[Year 2019]: A new life awaits you in the off-world colonies: the chance to begin again in a golden land of opportunity and adventure.—*Blade Runner* (1982)

COLONIALISM AND ITS REPLICANTS

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The invitation made in a familiar rhetoric by the advertising machine at the beginning of Ridley Scott's film suggests, among other things, that at least in some forms of political imagination it would be impossible today to depict a future in which some notion of colonialism and enslavement is not present. The quote also suggests that the world itself might be becoming too small a place to satisfy, within its traditional parameters, the ambition of colonial domination; it expresses a vision of another New World, for which yet another colonial beginning is imagined. *Post*-colonialism, *trans*colonialism, or *coloniality* at large, finally on the loose, unconfined, universal?[1]

The purpose of this book is to explore and to interrogate, from the cultural perspective of the Latin American *difference*, current theories dealing with both the historical phenomenon of colonialism and the plurality of discourses it has generated from the beginning of

colonial times. In coordinating a collective reflection on these topics, our critical and theoretical project has been twofold: we have been particularly attentive to the strategies utilized by imperial powers in American territories, since the initiation of the "Hispanic" era. This interpretive level implies not only a critical analysis of historical sources, humanistic archives, and classical traditions, but also a *located* critique of the political and philosophical paradigms that underlie the concept and the implementation of imperial expansion. In the particular case of Latin America, a discussion of *post-* or *neo-* colonialism—or that of *coloniality*, a term that encompasses the transhistoric expansion of colonial domination and the perpetuation of its effects in contemporary times—is necessarily intertwined with the critique of Occidentalism and modernity, a critique that requires a profound but detached understanding of imperial rationality.[2] Concurrently, our goal has also been to register, analyze, and interpret the political, social, and cultural practices that reveal the resistance against imperial powers exercised by individuals and communities in a variety of contexts, throughout the *longue durée* of Latin America's colonial and neocolonial history.[3] In analyzing practices and discourses of resistance, topics such as violence, identity, otherness, memory, heterogeneity, and language have been particularly recurrent. These topics, reformulated during the last decades from the theoretical perspective of poststructuralist theories, focus on the cultural mediations that connect historical events, political philosophies, and institutional protocols with the much more elusive domains of social subjectivity and symbolic representation.

The critique of Occidentalism—that is, of the philosophical, political, and cultural paradigms that emerge from and are imbedded in the historical phenomenon of European colonization—is essential to the understanding of the aggressive strategies used in imposing material and symbolic domination on vast territories in the name of *universal reason*, as well as of the opposition this domination generated over the centuries in "New World" societies.

Modernity and violence have intertwined throughout the whole course of Latin American history. The Latin American modern subject is the product of a traumatic origin.[4] From the beginning of the conquest, the encounter of indigenous peoples with the European other was defined by violence. Territorial devastation, slavery, genocide, plundering, and exploitation name just some of the most immediate and notorious consequences of colonial expansion. Social and class relations were shaped by what Sergio Bagú called the "omnipresent violence" of the colonial reality (1952, 129). Given

these foundational conditions, the elaboration of loss (of entire populations, cultures, territories, and natural resources) and, later on, the utopian myths that accompanied the ideology of modernity (the construction of a teleology of history which would include the conquest of social order, technological progress, and industrial growth, as well as the promised admission of Latin America as the belated guest in the feast of Western civilization) constituted the underlying forces that guided the construction of cultural identities in transatlantic societies. As Frantz Fanon indicated, the trauma of colonialism permeates all levels of social subjectivity. Taking into account some of these issues, this editorial project has assumed both the complexity of Latin American history and its social and cultural heterogeneity as a vantage point from which a new perception of early and late processes of colonial expansion and globalization could be elaborated.

Many of the pieces included in this volume make reference to a series of essays which initiated, in 1991, a reflection in U.S. academe on the pertinence of postcolonial theory for the study of Latin American history and culture. These essays were intended as a response to Patricia Seed's review essay titled "Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse," which appeared in the *Latin American Research Review* in 1991.[5] Two features were identified by Seed as the common denominator in the studies she reviewed: first, the relations of authority in colonial and postcolonial states; second, the connections between this new interdisciplinary scholarship and contemporary trends such as poststructuralism, new historicism, subaltern studies, and the like. Seed recognized that a distinct field of study was being configured around the process of colonial representation and that the critique of the supposed transparency of language was at the core of critical inquiries.[6]

In his response to Seed's article, particularly in reference to the discursive edge of colonial criticism, Walter Mignolo emphasized a topic that soon became commonplace in the field of critical theory: the *locus of enunciation* as the disciplinary, geocultural, and ideological space from which discourses of power and resistance are elaborated. In order to overcome the hegemony of the *alphabet-oriented notions of text and discourse* Mignolo proposed the term *colonial semiosis* as the overarching concept that, in addition to materials of the lettered tradition, could include cultural artifacts such as quipus, maps, myths, calendars, oral narratives, and discourses produced in indigenous languages, thus allowing for a wider exploration of dominated cultures (Mignolo 1992b, 1993). Mignolo's idea of "descentering" and "multiplying" the centers of power and production of knowledge has also been at the core of the critique of colonialism in recent decades. In this direction, perhaps

the most fruitful strategy has been the recovery of both a Latin American tradition that starts in the colonial period and continues in the following centuries, and the production of pre-Hispanic and contemporary indigenous cultures that intersect and challenge Creole culture from the margins and interstices of national cultures. The studies gathered in this book make frequent references to what could be called the Latin American archive. This plural and conflictive repertoire, which includes a wide range of representative genres, cultural orientations, and ideological positions, has been mostly ignored in central debates, despite the fact that in many cases that repertoire's production has anticipated theories and critical positions that intellectuals working mainly in American and European institutions popularized many years later.

