National Contradiction and Cultural Conflict

Javier Sanjinés C.

Those who proclaim the benefits of neo-liberalism seem to be busy edifying a new humanity capable of integrating ethnic, religious, and gender differences. Such a seductive ability emerges from dominant discourses on identity dazzled by "de-territorialization," and rushing to deploy this geographical metaphor in order to erase the boundaries of the opposing social forces that continue to struggle for self-knowledge and self-determination within the limits of the nation-state. While we live under the spell of the "illimitable fluidity" of the social in an increasingly dominant globalized world, there are, nevertheless, opposing voices that create, with equal forcefulness, counter-discourses representing the dominated,

the oppressed. In order to safeguard the emergence and inherence that these views opposing neo-liberal reality may have, the nation-state regimen must be reinstalled, and its cohesiveness recovered before this overpowering, de-politicized notion of "multiculturalism" takes over, and effectively blocks, both the possibility to think critically, and the possibility to express ideas that diverge from the dominant system of power.

Concomitant with the need for a stronger nation-state, there is also the need to reconsider the unresolved issues of the past that keep on impinging upon the present. These unsolved "cultural conflicts" seem to be particularly acute in the regions where large sectors of the population have been traditionally characterized as "people without a history" and located in a time "before the present." Today, these voices, apparently deprived of a history, are being heard loud and clear. As I shall discuss later on, these apparently ahistorical social agents are part of a colonial modernity that operates by bringing the "ruins" of the past unto the present. They of course live "in" the present, but in a differential, non-contemporaneous way, becoming the living insurrection of the "subjugated voices." They probably invoke naive knowledges, as Michel Foucault has rightly remarked, "located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition and scientism" (Foucault [1976] 1980, p. 82), but it is through the reentry of these low-ranking, upstart voices, that cultural conflict is at present

taking place. My intention in this essay is to bring into the present those ruins of the past which block the imagined nation-state from "coming into its own," meaning that it is structurally incapacitated of fully organizing its institutional life. I am referring here to ethnic ruins that precede the juridical-political construction of the nation advocated by liberalism. Consequently, I speak of an ethnic nationalism which does no longer allow the nation to be read under the dominant liberal discourse of the elites who happened to construct the nation guided by the "deep, horizontal camaraderie" Benedict Anderson refers to when he discusses the organization of the modern nation-state (Anderson, 1983).

Let me begin by providing an account of how the social and cultural conflict I expect to uncover here manifests its strength in Latin America, particularly in places like Bolivia, a true laboratory of Latin America's insurrectionary frontline. Indeed, it is in this landlocked country, deep in the heart of South America, where bold neo-liberal reform policies were installed during the past decade. After a seemingly successful start in 1993, the Bolivian neo-liberal state began to crumble with the sudden overthrow of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, the personification of neo-liberalism in Bolivia. The year 2003 also marks the violent upscale of social movements of diverse nature, but with strong indigenous ties.

While Bolivia's tumultuous protests can be seen in the context of a series of regional challenges to

the Washington consensus in South America, being Venezuela the most prominent, it would be a mistake to treat the crisis as a simply local effect of a predictable transnational phenomenon. Bolivia's present-day national confrontation between the *criollo-mestizo* sector and the demands for autonomy stemming from the unsolved indigenous past should permit us to understand that neither neo-liberalism nor globalization are independent agents that inevitably generate their own grave-diggers; nor should we assume that these mass uprisings form a single wave, sweeping inexorably from country to country. The protests in Bolivia are unique and have followed, between 2000 and 2005, their own trajectory. Consequently, their underlying dynamics can also be understood within the context of the country's distinctive traditions of the past 200 years: the 18th-century indigenous rebellions and the 1952 national-popular Revolution. How, why, and when these previous revolutionary movements are remembered of forgotten is born precisely by the tension-filled connections between indigenous and national-popular expressions that have been in contention (Hylton and Thomson, 2005).

The cultural conflict between the two confrontational forces of Indians and progressive *criollo-mestizos* is also clearly shown by the fact that both struggling sectors of society have followed separate historical tracks, misapprehension, suspicion, and manipulation. However, the

infrequent moments of convergence between these two struggling forces have created powerful radical movements that have had lasting effects. Both October of 2003, when Sánchez de Lozada was overthrown, and the June 2005 insurrections that led to Carlos Mesa's downfall stand out historically as exceptional conjunctures of this kind, combining elements of Indian past and national-popular struggles in novel ways.

