared. Continental scholars seem to be waiting for a new movement to emerge while continuing their historical research."<sup>97</sup> Indeed, it is as if many patiently wait for the next great French or German philosopher to follow or against whom they can debate. Thus, continental philosophy turns each time more conservative (in the sense of conserving its sources), and gradually replaces the history of (certain, mostly European) ideas for genuine philosophical thinking—which does not mean that philosophy can dispense with the history of ideas or textual analysis, of course. In many cases, it seems to fall into what Lewis Gordon calls "disciplinary decadence."<sup>98</sup>

Post-continental philosophy offers a possible cure to such a crisis. But the cure demands a radical dislocation of the canonical exercises of continental philosophy, and thus, of its very identity. Evoking Jacques Derrida, one might say that post-continental philosophy offers a gift of death.<sup>99</sup> It is the same kind of gift that Ethnic Studies and related fields offer to the modern western university and its disciplined based departments and programs—a gift that it is still largely misunderstood and contained by limitation within traditional Arts and Sciences schools or departments in research universities and elsewhere. There lies the main difficulty for these areas of theorizing and intellectual enquiry. But the future of post-continental philosophy, or of Ethnic Studies and related fields, in whatever guise or designation they take, does not depend on the adherence of continental philosophers—be they European, Asian, African, or Latin American. It depends on the continuous theoretical reflection by subjects who give priority to decolonization as a project of thinking and

being, who seem to be each time more and more.<sup>100</sup> Fortunately, we count with good examples among whom we have listed Anzaldúa, Césaire, Fanon, and Sartre. Others implicitly contribute and are indebted to this form of reflection, but they do not dare to cite the sources or recognize the influence. To be sure, the project will continue with or without such recognition, since recognition is not what it looks for, but a radical transformation of the world.

Race, modern colonialism, and capitalist exploitation are problems intimately linked with the existence of Europe. Sartre's existential phenomenology aims to overcome the hegemonic identity politics and conservatism that still defines much work that passes as or introduces itself as radical today—consider, for instance, Slavoj Žižek.<sup>101</sup> However, as we learn from Sartre's radical exercise in self-critique and defense of responsibility, the “de-colonial turn” and the post-continental philosophy that help to bring out basic coordinates in his work, demand more radical and consistent projects. First, we need to continue exploring ways to articulate the relation between race, colonialism, capitalism, gender, and sexuality beyond reductionisms or reifications.<sup>102</sup> These problems have become central in the theoretical production of some third world and racialized intellectuals.<sup>103</sup> At the institutional and programmatic level, post-continental philosophy is pursued in different sites.<sup>104</sup> They bring together ethnic studies, area studies, women's studies, sociology, philosophy and other areas in their theoretical reflections, not in a simple aggregated manner, but transforming each area of thought and performing new syntheses as well as creating new theoretical tools. Dialogues and debates among these and other projects, organizations, and collectives are important for the continuous sophistication of post-continental philosophy in the United States, Latin America, the Caribbean and elsewhere. South-south dialogues are equally relevant, as well as conversations and common projects with all those who are challenging the normative authority of the North and its provincial perspective. Herein lays an agenda of work the contours of which are to be defined in dialogue and commitment with continuing decolonization struggles all over the world.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Martin W. Lewis and Kären W. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 189, 205.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Critchley and William R. Schroeder, eds., *A Companion to Continental Philosophy* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998), 15.

<sup>3</sup> See Hilary Putnam, "A Half Century of Philosophy, Viewed from Within," *Daedalus* 126, no. 1 (1997); and, Richard Rorty, *Analytic Philosophy and Transformative Philosophy* (<http://www.stanford.edu/~rrorty/analytictrans.htm>) [On-line] (1999 [cited March 19 2006]).

<sup>4</sup> Cornel West is without doubt one of the most important ones. See, among others, Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison, Wisc.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), and the co-edited volume John Rajchman and Cornel West, eds., *Post-Analytic Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985). For more recent efforts that also avoid giving a patriotic tone to this project see, also, Linda Alcoff, *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Linda Alcoff and Walter Brogan, eds., *Extending the Horizons of Continental Philosophy* (Chicago: Philosophy Today, 2000); Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Hispanics/Latinos in the United States: Ethnicity, Race, and Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Surviving Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality: A Challenge for the Twenty-first Century* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Charles W. Mills, *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998); Charles W. Mills, *From Class to Race: Essays in White Marxist and Black Radicalism* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997).