This initial debate also included other topics. Hernán Vidal saw the emergence of the postcolonial field in the context of a double crisis which according to him involves both the academic and professional status of literature and literary criticism, and the political vacuum that followed the collapse of socialism. By discussing the formation and function of the Latin American literary canon since the nineteenth century, Vidal offered a panoramic view of the changes registered in the field of literary criticism, divided at the time, according to Vidal, between a technocratic and a culturally oriented approach. The emergence of postcolonial studies as a distinctive field, and one with a particular orientation toward discursive analysis, was seen by Vidal as an effort to find a common ground that could allow for the articulation of both sides of the issue. But his main contention was for the need to restore a political dimension in the study of symbolic representation and social subjectivity, a claim that echoed what has been a constant issue in Latin American cultural criticism.[7]

As for Rolena Adorno's contribution to the debate, it focused, first of all, on the narratives that depicted interactions between dominating and dominated cultures through antagonistic and oversimplified categories (villains/heroes, aggressors/victims, etc.). Secondly, Adorno returned to the concept of "colonial discourse," following in part the arguments developed by J. Jorge Klor de Alva, who challenged the application of the term *colonial* to the early period of Spanish domination in America.[8] These articles, elaborated from very diverse analytical perspectives, contained most of the topics that would become part of the theoretical agenda in this field of study.

As an ample and representative collection of theoretical and ideological approaches, this volume constitutes an attempt to contribute, in the first place, to the Latin American field, particularly to the areas of scholarship in

which the social sciences intersect with humanistic studies and cultural critique. Problems related to the scenarios of neoliberalism, globalization, migration, social movements, cultural hybridity, and the like cannot be appropriately analyzed without an understanding of Latin America's coloniality. At the same time, given their transdisciplinary nature and the often comparative perspectives at work in the analysis of the peripheral Latin American region, the studies gathered in this volume could also be read as a critical and challenging contribution to the vigorous postcolonial debate that has been developing in the United States since the 1980s. It should be stated, however, that this collection of studies represents neither an attempt to force an entrance for Latin America in central debates, nor a deliberate effort to analyze the systematic exclusion of the region from the vast repertoire of historical experiences and philosophical and political discourses often examined in connection with the topic of colonialism.[9] Nevertheless, in both their intellectual scope and their critical perspectives, these studies draw attention to some of the philosophical and ideological blind spots of postcolonial theories, which have been elaborated mainly in American academe in reference to decolonization processes that took place, for the most part, after World Wars I and II.

While scholarly opinion regarding postcolonial theory's contributions to the specific field of Latin American studies varies, for many intellectuals in that field the analysis of Latin America's *postcoloniality* seems far more problematic than analysis of the scenarios of decolonization that have resulted from contemporary experiences of imperial expansion. Many critics would argue that, at different levels, due to the specificity of Latin American colonial history, no matter what interpretation may ultimately be adopted for the polemic prefix attached to the term, the application of postcolonial theories to the study of this region would require a great deal of ideological and theoretical refinement. Perhaps the field of Latin American studies has been affected, not as much by the influence of postcolonial *theories*—some of which have been crucial for the understanding of historical processes and the deconstruction of colonial rhetoric—but by the *critique of colonialism and coloniality* in their diverse temporal and spatial manifestations. This critique has not only challenged the limits and agendas of traditional disciplines but has also destabilized reductive ideological and cultural dualisms, mobilizing instead an ample array of new topics and approaches distinctively connected to the experience of colonialism. The work around the notions of colonial semiosis and collective subjectivity; the intersections between metropolitan power and colonial discourse; the studies on language, institutions, and

cultural textualities; the analysis of orality, cartography, iconography; the revision and critique of the literary canon; the critique of the concepts of nation, identity, ideology, and hegemony—all have been instrumental for the understanding of political and cultural structures related to Latin America's coloniality. At the same time, scrutiny of the methodology of anthropology, of historiography, and, more generally, of the social sciences, along with analyses of popular resistance in its many forms and critiques of the role intellectuals play in appropriating and resignifying hegemonic models of thought and in exploring alternative forms of knowledge and belief have put into question the adequacy of traditional paradigms for studying a world that is undergoing rapid political and social transformations. But even more important, in spite of its sometimes obvious discursive proclivity, this line of questioning has prompted a productive reinscription of political analysis in the examination of culture and society, an approach that had been diffused, to some extent, by cultural studies and by the postmodern debate, which favored a more fragmented and volatile perspective of political and epistemological issues.