The effects of neo-liberalism—mainly the massive population flows from rural highlands to the cities—might have been expected to break down long-standing ethnic solidarities; instead, such solidarities have been reconstituted and have reinforced the central contradiction of the republican social formation—the cultural, political, and economic divide between the indigenous majority and the *mestizo* and *criollo* elite. There is no better visual representation of this division than the 2002 congressional session in which Sánchez de Lozada was inaugurated for a second time. This solemn moment of Bolivia's republican life made us aware of the structural obstacles that impeded national unity and maintained the citizenry apart.

1. A Ceremony of National Contradiction

On August 6, 2002, Bolivia's National Congress met in session to inaugurate Sánchez de Lozada for a second time, but the images transmitted from the congressional chamber on that day conveyed a picture of the country

that Bolivians were not used to seeing. The new Congress was no longer the ethnically homogeneous body of *mestizo-criollos* who had traditionally constituted the legislature and who had in themselves conveyed what had become the traditional representation of national unity. In 2002, the chamber seemed cleanly divided. On one side representatives of both sexes, sharply dressed in tailored suits and ties, fervently supported the inaugural speech of Sánchez de Lozada, who was returning to power after a five-year interruption, during a moment of acute crisis in the neo-liberal reforms that he himself had set in motion between 1993 and 1997. Across the isle an equally important sector of representatives, dressed in work jackets, ponchos, and peasant hats, listened silently, smiling incredulous of the discourse of national unity that the incoming president propounded. This discourse must have sounded somewhat disingenuous, responding to the interests of only one part of the country: the modern Bolivia, a Bolivia alien to indigenous and peasant demands. Nonetheless, the very presence of both sectors in the chamber illustrated a profound change that is taking place in this country of many ethnic groups, including speakers of Aymara, Quechua, and Guaraní, the most widely spoken indigenous languages in South America.

Watching these images on television, viewers throughout the country were reminded of how different this session of Congress was from the one that had taken place

some nine years ago, when a "multicultural" celebration of Bolivia took place. In 1993, Sánchez de Lozada first won the presidency on a platform of continuing and deepening neo-liberal reforms (The governing National Revolutionary Movement had first embarked upon the neo-liberal path in 1985, making a U-turn away from the state-capitalism that the party itself had instituted in 1952 with its National Revolution). In Sánchez de Lozada's first inauguration, the vice president had been the illustrious Aymara leader Víctor Hugo Cárdenas. Cárdenas appeared sporting a tie and an elegant shawl that had been symbolically given to him by his hometown, the Aymara village of Sank'ay Jawira, on the shores of Lake Titicaca. The Aymara vice president had led a moderate indigenous movement—the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari (MRTK, Tupaj Katari Revolutionary Movement), labeled after the legendary XVIIIth century Indian who rebelled against the Spanish—and contributed actively to the recognition of the multiethnic and multicultural character of the country. He represented the possibility of achieving a model of modernization based on Andean roots. Such a model, it was erroneously hoped, could balance out the international market model proposed by Sánchez de Lozada, a successful mining entrepreneur from Bolivia's *criollo* sector. This moment of multiculturalism, based on an intriguing alliance, unique in Latin America, proved short-lived, and the participation of one Indian in an otherwise entirely *mestizo-crio-*

llo administration proved to be one more example of the saying that one flower does not a garden make.

Beyond the multicultural discourse of Sánchez de Lozada's first inauguration, the session of Congress Bolivians were witnessing that August afternoon in 2002 was a much clearer representation of the ambiguous times we live today. As I indicated earlier, it is the expression of a nation that has not been capable of "coming into its own," a nation suffering a deep structural conflict. I would go so far as to say, that this national confrontation reveals a cultural conflict between *mestizos* and *indios* that is also structural, that is, inherent to the formation of the nation in the XIXth century. Close to a hundred and eighty years after Bolivia's independence from Spain, that August 2002 the *mestizo-criollo* sector of Congress was still expressing the need to consolidate the modern national state. This session of Congress was also a vivid manifestation of the tremendous hardships this modern pole of society—dominant yet not hegemonic—was continuing to have, at integrating the peasantry and the working class into its process of citizenship. It could be said that the "particular" and the "concrete" nature of Bolivian society was at odds with the "universal" and the "abstract" categories of Western thought. The process of modernization had not been completed and the "national cause" could not be accomplished from "above," from the institutions created by Western democracy as mediations between the state and civil society. This session

of Congress was also revealing the perils every fragile democracy undergoes when the constituted institutions of power risk being swallowed up by the newly constituting powers coming from "below," from the subaltern, indigenous forces of society.