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- <sup>5</sup> See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Toward a Critique of Continental Reason: Africana Studies and the Decolonization of Imperial Cartographies in the Americas," in *Not Only the Master's Tools: Theoretical Explorations in African-American Studies*, ed. Lewis Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2006), 51-84.
- <sup>6</sup> For a description and diagnosis of some of these problems see John McCumber, *Time in the Ditch: American Philosophy and the McCarthy Era* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2001).
- <sup>7</sup> See Rajchman and West, eds., *Post-Analytic Philosophy*; West, *American Evasion*. See also the analysis of Cornel West's patriotic pragmatism in Maldonado-Torres, "Toward a Critique of Continental Reason," 51-84.
- <sup>8</sup> Rajchman and West, eds., *Post-Analytic Philosophy*.
- <sup>9</sup> For a definition and critique of national and continental ontologies see Lisa Lowe, "Epistemological Shifts: National Ontology and the New Asian Immigrant," in *Orientations: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora*, ed. Kandice Chuh and Karen Shimakawa (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 267-76; Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2005).
- <sup>10</sup> For varied analyses of Latin American philosophy see Carlos Beorlegui, *Historia del pensamiento filosófico latinoamericano: una búsqueda incesante de la identidad* (Bilbao, Sp.: Universidad de Deusto, 2004); Eduardo Mendieta, ed., *Latin American Philosophy: Currents, Issues, Debates* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); and Isabel Monal, Pablo Guadarrama González, Rafael Plá León et al., *Filosofía en América Latina* (La Habana: Editorial "Felix Varela", 1998).
- <sup>11</sup> See Santiago Castro-Gómez, *Crítica de la razón latinoamericana* (Barcelona, Sp.: Puvill Libros, 1996). Also important in this context is Walter Mignolo's critical analysis of the idea of Latin America. See Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*. Mignolo's critique of the work is an example of post-continental theory in a decolonial vein. For a different but related take on the relevance of geo-political and economic dynamics in the constitution of continental ideologies in Europe and the Americas see Maldonado-Torres, "Toward a Critique of Continental Reason," 51-84.
- <sup>12</sup> This is the point of departure for Walter Mignolo's critique of "the idea of Latin America." See Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*.
- <sup>13</sup> Walter Mignolo refers to temporal epistemic fractures as epistemic changes within a temporal genealogy, e.g. European thought. Spatial epistemic fractures, on the other hand, refer to epistemic changes that can only be explained in reference to the difference in geo-political space, e.g., epistemic innovations or breakthroughs in the colonial world. See Walter Mignolo, "Globalization and the Geopolitics of Knowledge: The Role of the Humanities in the Corporate University," *Nepantla: Views from South* 4, no. 1 (2003): 97-119. With "temporal-spatial epistemic fractures" I aim to denote that spatial epistemic fractures can also be related to temporal processes—which might not need to be conceived exclusively in terms of European history, but in terms of the species. I elaborate the idea of a "decolonial turn" in Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Césaire's Gift and the Decolonial Turn," *Radical Philosophy Review* 9, no. 2 (2006): 111-37; Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming), among other places. It was also the central concept in the conference "Mapping the Decolonial Turn: Post/Trans-continental Interventions in Philosophy, Theory, and Critique" at the University of California, Berkeley on April 21-3, 2005. Ramón Grosfoguel, José David Saldívar, and I are currently editing a volume with the same title that includes essays from the conference participants.
- <sup>14</sup> Vest emphasizes the need of by passing European centrality and fomenting south-south dialogues. She works primarily on Native American and African philosophy and focuses on the Caribbean as a region of encounter that facilitates such dialogue. See, Jennifer Lisa Vest, "Critical Indigenous Philosophy: Disciplinary Challenges Posed by African and Native American Epistemologies" (Ph.D., University of California, 2000); Jennifer Lisa Vest, "The Promise of Caribbean Philosophy: How it Can Contribute to a 'New Dialogic' in Philosophy," *Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 2 (2005): 3-34.
- <sup>15</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 178-80.
- <sup>16</sup> Illuminating in this regard is Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology," in *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Reader*, ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1997), 103-40. In the same line see Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, *Achieving our Humanity: The Idea of a Postracial Future* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
- <sup>17</sup> For contributions in the United States that help deflate "Americanism" in its different forms see Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: the New Mestiza=La frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1991); Kandice Chuh and Karen Shimakawa, eds., *Orientations: Mapping Studies in the Asian Diaspora* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Vine Jr. Deloria, *For this Land: Writings on Religion in America* (New York: Routledge, 1998);