Within this framework of problems and possibilities, the recognition of the particulars that constitute Latin America's history from the beginning of colonial times should not be read as a claim of *exceptionalism* (a position explored in this volume by Peter Hulme, Amaryll Chanady, and others), but rather as an attempt to elaborate on what Walter Mignolo and other scholars have called *colonial difference*, understanding by that the differential time-space where a particular region becomes connected to the world-system of colonial domination.[10]

To begin with, it should be taken into consideration that Latin American coloniality originates in the transoceanic adventures from which European modernity itself was born, following the arrival of Columbus to the Caribbean islands. The conquest of overseas territories by peninsular powers—that is, the foundation of the oldest colonial system in the West—is not the expression of the logistics of an imperialist search for transnational markets implemented from the centers of advanced capitalism—as it would be the case with English and French territorial appropriations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—but, instead, an unforeseeable outcome of adventurous commercial explorations, as well as a function of political absolutism and religious expansionism. The prolonged crusades against Islam provided the model of the Holy War that would be implemented, with many variations, in the New World, creating a trade-off in which Indians would occupy the place of Moors within the Christian project of religious dis-

semination. In spite of the prolonged effect of classical and medieval ideas in the modern era, with the "discovery" of America during the first decades of the sixteenth century many epistemological and geopolitical paradigms of the Renaissance from which the enterprise of territorial conquest and colonization had originally emerged came to an end. A *new world*, one that encompassed both metropolitan and colonial territories, appeared on the horizon of European imaginaries. The "peoples without history" who, according to G. W. F. Hegel, would constitute the new frontier of European civilization were conceptualized as the tabula rasa on which the principles and accomplishments of Western rationality (religious beliefs, scientific advances, and humanistic paradigms) could and should be inscribed. The European expansion over transoceanic territories and the domination of subjugated cultures not only resulted from the willingness to pursue economic profit and prove military superiority, but also constituted the historic outcome of political and religious transcendentalism. With the colonization of America, Europe became, at least within the limits of Occidental consciousness, the center of the universe. From then on, the Spirit of Civilization would not only mobilize the Angel of History, but also incarnate in the Specter of Capitalism.

Another defining characteristic of Spanish colonialism not present in more contemporary practices of European expansion was the particular distribution of power implemented among metropolitan and vernacular elites in America. For some scholars, the division of colonial societies into two parallel "republics" (the República de españoles and the República de indios) instituted a unique social and political organization which, by incorporating Creoles (those born in America from Spanish descent) into the dominating Spanish system (the República de españoles), co-opted, at least to a certain degree, a very important sector of viceregal society. Although Creoles occupied a position of relative subalternity with respect to peninsular authorities, their active participation in the Spanish administrative and ecclesiastic apparatus during the period of "viceregal stabilization," as well as their ongoing control over indigenous and African American populations after the so-called emancipation, make it difficult to apply the terms *colonial* and *independence* to the New World without a careful consideration of the power structure and social organization of the colonies. Multiplicity and heterogeneity (of projects, of social strata among dominant and dominated subjects, of political articulations within the vast space of colonial societies, of languages and cultural traditions), as well as perpetuation of social and political structures after the termination of Spanish rule, characterize colo-

nial domination in America. As for Brazil, its colonial history has obvious similarities to that of the Spanish possessions. Nevertheless, it is also true that the region has a unique and ambivalent condition as the only colony that became the official site of its correspondent metropolitan monarchy, when in 1808 the Royal family transferred its residence to America in order to flee Napoleon's threat. Brazil's colonial and postcolonial condition, as well as Portugal's rather peripheral position in the world-system with respect to the British Empire, creates, as Boaventura de Souza Santos has also suggested, "an excess of alterity" that divides Brazilians in two groups: "those that are crushed by the excess of past and those that are crushed by the excess of future" (2003, 9–43).

The differential quality of Latin American colonial history suggests that the phenomenon of imperial expansion has, in the Western world, a genealogy that is much longer and more complex than the one generally considered by postcolonial studies. Spanish and Portuguese colonialism triggered, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a long series of political, economic, and cultural processes which—with the support of an intricate and diversified web of projects and discourses—instituted *modernity* as the space of intelligibility where colonial domination could be implemented and legitimized as the strategy that would allow the installation and consolidation of Western civilization as defined by metropolitan standards. With the emergence of Spanish colonialism at the end of the fifteenth century—and not just with the Enlightenment, as is usually assumed by postcolonial studies—Eurocentrism became a conceptual and a political reality, and the periphery emerged as the repository of material and symbolic commodities that would nurture, from then on, the economies and cultures of the Old World. As Enrique Dussel has indicated, the ethnographic conception of the *temporal deficit* of the Other (someone without property, law, writing, etc.) and the practices to which this Other was consequently subjected to (exploitation, evangelization, etc.) constituted, at the time, both conceptually and historically, *modern* colonial experiences in the New World. Ethnography, as well as cartography, history, law, theology, and the like, contributed to define both American otherness and modern (colonial) rationality (1995a). The "peoples without history" were relegated to a pre-modern condition, while barbarism and primitivism were proposed as the defining features of cultural alterity. As Aníbal Quijano has shown in his studies, the political and philosophical thought emerging from colonialism "invented" *race* as the pivotal notion that supported the process of world classification. Situated as one of the axes of modernity, the issue of race became the "rationale" used

to support, justify, and perpetuate the practice of imperial domination. As Quijano noted, *race* emerges as a key category to define and justify colonial arrangements and to "legitimize" the system of forced labor in the New World. The concept of *coloniality*, a term coined by Quijano, facilitates an understanding of how race and labor were articulated in the colonial period —a subject often neglected in postcolonial studies—and of its perpetuation in modern times.[11]

