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Bianca Boteva-Richter
Wie viel neue Heimat braucht der Mensch?
Heimat und Heimatlosigkeit in und durch Migration

Hans-Martin Schönherr-Mann
Die Sprache des Ausnahmezustands. Zur Genealogie von Gewalt und Recht

María Luz Mejía Herrera
La perspectiva del diálogo intercultural. Una propuesta para enfrentar la globalización neoliberal

Albert Kasanda
La philosophie interculturelle africaine. Réalités et perspectives

Edward Demenchonok
Discussions on Cultural Diversity and Interculturalism in the United States and Canada

Buchbesprechungen / Recensiones / Comptes rendus / Book reviews

Deutsch / Alemán / Allemand / German

María Elisabeth de los Ríos Uriarte
Sobre el concepto de redención en Walter Benjamin y el de liberación en Ignacio Ellacuría. Hacia una teoría crítica en América Latina
Edward Demenchonok (Georgia, USA)

DISCUSSIONS ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INTERCULTURALISM IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

During recent decades, the philosophical landscape of America, traditionally dominated by analytical philosophy, along with pragmatism and continental philosophy, has been changing. One trend in the academy has been a turn toward an interest in the issues of cultural diversity, labeled as "multiculturalism," and more recently, as "interculturalism." This has been accompanied by a growing visibility of African-American and Latino/a philosophies in the United States, which have brought the problem of the relations between philosophy and culture to the forefront of intercultural philosophy.

Cultural minorities in search of their self-consciousness and identity, not only express themselves in their original literature, music, and arts, but they also attempt to reconstruct their history and develop their own authentic philosophical thought. These emerging philosophies represent the original response to the search for self-consciousness of racial and ethnic minorities or minority nations, challenging stereotypes of the dominant culture in which the minorities reside, and striving for the development of their own thought in order to help their quest for cultural identity, recognition, and preservation of their civil and human rights.

Of note are certain affinities and parallels in the development of these philosophies with that of African and Latin American philosophies. In search of their authenticity, they turned their focus to their cultural heritage. However, an emphasis on cultural originality, if exaggerated, or not balanced by reciprocal recognition of others, can lead to ethnocentric fragmentation (many isolated centers pretending to be universal), and solidifying the differences that keep these groups marginalized.

African-American and Latino/a philosophies are confronted by twofold task: On the one hand, they challenge the predominant philosophical currents, offering alternatives that are informed by their own cultural traditions. On the other hand, their further development requires them to interrelate with the other philosophical currents and elaborate their intercultural dimensions.

For any groups that resist excessive control and discriminatory policies prevailing powers and who strive for freedom, equality, and civil and human rights, it is vitally important to preserve a common ground for unifying dialogue and solidarity rather than to deepen any racial or cultural divides.
This article explores issues of cultural diversity, identity, and intercultural relations, and their interpretation in African-American, Africana, and Latino/a philosophical thought in the United States, as well as in the discussions about multiculturalism and interculturalism in Canada. The first section examines African-American philosophy in dialogue with African and Afro-Caribbean philosophies. The second section analyzes Latino/a philosophical thought. The third pays attention to the discussions about interculturalism in the francophone Quebec, Canada.

African-American Philosophy in Dialogue with African and Diaspora Philosophies

Cornel West, in his reflection on *philosophia* as love of wisdom, writes that a quest for wisdom requires us “to be open to the voice, viewpoint and vision of others” (2011, 25). He raises the question: How does philosophy relate to the Afro-American experience? (2008, 7). In an attempt to answer this question he writes, “Afro-American philosophy is the interpretation of Afro-American history, highlighting the cultural heritage and political struggles, which provides desirable norms that should regulate responses to particular challenges presently confronting Afro-Americans” (11).

According to West, African-Americans are confronted by two interrelated challenges: those of self-image or issue of self-identity, related to the culture, and those of self-determination, related to the political struggle for a better life. He emphasizes the fundamental role of culture with regard to Afro-American self-understanding. In historical African-American traditions, West distinguishes the vitalist, rationalist, existentialist, and humanist traditions, which represent various responses to the challenges of self-image and self determination. He considers the most promising of the four types to be the humanist tradition, which “extols the distinctiveness of Afro-American culture and personality” (ibid., 13).

In developing African-American philosophy, its theorists reconstruct the tradition of thought. They have taken a broad, intercultural perspective, turning their attention to African cultures, seeking their original roots to inform their philosophy. This resonates with the efforts of African and Afro-Caribbean intellectuals from different countries who are developing the broader Africana philosophy, which focuses on the African diaspora.

Like African philosophy, which seeks its ground in indigenous African culture and tradition of thought combined with some modern philosophical techniques, the African-American philosophers view it as culturally embedded—both rooted in culture and, at the same time, contributing to its development. African-
American philosophers born and educated in the United States, within its cultural milieu, and thus being natively "American," at the same time seek to inform their unique philosophy by seeking their African cultural roots. This biculturalism opens a space for creative intercultural discourse.

Since 1990s, this interaction among the threads of Africana philosophy has been invigorated by a number of intellectuals from Africa who have immigrated to the United States to work at universities, doing research, participating in conferences, and publishing in this field. These immigrants have gained new social-cultural experiences, which may broaden their view of their native cultures from an outside perspective. Conversely, they bring new dimensions to the cultural palette of their new country of residence. The presence of these intellectuals in the United States brings a new perspective in theorizing about race, culture, identity and intercultural relationships, which are at the center of African-American philosophy, but which are ignored by the mainstream of analytical philosophy. Thus, they can critically evaluate their native cultures "from an outside perspective," and they can evaluate American culture from their own cultural perspective—as "others." From their position of the "outsideness" of their ethnicity, as bilingual and bicultural intellectuals, an intercultural thought has emerged. This cultural "being in between" and engagement of diverse worldviews poses challenges, but it can be mitigated and it can also be stimulating for philosophical reflection and for critically rethinking some established views on cultural diversity and interculturalism.

Many of these intellectuals from Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America, working at universities in the United States are struggling to transform the politics of knowledge as "outsiders within the teaching machine." They contribute to attempts to create a new type of theorizing with a "border epistemology" that goes beyond the Western canon and allows for the emergence of new thought from the perspective of minorities, immigrants, refugees, etc.

**Conceptual decolonization and intercultural dialogue**

Among notable African philosophers currently working in the United States are Ghanian William E. Abraham, Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Santa Cruz; Kwame Anthony Appiah, son of the late Ghanaian intellectual Joe Appiah, who is currently Professor of Philosophy at Princeton University; Nigerian Segun Gbadega, Professor of Philosophy at Howard University; Kenyan Dismas A. Masolo, Professor at University of Louisville in Kentucky; Congolese Valentin Y. Mudimbe, Professor Emeritus at Duke University; Eritrean born Tsenay Serequeberhan, Professor at Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland; Nigerian Olufemi Taiwo, Professor at Cornell Uni-
versity, Ithica, New York; and Ghanian Kwasi Wiredu, Professor Emeritus at the University of South Florida, Tampa.

Appiah (1997) wrote that in the United States in recent years, in part because of a general sensitivity in the academy to questions of cultural diversity and intercultural relationships, “allegations of the cultural—the national and, perhaps, the ethnic—specificity of philosophical practices in this country have been the object of serious attention” (16). As one of its manifestations, there was the attempt to explore the conceptual world of Africa’s traditional culture, called “ethnophilsophy.” This effort was made by philosophers both in Africa and in the American academy.

What are the lessons for an African-American philosophy from the African debate about ethnophilsophy? In critically evaluating this debate, Appiah proposes several conditions for a desirable “critical ethnophilsophy” (ibid., 28). He believes that “African philosophy can illuminate the currently important question—raised, as we said, in the works of Cavel, Rorty, and West—of the relations between philosophy and culture elsewhere” (1993, 133). He mentions W. E. B. Du Bois’s The Soul of Black Folk as a classic example.

Africans share many common problems of development. Appiah writes that Africa is diverse, but these differences should be approached in a positive way and celebrated: “Africans can learn from each other, as, of course, we can learn from all of humankind” (1992, 26). He views the pluralism as relevant to the United States as well. He writes, “because the intellectual projects of our one world are essentially everywhere interconnected, because world cultures are bound together,” we can talk about “one race to which we all belong” (27). This underlies Appiah’s concept of cosmopolitanism.

Masolo is the author of several books on African philosophy, in which he examines its history, trends, and impact, as well as its future role. He argues that works of African philosophers teach us that “all philosophy, not just African philosophy, is embedded in culture by virtue of the observation that philosophical problems stem from and are part of how philosophers consciously and critically live the cultures of their times” (2010, 50). At the same time, he is concerned about the repressive practices of culture (122). He analyzes the tension between the freedom and the authority of society, with its communalistic orientation. His books address topics such as the relevance of philosophy for cultures that are still largely based on traditional values, and the meaning of philosophy to cultures and individuals. His comparison of the phenomenological francophone and analytic anglophone trends in African philosophy shows their mutually enriching role. Comparative analysis across linguistic and cultural worlds of non-Western and Western philosophies shows that their cross-cultural
communication broadens the pluralistic picture and points to new horizons of philosophical landscape.

Since arriving in the United States, Wiredu has published several books on African philosophy, which raise some fundamental questions about the interrelation between culture and philosophy, cultural universals and particulars, and intercultural philosophical dialogue. He highlights the importance of “cultural traditions of thought” (1980, 24) and the crucial role of language in shaping them. He addresses important themes such as the relationship between academic philosophy and Africa’s indigenous culture. This contributes to a better understanding of the cultural embeddedness of philosophy, as well as the enlightening role of philosophical reasoning regarding cultural diversity and intercultural relationships. Wiredu’s works have attracted critical attention by American scholars, followed by his response, and thus sparking an intercultural dialogue.