- José David Saldívar, *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1997). I have commented on some of these sources and contributed to the critique of Eurocentrism and Americanism in Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics after September 11: Eurocentrism and Americanism against the Barbarian Threats," *Radical Philosophy Review* 8, no. 1 (2005): 35-67; Maldonado-Torres, "Toward a Critique of Continental Reason," 51-84.
- <sup>18</sup> See Carlos Rojas Osorio, *Filosofía moderna en el Caribe hispano* (Mexico, D.F.: Universidad de Puerto Rico; Miguel Angel Porrúa, 1997).
- <sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1968), 109-10.
- <sup>20</sup> See Fanon, *Black Skin*, 109-10, and conclusion. The contrast between liminal subject and continental ontology on the one hand, and the demand, as a response to such a contrast, for a decolonized form of human study and philosophy, on the other, parallels Lisa Lowe's arguments about the challenge of the new Asian immigrant to U.S. national ontology and Asian American Studies. See Lowe, "Epistemological Shifts," 267-76. For examples of political and intellectual projects from liminal communities that challenge the integrity of "Anglo" and "Latin" America see Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*.
- <sup>21</sup> For explorations of the philosophical relevance of Caliban see Paget Henry, *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2000). See also Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Introduction," *Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 2 (2005): vii-viii.
- <sup>22</sup> For Wynter's groundbreaking account of the imaginary, system of symbolic representations, and self-perceptions that emerge or are solidified in the aftermath of the so-called discovery and conquest of the Americas see Sylvia Wynter, "1492: A New World View," in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*, ed. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 5-57; Sylvia Wynter, "Columbus and the Poetics of the Propter Nos," *Annals of Scholarship* 8, no. 2 (1991): 251-86.
- <sup>23</sup> See Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, trans. Aquilina Martinez and Christine Morkovsky (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985); Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," *Nepantla: Views from South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533-80.
- <sup>24</sup> This idea is clear if figures such as Kant and Hegel. See G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
- <sup>25</sup> See "On the Coloniality of Being," presentation in the Critical Theory and Decolonization Conference at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and Duke University on May 30th to June 1<sup>st</sup> 2004. See also Maldonado-Torres, *Against War*; Maldonado-Torres, "Césaire's Gift," 125-7; Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics," 16-7, 39-40.
- <sup>26</sup> For Husserl's reflections on the beginnings of philosophy see Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity," in *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 269-99.
- <sup>27</sup> See, Rémi Bague, *Eccentric Culture: A Theory of Western Civilization*, trans. Samuel Lester (St. Augustine's Press: South Bend, Ind., 2002). The original title of this book is *Europe, la voie romaine*, which literally translates as Europe, the roman path.
- <sup>28</sup> See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "The Topology of Being and the Geopolitics of Knowledge: Modernity, Empire, Coloniality," *City* 8, no. 1 (2004): 29-56.
- <sup>29</sup> For elaborations on the unfinished project of decolonization see Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar, "Latin@s and the 'Euro-American' Menace: The Decolonization of the US Empire in the 21st Century," in *Latin@s in the World-System*, ed. Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar (Boulder, Co: Paradigm Press, 2005), 3-27; Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- <sup>30</sup> For recent works in this direction see Lewis Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon, eds., *A Companion to African-American Studies* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2006); Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon, eds., *Not Only the Master's Tools: Theoretical Explorations in African American Studies* (Boulder, Col.: Paradigm Press, 2006).
- <sup>31</sup> To list only some of the most recent, see, among others, Lewis R. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Walter Mignolo, "The Larger Picture: Hispanics/Latinos (and Latino Studies) in the Colonial Horizon of Modernity," in *Hispanics/Latinos in the United States*, edited by Jorge J. E. Gracia and Pablo de Greiff (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 99-124; Walter Mignolo, "Os esplendores e as misérias da <<ciência>>: colonialidade,