After the wars of independence, and in addition to the dominating practices inherited from the colonizers and perpetuated by Creole oligarchies, the subalternization and marginalization of vast social sectors within the framework of national scenarios constituted a constant reminder of the limits of hegemonic episteme as well as of the perversions that accompanied, in different stages, the "civilizing," "emancipatory," and "developing" missions in Latin America. Following the foundation of nation-states, with the secularization of society, the liberalization of commercial trade, and the adoption of Enlightened thought, the "coloniality of power" described by Quijano manifested itself in multiple ways: social hierarchies; economic, racial, and sexual inequality; economic and cultural dependency.

As modernization processes intensified and new forms of colonialism were implanted in Latin America, internal dissidences and resistances increased, thus jeopardizing the advancement of national projects. Often, national bourgeoisies were involved in "neocolonial pacts" with international powers (mostly England, France, and the United States), which strengthened economic and political dependency and deepened inequality in Latin American societies.[12]

In addition to internal problems derived from the continuation of colonial structures, Latin America also endured, since the beginning of its independent life, the effects of both economic interventions and political aggressions. With the Spanish-American War of 1898 and more clearly after World War I, the international hegemony of the United States reformulated Latin America's neocolonial condition, thus providing new evidence of the multiple faces adopted by colonial expansion, its always renewed dominating strategies, and its devastating repercussions.[13]

If the nineteenth century had been the setting for Great Britain's *neocolonial* control over Latin America's economy—as well as of France's cultural influence on newly emancipated societies—the twentieth century saw the consolidation of U.S. international preeminence, which materialized in numerous military and political interventions. The increasing control and conquest of international markets and the development of an imperial foreign

policy consolidated U.S. power at a global level, leading this country's expansion into the Pacific and the Caribbean. When in 1898 Spain lost to the United States the territories that remained from the old empire—the Philippine Islands, Cuba, and Puerto Rico—U.S. supremacy was inaugurated. In Latin America, still within the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and as direct application of the "Dollar Diplomacy" approach to foreign policy, the United States intervened—sometimes repeatedly—in Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, in some cases occupying national territories for many years. Later, the United States engaged in sometimes-disguised political involvements in the internal affairs of numerous other countries (Pinochet's coup d'etat in Chile, Plan Colombia, etc.), as well as in direct military operations in El Salvador and Grenada, to name just some of the most conspicuous U.S. interventions in recent history.

The uninterrupted practice of colonialism has marked Latin American history from its beginning. Even today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it would be difficult to analyze Latin America's position, both at the national and at the international levels, without an understanding of its colonial and neocolonial history. But this history should not be written only as a mere enumeration of grievances—a "memorial de agravios"—that renders testimony of the enduring effects of colonial domination and its importance as a determining factor in Latin American historical development. This heterogeneous history must be written, also, as an account that registers the multiple voices, actions, and dreams that have contributed to shaping the collective expression of political rebellion against external aggressions, discrimination, marginality, and social inequality, as well as the search for social transformation and cultural integration. Continuous mobilizations—such as defensive wars, uprisings, subversions, riots, insurgencies, popular demonstrations, and revolutions intended to repel, undermine, or overthrow the dominating powers since the "discovery," in addition to the more institutionalized resistance channeled through the work of political parties, unions, student organizations, and the like—constitute persistent testimonies of an ongoing liberating struggle that traverses the limits of historical and geocultural demarcations.

In other words, from Canudos to the Mexican Revolution to the guerilla wars of the 1960–1980s, Latin American history is also the history of its many *replicants* and its multiple forms of systemic and nonsystemic resistance against colonialism and the rule of capital. Likewise, the social movements that appeared in the Latin American scenario during the last decades

of the twentieth century (the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra in Brazil, the Zapatista movement in Mexico, indigenous mobilizations in the Andean and Central American regions, to name just some of the most notorious expressions of popular struggles) are evidence of the peoples' determination to resist economic inequality, political repression, and social injustice, which are functions of the surviving apparatus of neocolonial domination—what the Peruvian thinker José Carlos Mariátegui called "colonialismo supérstite" (surviving colonialism)—in contemporary times.