In the postcolonial situation, the main motivation of African philosophy has been a quest for self-definition, a search of identity. The intense debate about what constitutes African philosophy itself is a substantive philosophical issue that calls for a comprehensive rethinking of traditional philosophical fundamentals. Recognition of the cultural roots of philosophy leads to rethinking the concept of philosophy and the history of philosophy.

Wiredu views philosophy as culturally embedded. He also discusses the relationship between emerging African philosophy and European (and other) philosophies. Colonial nations were characterized by asymmetry of power; it was one-way imposition of the colonizers’ canon. Postcolonial African philosophy’s search for authenticity and its own voice leads some philosophers to focus on African tradition of thought as opposed to European philosophies, while others have continued to uncritically imitate European philosophy. In contrast to these extremes, Wiredu represents a balanced tendency of those philosophers who are looking for a critical and creative approach toward philosophical thought, whether in Africa or abroad, aiming to find what is valid in them. He champions intra- and intercultural communication and philosophical dialogue.

According to Wiredu, the task of African philosophers is “to try to liberate ourselves” from a colonial mentality as far as is humanly possible (1996, 4–5). He suggests the following imperative for African philosophical research: “There is need, first, to bring out the true characters of African traditional philosophy by means of conceptual clarification and reconstruction and, second, to try to find out what is living or fit to be resurrected in the tradition” (2004, 11). As exemplars, Wiredu explores with analytic rigor the philosophical prepossessions of some concepts or aspects of the Akan language and culture.
In philosophy, conceptual decolonization involves two tasks. One is the critical task of avoiding, through a critical conceptual self-awareness, the unexamined assimilation of the conceptual frameworks embedded in the foreign philosophical traditions that have had an impact on African thought. Another is the positive task of exploring “the resources of our own indigenous conceptual schemes in our philosophical meditations on even the most technical problems of contemporary philosophy” (Wiredu 1996, 136).

The fundamental concepts of philosophy are the most fundamental categories of human thought. However, “the particular modes of thought that yield these concepts may reflect the specifics of the culture, environment, and even the accidental idiosyncrasies of the people concerned” (137). The cultural embeddedness of any philosophy will influence its concepts. The claims of any philosophy to universality should not be accepted uncritically. Wiredu leaves out no classic concept traditionally analyzed by philosophy (reality, being, existence, truth, knowledge, and mind being only a few) (ibid.).

As a believer in the universality of reason, Wiredu holds that the positive impact of this process of decolonization and of conceptual rethinking and elucidation will be of interest also of non-African thinkers and will reverberate far beyond the African continent, because, in the interrelated world, “any enlargement of conceptual options is an instrumentality for the enlargement of the human mind everywhere” (1996, 144). Through critical reflection on the concepts of various Western philosophies, along with suggestions from other cultures (as, for example, those of the Orient) “we can combine any indigenous philosophical resources to create for ourselves and our peoples modern philosophies from which both the East and the West might learn something” (Wiredu 1995, 21). Conceptual decolonization is a task common to all post-colonial regions in developing their authentic philosophical thoughts and a search of identity. It is faced by African, Latin American, and other “Third World philosophies.”

Wiredu addresses cross-cultural comparisons of conceptions in philosophy. Conceptions in different philosophies evince language-specific features. But are these compatible across cultures and languages? Is there a common ground for mutual understanding? Starting with answering these questions, he then moves further toward a more general problem of intercultural communication and dialogue. He explores “interplay of conceptual universals with semantical particulars in intercultural discourse” (1996, 7).

A philosophical concept or problem can reflect semantic particularities of a given language, depending on its vocabulary or syntax. Examining the relation between truth and fact in the Akan language, for example, “both truth and fact are rendered by the same phrase, and yet anything that can be said about the
world by means of the concepts of fact and truth in English can also be expressed within the semantical economy of Akan" (Wiredu 1996, 5). Another example is the concept of freedom. Unlike in English, in Akan, there is nothing corresponding to a problem of free will as distinct from the problem of responsibility. As Wiredu writes, in Akan ethics, "a person either did something 'with his own eyes' or not." Persons determined to be free agents are held accountable as being responsible. If not found responsible, then, "reaction is one not of moral reproach but help" and advice from kin and friends. In the Akan culture, all human beings have intrinsic value, since they are seen as possessing a part of God. Irresponsibility has passed into non-responsibility. Help is regarded the restoration of personhood, that would be a "restoration of free will and ipso facto, of responsibility" (6).

There is no exact equivalent of the English-speaking notions of free will and responsibility within Akan framework of concepts, but an analysis shows its Akan counterparts. To express the equivalence of free will with responsibility as an interculturally valid thesis, Wiredu relies on "independent considerations," which he defines as "considerations that are not specific to the peculiarities of any given language and are, consequently, intelligible in all the languages concerned" (ibid., 3).

Independent considerations are possible because of the intrinsic self-reflexivity of natural languages. The possibility of independent considerations can facilitate the translation of a metropolitan formulation of the concepts into an African language, and generally be "a source of fundamental conceptual insight for all; that is, irrespective of race, culture, and so forth" (1996, 3). By these examples, Wiredu illustrates "a potentially fruitful interplay of conceptual universals with semantical particulars in intercultural discourse" (ibid., 7).

Wiredu views strategy for development of African philosophy as twofold: restoration of traditional philosophical thought and the creative assimilation of the achievements of Western (and other) philosophical currents in dialogue with them. To achieve the first task, he argues for the value of the particular features of African and other culturally embedded philosophies, reflecting the unique characteristics of their languages and cultures. For the second, he emphasizes the importance of recognizing the universal dimension of all cultures as the common ground for intercultural relationships and inter-philosophical dialogue. In his theory, he tries to walk a fine line between particular and universal and to find a proper balance between them. Wiredu believes that all of humanity shares certain basic rational attributes and that the exploration of their role for human understanding is paramount for a cross-cultural philosophy. He points out the paradoxical situation regarding intercultural discourse. On the one hand, there is
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an unprecedented informational interaction among the different cultures of the world, but, on the other hand, there is “increasing skepticism regarding the very foundation of such discourse, namely, the possibility of universal canon of thought and action” (ibid., 1). Contrarily, Wiredu disagrees with this kind of skepticism. He discounts claims about alleged incompatibility between the perspectives of universalism and particularism. The possibility of cultural universals is predicated on their humanity. He supports his argument by specifying some cognitive and ethical universals, such as the principles of noncontradiction (“that a proposition cannot be true and false at the same time”) and induction (“the capacity to learn from experience”) (27), and in he cites “the categorical imperative” (1–2).

Prima facie, cultures differ from one another, but on a more fundamental level, as expressions of a common humanity, they manifest and share important common principles. In any culture, there are elements of both particularity and universality. However, cultural particulars are accidental. He stresses that the universals of culture are what define the human species, and holds that cultural relativism obstructs intercultural dialogue (ibid., 20). Wiredu’s conceptualization of communication applies to both intra- and intercultural communication.

Wiredu also addresses the problem of translatability of language. Unlike routine translation, from the one language into the other when obviously equivalent words are available in each, the translatability issue involves stepping above both languages onto a “meta-platform.” Thus, untranslatability does not necessarily mean “unintelligibility” (ibid., 25). By this procedure, Wiredu argues that in principle, all human languages are inter-learnable and inter-translatable. Given the inter-translatability, no limits can be set to either intra- or intercultural communication (26). Of note is that Wiredu’s concept resonates with Mikhail Bakhtin’s idea that dialogism is a constitutive characteristic of the language as such. Consequently, as I mentioned somewhere, the various forms of dialogue related to language (including a dialogue of cultures) bear this “genetic” dialogic property immanent in language (Demenchonok 2014, 115).

Along with the presupposition of conceptual universals, intercultural and even intracultural communication also presupposes the existence of enough commonality of cognitive criteria for the rationality of those intimations to be assessed from the point of view of an alien culture. Recalling Bakhtin, culture can be better understood from the viewpoint of another, foreign culture: “it is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly” (Bakhtin 1986, 7).

Effective intercultural communication also presupposes cultural universals. Wiredu discusses whether any such cultural universals exists. One of the cultural
universals is language: the use of language by all human societies is "the cultural universal par excellence" (1996, 28). Ethical universals are another basis for intercultural communication. Citing the Golden Rule and Kant's categorical imperative, as well as traditional Akan ethical maxims, Wiredu formulates what he calls a "principle of sympathetic impartiality," which, he asserts, is a human universal that transcends particular cultures. This principle combines both impartiality (what the moral rules embody) and the sympathy that moral motivation evinces. Sympathetic impartiality includes such values as truthfulness, honesty, justice, and chastity, which are moral norms common to any culture. As Wiredu writes, "whether you are a Ghanaian or American or a Chinese or of any other nationality, race or culture, truth telling is an indefeasible obligation" (63).

However, for some, the very idea of a cultural universal raises the suspicion of authoritarianism and a justification of imposition of power against the will of individuals. This skepticism stems from the history of intercultural oppression, in which some cultures have imposed their ideas of good and evil, as allegedly universal, on other cultures. But what they have imposed has generally been their customs rather than any principles of pure morality. No wonder that Wiredu laments that such practice "has earned universals a bad name" (ibid., 2). Philosophy's critical role is to clarify concepts and their genuine meaning. Wiredu is critical of the abuse of universals by neo-colonial ideologies, which impose such alleged universals (which have been rather pseudo-universals and "home grown particulars") upon other peoples (ibid.). He asserts that this is a false and unphilosophical form of cultural universalization, nothing more than a manifestation of cultural ethnocentrism. He asserts that fallible conceptions of universals, both cognitive and ethical, should not be confused with the very idea of universals itself: "judicious claims of universality imply only that contending adults can, in principle, discuss their differences rationally on a basis of equality, whether inside identical cultures or across them" (31). He suggests a respectful dialogical approach to these matters through rational discourse (2).