It is the nature of this structural conflict that begs to be analyzed. I believe that a weak society, a product of an incomplete process of modernization, also preconditions the faulty reading of reality inherent to multiculturalism. This reading willfully omits the conflict, the colonial nature of the differences which remain at the very core of the national problem. And these differences are closely related to the *ruins* of the past that keep penetrating into the present. These ruins also negate the elaboration of reality from the globalizing, multicultural perspective introduced by neo-liberalism. Let us go deeper into the nature of these uncomfortable ruins.

2. The Ruins of the Past

The XIXth century juridical-political construction of the nation is anteceded by the ruins of the past, and the ruins of the past are ethnic. As the XIXth century Romantics conceptualized the nature of the incompleteness of the German state, they unveiled the fact that ethnic "nationalism" ran much deeper than the legal construction of the nation. The Romantics discovered that the "national sentiment" contained much more than the mere ideological transmission of values through the

state apparatuses. "National sentiment" is a powerful expression—more *potentia* than *potestas*—of belonging to a concrete, tangible, yet largely unrecognized territory. Such a sentiment also explains "imaginarily" that a place in the social universe remains unaccounted for by the liberal construction of the national state. I am speaking of the archaic *communitas*, of the subaltern's demand that the "structural" pole of society stand trial for benefiting from the dispossession of the land that the downtrodden suffered.

The demands for the ownership and the autonomous administration of territories are, of course, as old as civilization itself. These demands antecede the formation of the national state and constitute the backdrop modernity obviates and leaves behind unexplained. By avoiding/ignoring the nature of these demands, modernity pretends to displace them by means of the "de-territorializing" reading of reality. "De-territorialization," then, means leaving behind the decisive weight of what both land tenure and the autonomous administration of territories mean for the national sentiment of the oppressed. It also means forgetting the importance of primitive, maternal languages, in the organization of knowledge. Consequently, land tenure (as well as the administration of autonomous territories) and the recognition of the vernacular languages, both allow the evolution and transformation of individuals into citizens (Grüner, 2005, p. 218-49). Negating this flow, modernity also retards the

process of the very construction of the national state it so desperately seeks. In the same venue, obviating the conflict between *communitas* and structure may open the "de-territorializing" reading of reality, but it will leave unanswered the contradictions which, stubborn as they are, remain as ruins of the past haunting the present.

In Bolivia, territory and language are the Motherland, the *Pachamama*, in conflict with the Fatherland, the incomplete nation-state. The new "national family"—if such a foundational social metaphor becomes a reality—would depend on the ability to incorporate the backdrop into the frontal stage of modernity. It also means that the indigenous pole of society will have to transform itself within the rhythm of its own historicity. Simply put: conflict management must overcome fundamentalism. In other words, society will have to evolve through a process distanced from and in serious need of transforming the liberal institutions of the last two centuries. I will get back to this issue when I discuss, in the last pages, Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of "agapism," connected to the possibility of implanting in the life-world the notion of love.

It would be wise to forge a renewed "revolutionary nationalism," an ideology capable of generating and sustaining the intercultural rapport among the variegated ethnicities, among the culturally intertwined pluralities. Such an ideology would need to find the bridges capable of articulating tradition with modernity, while defending

the territorial conceptions of both the state and the nation. Of course, such a vision would have to contemplate the need to connect the modern structure of the nation-state with the traditional *communitas* I described before.