But such resilient practices, as well as the numerous manifestations of collective sentiments of discontent and rebellion often expressed through the symbolic practices of everyday life and popular culture, are only possible because they are rooted in solid cultural and epistemological foundations. In fact, the history of Latin America's resistance to colonialism is constituted by the interweaving of multiple narratives that include testimonies of dominated cultures which have survived the devastating impacts of homogenization, repression, and censorship, managing to maintain their alternative and challenging quality through the different stages of Latin American history. For this reason, any study of social and political resistance in the contexts we focus on in this book necessarily implies an analysis of marginalized imaginaries and alternative epistemologies, surviving and emerging subjectivities, and modes of representation which exist in colonial and neocolonial societies under—and in spite of—specific conditions of production, reception, and dissemination of knowledge.

It could be said, that by exposing the perpetuation and metamorphic strategies utilized over the centuries by colonial and neocolonial domination, Latin American history challenges the concept of *post*coloniality from within. This is particularly true when the prefix is used to connote the cancellation or overcoming of political, cultural, and ideological conditions imposed by foreign powers in societies that existed under colonial rule.[14] Although a periodization of Latin American coloniality is not only possible but necessary in studying regional developments, the idea of a stage in which colonial domination had been economically, politically, and culturally erased and/or transcended (as suggested, in some interpretations, by the prefix *post*) seems more the product of a depoliticized evaluation of contemporary history—or even an expression of hope and desire—than the result of a thorough examination of Latin America's past and present. This book offers a thorough examination of the contributions and the downsides of the concept of postcoloniality in the region, and the contributors differ, on many

occasions, about the merits and applicability of the term for our field of study. It is precisely this plurality of critical approaches and ideological positions that makes this book a challenging contribution to the debate.

In any case, it is obvious that for Latin America both globalization and neoliberalism stand as new incarnations of neocolonialism, and capitalism continues to be the structuring principle which, by ruling all aspects of national and international relations, not only allows for but requires the perpetuation of coloniality. The consolidation of a *new world order* in which the concentration of power and the redefinition and strengthening of hegemony is taking place at a formidable pace also calls for a thorough examination of peripheral societies where most of the struggles for economic, political, and epistemological liberation are being fought, with variable results. It is within this framework of theoretical problems and political realities that this book has been structured.

But the scenarios of coloniality cannot be thoroughly analyzed without a study of the role intellectuals have played, over the centuries, in conjunction with political and religious institutions, in the definition of social and political agendas, as part of the educational apparatus, in the fields of art, communications, and the like. All processes related to the production, appropriation, and/or dissemination of knowledge in peripheral societies are crucial for the advancement of emancipatory projects. In Latin America, the intertwining of intellectual work and coloniality has been a defining characteristic since the beginning of colonial times, from the construction of a Creole cultural and historical archive in viceregal societies, to the writings and practices associated with the process of independence and the foundation of national states, to the modernization and imposition of neoliberalism in the global era.

Creole *letrados* as hermeneutists and cultural translators, indigenous thinkers as the memory and voice of dominated cultures, national intellectuals as the Messiahs of Enlightened rationality, academics, artists, writers, technocrats, "organic" and public intellectuals as cultural advisors, disseminators, and/or facilitators of national and transnational exchanges of symbolic commodities—none of these categories capture per se the social and ideological paradoxes and ambiguities of intellectual agency in colonial and neocolonial scenarios, and the negotiations imbedded in the production and manipulation of epistemic and cultural paradigms.[15] It could be said that, at all levels, from colonial times to the present, intellectual action has been developed in an attempt to confront the traumatic effects of colonialism. From diverse ideological positions, the narratives that elaborate on the

concepts of history, emancipation, collective subjectivity, political and cultural agency, and the like are all permeated in one way or another by the remainders of colonial domination, whether the geocultural site of enunciation is located inside or outside Latin America.

Beginning with the early discourse of Creole letrados who reacted against Spanish authority, many critiques of colonialism have been elaborated by Latin American intellectuals. In modern times, during the periods of independence and modernization, critiques of colonialism proliferated, emerging from different political and ideological perspectives. Very few, however, have been acknowledged in postcolonial studies and debates. The general resistance to postcolonial theory in Latin America is due, in part, to the perception that the concept of neocolonialism should replace that of postcolonialism, which seems to imply—at least in some interpretations of the prefix *post*—that colonial times have passed. The *locus of enunciation* has also been challenged. Postcolonial theory has been elaborated from "inside the belly of the monster," as José Martí said in reference to his own struggles against imperialism. At the same time, critical discourses elaborated from peripheral societies have often been ignored, considered in themselves objects of study but never been valued as theoretical contributions worthy of debate. Nevertheless, the long and rich Latin American debate on colonialism includes schools of thought which, incorporating Marxist analysis of imperialism and combining it with other sociological and political approaches (such as those represented by dependency theory and liberation theology), provide incisive deconstructions of colonialism.