**Inter-philosophical dialogue under umbrella of Africana philosophy**

Philosophical dialogue between the intellectuals of Africa and of the diaspora has a long history. Since 1990s, when African-American academic philosophy began to gain influence in North American universities, it attracted Afro-Caribbean philosophers. Among philosophers related to the African diaspora in the Caribbean and now working at universities in the United States are Jamaican-born African-Jewish Lewis R. Gordon, Professor of Philosophy and Africana Studies at the University of Connecticut, Storrs; Monserrat born Anti-
guan Paget Henry, Professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island; and Jamaican Charles W. Mills, John Evans Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy at Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

The collaboration between African-American and Afro-Caribbean philosophers, as well as some other diasporic philosophers from Central and South Amer diasporic Africana philosophy, which receives much attention today. The articulation of Africana tradition of thought shows important, previously ignored, aspects of cultural diversity and interculturality. For some, Africana thought includes black thought, but not exclusively such. Some others regard Africana and black as creolized or mixed cultural categories. These have also been combined with other designations of mixture, such as borders or temporal displacement.

Lucius Outlaw elaborated the concept of Africana philosophy as early as in 1996 (On Race and Philosophy). He characterizes Africana philosophy as “metaphilosophical, umbrella-concept”:

The notion of “Africana philosophy” is of very recent origin but is being taken by increasing numbers of professional philosophers who are African or of African descent, and by others who are not. “Africana philosophy” is very much a heuristic notion—that is, one that suggests orientations for philosophical endeavors by professional philosophers and other intellectuals devoted to matters pertinent to African and African-descended persons and peoples. (2004, 90)

In this view, African, African-American, and Afro-Caribbean philosophies construed as the components of Africana philosophy. Gordon writes, “Africana philosophy is a species of Africana thought, which involves theoretical questions raised by critical engagements with ideas of Africana cultures and their hybrid, mixed, creolized forms worldwide” (2008, 1), the geographical scope of which includes North America, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. It is also characterized as “an area of philosophical research that addresses the problems faced and raised by the African diaspora” (13). It addresses the issues of culture, race, identity, modernity, colonization, oppression and struggles for emancipation.

Within this broadly defined field, Gordon considers African-American philosophy as “an area of Africana philosophy that focused on philosophical problems posed by the African diaspora in the New World.” This broadens the concept of African-American philosophy beyond the United States, meaning “the modern philosophical discourse that emerges from the diasporic African community, including its francophone, hispanophone, and lusophone forms” (ibid., 69).
African-American philosophers engaged in dialogue with intellectuals of African descent from the Caribbean and Central and South America embody a metaconcept of "Africana philosophy," which connects African philosophical thought with that of the African diaspora in the Americas. In the United States, the Society for the Study of Africana Philosophy (SSAP), based in New York City, gained recognition by the American Philosophical Association in 1987, thereby establishing Africana philosophy as an officially listed specialty in the discipline, which facilitated its recognition in some academic departments. There is also the Society of African Philosophy in North America (SAPINA). Of course, membership in these philosophical associations and research and teaching on African-American, African, and Africana philosophy are not limited to philosophers of African descent. The field is rather inclusive and open to scholars and intellectuals regardless of cultural identity ethnicity. Such identities as such are of no import for their philosophizing. In fact, many of these scholars are contributing to the development of these areas of studies, including from interdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives. By virtue of their competencies, researchers in these areas may be identified as, for example, "African America-nists," or "Africanists" "Afro-Caribbeanists," or "Latin-Americanists." These areas of research are also the areas of dialogue and collaboration of philosophers with different cultural backgrounds. Conferences are hosted in departments of philosophy in various universities throughout the United States. In addition, there are now books, and publications in professional journals on these topics. Of particular publishing significance is the continuing, regular appearance of the journal, *Philosophia Africana: Analysis of Philosophy and Issues in Africa and the Black Diaspora*.

The interplay of the issues of culture and race sets some of the themes for theorizing about the identity of Africana philosophy. It also determines to some degree the locus of this philosophy—how this philosophy positions itself in the spectrum of contemporary philosophical currents: its affinity with some and its distancing from the others.

Gordon explores some challenges in the philosophy of culture, using an approach he calls *dialectical, psychoanalytical, and existential*. This leads to problematics of (1) theoretical philosophical anthropology; (2) freedom and liberation; and (3) metacritiques of reason * (2010, p.198). He addresses them in developing his alternative, "theory in black." He approaches race and culture issues from a perspective of Africana existential philosophy. The existential questions concerning freedom, identity, and liberation through a focus on the human condition permeate black thought. In contrast to the postmodern thesis of
the “death of subject,” he revitalizes existential phenomenology and shows its importance for developing a new humanities and a new social theory.

Gordon’s work bridges both European existentialist tradition and Africana existential thought. He indicates that this was a theme of “the various dialogical encounters between twentieth century Africana theorists and European and Euro-American theorists” (2000, 7). He notices that Jean-Paul Sartre “serves as a link between Richard Wright and Franz Fanon” (9).

African-American and Afro-Caribbean philosophers made a critical “deconstruction” of the deformation (double consciousness) that accompanied the racialization of African identity. Paget Henry explored the positive alternative of the reconstruction of self-formation (2000). His approach consists of bringing together “phenomenological and discursive strategies, as well as insights drawn from the Caribbean philosophical experience” (2003, 48). As he states, philosophy is a rationally oriented discourse, but this does not negate its cultural embeddedness. The author focuses on the discursive processes vital to the formation of these philosophies.

As a recent trend in the evolution of African-American and Afro-Caribbean philosophies, Henry notices that that they became more open to other intellectual traditions. They are also engaged with Euro-American pragmatism and various European philosophies. Henry also points out the necessity to be engaged in more systematic dialogues with indigenous Americans and Indo-Caribbean philosophies. Both indigenous Americans and people of African descent have been victims of the phenomenological and discursive invisibility, and neither has been able to see the other’s philosophies. “Hence,” he concludes, “the urgent need for dialogue” (ibid., 63). The importance of dialogue has also been stressed by other authors. Jennifer Vest, for example, argues for the “New Dialogic” in philosophy (2005).

Africana philosophy has made a positive impact on contemporary African philosophy. African philosophers give credit to the African-American philosophers for supporting the emergence of “conversational philosophy” in Africa as its recent orientation since late 1990s. Jonathan Chumakonan, Nigerian-born logician, in his recently edited volume writes that some “proponents of conversational African philosophy in this era ironically have emerged in the Western world notably in America” (2015, 28). Among them, he mentions Gordon, Outlaw, Vest, and Bruce Janz. He opines that Gordon’s work, for example, “suggests a craving for a new line of development for African philosophy–new approach which is to be critical, analytical and universalizable while at the same time being African,” which is the spirit of the emerging conversational philosophy (ibid.). He also mentioned Outlaw’s corroboration, who advocates the
deconstruction of the European-invented image of Africa to be replaced by a reconstruction to be done by conscientized Africans free from the grip of colonial mentality (Outlaw 1996). Chumakonan writes, “influences from these thoughts by the turn of the millennium year crystallized into a new mode of thinking which metamorphosed into conversational philosophy, thus heralding New Era of African philosophy” (2015, 28). Chumakonan characterizes conversational philosophy as a “critical conversation among practitioners” and theoretic evaluation of the thoughts of other African philosophers (ibid.). Although he does not use term “dialogue,” there is little doubt that conversational philosophy is inherently dialogical.

A journey in the search for identity leads not to a final destination of substantialist “core,” but rather moves the philosophies to the realm of polyphonic interrelations of living thought. We can see traces and possibilities of these interrelations. The dialogue or polylog of African-American, African-Caribbean, and African philosophies can be considered as inter-cultural relations, given the originality of each tradition, and at the same time as intra-cultural relations of participants under the Africana “umbrella.” Each of these philosophies is engaged with various currents of European philosophy, which can also be viewed as inter-cultural relations. Thinking in more general terms of culturally embedded unities or “families” of philosophies like Africana or European, they would represent interrelations among large cultural types or traditions of thought. The borders identifying each of these philosophies and their constellations on all levels are not absolute but rather historically conditional, alterable and transparent. The new ideas frequently emerge on the borders or in the border zones “in-between” of philosophical currents. Each of these philosophies is shining with its own internal light of wisdom and with the reflected light of other philosophies. The possibility of each of them, developing as a part of the multidimensional and dynamic network of interrelations, derives its potential from being ultimately embedded in the all-embracing philosophical culture of humanity.

**Latino/a Philosophy: An Original Voice in World Philosophy**

*The Emergence of Latino/a Philosophy in the United States*

Latinos (mainly Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Ricans) are the largest minority group and the second largest racial/ethnic group, second only to whites in the United States, constituting approximately 50.5 million (16.3 percent) of the total population (Urbina 2014, 7). This rapidly growing group is projected to soon become the majority. Latina/o culture has been a part of ‘America’ longer than the United States has existed” (ibid., 6). But after the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, when the United States annexed over half of the Mexi-
can territory (now California, Texas, and New Mexico), Mexican Americans became foreigners in their own land. They experience a similar pattern of neglect and discrimination as other ethnic/racial minorities, and they have seldom been studied in academic research. Essentially removed from the pages of history, “they have been historically manipulated, intimidated, marginalized, oppressed, and silenced” (4).