Bringing the ruins of the past unto the present means restoring as well as overcoming the conflictive nature of our social life. Conflict is not simply a political issue; conflict must deal with historical time, the most precious metaphorical representation of modernity. Indeed, countries with incomplete capitalist social formations, and with unsolved ethnic and racial conflicts, with deep colonial differences, simply cannot be conceived in linear terms. They live an "internal time" (Harootunian, 2005, p. 23-52), rejecting the idea that it is possible to follow a Western linear conception of development. Given the cultural conflict produced by a past which keeps on haunting the present, such a linear solution is impossible. Needless to say, a renewed "revolutionary nationalism" ought to be keenly aware of the non-contemporary rhythms of conflictive societies. It cannot risk ignoring the need of a mutual negotiation between past and present—much like Benjamin's reflections on the Angel of History—, materialized in the figure of the archaic indigenous community. This "ghostly" apparition, I would underline, appears less a repetition of the past than as a reminder of a "lack," a need to be overcome if modernity is to take place. In this way, the appeal to a putative tradition in a specific time and place takes the form of a

deferred action, reflecting a nonlinear conception of lived time in which the past produces itself retroactively in the present. I am referring here to the non-contemporaneous rhythms of history in an "alternative modernity" such as Bolivia's. These rhythms, which Lefebvre classified bodily as instants of "eurthythneia" (Lefebvre, 2004), invariably represent the moments that break the spell of routine to introduce different but coexistent temporalities best exemplified by Ernst Bloch's recognition of "contemporaneous non-contemporaneity" (Bloch, 1991), where fragments of the past unexpectedly and suddenly rise up to impinge upon the present.

How does this unevenness, perhaps lived more intensely in the space and time of the everydayness of colonial difference, appear? It is part of the temporal rhetoric informing the construction of power and the state. Through what byways did this temporal rationality reach Bolivia? How did it influence the construction of elite discourse? How is this elite discourse being nowadays counteracted and turned upside down? Of course, the story is long, but I intend to recount it as briefly as possible.

3. The "Contemporaneous Non-Contemporaneity"

The "contemporaneous non-contemporaneity" is the result of a way of thinking that has been passed down since the 16th century, the product of a double epistemic operation in which the temporal explanation of events

become more important than the space where this reasoning was applied with impeccable zeal. The first operation was the colonization of time, and through it, the invention of the Middle Ages and of Greco-Roman Antiquity as the "ancestors" of the Renaissance, and of the linear history that was (and still is) considered "universal." The second operation was the colonization of space, which gave rise to the Americas, Africa, and Asia, with all three dependent upon the centrality of Europe. The double colonization of time and space—in which the temporal, linear explanation of history offered by Western philosophy came to dominate the colonized space—created the conditions for Europe to emerge as the global point of reference. These operations were, I repeat, fundamentally epistemic.

Transferred to an alien space, and based on Western conflation of time with history, the colonial apparatus served as the mainstay of the elite for centuries. But the Spanish cultural onslaught that assailed the distant Andes was unfortunately uninformed by the great revolts of Western modernity: critical individualism on the one hand, and revolutionary utopianism on the other. When the elite of the colonized Andes were faced with the enormous difficulty of transforming the world around them, they unfailingly used their discourse, both religious and secular, to represent their own personal interests and the interests of those who held power. The temporal concepts of continuity and le-

gitimacy—concepts that lie at the deepest origin of the vertical exercise of power—molded every discourse on constructing nationality. This includes both the oligarchic, conservative discourses that saw local cultures as barbaric, as well as the reformist views that promoted and still promote *mestizaje*. The colonization of time, with its deep Western roots, is what has always made our countries see themselves as a collection of little Romes, habitually governed by little *mestizo-criollo* Caesars who can only observe the world from the "outside" point of view, from the Western view that disdains everything local and interprets it as insufficient.

Discourses on national construction, which frequently correspond to the viewpoints of those in power, are not only serious and sometime apocalyptic in tone, but also tragic because they never manage to construct their desired place completely. Our modernity, too, is tragic: it is prevented from progressing by a colonial presence that it can never eliminate, precisely because that presence is the paradoxical result of the division between rich and poor that our modernity itself has created. Remember that tragic figures in Shakespeare and Racine are invariably accompanied by comic figures who prevent them from establishing themselves entirely, and who instead anchor them in critical ambivalence. Just as Lear is inseparable from his fool, and Phaëdra cannot rid her consciousness of ambiguity, likewise Sánchez de Lozada's modernizing discourse cannot free itself from the carnal

and verbal irreverence of those indigenous leaders who were present at the inauguration, and who represent the other Bolivia, the "non-contemporaneus" Bolivia of the dispossessed. Sánchez de Lozada and the indigenous leaders—like the Aymara Felipe Quispe—are thus the two faces of our conflictive modernity, the two sides of the coin. The presence of the indigenous movements is therefore what teaches us that Bolivia's contemporaneity, the Bolivia that rises from the *mestizo-criollo* imaginary, cannot go on examining itself in a flat mirror that fails to reflect the non-contemporaneous and the conflictive nature of its true being, nor can it continue isolating itself thanks to the specular "totality" that it has constructed in the realm of its hierarchical safety.