- geopolítica do conhecimento e pluri-versalidade epistémica," in *Conhecimento Prudente para uma Vida Decente: Um Discurso sobre as Ciências' revistado*, edited by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (Porto, Port.: Edições Afrontamento, 2003), 667-709; Walter Dignolo, "Philosophy and the Colonial Difference," *Philosophy Today* 43, no. 4 (1999): 36-41; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999); Sylvia Wynter, "On Disenchanted Discourse: 'Minority' Literary Criticism and Beyond," in *The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 432-69; the essays in Gordon and Gordon, eds., *Not only the Master's Tools*, and this dossier.
- <sup>32</sup> On the concepts of Transmodernity and the decolonial imaginary see, respectively, Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995); Enrique Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad: diálogos con la filosofía de Gianni Vattimo* (Puebla, Mex.: Universidad Iberoamericana, Golfo Centro; Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente; Universidad Iberoamericana, Plantel Laguna, 1999); and Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).
- <sup>33</sup> Dussel, *The Invention*; Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limits of World-History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); Germán Marquínez Argote, Luis José González Álvarez, and Francisco Beltrán Peña, eds., *Latinoamérica se rebela: contestación al discurso de Hegel sobre América*, 2nd ed. (Bogotá, Col.: Nueva América, 1979). See also Maldonado-Torres, *Against War*.
- <sup>34</sup> Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*.
- <sup>35</sup> Enrique Dussel, "World System and 'Trans'-Modernity," trans. Alessandro Fornazzari, *Nepantla: Views from South* 3, no. 2 (2002): 221-44.
- <sup>36</sup> For an analysis of the role of the philosophy of history in the context of revolution see Reinhart Koselleck's critique of the philosophy of history in the Enlightenment. Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1988).
- <sup>37</sup> See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Post-imperial Reflections on Crisis, Knowledge, and Utopia: Transgressive Critical Hermeneutics and the 'Death of European Man'," *Review: A Journal of the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations* 25, no. 3 (2002): 277-315. See also the essay by Kenneth Knies in this dossier. He elaborates an internal critique of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology that exposes his problematic commitment to continentality and that opens up a conceptualization of ethnic studies and related fields as post-European sciences.
- <sup>38</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 299, italics in original.
- <sup>39</sup> Husserl, *Crisis*, 15.
- <sup>40</sup> Husserl, *Crisis*, 290.
- <sup>41</sup> Husserl, *Crisis*, 290.
- <sup>42</sup> Husserl, *Crisis*, 273.
- <sup>43</sup> Husserl, *Crisis*, 299.
- <sup>44</sup> For a more developed critique of Husserl around this point see Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Imperial Reflections," 277-315.
- <sup>45</sup> I have developed this critique of Heidegger in Maldonado-Torres, "Topology of Being," 29-56.
- <sup>46</sup> Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth," in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, Rev. & exp ed. (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 125.
- <sup>47</sup> See Martin Heidegger, "'Only a God can Save Us:' *Der Spiegel's* Interview with Martin Heidegger (1966)," in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 1993), 91-116.
- <sup>48</sup> Charles Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003); Victor Farias, *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Paul Burrell and Gabriel Ricci (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger: l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2005); Patricia J. Huntington, "Heidegger, Irigaray, and the Masculine Ethos of National Socialism or, How to Tame the Feminine," in *Ecstatic Subjects, Utopia, and Recognition: Kristeva, Heidegger, Irigaray* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 33-75; Emmanuel Lévinas, "Is Ontology Fundamental?," in *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*, ed. Adriaan T. Peperzak, Simon Critchley, and Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 1-10; Domenico Losurdo, *Heidegger and the Ideology of War: Community, Death and the West*, trans. Marella and Jon Morris (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2001); Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, eds., *Martin Heidegger and the Holocaust* (Atlantic

- Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996); Richard Wolin, ed., *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
- <sup>49</sup> See Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*, 2nd ed. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003).
- <sup>50</sup> For an explanation of the concept of coloniality of power see, among others, Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder y clasificación social," *Journal of World-Systems Research* XI, no. 2 (2000): 342-86; Quijano, "Coloniality of Power," 533-80.
- <sup>51</sup> See the essays, and especially the introduction of Gordon and Gordon, eds., *Not only the Master's Tools*.
- <sup>52</sup> Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: the New Mestiza=La frontera*.
- <sup>53</sup> On the concept of "border thinking" see Mignolo, *Local Histories*; Walter D. Mignolo, "The Many Faces of Cosmopolis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism," *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (2000).
- <sup>54</sup> See Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). Sandoval locates the general effects of decoloniality in European and non-European figures. She is inclusive and generous towards European figures, but it is nonetheless clear that her work stands as a challenge to those who continue to refuse first, recognizing and second focusing more centrally on the connections of their work with the work of intellectuals of color, with decolonization as project, and with the methodology of the oppressed.
- <sup>55</sup> Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).
- <sup>56</sup> René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, ed. David Weissman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). Maldonado-Torres, "Césaire's Gift," 111-37.
- <sup>57</sup> Césaire, *Discourse*, 31.
- <sup>58</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1991); translated as Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.
- <sup>59</sup> For a reflection on the struggle between Eurocentrism and its competitor U.S. Americanism see Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics," 35-67.
- <sup>60</sup> Definitions obtained in the University of Notre Dame on-line Latin dictionary (<http://catholic.archives.nd.edu/cgi-bin/lookdown.pl>).
- <sup>61</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin*, 8; Lewis R. Gordon, *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 74. See also Gordon's contribution in this dossier.
- <sup>62</sup> For an analysis of the meaning of "damnation" see Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics," 62-3.
- <sup>63</sup> Fanon, *Black Skin*, 232.
- <sup>64</sup> See Emmanuel Lévinas, *Humanisme de l'autre homme* (N.p.: Fata Morgana, 1972). For an analysis and comparison between humanism, anti-humanism, and what he refers to as *alter* humanism see George Ciccariello Maher, "Beyond the Debate on Humanism: Césaire, Fanon, and the Limits of the European Gaze," *Radical Philosophy Review* 9, no. 2 (2006). Lévinas is also explicitly critical of liberal humanists and anti-humanists.
- <sup>65</sup> I owe the expression "*alter* humanism" to George Ciccariello Maher who employs it in Ciccariello Maher, "Beyond the Debate on Humanism". The Lévinasian connotation is my own. I use "*alter* humanism" as synonymous with a decolonial humanism of the other person such as the one that I find in my Lévinasian reading of Fanon. I write extensively on these two figures in *Against War*.
- <sup>66</sup> I elaborate on the different dimensions of decolonial ethics and their expression in theory and politics in *Against War*.
- <sup>67</sup> See the introduction of Fanon, *Black Skin*, and Sylvia Wynter, "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What it is like to be "Black"," in *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America*, ed. Mercedes F. Durán-Cogan and Antonio Gómez-Moriana (New York: Routledge, 2001), 30-66.
- <sup>68</sup> See the introduction of Sandoval, *Methodology*.
- <sup>69</sup> See Maldonado-Torres, "Césaire's Gift," 111-37; Maldonado-Torres, "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics," 35-67; Maldonado-Torres, "Topology of Being," 29-56; Maldonado-Torres, "Toward a Critique of Continental Reason," 51-84.
- <sup>70</sup> Lewis R. Gordon, "Du Bois's Humanistic Philosophy of Human Sciences," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 568 (2000): 265-80.
- <sup>71</sup> For a related analysis see Sandoval, *Methodology*, 84-7.
- <sup>72</sup> See Sylvia Wynter, "Beyond the Word of Man: Glissant and the New Discourse of the Antilles," *World Literature Today* (1989); Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation--An Argument," *The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257-337.