From the Latin American Marxist tradition, the critique of imperialism has included, among other things, a long reflection on colonial and neocolonial exploitation. José Carlos Mariátegui's analysis of race, class, land ownership, and national culture in Peru constitutes a good example of an original re-elaboration of materialist thought applied to the specific Latin American reality. Topics related to colonization, Indian exploitation, slavery, and the emergence of nation-states and peripheral capitalism, as well as the long history of popular insurgencies and different forms of cultural resistance, have been thoroughly studied. José Carlos Mariátegui, Julio Antonio Mella, Juan Marinello, Luis Carlos Prestes, C. L. R. James, Sergio Bagú, Nelson Werneck Sodré, Ernesto González Casanova, and Agustín Cueva are just some of the most representative intellectuals concerned with problems related to Latin America's neocolonial history and dependent development. Latin America's coloniality was understood—as early as the 1930s and 1940s—not as a derivation of feudalism but as the result of early capitalism's

expansion and of the correlative emergence of peripheral modernity in the region. C. L. R. James, for instance, analyzes the *modernity* of colonial exploitation of labor in slave plantations in Atlantic territories, applying his arguments to the study of the Haitian revolution (1938). The Argentine Sergio Bagú focused on the capitalist characteristics and historical determinations of Latin America's colonial economy and racial relations. His analysis contested traditional assumptions of a Latin American *late feudalism* with the theory about the region's introduction into a system of peripheral but quite modern *colonial capitalism* (1949).

Another seminal theorization on Latin America's peripheral capitalism and its colonial relations with hegemonic centers was undertaken by dependency theory, which emerged in the late 1950s and was developed throughout the 1970s by liberal and Marxist economists such as Raul Prebisch, Andre Gunder Frank, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Osvaldo Sunkel, Pedro Paz, and Theotonio Dos Santos.[16] From different but convergent perspectives, dependency theory was mainly concerned with the continuity of colonial structures still imbedded in modern capitalism and with the critique of developmentalism. From the perspective of this theory, the projects of development in and for Latin America were interpreted as a "neocolonial pact" between international capital and national elites that perpetuated relations of international dependency and social inequality in the region. Development and underdevelopment, powerful international centers and struggling peripheries, internal and international division of labor, exploitation of national wealth and widespread internal poverty, copious exports of raw materials and ominous hunger—all were aspects of the "colonial capitalism" already analyzed by Sergio Bagú. *Dependentistas* examined this asymmetrical configuration as a contemporary form of the colonial system applied in America and Africa by European empires. To a certain extent, dependency theory constituted a clear acknowledgment of Latin America's "coloniality at large" and a serious attempt to undertake a materialist analysis of the region's economic relations both at a national and an international level.[17]

Divergent and at the same time related to dependency theory, Theology of Liberation provided an alternative reflection on problems related to capitalist oppression in the so-called Third World.[18] In the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution and during the crisis of populism in the 1960s, progressive religious thinkers such as Camilo Torres, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Juan Luis Segundo, in direct contact with grassroots groups, articulated a theological reading of social reality and a programmatic answer to social problems in Latin America. Liberation theology not only theorized alienation, capitalism,

and colonialism, but also inspired a large and influential social mobilization nurtured by a solid religious and political agenda which developed intricate relations with popular insurgency and liberation movements. As an epistemological and theoretical critique of colonialism, liberation theology transcended traditional Marxist notions of alienation, resignified religious narratives as discourses of liberation and popular resistance, and created a new rhetoric and a new concept of social change which connected with popular beliefs and emancipatory political agendas. Finally, liberation theology offered a new framework to rethink the articulation of religion and politics, culture and community.

One of the challenges of this volume is to incorporate into current postcolonial debates the fundamental inputs made by Marxist thought, dependency theory, and liberation theology to the study and understanding of Latin America's coloniality; furthermore, to engage the reader into a serious reassessment of these contributions vis-à-vis new critical and theoretical approaches. In other words, this volume proposes the integration of "vernacular" academic traditions into the reflections and discourses that are rethinking colonialism today from the scenarios impacted by the transformation of hegemony at a planetary level, taking into account the challenges of late capitalism, multiculturalism, and globalization. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the fact that, in creating new grounds for transdisciplinary and transnational debates, it is essential to contemplate the specificities of the actors involved in intellectual dialogue, and to ponder the circumstances surrounding the processes of discourse production in various and sometimes conflicting loci of enunciation. Paradoxically, it is in these foundational, though peripheral, analyses that we can find some of the economic and materialistic approaches that we miss today in postcolonial theory.

In the specific case of the debate on (post)colonialism, Latin American intellectuals, who are justly wary of the well-known risks of cultural penetration, often resent the adoption of First World paradigms in the analysis of peripheral societies. This is true in the case of "Creole" thinkers and scholars as well as among indigenous intellectuals who inhabit the domains of cultures dominated by means of internal colonialism and who think and write in nonhegemonic languages and from nonhegemonic places. Sometimes, a fruitful dialogue can still be established, particularly due to the fact that cultural frontiers are today more permeable than ever, and Latin America not only exists in its original territories but is also disseminated in adoptive countries, a fact that tends to facilitate the exchange of ideas and

collaborative work. But this dialogue can be not only challenging but also difficult to establish. Latin American scholars often seek refuge in different forms of cultural fundamentalism, thus precluding the possibility of taking advantage of theoretical, critical, and political positions that could illuminate regional developments. On other occasions, "central" intellectuals approach Latin American cultural history with variable degrees of theoretical arrogance, paternalism, or "colonial guilt." Time and again, local histories and alternative epistemologies are treated as if they were experimental constructs which have come to existence in order to confirm the place of the Other in the realm of Universal History and to legitimize its inquisitive gaze. Likewise, neocolonial societies as a whole, or specific sectors in particular, are the object of new forms of social classifications that homogenize historical, political, and cultural differences and inequalities by subsuming them in rigid and compartmentalized conceptual systems which reveal more about the nature of the observer than about the quality of the object of study.