An example of the inverse logic that keeps its distance from the universals of Western time is when journalists asked Felipe Quispe, the Aymara leader, what he thought of Sánchez de Lozada's inauguration speech. He replied that, for him, the whole ceremony had been a "pain in the butt," and that he would have made better use of the day if he had spent it in the countryside in the company of his fellow Aymara villagers. Setting aside his humorous irreverence, it is interesting to observe the eccentricity of his "non-contemporaneous" answer, its distance from the temporal rationality of the discourse of modernity. By holding up the countryside as a space of liberation, Quispe's reply dislocates the questioner, who undoubtedly expected to hear a series of observations on the

various economic and social themes interwoven with the president's temporal reflections. Consciously or unconsciously, Quispe's reply ignores the aspects of the speech that were marked by the contemporaneity of the Western logic of modernizing discourse, and instead locates itself outside the dominant discourse.

Let us now explore the "non-contemporaneous" nature of this discourse; how its temporal unevenness ought to proceed. In other words, how should the contemporaneous non-contemporaneity recuperate the fragments of the past. Furthermore, let us explore what rhetorical tropes have to do with it.

4. The Allegorical Retrieval of the Past

The allegorical reading of reality is deeply influenced by Walter Benjamin's famous discussion on allegory and the origin of German tragic drama (Benjamin, 1977). In it, Benjamin decodes the allegorical form's vision of history as a permanent catastrophe. Allegory, Benjamin insists, is a way of seeing in its own right: it registers the "failure" of human language and signification to capture meaning. The allegorical form captures a facet of historical experience inaccessible to the totalizing symbol: the experience of all that is untimely, sorrowful, and unsuccessful. It does justice to the suffering element of human existence and to its lack of fulfillment. A potent antitoxin to the aesthetic symbol, to the image

of a harmonious totality, allegory offers a patchwork of amorphous fragments.

The fragment is the single most important allegorical figure in Benjamin's construction of reality. It is also a very helpful tool because it allows us to understand the nature of the cultural conflict I have been discussing all along. Indeed, it is through Benjamin's allegorical analysis that we can comprehend the necessity to retrieve the ruins of the past. Such a retrieval, such a search for the arcane, can only take place when the appropriate agents behave like creative archaeologists seeking a renewed meaning for society. This can only happen when fundamentalist sectarianisms are rejected as possible solutions. In other words, creative archaeologists cannot remain stuck inside eternally petrified essences. On the contrary, the allegorical movement—Grüner labels it *allegoresis*—coming from the margins, from the periphery of Western thought, must seek to overcome the colonial structures that made society loose its origins, its capacity to develop autonomously. This reconstruction must be done here and now because we live an awakening that separates us from the cult of dreaming.

At first glance, it might seem allegorists are merely trading one blindness for another, rejecting distance and past-mindedness only to fall into an extreme, solipsistic present-mindedness. They appear to sacrifice the past instead of the present. But, in fact, they are thinking of a movement in both directions, Their real interests lay in a

particular kind of "constellation" of past and present that yields a "higher concretion" than historicism. Against all sectarianisms, *allegorisis* must do justice to the historical situation of both the past object and the present-day interest in it. The relationship must be reciprocal. The "concrete, historical" subject looks into the past and retrieves the pre-figured or "pre-formed" past object; but this object, in turn, is raised to a higher concretion in the present. Nowhere does the allegorist propose simply projecting the images of the present onto the past. On the contrary, only by reading the past can the present hope to find its own self-image at all. This enables the allegorist to avoid the ideological shoals of the prejudice he/she has long been steering away from: modern idealism, which mystifies the metaphoric-symbolic "totalizing" process of historical development.