- <sup>73</sup> See Wynter, "1492," 5-57.
- <sup>74</sup> Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1978), 34.
- <sup>75</sup> See Bruce D. Jr. Dickson, "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Idea of Double Consciousness," in *The Souls of Black Folk. Authoritative Text. Contexts. Criticisms*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Terri Hume Oliver (By W.E.B. Du Bois. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999), 237-8.
- <sup>76</sup> See W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk. Authoritative Text. Contexts. Criticisms*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Terri Hume Oliver (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1999), 11.
- <sup>77</sup> Indeed, *Black Skin, White Masks* can be read as a postcolonial analytic of desire. See the comparison between Fanon and C.L.R. James's reflections on desire in Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Frantz Fanon and C.L.R. James on Intellectualism and Enlightened Rationality," *Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 2 (2005): 149-94.
- <sup>78</sup> I have elaborated a phenomenology of the "cry" elsewhere. See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "The Cry of the Self as a Call from the Other: The Paradoxical Loving Subjectivity of Frantz Fanon," *Listening: Journal of Religion and Culture* 36, no. 1 (2001): 46-60. Available on-line at: <http://www.listeningjournal.org/articles.htm>
- <sup>79</sup> For an elaboration of the idea of biological selection and its relation to a religious conception of divine selection see Wynter, "Unsettling," 257-337.
- <sup>80</sup> Césaire, *Discourse*, 36.
- <sup>81</sup> For an analysis of bad faith see Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, Pocket Books, 1966), 86-118.
- <sup>82</sup> For an analysis of institutional racism as a form of bad faith see Lewis R. Gordon, *Bad Faith and Antiracist Racism* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1995).
- <sup>83</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Wretched of the Earth," in *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, trans. Azzedine Haddour, Steve Brewer, and Terry McWilliams (London: Routledge, 2001), 151.
- <sup>84</sup> Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*.
- <sup>85</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*, trans. Philip Mairet (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973).
- <sup>86</sup> See Paul Clay Sorum, *Intellectuals and Decolonization in France* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977).
- <sup>87</sup> On Sartre's relation to Fanon see Ciccariello Maher, "Beyond the Debate on Humanism".
- <sup>88</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, trans. George J. Becker (New York: Schocken Books, 1995); Jean-Paul Sartre, "Black Orpheus," in *"What is Literature?" and Other Essays*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 289-332; Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit and Three Other Plays: Dirty Hands, The Flies, The Respectful Prostitute* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); Sartre, "The Wretched of the Earth," 136-55.
- <sup>89</sup> Emmanuel Lévinas, *Unforeseen History*, trans. Nidra Poller (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 73-4.
- <sup>90</sup> Sartre, "Black Orpheus," 291.
- <sup>91</sup> Some of these criticisms appear in Fanon, *Black Skin*. I comment on them in a work in progress.
- <sup>92</sup> For a complete profile of Sousa Santos visit his website: <http://www.ces.uc.pt/bss/index.htm>
- <sup>93</sup> See Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- <sup>94</sup> See Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *The World-Social Forum: Toward a Counter-Hegemonic Globalization* [Web: [www.ces.fe.uc.pt/bss/documentos/wsf.pdf](http://www.ces.fe.uc.pt/bss/documentos/wsf.pdf)] (2003 [cited 2003]).
- <sup>95</sup> See, for instance, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Inter-identity," *Review* 29, no. 2 (2006): 143-66.
- <sup>96</sup> For an elaboration of the concept of "shifting the geography of reason" see Lewis R. Gordon, "African-American Philosophy, Race, and the Geography of Reason," in *Not Only the Master's Tools: Theoretical Explorations in African American Studies*, ed. Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (Boulder, Col.: Paradigm Press, 2006), 39-47. See also Lewis R. Gordon, "From the President of the Caribbean Philosophical Association," *Caribbean Studies* 33, no. 2 (2005): xv-xxiii.
- <sup>97</sup> William R. Schroeder, *Continental Philosophy: A Critical Approach* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2005), x.
- <sup>98</sup> See Lewis R. Gordon, *Disciplinary Decadence: Living Thought in Trying Times* (Boulder, Co.: Paradigm Press, 2006).
- <sup>99</sup> See Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- <sup>100</sup> Chicana feminism, the recent so-called "leftist" turn in Latin America and, the insurgent activities by indigenous peoples in the Americas and elsewhere have increased explicit references to a needed decolonization process. See, among others, Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*;