In any case, and regardless of the chosen definition of intellectual agency, it is obvious that in spite of the enduring effects of colonial and neocolonial domination, Latin America should not be conceptualized as the residue of colonialism but rather as a space where coloniality has been perpetrated and perpetuated as a function of capitalism, and where cultural, social, and political transformations have been taking place for centuries, in search of emancipation and sovereignty—an arena where multiple and conflictive struggles are being fought and where knowledge is not just appropriated and recycled but *produced* both in dominant and dominated languages and cultures. Consequently, the region as a whole can and should be seen as a much more complex scenario than the one usually approached through concepts such as postnational, posthistoric, posthegemonic, post-ideological, and the like. These fashionable notions, which in certain contexts could mobilize theoretical reflections, capture very specific aspects of a much broader political, cultural, and epistemological reality, and when taken as totalizing critical paradigms, provide limited and limiting knowledge of Latin America's cultural and political problems. This editorial project is precisely an attempt to bridge the different cultural, ideological, and institutional spaces where Latin Americanism is being developed as a transnational intellectual endeavor.

Many scholarly strategies, disciplinary protocols, and ideological positions are combined in this book. Hopefully, the reader will be able to travel these avenues forging his or her own path in approaching the fascinatingly complex Latin American history, and the narratives it has inspired. If, as

Stuart Hall has stated, postcolonial theory entails the task of "thinking at the limits," the study of *coloniality* implies, in turn, the challenge of thinking *across* (frontiers, disciplines, territories, classes, ethnicities, epistemes, temporalities) in order to visualize the overarching structure of power that has impacted all aspects of social and political experience in Latin America since the beginning of the colonial era. Without a doubt, the struggle for emancipation and equality is fought in the region with varying degrees of intensity and success on different fronts. It includes the battles for the recuperation of interstitial spaces of intercultural communication and for the creation of new epistemological platforms from which new forms of political imagination could emerge and proliferate. Divergent forces and impulses traverse the vast territories of coloniality: desire and rejection, mourning and oblivion, passion and melancholia, the harms of spoliation and the need for restitution. But none of them exist outside of the political realm, be it in Latin America itself or in the multiple, transnational domains in which Latin America is studied, imagined, or remembered. It is our hope that this book will be read as not only a contribution to but also as an intervention in the study of Latin America, where coloniality and its replicants exist, at times—still—undetected.

NOTES

1 *Blade Runner* could also be said to represent the political limits of colonialism. From those off-world colonies something returns to challenge the colonial order: the insurgence of the exploited, the insurrection of reified labor, the violent defiance of races condemned to submission. It seems that unlimited colonialism might have limits after all.

2 The concept of "coloniality" coined by Aníbal Quijano has been pivotal to the understanding and critique of early and late stages of colonialism in Latin America, as well as of its long-lasting social and cultural effects.

3 We are aware of the wide application of the term *colonialism* throughout the book, as well as of the use of *postcolonialism* and *neocolonialism* by different authors. Since each contributor makes a specific case for the interpretation of the concept and the term of preference, we have respected this terminological plurality and welcome the different critical and theoretical avenues they open to the reader.

4 The term *colonial subjects* is being used here in its ample semantic spectrum, referring to both hegemonic and oppressed subjectivities within the context of Latin American coloniality.

5 Seed's essay, which initiated a series of responses around the politics and discourses of colonialism, focused on five books on Latin America and the Philippines published between 1979 and 1991: *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native*

Caribbean by Peter Hulme (1986), *Discursos narrativos de la conquista: Mitificación y emergencia* by Beatriz Pastor (1988), *Unfinished Conversations: Mayas and Foreigners between Two Wars* by Paul Sullivan (1989), *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* by Vicente Rafael (1988), and *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840–1910* by Reynaldo Ileto (1979).

6 This initial debate is extensively discussed by Fernando Coronil in his essay in this volume.

7 Interestingly enough, in his discussion of the initial debate on postcolonialism, Bill Ashcroft (1998) reduces Vidal's argument to a "stubbornly ethnocentric" and characteristically fearful rejection of outside critical movements. He misses, in our opinion, the point made by the Chilean critic regarding the need to go beyond the limits of textual deconstruction in order to reach "the political dimension in cultural analysis." Ashcroft focuses, rather, on Vidal's concern about the technocratic turn of literary criticism, a preoccupation shared, in the text offered to the same debate, by Rolena Adorno.

8 Klor de Alva's argument appears in his polemic and often quoted article "Colonialism and Postcolonialism as (Latin) American Mirages," which is commonly associated with the postcolonial debate.