Allegorisis is the movement that brings the past unto the present. It is a dialectical movement resulting from the reciprocal relationship between *communitas* and structure, between two discrete historical moments. A dialectical movement, through which the allegorist retrieves the ruins of the past in order to construct a new present, *allegorisis* is the reconstruction, the re-articulation of those communitarian demands—territory and primitive language—that modernity disregarded. Much like the "anticipated memory" of which Ernst Bloch spoke about, *allegoresis* is the need to recuperate for the present the nation's own socio-historical chronotopes in

order to create a new autonomous and self-determined "national community."

Given the unstable existence of those social movements that have made us aware of the need to incorporate the past into the present, the second feature of the dialectical movement concerns its fleetingness. Since the dialectical movement arises from the configuration of two discrete yet shifting historical moments, it is a "rapid movement." It is not meant to be constructed in the future; it is also not meant to be a reflection on the experiences of the immediate past. The measure of time inherent in it is an emphatic "now."

Another characteristic of *allegoresis* is that it can be perceived as a pathos of nearness—for example, the catastrophic turning of the world upside down—, as well as a pathos of simultaneity—may be defined as "quiliasm" (Mannheim, 1973, p. 215)—, an "explosion" in the present, linked to political action. It loads time into itself until the energies generated by the dialectical movement produce an irruption of discontinuity. This conception of time sets the dialectical movement off from idealism and from historicism alike. Besides quiliasm—"here" and "now"—, the practice of *allegorisis* may also use two additional concepts: catachresis, the use of a term when no proper term exists, and agapism, the notion that communities ought to be ruled by love as their sole moral imperative.

5. Catachresis, Quiliasm, and Love

In her interesting analysis of catachresis, Patricia Parker has indicated that

> the first thing that strikes one in the history of the terms "metaphor" and "cathacresis" is the apparently unnecessary confusion of the two, since the difference between them was clearly defined as early as Quintilian's discussion of catachresis in the *Institutio oratoria*. (Parker, 1990, p. 60.)

Indeed, catachresis (*abusio*, or abuse), resembling a ruin of the past, is defined there as "the practice" of adopting the nearest available term to describe something for which no proper term exists. The lexical gap is in this passage the clear basis for Quintilian's distinction between catachresis, or *abusio*, and metaphor, or *traslatio*: catachresis is a transfer of terms from one place to another, employed when no proper term exists, while metaphor is a transfer or substitution employed when a proper word does already exist and is displaced by a term transferred from another place to a place not of its own.

What precisely, we might ask, is at stake in the distinction between both tropes. Much like *communitas* antecedes the juridical-political construction of the nation, the temporal narrative presented by catachresis and metaphor moves from "poverty" to "adornment," from a situation of lack and the constraints of "necessity" to the delights of "entertainment." What is at stake here is the need to recuperate for the present the primitive moments of language—the *langue maternelle*—which have been

totally forgotten or kept hidden under the embellished metaphorical construction of the nation. Consequently, the violent and rude intrusions of catachresis and the possibility of transfers that, unwilled, subvert the very model of the controlling subject (the nation-state), are the ruinous underside of the mastery of metaphor, the uncanny other of its will to control. And words' taking a life of their own only conflates the abuses of metaphor with the *abusio* of catachresis but transports to the present the linguistic return of the oppressed, the *unheimlich* return of a communal past that the embellished metaphor can no longer control. I believe there is a close relationship between catachresis and the need to project unto the present that ruinous past buried under memory (the catastrophic overturn of the universe). Here, catachresis helps allegory become the explosive agent of transformation. This way of subverting the foundation of the political and the social order takes place under a new conception of space and time: the "here" and the "now" better known as quiliasm.

It is in the very nature of quiliasm to produce the sudden and abrupt displacement of the archaic. This is a destructive moment that gets hold of the world and transforms it. Allegorists make no attempt to disguise the fact that *allegoresis* contains the seeds of its own destruction. Like the Andean *Pachakuti*, the sudden overturn of external reality, the dialectical rhythm of allegory and the rude intrusions of catachresis contrast with the balanced,

harmonious inwardness of the embellished nation-state. Rooted to *allegorisis*, both catachresis and quiliasm have nothing in common with the more familiar and comfortable use of "dialectic" in Hegelian traditions. Rather, they help us understand dialectics as an "eccentric" motion that enacts a reversal and abrupt transformation of reality. Constituting the antinomies of allegory, both catachresis and quiliasm involve a radical, despairing alternation, unbridgeable through the comforting prospect of the harmonious Hegelian synthesis. If quiliasm is the here and now, the absolute present, distanced from both the conservative "experience" of the past and modernity's construction of the future, catachresis is the trope that explains the rhetorical construction of allegory.