Esteban Ticona Alejo, *Lecturas para la descolonización: Taqapachani qhispiyasipxañani (liberémonos todos)* (Cochabamba, Bol., La Paz, Bol., and Quito, Ec.: AGRUCO-UMSS, Universidad de la Cordillera, and Plural Editores, 2005); Catherine Walsh, ed., *Pensamiento crítico y matriz (de)colonial: reflexiones latinoamericanas* (Quito, Ec.: Editorial Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, 2005)

<sup>101</sup> See William D. Hart, "Can a Judgment be Read? A Response to Žižek," *Nepantla: Views from South* 4, no. 1 (2003): 553-78; William D. Hart, "Slavoj Žižek and the Imperial/Colonial Model of Religion," *Nepantla: Views from South* 3, no. 3 (2002); Slavoj Žižek, "I Plead Guilty--But Where is the Judgment?," *Nepantla: Views from South* 3, no. 3 (2002): 579-83; Slavoj Žižek, "A Leftist Plea for 'Eurocentrism'," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1998): 988-1009; Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2003); Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Liberation Theology and the Search for the Lost Paradigm: From Radical Orthodoxy to Radical Diversality," in *Latin American Liberation Theology: The Next Generation*, ed. Ivan Petrella (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 39-61; Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "The Regressive Kernel of Orthodoxy," review of *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, by Slavoj Žižek., *Radical Philosophy Review* 6, no. 1 (2003): 59-70; Walter Mignolo, "The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 1 (2002): 57-96.

<sup>102</sup> Relevant on this point is Ramón Grosfoguel, "Subaltern Epistemologies, Decolonial Imaginaries and the Redefinition of Global Capitalism," *Review* 29, no. 2 (forthcoming 2005); Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder y clasificación social," 342-86; Quijano, "Coloniality of Power," 533-80; Aníbal Quijano, "Modernity, Identity, and Utopia in Latin America," in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. John Beverly, Michael Arona, and José Oviedo (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 201-16; Aníbal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Americanness as a Concept, or the Americas in the Modern World-System," *International Social Science Journal* 44 (1992): 549-57. Central to this point is also María Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern, Gender System," in *Mapping the Decolonial Turn: Post/Trans-continental Interventions in Philosophy, Theory, and Critique*, ed. Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar (N.p.: N.p., forthcoming); and the introduction and several contributions in Ramón Grosfoguel and Ana Margarita Cervantes-Rodríguez, eds., *The Modern/Colonial/Capitalist World-System in the Twentieth Century: Global Processes, Antisystemic Movements, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002).

<sup>103</sup> These topics have been central in a series of meetings and conferences that Ramón Grosfoguel, José David Saldívar, and myself have co-organized at the University of California, Berkeley. They are also central to scholars in the Future of Minority Studies initiative, the Modernity/Coloniality network, and the Center for Philosophy, Interpretation, and Culture at Binghamton University under the directorship of María Lugones.

<sup>104</sup> They include the Caribbean Philosophical Association; the Center for the Study of Globalization in the Humanities at Duke University; the Center for Philosophy, Interpretation and Culture at Binghamton University; The Center for the Study of Race and Social Thought at Temple University; the Center of Social Studies at the University of Coimbra, Portugal; the Center for Caribbean Thought at the University of West Indies at Mona, Jamaica; the Institute for Postcolonial and Transcultural Studies at the University of Bremen, Germany; the Doctoral Program in Latin American Cultural Studies at the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar in Quito, Ecuador; the Phenomenology Roundtable; the Roundtable on Philosophy and Race at the University of San Francisco; the Modernity/Coloniality collective; the methodology of the oppressed; and the philosophy of liberation, among other groups, departments (such as African Diaspora Studies, Ethnic Studies, and related fields), and philosophical postures are doing essential work in post-continental philosophy.

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