Latinos/as began to demand a greater role in American society and a greater understanding of who they are. This brought attention to the need to understand their identity, their history, and their thought. This involves broader ideas about ethnicity, race, and cultural diversity, “elevating multiculturalism to a universal level of equality, justice, respect, and human dignity—eventually moving beyond post-racial America” (Urbina 2014,15). Intellectuals aspire to develop a Latino/a philosophy both in search for identity and as a resource to address concerns of their people.

The birth of this philosophy was prepared by the generation of pioneering philosophers who were born in the 1940s and 1950s in Latin American countries and who were educated in the United States and later working there as professors at universities. These include Jorge J. E. Gracia, Linda Martin Alcoff, Ofelia Shulte, Walter Mignolo, María Lugones, and Mario Saenz. They were joined by a younger generation of philosophers, such as Eduardo Mendieta, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Carlos Sanchez, among others (Mendieta 2009, 519–521).

An outstanding leader of this pioneering generation of Latino/a philosophy is Jorge J. E. Gracia, who was born in Cuba, educated in the United States and Canada, and currently holds the Samuel P. Capen Chair in the Department of Philosophy and Comparative Literature at the State University of New York at Buffalo. His numerous books are in subjects such as metaphysics, hermeneutics, aesthetics, ethnic and racial issues, medieval philosophy, philosophy of religion, and Latin American philosophy. With his expertise in analytical philosophy and history of philosophy, he was able to provide an original articulation of the place of Latino/a philosophy in the United States and to lay the groundwork for its development (see 2000; 2008). On the eve of the twenty-first century, he wrote about the obstacles for recognition of Latino/a philosophers within the United States philosophical establishment, due to culturally biased stereotypes and perception of them as “foreigners.” Because the American philosophical community is “xenophobic,” there are “two ways of disenfranchising philosophers: locating them in a non-European or non-American tradition, or classifying what they do as non-philosophical” (Gracia 2000, 182). Latinos/-Hispanics who show any interest in Hispanic thought or issues are perceived as
foreigners, and "the fragmentation, the genetic and family organization, and the rivalry between these families in American philosophy, all contribute to the exclusion of Hispanics" (186). But this still does not mean that in order to be accepted by the establishment that Latinos/as should surrender their identity and forget their culture and values. He encouraged philosophers to continue on their path and to address the relevant issues. In viewing this situation in perspective, Gracia prophetically wrote, "we are outside of the American philosophical mainstream today, but tomorrow might be different" (187).

Gracia addresses the problem of identity, which is central to the Latin American philosophical tradition, and which obtained new aspects in the context of the United States (2000; 2005). How do Latinos/as think about themselves and their identity? In answering to this question, he goes beyond the traditional dilemmas (essentialism versus eliminativism and generalism versus particularism) and proposes a new way of thinking about Latinos/as based on the familial-historical view of ethnic identities that allows for negotiation, accommodation, and change. This view also "opens the doors to dialogue and understanding, diminishing the possibility of conflict and strife among peoples from different cultures, races, ethnics, and nations" (2014, 77).

Gracia proposes an original conception of "Latino philosophy as an ethnic philosophy" (2008, 139). An ethnic philosophy is the philosophy of an ethnos, based on a familial-historical view, and its unity has to do with contextual historical relations: "Latino philosophy is the philosophy the Latino ethnos has developed in the circumstances in which the members of the ethnos have found themselves throughout history" (141). What Latino philosophy is should be examined only in the context of the Latino ethnos, without applying criteria developed by other French, British, Indian philosophy or other ethne. Gracia develops his conception by revising the universalist (or "scientific"), culturalist, and critical views of philosophy. As he writes, "there are philosophers whose standards are set by their ethnic context, and this should not disqualify them from being labeled philosophers, even if they cannot be labeled 'scientific' philosophers" (146).

This conception highlights the unity of Latino philosophy, broadly understood as including the work of Latino/a philosophers working both in the United States and in Latin America. It shows their common cultural tradition and relationships, and that the work of most Latino philosophers in the United States has roots in Latin American philosophy. More specifically regarding Latino philosophers living in the United States, Gracia analyses the distinctive characteristics of their works and their relationship to the other philosophical currents in this country. He offers a strong justification for a historiographical, pedago-
gical, and conceptual role of the Latino/a philosophy for the philosophical thought in the United States. He examines the questions concerning philosophical canons and philosophical traditions and how Latino/s philosophy fits into both the American and world canons of philosophy. He suggests several measures that could help improve the standing of Latino/a philosophy in the United States (2008, 174–176).

The themes of cultural identity and Latin American feminist philosophy are explored by Cuban born Ofelia Schutte, Professor Emeritus at the University of South Florida. Her book *Cultural Identity and Social Liberation in Latin American Thought* (1993) had contributed to the visibility of Latin American philosophy in the United States. It was followed by Schutte’s several publications on topics related to Latin American philosophy and Latino/a identity (see 2000; 2011). Schutte was instrumental as one of the co-editors in publication of a collection *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy* (Nuccetelli at al. 2010). This volume promotes the presence of Latin American philosophy and a dialogue with the work of Latinos/as in the United States.

An original approach to the problem of identity is developed by Panamanian born Linda Martin Alcoff, a Professor at Hunter College/CUNY Graduate Center. In her book *Visible Identity* (2006), she grapples with issues of race, gender, and various social identities such as Latinos, African Americans and Asian Americans. She believes that we need new notions of the self that can accommodate its specificity. Alcoff promotes a dialogue of Latino/a philosophers with their African-American philosophical colleagues regarding the hot button issues of race and ethnicity. In commenting on Alcoff’s book, Lewis Gordon stressed its relevance to the analysis of the gender and race issues in Africana existential phenomenology (2008, 144–150). In recent interview to *New York Times*, Alcoff said that all of the great Latin American thinkers were engaged with the question of Latin American cultural, racial and ethnic identities and histories:

*Philosophy in Latin America is very diverse, but one can discern a running thread of decolonial self-consciousness and aspiration. Thinkers from Europe and the United States persist even today in dismissing Latin American philosophy, and as a result, Latin American philosophers have had to justify their prerogative, and their ability, to contribute to normative debates over the good, the right and the true. But this has had the beneficial result of making visible the context in which philosophy occurs, and of disabling the usual pretensions of making transcendent abstractions removed from all concrete realities. (Yancy and Alcoff 2015)*

Latino/a philosophers collaborate with Latin American philosophers in critical analysis of homogenizing globalization from perspectives of postcoloniality
and interculturalism. Columbian born Eduardo Mendieta, was educated in the United States and Germany, and currently is a Professor at Penn State University. He works on Latin American philosophy, critical philosophy of race, and issues related to religion, globalization, and global justice. In his book *Global Fragments: Globalization, Latinoamericanisms, and Critical Theory* (2008) he provides philosophical explorations of the processes of globalization, particularly in the context of Latin America. He bridges critical social theories from Latin American philosophy, Frankfurt School critical theory, and African American philosophy to put forth a synthetic vision of global ethics from the perspective of the oppressed. He develops a concept of critical and dialogic cosmopolitanism as self-reflexive and also self-reflexive of the point of view of the others and guided by contextual universalism. He also offers an analysis of what does it mean to be a Latin American and Latino/a in the twenty-first century. Mendieta fosters close collaboration between Latino/a and Latin American philosophers, including through bringing them together in collective volumes edited by him. He translated Enrique Dussel’s books in English. He highlights different dimensions of the question of Latino/a philosophy: (1) Who are Latinos in the United States, or to what does the term “Latino” mean; how do they relate to Latin America and the larger Hispanic culture? (2) What is the role of national identities—let us say Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans—within this new forged identity? (3) What can and should be their philosophical canon? (4) What is the role of this unique philosophical perspective within “American” philosophy? and (5) What is the relationship between Latino/a philosophy and African American philosophy?

Argentinean born Walter Mignolo, a Professor at Duke University, shows the preeminence of Latin American thought in developing the philosophical basis for a systematic critique of colonialism and Occidentalization. He proposes a comparative and philological methodology and a pluritopic hermeneutics as an approach for the radical rethinking of cultural differences, of the Other as a subject to be understood, and of the understanding subject itself (2005). In his book *The Darker Side of Western Modernity* (2011), published in a critical series “Latin America Otherwise: Languages, Empires, Nations,” he pierces the surface of Western epistemic rationality and its geopolitical genesis to reveal its hidden underside, its foundation in the terror-logic of imperial rule. He explores the themes of the geopolitics of knowledge, transmodernity, border thinking, and pluriversality or “diversality.” In opposition to hegemonic globalization, Mignolo (2011) offers his concept of “de-colonial cosmopolitanism.”

Columbian born Mario Saenz is a Professor at Le Moyne College, in Syracuse, New York. He contributed to Latino/a philosophical thought in the United
States through his works on Leopoldo Zea and Enrique Dussel. He offers the framework through which one can address the question of the identity of Latinos/as within the United States (1999). Sáenz edited a volume Latin American Perspectives on Globalization (2002) which bring to an English-reading public important reflections on globalization from the perspective of significant Latino/a and Latin American intellectuals. They explore conditions for building dialogic relationships and propose models of intercultural relations. In his Introduction to the volume, Saenz argues that a theory of globalization with intent in human emancipation must address the process of liberation. He highlights intercultural dimension of liberational thought. Intercultural philosophy is a discursive alternative to the monocultural structures of traditional philosophies. In commenting on Raul Fornet-Betancourt’s concept of intercultural philosophy, Saenz writes that being “aware of the cultural limitations inherent in the doing of philosophy, intercultural philosophy grounds itself on relations of solidarity with the philosophical endeavors of other cultures. It is at the places of their encounters that a concrete universality arises” (Saenz 2002, 16; see also Introduction, 1–21).