9 Anouar Majid has referred to the solidly Anglo-Eurocentric limits of the postcolonial: "As established and practiced in the Anglo-American academy, postcolonial theory has been largely oblivious to non-western articulations of self and identity, and has thus tended to interpellate the non-western cultures it seeks to foreground and defend into a solidly Eurocentric frame of consciousness. Postcolonial theory thus operates with the paradoxical tension of relying on the secular, European vocabulary of its academic origins to translate non-secular, non-European experiences. Despite brilliant attempts to elucidate (or perhaps theorize away) this dilemma, the question of the non-western Other's agency remains suspended and unresolved, while the material conditions that generate a culture of dubious virtues (such as 'hybridity' and 'identity politics') acquire more theoretical legitimacy. The question finally is: Will the subaltern be allowed to speak?" (2001).

10 Walter Mignolo defines *colonial difference*: "The colonial difference is the space where coloniality of power is enacted. It is also the space where the restitution of subaltern knowledge is taking place and where border thinking is emerging. The colonial difference is the space where *local* histories inventing and implementing global designs meet local histories, the space in which global designs have to be adapted, adopted, rejected, integrated, or ignored. The colonial difference is, finally, the physical as well as imaginary location where the coloniality of power is at work in the confrontation of two kinds of *local* histories displayed in different spaces and times across the planet" (2000d, ix). We use the term *colonial difference* with a slightly modified, more punctual meaning, in order to emphasize the *specificity* of Latin America's colonial history, that is, its particular historical, political, social, and cultural modes of articulation within the world-system of colonial domination throughout the centuries.

11 Quijano defines coloniality as a global hegemonic model of power in place since the Conquest that articulates race and labor, thus combining the epistemological *dispositifs* for colonial dominance and the structures of social relations and exploitation which emerged with the Conquest and continued in the following stages of Latin America's history.

12 Fanon makes reference to colonialism as one of the ineluctable "pitfalls of national consciousness" (1991, 148–205).

13 *Coloniality* and *imperialism* name, respectively, the condition resulting from colonial domination and the modern phenomenon of territorial expansion. Colonialism is considered a form of imperial domination. The term *imperialism* is usually restricted to the type of empire building that accompanies the emergence of the modern nation-state in the West, and usually refers to European territorial expansion during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although there is evidence of the use of the term *empire* as early as the sixteenth century, *imperialism* became popular in the mid-nineteenth century, particularly after 1858, the period of the Pax Britannica.

14 Negotiating the concept of postcoloniality as one that makes primary reference to the "political and discursive strategies of colonized societies" (Ashcroft 2001, 24) is not enough. In an attempt to respond to the "perceived threat to Latin American intellectual integrity posed by outside critical movements" and salvage the validity of the term *postcolonialism* Bill Ashcroft proposes some interpretive alternatives, particularly the one that defines "postcolonialism [as] the discourse of the colonized" (2001, 24). This possibility, proposed as a well-intentioned but rather condescending way of dealing with the "fear" of Latin American intellectuals, overlooks the decisive influence that the discourses of power have in constituting the discourses of resistance—that is, the impact of dominating narratives, hegemonic epistemologies, political "rationales," and the like, which inevitably intertwine with the elaboration of emancipatory agendas in colonial or neocolonial domains. If this is the chosen use for the term *postcolonial*, it would provide a truncated account of the cultural, political, and ideological scenarios emerging from colonialism. In my opinion, any analysis of postcolonial discourses should take into account both sides of the coin, as well as the difficult negotiations imbedded in the process of cultural appropriation and intellectual production.

15 The topics of Creole subjectivity and the Januslike identity developed by this group in the colonial period and even in the formation and consolidation of national estates have been studied by many critics. For a critique of the Manichean interpretations of subjects confronted in colonial encounters, see, in this volume, Seed, Adorno (particularly their discussions of what Seed calls "tales of resistance and accommodation"), and Mazzotti. Santiago Colás has also contributed to the study of subject positions and colonial *desire* (1995).

16 For a succinct historic presentation and analysis of dependency theory, its proposals, and its debates, see Theotonio dos Santos's *La teoría de la dependencia: Balances y perspectivas* (2003).

17 "Latin America is today, and has been since the sixteenth century, part of an

international system dominated by the now-developed nations. . . . [Its] underdevelopment is the outcome of a particular series of relationships to the international system" (Bodenheimer 1971, 157).

18 As is well known, in the 1980s the concept of postcolonial(ism) displaced that of the Third World. The term *Third World* was coined in 1952 by the French economist, historian, and anthropologist Alfred Sauvy, and it soon came to be used worldwide in reference to a cluster of nations that, due to the impact of colonialism, had not reached the standards of development that characterized North American and European societies. The term *Third World*, derived from the expression *Tiers Etat* (used during the French Revolution in reference to politically marginalized sectors of society), gained popularity in reference to countries aligned neither with the U.S.S.R. nor with NATO during the Cold War. Since then, *Third World* has been used as a homogenizing and sometimes derogatory denomination applied to underdeveloped nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (a group also known as the Global South) regardless of their economic, social, and cultural differences.