In the process of change, catachresis yields to metaphor, to the construction of a national unity best represented by the nation-state. We must, however, not forget that the hermeneutical possibility of reconstructing the process of how the metaphoric stability is achieved always remains open. Thus, the voice of the subaltern can be retrieved, as it happens in the novels of the Peruvian José María Arguedas. Through the synchronicity of events Arguedas narrates, we can glimpse the violent and ruinous past. This past is the agglomeration of ruins, of violent primitive voices, which haunt the reader with their complicated catachresic origins. Applying this analysis to the notion of cultural conflict that initiated the discussion of *allegoresis*, it is clear

that this conflict cannot be disconnected from the mishaps suffered by historical time as it stumbles on those past ruins unknown to the rationally-oriented Weberian process of the "disenchantment of the world" (Weber [1906], 1972). Consequently, maybe there is no other alternative left but to "re-enchant " the world and to recuperate those topics that, as in the case of quiliasm, come from the past to question a modernity already in crisis. The return of the repressed is thus related to the "here" and "now," and allows us to affirm the need to bring from the past those "ecstatic," redemptive experiences, long forgotten by modernization and by its process of rationalization. *Allegoresis* anticipates the future beyond the Western conceptualization of history. In this process, the allegorist relates the present with the pain of the subaltern, whose aspirations are eternally relegated to the "waiting room of history." In order to overcome this calculated indifference toward the other, I find Charles Sanders Peirce's theory on "evolutionary love" particularly intriguing and productive.

Turning now to this last issue, I submit the thesis that only by leaving behind the philosophical notion of the specular will we be able to overcome the cultural conflict between *communitas* and structure. The Latin version of the Greek *theoria*, is *speculum,* which comes from *specio*, meaning to look, to observe. In modern philosophy, the best known example of the specular may be found in Hegel's dialectical unity of subject and object under the

speculum of the Absolute Spirit. As Martin Jay has noted (Jay, 1993), it became evident to the critics of historicism what the negative implications of Hegel's idealized unity under the category of totality may be. One such critical voice was the analytical philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce. In a revealing essay criticizing scientific evolutionism and social Darwinism, Peirce evocated the dangers narcissism—the uncontrollable subjectivity into which excessive individualism degenerates—poses to society. To the perverse effects of narcissism, Peirce also added his observations on the relationship between capitalism and avarice.

"Evolutionary Love," a revealing essay on historical agency, published in *The Monist* ([1893] 1992), contains Peirce's conceptualization of agapism (altruistic love). For Peirce, love is the only operative force in the world. This notion anticipates some well-known late XXth century revolutionary movements struggling to construct a prophetic vision of a political nature calling human beings to concerted collective action, to making concrete perceptions of "the good society," "the better living," and "the ideal human being" a reality. Peirce affirms that out of the three possible types of evolution (through fortuitous variation, mechanic necessity, or creative love), only the last one is worth pursuing. Taking hatred to be, not the opposite of love, but rather an imperfect stage in the search for love, Peirce rejects the "gospel of avarice" that rules modernity, and regrets seeing sentimentalism

being discredited when, in reality, it ought to be praised as society's molding value. While social Darwinists reinforced the separation between *communitas* and nation, Peirce presented his ideas on evolutionary love as an antidote to the construction of nation-states on the basis of avarice, and on the basis of the idea that political and economic rationalization ought to rule every single aspect of everyday life.