Nelson Maldonado-Torres was born in Puerto-Rico, educated in the United States, and currently is an Associate Professor at University of California, Berkeley. In his book Against War (2008), published in a critical series “Latin America otherwise: languages, empires, nations,” he explores ethics and the philosophy of liberation, bringing together the European Jewish, Afro-Caribbean, and Latin American critical thought. Starting with the study of genealogy of the works of Emmanuel Levinas, Franz Fanon, and Enrique Dussel, he moves toward the development of the phenomenology of the racialization. Maldonado-Torres identifies at the heart of western modernity and its war paradigm a “master morality” of domination, which legitimizes racial policies, imperial projects, and wars. As an alternative, he offers a new type of politics and ethics that he calls “de-colonial ethics.” He elaborates on the concepts of “decolonial reduction” and a “post-continental” philosophy (2006). He is a co-editor of a volume Latin@s in the World-System (Grosfoguel et al. 2005), which examines the diversity of Latino/a origins and cultural-spiritual backgrounds and the impact of Afro-Latinos and Indo-Latinos in the United States.

Some evidence has come to bear on the issue, which indicates that Gracia’s prediction regarding the future of Latino/a philosophy was right. The efforts of these Hispanic/Latino philosophers appear to be bearing fruit. Importantly, in recent years, we have seen the emergence of a Latino/a philosophy, evident in events such as, for example, “Latino/a Philosopher: A National Symposium,” which was held at State University of New York at Stony Brook, March 15–16,
2014. This was the first event of its kind. It gathered together many philosophers living in the United States, who self-identify as Latin and who believe that their ethnic identity somehow impacts the philosophy they produce. According to Robert Eli Sánchez’s report on this event:

What we witness was, in some way, the arrival of Latino/a philosophy, . . . the arrival of what Jorge J. E. Gracia called in the first paper of the symposium an “ethnic philosophy”—that is a “philosophy produced by an ethnus and, as such, [one that] reflects the ethnus and whatever may characterize it. (2013, 2)

However, as Gracia argued, the use of the phrase “Latino/a philosophy” meaningfully suggests only:

that in certain periods and places, Latino/a philosophy has shared certain interests, topics, approaches, or methods that were geared toward the immediate historical context and thus distinguishable from other philosophies or other groups in other places and times. (Ibid.)

One of the main problems addressed by the participants of the symposium was the under-representation of Latino/a philosophers. Facing negative stereotypes in academia, they are discouraged from philosophizing as Latinos/as—from exploring their own socio-cultural roots through philosophy. This needs to change. At the same time, to conceptualize and defend Latino/a identity or a group agenda should not generate internal exclusions in the struggle for recognition. The benefits of the emergence and recognition of Latino/a philosophy, or of ethnic philosophies in general, are that they offer an opportunity to enlarge philosophy by representing differences within it and to make visible its new aspects. Increasing diversity is an opportunity for philosophy to avoid epistemic errors and improve its “epistemic reliability” as well as to expand its horizons. As Gracia stated, it is the basis of a truly comparative philosophy, for although “comparative philosophy was born from the desire to see similarities between the great philosophies developed in different parts of the world, . . . as important as the similarities are the differences” (ibid., 3).

The Symposium philosophers viewed the emergence of Latino/a philosophy as an opportunity to contextualize philosophy and to include in it relevant issues and concerns of Lationinos/as. They hope to find in philosophy a resource to address problems such as the marginalization and colonization of philosophy, Latino/a identity, interculturality, immigration, etc. At the same time, the participants agreed that the effort to realize an autochthonous Latino/a philosophy should not be too ideological and should not compromise the universal aspiration of philosophy (ibid., 4).

The search for answers to these significant questions indicates the themes and perspectives of the research agenda for this new field of philosophy. Pur-
suing Latino/a philosophy is at the focus of conferences and publications. The papers of the first national symposium on the Latino/a philosophy in the United States will be published in the forthcoming anthology by Indiana University Press. The topics of Latino/a philosophy were discussed at a conference at University of San Francisco in April 17, 2015 and at the American Philosophical Association Pacific Division meeting in April 1-4, 2015 in Vancouver, Canada.

All these questions are relevant not only to Latino/a philosophy, but also to African-American, Africana, Asian-American, and any other emerging philosophies in our culturally diverse and interrelated world.

United States Latino/a philosophers have established dialogue and collaboration with their Latin American counterparts. They have joined conferences, conducted research projects, and published in scholarly journals. Being bicultural and bilingual, they have “double citizenship” so to speak, as well as world citizenship as philosophers. They have published anthologies and books about Latin American philosophy in general, as well as philosophies in Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and other countries of the region. They also contribute their perspective to cross-national discussions among philosophers about the problems of social and cultural identity.

Overall, the emergence in the philosophical landscape of the United States of the original currents of African-American and Latino/a philosophies, and their growing interrelationship with African, Africana-Caribbean, Africana, and Latin American philosophies show an increasing intercultural and transcontinental philosophical exchange. These are the signs of the emerging birth of the phenomenon of “transamerican philosophy.”

*From critical multiculturalism to interculturalidad*

During the 1990s, there was a period of rising multiculturalism. However, the neoliberal version of multiculturalism was also criticized for its limitations. Attempts at rethinking and revising it generated a shift toward more critical multiculturalism, which is open to dialogical relationships among cultures and oriented toward interculturalism.

Latino intellectuals, supporting the struggle for cultural identity and the rights of minorities, welcome multiculturalism insofar as it facilitates nondiscrimination and recognition. At the same time, they are critical of the limitations of neoliberal multiculturalism (both as concept and policy), which does not address the root cause of racial and ethnic discrimination, and stops short of securing the rights of minorities and the conditions for pluralistic governance.

Puerto Rican born Juan Flores, Professor at Hunter College, City University of New York, is outspoken with regard to his views of multiculturalism. He is a
strong proponent of minorities' studies, and in this regard, stresses the importance of the "particularity" peculiar to each unique culture. Flores points out the one-sidedness of undifferentiated views of multiculturalism in the United States as oriented toward cultural exclusivity and separatism (Canclini 2014). He draws attention to the complexity of neoliberal multiculturalism, and the need to differentiate its limitations from its sound potential aspects. He argues for a critical multiculturalism, which would guide minorities studies, apart from a knowledge of structured separations and exclusions, and aim for equality and recognition. From this perspective, a relational or intersectional approach to the study of cultural identities, as an alternative to essentialist and relativist conceptions, is valuable, but it needs to be accompanied by "a broad theory of geopolitical and social power capable of registering differential kinds and conditions of relationality" (Flores 2006, 62).

Flores sees some ideas for such a theory in Walter Mignolo's (2000) concept of "decoloniality," Anibal Quijano's (2010) concept of "coloniality of power," and José D. Saldivar's (2011) concept of "Trans-Americanity." He further shows that the development of ethnic minority studies programs has enhanced our collective understanding of the relationship of identity to culture and to knowledge, as well as interrelations among cultures.

New accounts of scholarship among our various identities are needed. Flores suggests that the relational approach in Latino Studies should be implemented in three directions: trans-national relations between United States Latino diasporas and the national cultures of their respective countries; cross-ethnical studies of Latino's' relations to non-Latino groups in the United States, including African Americans; and the intra-group relations among the various Latino ethnicities, as well as class and racial relations within them (2006, 62).

Progressive intellectuals such as Flores champion cultural diversity and identity politics over the "structural monoculturalism" perspective of such theorist as Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., who objects to bilingual and multicultural education, and claims that "the point of America was not to preserve old cultures, but to produce a new American culture" (Schlesinger, 1998, 17). In response, Flores argues for a critical multiculturalism, which presupposes equality and reciprocity (2006, 61).

Maria Lugones, Associate Professor, and Joshua Price, Professor, both at the State University of New York at Binghamton, critically analyze the cognitive practices of structural monoculturalism that foster fundamentalist patriotic unity and hegemony, finding them to be as reductive, impoverishing, and tyrannical (2009, 93). They also criticize neoliberal multiculturalism, which they claim hides the coloniality of power and serves to retain the status quo. They believe that
a plurality of cultures, values, economies necessitate an authentic, structural, not merely ornamental, multiculturalism (ibid., 93). Developing this structural (or "policentric") multiculturalism leads toward interculturalism (interculturalidad), a term that Lugones and Price borrow from Catherine Walsh, who explains it as a proposal from the bottom up that "reflects the need to promote processes of reciprocal translation of knowledges in the plural" (quoted in Lugones and Price, 2009, p. 97). Interculturalism "represents the construction of new epistemological frameworks that incorporate, negotiate and interculturalizan both knowledges" (ibid., p. 137). Countering the social and cultural subalternization, interculturalism opens spaces for the processes of desubalization and decolonization.

When cultural variety is valued, mutual exchange can influence people's worldviews and lead to social transformation through the processes of interculturalization. In light of this, Lugones and Price call for an epistemological shift toward a multivoiced solidarity in place of a univocal conformity, a solidarity exemplified by multiple movements whose potential is emergent. As an example, they mentioned the May 1, 2006 pro-immigrants marches. "The potential of the marches rest in part on practices of interculturalidad built on reciprocal exchanges" (ibid., 97). The sense of the possibilities lies in the participation of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans, and other minorities in "an inward multivoiced process of egalitarian challenge to the marriage of global capital and the racial nation-state" (98).

José Luis Gómez-Martínez (1997), Professor Emeritus at the University of Georgia, applies the basic principles of intercultural philosophy to the analysis of intercultural relations, as expressed in Latin American literature. He examines the problems that hinder intercultural dialogue. Intercultural relations frequently take place within a hierarchical structure (superior-inferior, or, what Hegel called "master-slave mentality") rather within a context of equality. Respect for other cultures should not be an uncritical, blind acceptance and imitation, which implies the status quo. Critical analysis should unmask the hierarchical structures, which subordinate one culture to the other. Based on his concept of the "anthropic discourse" he believes that appealing to the "anthropic" or to human being as praxis would lead toward a liberating intercultural dialogue.

**Toward Dialogical Dialogue**

World-renowned philosopher, theologian, and mystic Raimundo Panikkar grew up in Spain, the son of a Indian father and a Spanish mother. He spent two decades in the United States as a Professor at Harvard University (1966–1971) and as a Professor and the chair of Comparative Religious Philosophy at the University of California in Santa Barbara (1971–1987). During those years,
Panikkar had published his famous book *The Intra-Religious Dialogue* (first edition in 1978), as well as many other works, which laid the ground for his further major books.

A proponent of inter-religious dialogue, Panikkar’s general approach was to view issues in the world through the eyes of two or more traditions. His in-depth knowledge of both the Western and Eastern philosophical and spiritual traditions allowed him to engage in an inter-philosophical and inter-religious dialogue between different traditions and beliefs. He tried to connect religion and philosophy as important to many cultures.

The running thread of Panikkar’s works is the idea of relationship, what he terms radical “relationality” or “relativity.” He coined the term “cosmotheandric” to refer to his conception of the threefold unity of all reality, meaning God, human beings, and nature are linked in a symbiotic relationship. In culture, “radical relativity” means the primordial interconnection of all human traditions. This implies that persons, despite their “otherness,” have the capability, through dialogue, to communicate their experiences and understandings to one another. Since an effective discourse presupposes a common set of beliefs and values (a shared symbol system) within a tradition and across traditions, Panikkar focuses on the symbolic discourse in interfaith encounter or “dialogical dialogue.”

Panikkar discusses the relation between dialectical dialogue and “dialogical dialogue,” which are “two intertwined moments of the dialogical character of the human being” (1999, 30). The difference is that the first is about objects, while the second is a “dialogue among subjects aiming at being a dialogue about subjects” (29).

The starting point for dialogical dialogue is the *intra*-personal dialogue by which one consciously and critically appropriates one’s own tradition. One also needs to be open to others’ traditions, without prejudice or premature judgments, and to have a desire to understand them. The *inter*-personal dialogue focuses on the mutual testimonies of those involved in the dialogue. It presupposes a certain trust in the other qua other, “considering the other a true source of understanding and knowledge, the listening attitude toward my partner, the common search for truth” (ibid., 31). Others have their own experiences, which, through dialogue, produce new intellectual productivity. Dialogical dialogue assumes that reality is not given once and for all, but “it is continually creating itself” (ibid.).

In dialogical dialogue, there is always place for diversity of opinions; it leads to recognizing difference but also to what we have in common, producing mutual fecundation. As such, it is not merely an abstract, theoretical dialogue, a dialogue about beliefs, but primarily a “total human encounter” of persons, involving not only minds but also hearts. This relationship of human beings
emerges in the actual praxis of the dialogical dialogue. Ethically, the will to dialogue is incompatible with the will to power, for any intention "to convert, to dominate, or even to know the other for ulterior motives, destroys the dialogical dialogue." The dialogical dialogue is a deep-reaching human dialogue in which one seeks the collaboration of the other for mutual realization, since wisdom consists in being able to listen and understand the other (ibid.). Dialogue is something absolutely necessary for humanity, and inter-religious dialogue plays an important role. Dialogue challenges many of the commonly accepted foundations of modern culture and brings hope for change. Panikkar argues that "to restore or install the dialogical dialogue in human relations among individuals, families, groups, societies, nations, and cultures may be one of the most urgent things to do in our times threatened by a fragmentation of interests that threatens all life on the planet" (ibid., 32).

Contemporary "intercultural thought" is a broad notion, which includes intercultural theology and philosophy. Orlando O. Espín, Professor of systematic theology at the University of San Diego and Director of the Center for the Study of Latino/a Catholicism, develops intercultural theology in dialogue with intercultural philosophy. He characterizes Raúl Fornet-Betancourt's concept of intercultural philosophy as "particularly insightful and rich as a dialogue partner for Western Catholic theology" (Espin 2014, 62).

Intercultural approach to theology considers the cultural embeddedness of theological forms. For Espín, "all theologies and all theologians are culturally bound, and there can be no exception" (2007, ix). He explores the breadth of Latino/a culture in dialogue with Catholic tradition, non-Christian religions, and the Afro-Latino heritage. By paying attention to black and Latino/a LGBT groups, he expands the scope of the inclusiveness of Latino/a and black communities and cultures. His approach to an intercultural theology of religion emphasizes the importance of dialogue. Going beyond the traditional dialogue between Christianity and the main non-Christian religions, Espín indicates that dialogue in a Latino/a theology of religions must also take place with non-Christian native or African religions including Lukumi. He insists that an acknowledgement by theologians of the impact of Africanness upon Latino/a identity and culture must also include a heritage of slavery and racism, providing a more complete picture of history and communal identity.

In writing about an intercultural theology of tradition, Espín understands tradition as thoroughly historical and contextualized. As such, it cannot presume to represent truths that may be recognized as universally relevant without multi-level processes of dialogue and self-critique within and between cultures. Through such processes "multiple historical, cultural, human universalities" can
be drawn beyond the particularities of each toward "solidarity with others" (2007, 21).

The first major dialogue between Latina theologians and Latin American feminist theologians took place at The Interamerican Symposium on Feminist Intercultural Theology, which took place in Mexico City, July 5–11, 2004. Prominent feminist social scientists and theologians from North, Central, and South America discussed the epistemological and hermeneutical frameworks for a critical feminist theology that develops in intercultural terms. Based on the presentations at that conference, Maria Pilar Aquino and Maria Jose Rosado-Nunes edited a volume titled *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World* (2007).

**Discussions on Interculturalism in Canada**

The recognition and celebration of cultural diversity was a hallmark of the second half of the twentieth century. "Multiculturalism" became a fashionable term. Frequently, however, merely lip service is given to the development of diverse cultures: in multiculturalism, the other's "right to exist" may acknowledged, while still considering one's own culture or truth to be superior to others or absolute. As I mentioned somewhere, multiculturalism has shown its conceptual failures (Demenchonok 2010, 470-473). It presented the holistic, rather than the dynamic, model of cultures as hermetrical and self-sufficient. If cultures are focused mainly on their differences and on maintaining their borders with other cultures, rather than being open to shared values and dialogue, then the result is likely to be warlike relations ("culture wars" inside societies and a global "clash of civilizations"). In contrast, intercultural philosophy argues for an alternative concept of cultural diversity free from determinism and representation.

The influential "White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue" from the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (2008) argues that multiculturalism has failed and interculturalism should be the preferred model for Europe. It asserts, "whilst driven by benign intentions, multiculturalism is now seen by many as having fostered communal segregation and mutual incomprehension," and "the emerging interculturalist paradigm" incorporates the best of preceding models and "it adds the new element, critical to integration and social cohesion, of dialogue on the basis of equal dignity and shared values" (Council of Europe 2008, 19). In the same vein, the second *UNESCO World Report. Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* (2009) argues in favor of a new approach to cultural diversity—one that takes account of its dynamic nature, cultural interactions, intercultural competencies, and intercultural and interfaith
dialogue at all levels (UNESCO 2009). However, some philosophers disagree with these views (Meer and Moddod 2012).

*The “politics of recognition,” group rights, and individual freedom*

Canada has a francophone province of Quebec within its anglophone majority. The differing views of these two groups regarding cultural diversity and integration are conceptualized as the distinction between “multiculturalism” versus “interculturalism.” In Montreal for about five decades there was Intercultural Institute of Montreal (1963–2012), which published journal *INTERculture.*

Charles Taylor, Canadian philosopher and Professor of McGill University in Montreal, in his influential “The politics of recognition” (1994) approached the issue of multiculturalism from a philosophical perspective. He characterized the emergence of a modern politics of identity as premised upon an idea of “recognition.” According to Taylor, the notion of recognition, and its relationship to multiculturalism, has developed out of a move toward a notion of equal dignity as an essential part of democratic culture. The idea of recognition gives rise to a search for “authenticity.” He argues that multiculturalism is dealing with a tension between the recognition of equal dignity of human beings and the recognition of cultural authenticity. People form their identities not “monologically” or without an intrinsic relationship with others. Rather, we are “always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us” (1994, 33).

Taylor refers to Mikhail Bakhtin’s conceptions of dialogism. He focuses on the relationship between the identity of an individual or a group and its recognition within the society. For him, a sense of socio-cultural self-esteem emerges not only from personal identity, but also in relation to the group in which this identity is developed. (ibid., 25)

This “politics of recognition” has sparked vivid discussions. Kwame Anthony Appiah views it as a part of the accommodationist movement and efforts at balancing a relationship between identities and the state. However, he is concerned that the way much discussion of recognition proceeds and the contemporary talk of identity (in terms of large collective social identities: gender, ethnicity, nationality, “race,” sexuality) seem too far removed from the individual. His main concern is personal autonomy. He distinguishes between the personal and the collective dimensions of individual identities, pointing out that the personal dimensions of identity work differently from collective ones.