When considering the spirit of Peirce's essay, I find the notion of "a better living" promoted by his ideas, aligned with the claims indigenous movements make today. If this is so, shouldn't we be attempting to infuse human values into the functioning of the economy? Such an attempt would have to go beyond the monotheistic viewpoint of what an economy really is, and it would have to accept the alterity of those "other" economies which create social links through the circulation of gifts, sentiments, and rituals alien to the rational econometrics of Western thought. In my view, the originality of Peirce's thought derives from his being opposed to the belief that knowledge should always be "translated" into the scientific language of the rational economy promoted by the West. In other words, there are languages that suffer distortions when they are translated into the master discourse of the scientific. Beyond Newton and his belief that all languages ought to be mediated by the higher language of science, it could be suggested that this godless world of a continuous and a homogeneous time is

challenged by the very presence of the other gods and spirits that cannot be explained in a scientific manner. In other words, it could be said that although the sciences signify some kind of sameness in our understanding of the world across cultures, the gods signify differences that are hard to explain "scientifically." And writing about the presence of gods and spirits in the secular language of history or sociology would therefore be like translating into a universal language that which belongs to a field of differences.

Aren't the enchanted *apus* (gods of the mountain) just as real as the belief in the ideologies ruling our modern life? They are, however, invoked in communitarian rituals distant from the world of rational beliefs. The *ch'alla*, the Aymara ritual which "sanctifies" material goods, is also as real as any modern insurance policy. The *ch'alla*, however, cannot be translated into the language of modern economic exchanges without turning the "enchanted" ritual into a meaningless secular transaction. Consequently, the struggle between *communitas* and structure has much to do with the the difficulties encountered with the translation of concrete life-worlds into abstract and "universal" economic and sociological categories.

Finally, *allegoresis* allows us to understand that the nation-state, ruled by its homogeneous, empty time, and the archaic *communitas*, ruled by the quiliastic now, are opposed but also intertwined by both the process of social mobilization and of political transformation. This

very peculiar interaction and combination guards *allegoresis* from becoming an essentialized process, proper to fundamentalism. The political originality of indigenous movements, their capacity to intertwine modernity with tradition, may not solve the national confrontation Bolivia lives today, but it gives subaltern agency the capacity to combine the legal system with violence; horizontal organization with vertical mediation between the state and civil society; autonomous social mobilization with the capacity for renewed negotiation. It would be highly desirable that such flexibility would allow the structures of modernity to assimilate communal values. After all, shouldn't we be happy to see physicists resort more to the laws of "gravitation" than to the laws of "gravity"? Indeed, gravitation keeps us together, there where gravity punishes us with its merciless law of the fall of bodies. Pierce had a great piece of advise for our scientific, modern world: it is much more rewarding to gravitate under the "orbit of decency" than to fall in the discriminatory exercise of subordination.

Bibliography

Anderson, Benedict (1983). *Imagined Communities*. London, Verso.
Benjamin, Walter (1977). *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Trans. John Osborne. London, Verso.

Bloch, Ernst (1991). *Heritage of Our Times*. Trans. Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore. London, Continuum.

Foucault, Michel ([1976] 1980). "Lecture One: 7 January 1976." *In*: *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York, Pantheon Books.

Grüner, Eduardo (2005). "Recuerdo de un futuro (en ruinas). La Nación como no-espacio en la ideología de la Globalización." *In*: *Pensar a contra-corriente*. La Habana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

Harootunian, Harry (2005). "Some Thoughts on Compatibility and the Space-Time Problem." *Boundary*, n. 2, v. 32, p. 2.

Hylton, Forrest and Thomson, Sinclair (2005). "The Chequered Rainbow." *New Left Review*, n. 35 (Sept Oct), p. 41-64.

Jay, Martin (1993). *Force Fields. Between Intellectual History and Cultural Critique*. New York, Routledge.

Lefebvre, Henri (2004). *Rhythmanalisis*. Trans. Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore. London, Continuum.

Mannheim, Karl (1973). *Ideología y Utopía. Introducción a la sociología del conocimiento*. Trans. Eloy Terron. Madrid, Aguilar.

Parker, Patricia (1990). "Metaphor and Catachresis." *In*: eds. Bender, John and Wellbery, David E.. *The Ends of Rhetoric. History, Theory, Practice*. Stanford, CA., Stanford University Press, p. 60-73.

Peirce, Charles Sanders ([1893] 1992). "Evolutionary Love." *In*: Houser, N. & Kloesel, C. (eds.). *The Essential Peirce, Vol I (1867-1993)*. Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press.

Weber, Max ([1906] 1972). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Trans. Talcott Parsons. London, Allen & Urwin.