From this perspective, Appiah comments on Taylor’s analysis of the Quebec laws in the field of language. The politics of language is a central and difficult issue in the multilingual states. Appiah believes that the aim of Quebecers for
the survival of their culture is understandable, and that their democratic choice of French as the political language is perfectly acceptable in democratic politics. However, he adds, “such aims must be managed within the framework of equal citizenship and a concern for the personal autonomy of citizens, not by notion of compulsory identities” (2007, 103–104). Thus, “where people can gain access to an identity by learning a language and they wish for that access, it is not the state’s business to stop them” (104). He sees two ways to reconcile full citizenship with the interest of the minority in their language: one is to make their language one of the political languages; the other is to teach them the political language, while allowing them to maintain their own.

Appiah is concerned that the civil apparatus and bureaucratic handling of the politics of recognition in their extreme can seem to require that one’s skin color or sexual body should be politically acknowledged, rather than to be treated as personal dimensions of the self. “Because identities are constituted in part by social conceptions and by treatment-as, in the realm of identity there is no bright line between recognition and imposition” (2007, 110).

Appiah distinguishes between “soft pluralism” and “hard pluralism.” The hard pluralists (Gray 2002; Ingram 2000) object to the elevation of personal autonomy over group autonomy and move from the equal standing of individuals to the equal standing of identity groups. This homology between identity groups and persons is the basic assumption of “millet multiculturalism,” which seeks “to honor the sovereignty of the group, and to minimize the outside interference with its affairs, in a way that has sometimes called to mind the millets system of the Ottoman Empire” (Appiah 2007, 74). But the problem is the lack of any “internal restriction on how the members of these communities are to be treated” (75). This would leave groups “free to do just about anything to their members short to physical coercion” (74). To this Appiah opposes “soft pluralism,” which he associates with works of Canadian philosopher Will Kymlicka (2000), who argues that certain “collective rights” of minority cultures are consistent with liberal democratic principles. Soft pluralism is related to liberal multiculturalism, which aim is to balance external rights and internal constraints and combine both group and personal autonomy (Appiah 2007, 78–79).

The potential for conversion of freedom into repression is rooted in the paradox of multiculturalism: individual liberties are restricted in name of securing the collective rights of culture groups. In the relations between individuals, intermediate (ethnocultural) groups, and the state, the groups could be externally autonomous but internally undemocratic and oppressive to the individuals.

A heuristically fruitful approach to the problem of cultural identity and diversity is based on a liberal conception of equality and cultural rights. The uni-
universalistic principle of civic equality, if implemented in a manner based on law, can serve as a safeguard against the restriction of basic individual rights in name of collective rights of culture groups. The right of freedom of association implies the voluntary character of group membership and the right to dissent and exit. Only those group rights are legitimate which can be derived from the cultural rights of the individual group member, and “only the difference-sensitive egalitarian universalism of equal rights can fulfill the individualistic requirement to guarantee equally the vulnerable integrity of individuals with distinctive life histories” (Habermas 2005, 13). The mutual recognition of the equal status of all members also requires a transformation of interpersonal relations through discourse and public debates over identity politics.

In his recent publication, Taylor (2012) explains the rationale behind the shift towards interculturalism and its heuristic advantages. In comparing the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism in Canada, he argues that the difference between the two is not so much a matter of the concrete policies dealing with diversity and integration, but concerns rather the “stories” about the situation as viewed from the perspective of anglophone Canada under the rubric “multiculturalism” versus that from the perspective of francophone Quebec referred to as “interculturalism.”

Nevertheless, at the same time, Taylor points out the tension aroused around the semantic distinction between the two terms: within the dual goal of recognizing difference and achieving integration, the prefix “multi-” points to diversity, while “inter-” places a greater emphasis on integration. Interculturalism is preferred in the case of Quebec where integration has to be a more complex goal than in the rest of Canada and it takes place in French rather than English. Interculturalism sees the regaining historical identity as a process in which all citizens have an equal voice and no-one has a privileged status. Viewing immigrants as the dichotomy us/them reflects underlying fears that “they” may change “us.” Quebecers view Canada as a dual country including both a francophone and an anglophone society, each integrating immigrants in their own manner.

Taylor argues that interculturalism also “suits better the situation of many European countries” (2012, p.?). Fears around multiculturalism stoke hostility toward immigrants, which, in turn, fuels their alienation and anger, leading into a dangerous spiral. Taylor sees the only remedy as “successful enactments of the intercultural scenario” (Taylor 2012, p.?). This requires more open and collaborative policies: it means that the members of the majority mainstream seek out leaders and members of the minorities and work together to resolve the conflicts. Such a collaborative relationship requires the elaboration of a more inclusive culture of interaction.
Interculturalism: A View from Quebec

Philosophers from Quebec provide new insights into the negotiation and management of diversity of national minorities in complex democratic contexts. Much debate has been generated recently over the ways for the accommodation and empowerment of minority groups and nations and of the advancement and enrichment of pluralism and intercultural dialogue.

Alain-G. Gagnon, a Professor at Quebec University in Montréal, examines the ways in which minority nations have begun to empower themselves in a global environment that is increasingly hostile to national minorities. In comparing conditions in Quebec, Catalonia, and Scotland, he argues that self-determination for these nations is best achieved through intercultural engagement and negotiation within the federal system, rather than through independence movements. He argues that autonomy need not be seen as closing oneself off to the “Other,” but rather as a voluntary and consensual mechanism of enfranchisement.

Gagnon is focused on francophone cultural heritage in order to maintain the minority culture and to counterbalance the negative impact of “American cultural imperialism and Anglo-homogenization” on minority communities (2014, chap. 2). According to him, current approaches to management of diversity and to national emancipation are limited in scope. He recommends two novel ways of accommodating national minorities in their quest for formal recognition and autonomy: one is the empowerment of individuals and groups to engage in the public life of their nation through active citizenship; the other is expanded forms of intercultural dialogue and cooperation among religiously, culturally, and linguistically diverse citizens. In contrast to the multiculturalism, the intercultural model for managing diversity rejects the notion of juxtaposing groups and instead encourages cross-cultural dialogue and the responsible functioning of the political community. The enshrinement of interculturalism derives from the need of all democratic polities to promote active citizen engagement and political participation (chap. 3). In Quebec, interculturalism in recent years contributed to the promulgation of active citizenship.

Sociologist and historian Gérard Bouchard, Professor at Quebec University in the Chicoutimi, was a co-chair, along with Charles Taylor, of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (CCAPRCD), created in February 2007, by the government of Quebec. They co-authored the Commission’s report (2008), which marked a milestone in the international discussion on how a diversified society can become both integrated and egalitarian.

In Interculturalism: A View from Quebec (2015), Bouchard offers his general conception of interculturalism in the Quebec context. Its analysis is relevant to
the cases where the cultural majority is also a minority in its outside environment (Catalonia, Scotland, Wales). In some aspects, it is also relevant to the United States and some western European countries that, during recent years, have been dealing with immigration issues. He also defends his conception against its various criticisms.

Bouchard gives the following definition: “Interculturalism, as a form of integrative pluralism, is a model based on a search for balance that attempts to find a middle ground between assimilation and segmentation and that, for this purpose, emphasizes integration, interactions, and promotion of a shared culture with respect for rights and diversity” (ibid., 32). He views interculturalism as one of the models of “management of ethnocultural diversity” (along with multiculturalism, the melting pot, republicanism, assimilationism, etc.). Interculturalism shares some elements with other models, such as recognition, pluralism, and reasonable accommodation, while its own articulation stresses relationships, dialogue, and balance. He relates these models to five major paradigms, which represent different types of societies. According to Bouchard’s typology, these paradigms are: diversity, homogeneity, bi- or multipolarity, mixité, and duality (18–20).

Bouchard in his analysis combines both cultural and civic aspects of multiculturalism. He mentions several distinctive components that characterize interculturalism with respect to other models of diversity management. As a global model for social integration, interculturalism takes shape principally within the duality paradigm, in which diversity is conceived and managed as a relationship between a cultural majority (described as “foundational”) and minorities, including immigrants. The duality paradigm does not create this divide, but it rather draws attention to already existing majority/minorities relationships and the tension associated with them. The cultural majority or the “found ing culture” can feel anxiety in the face of ethnocultural minorities perceived as hostile to their traditions and values, which fosters resistance to integration. Likewise, minorities fear for their own values and cultures and experience uncertainty about their future. This reflects the intersection of two sets of anxieties, which can fuel reciprocal mistrust and tensions. This model attempts to address these problems and ease the us-them relationship in order to prevent it from lapsing into conflicts and ethnicism.

Interculturalism seeks to care for the future of the majority culture as much as that of minority cultures, and in this sense, it is essentially a search for conciliation. The tension underlying this duality can be corrosive and result in various forms of discrimination from the majority group. On the other hand, the duality paradigm “feeds a critical awareness” by making them more visible and remin-
ding of the need for dialogue and concerted adjustments. (Bouchard 2015, 24, 26).

Furthermore, interculturalism brings to the fore power struggles that underlie intercultural relationships. The duality paradigm "gives high visibility to a fundamental power relationship and consequently focuses attention on its visible abuses" (ibid., 39). Ruling powers may be inclined to exercise their advantage in social-cultural decisions at the expense of minorities. In this asymmetry, "the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue is limited by power relationships, practices of discrimination, exclusionary measures and social inequalities," thus "a call for social change" (44).

At the heart of interculturalism is integration of diverse coexisting traditions and cultures. Using the term "integration," which due to the recent controversies in Europe is associated with imposition and assimilation not respectful of diversity, Bouchard stresses that it is devoid of any assimilationist overture, but rather has voluntary and inclusive meaning in the intercultural model: "In accordance with North American sociological tradition, the concept of integration designates the set of mechanisms and processes of socialization through which social bonds, along with their symbolic and functional foundations, are constituted" (ibid., 41).

These processes engage all citizens, operate on individual and institutional levels, and in economic, social, and cultural dimensions. As Bouchard writes, "the best means to counteract the discomfort that some can feel when faced with a stranger is not to keep their distance, but to come together to destroy false perceptions and to facilitate the stranger's integration into the host society" (ibid., 43).

In contrast to assimilation, interculturalism advocates a particular type of pluralism defined as "integrative pluralism" (ibid., 5). It pays more attention to the social dimension of integration, addressing the themes of inequalities, power relationships, discrimination, and racism. It also includes the political dimension, necessary for the implementation of a policy for the management of ethnocultural diversity.

Bouchard laments that current debates on integration do not give the issues of basic social justice and equality the attention they deserve. Interculturalism is concerned with the social and economic inclusion of citizens, particularly those who are underprivileged minorities, which must accompany cultural integration. It encourages fostering the socio-economic integration of immigrants.

In the spirit of interaction and integration, interculturalism favors the idea that beyond ethnocultural diversity, there are elements of a common culture (or a national culture) beginning to take shape. A common culture is made up of
three closely interwoven, ever-changing threads: "the majority culture, the minority cultures, and the shared culture" (ibid., 47).

Interculturalism supports the regime of "inclusive secularism," emphasizing "respect for ethnocultural (including religious) differences within the limitations of fundamental values, especially equality between men and women" (ibid., 134–135). In summarizing the distinctive components of interculturalism, Bouchard writes:

To sum up, interculturalism is basically characterized by an embrace of pluralism as an ethics of cultural encounter, the vision of ethno-cultural realities as structured by a majority/minorities relationship (cf. the duality paradigm), an emphasis on integrations (through policies of social and economic inclusion and a dynamic of interaction) and a strong concern for the societal level (development of a common culture). (2013, 98)

Bouchard's view of interculturalism "from Quebec" was made within the context of the francophone province of Canada. He ponders how to preserve the French culture in Quebec, "as a small francophone nation and as a minority culture on the continent," in the face of the anglophone Canadian culture (2015, 58). He makes several suggestions in this respect, such as the promotion of French as the common, official language, teaching of the francophone past in the history courses, etc.

Bouchard's claim for the recognition of the majority culture as a founding component may ease the fears of the French-speaking populists, who perceive minorities and migrants in Quebec as a challenge to their traditional culture (ibid., 23). Many majority communities may find this claim reassuring. Ironically, however, such a claim used by the anglophone majority of Canada would be disadvantageous for francophone Quebec as a minority. Dominant cultures are already in an advantageous position over minority cultures. Moreover, the greatness of each culture depends on its achievements and its role within society, and it cannot be decided politically or administratively.

Bouchard acknowledges that this claim may, in a certain light run counter to the principle of formal equality between individuals, groups, and cultures, but expresses skepticism with respect to "the ideal (often professed but achieved nowhere) of the cultural neutrality of the state" (ibid., 50). Some critics think that insistence on a particular language may be seen "as somewhat partial" (Cantle 2012, 154). At the same time, Bouchard warns against abusive extensions of the majority culture. He suggests that in the cultural sphere, immigrants and members of minorities should be made more visible in the media and public institutions. Schools and universities curricula should be designed to promote pluralism, mutual knowledge, and interculturalism. He advocates that efforts be
directed to teach both the official language of the host society and the language of origins of the minorities and immigrants (Bouchard 2015, 34, 79).

Bouchard in his analysis tries to keep the fine line between the interests of the francophone majority in protecting their culture from fragmentation and the interests of minority in preserving their cultural identities from assimilation. Interculturalism is a search for balance, aiming to develop "a third way" between fragmentation and assimilation. In contrast to the polarizing tendencies, "interculturalism is an approach conceived around bridges, relationships, and arbitrations" (ibid., 58). While fostering respect for diversity, interculturalism encourages interactions and exchanges in a spirit of conciliation and reciprocity. Bouchard sees the advantage of interculturalism, in comparison to multiculturalism and other models, in that it is best suited to "the double objective of unity and respect for diversity" and "to learn to live together in a spirit of respect for our differences" (56). The overall goal of interculturalism is "to manage the relationship between the majority and minorities in a way that is in accordance with human rights and pluralism, with a view of promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and reapproachment" (154).

The issues of language, faith, history, and "core values" addressed by interculturalism represent some fundamental concerns about cultural identity. As Ted Cantle wrote in his analysis of interculturalism, "very similar issues to those described by Bouchard, which again touch upon underlying and more fundamental concerns, could be created in most other Western nations, though the precise nature of issues will vary from country to country" (Cantle 2012, 203).

**Toward inter-philosophical and intercultural dialogue**

The discussions on cultural diversity and interculturality take place within the context of the social-political processes in the society and in the world. In the United States, the struggle for recognition, within the existing social-economic and political structures, exposes the deeply rooted problems of racial and ethnic discrimination, social inequality, the broadening gap between rich and poor, and the erosion of democracy in a political environment monopolized by two similar parties, both of which are dependent on the real power of big corporations.

The international geopolitical context adds its own controversies. After the end of the Cold War, many hoped that humanity would at last come to its senses and embrace new opportunities for peaceful and collaborative relations among the nations as equals, for the solution of social and global problems. The decade of the 1990s was marked by the rise of the movement for cultural diversity, as expressed in the ideas of multiculturalism and interculturalism.
However, these hopes were soon dashed by the neoconservative “revolution,” the Bush Doctrine and its implementation in a boundless “global war on terror” and a strategy of global hegemony. The military preponderance and hegemonic policy of the world’s sole remaining military superpower is perceived as a threat by nations that do not want to be dominated. This triggers a geopolitical competition and an arms race, increasing the risk of war. But the real alternative will be not for the dominating power to change hands, but for a world free from any hegemonic domination. This power politics creates a vicious circle of violence with little room for positive programs of social and cultural development.

In a diverse and interrelated world, the utopia (or rather dystopia) of an empire-centered global hegemony is a failed project. Nevertheless, the unilateral policy of pursuing it undermines sovereign equality as a principal of international law and a pluralistic multilateral international system. It also has its negative impact on the society. The permanent state of war that has ensued is used as justification for unlimited governmental power, including the infringement of civil rights and sweeping surveillance violating the privacy of citizens. It creates a fear-aggressive reaction, in which the ideas of plurality and cultural diversity are overshadowed by the reverse tendency toward ethnocentrism and ideological fundamentalism, suspicion of “the others,” and the anti-multicultural and anti-intercultural politics of “integration.” This is accompanied by anti-immigration legislation and excesses of racism and ethnic/religious intolerance.

Critics point out a glaring discrepancy between the declared ends and the means: world stability through the power politics of a global empire and the forcible “spread of democracy”; security through militarization and global electronic mass surveillance; domestic social stability through targeting racial and ethnic minorities and anti-immigration policies; “integration” through the homogenizing “mass culture” and brainwashing mass communication media. In this atmosphere, the themes of peace, equality, and intercultural dialogue have almost disappeared from public discourse.

The asymmetry of political-economic power, domination, and a homogenizing effect of globalization in its hegemonic version create conditions conducive neither to the preservation of the unique cultures of nations and minority groups nor to a dialogue of cultures as equals. Traditional policies have failed: they have not removed the root causes of the problems, but have made them even worse while also generating new problems. Thus, new approaches and policies are needed.

Where, then, does the future lie? The situation of humanity at a crossroads is a call to turn our eyes to philosophy: Quo vadis, Philosophie? Philosophy, with
its commitment to open-ended and critical thinking, must contribute to an in-depth analysis of the world problems and their possible solutions. In order to realize its transformative potential in a conflicted world and to respond constructively to internal theoretical and external social-cultural challenges, philosophy itself needs to undergo a self-transformation. Interculturality is one of the aspects of this transformation.

The call for positive changes invokes a different philosophy, at the center of which is human freedom and the vital interests of humanity. It promotes an ethics of nonviolence and planetary co-responsibility, aiming for peace and cooperation among the nations, democratic equality, realization of human rights, dialogical relationships, conditions for the harmonious development of individuals, and the flourishing of diverse cultures. It asserts that morally good ends can be achieved only through morally good means.

Philosophy is committed to an a priori respect for all human beings as potential participants in intersubjective and intercultural dialogue. Intercultural dialogue should have inter-philosophical global dialogue as its epistemological and ontological foundation. Intercultural dialogue is a condition and an indispensable means for progression toward coexistence and mutually beneficial relationships between different cultures. In its normative role, dialogism can serve as the standard for the evaluation and critique of existing relationships within a socially-culturally diverse world. It can also serve as a regulative principle in the ennoblement of human relationships. Dialogism should become the norm for ways of thinking and for relationships on all levels—intersubjective, social, cultural, and international.

A dialogue that is beginning to take place among the various world philosophies contributes theoretically and practically to fostering intercultural dialogue, which, in turn, may serve as a model for constructive political interactions, thus promoting a more just and collaborative world, and aiming for a gradual realization of the ideal of a cosmopolitan order of law and peace.
References


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