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## EDITORIAL

**MIGUEL E. VÁSQUEZ R**

Universidad Complutense de Madrid

# Image, power and peripheries: Current perspectives on Latin American studies

### ABSTRACT

*This is an introduction to the Special Issue of Empedocles European Journal for the Philosophy of Communication focused on Latin American studies. The articles collected here were meticulously selected in light of previous discussions and conferences about Latin America that took place over the past year. The contributors transversally analyse several issues in current Latin American studies, particularly those related to philosophy, art, literature and visual studies. They propose alternative readings of Latin America taking into account its singularity and the way in which traditional categories such as representation, power, modernity or gender, among others, are implicitly and explicitly used and criticized.*

### KEYWORDS

Latin America  
philosophy  
modernity  
power  
image

1. In this matter I must consider Mieke Bal's idea of *travelling concepts* (2002). According to the author, travelling concepts change their meaning across disciplines and contexts. This idea can also be helpful in order to analyse imagery as a 'form of language', where images could be understood as a discursive, potentially conceptual items that let us trace their background and consider their meaning by reviewing how they have been studied in different fields at different times. See also Bal (2009: 5, 181–82).
2. In this introduction we distinguish between Latin American studies and Latin American thought as forms of study about Latin America that are mutually supportive but not identical. We understand Latin American studies as a research field developed mainly in US academia, especially since the late 1970s. On the other hand, Latin American thought refers to studies on Latin American realities, which, even with another denomination, could be understood as reflections on identity, territory, culture, politics, philosophy, literature or history that go beyond the university field.

As the reader will find out, our approach to Latin America in this Special Issue is not linked to any would-be dominant perspective, that is, to any view that attempts to unify the field of Latin American studies. On the contrary, our goal is to show the current state of affairs in Latin American thought from a multidisciplinary perspective without conceptual or genealogical hierarchies. This allows us to avoid biases which, in the past, narrowly defined Latin American thought as a form of politics, history or merely as a kind of aesthetic thought. In this way, our effort as guest editors has been to propose a diverse and multi-voice dialogue about Latin America, its present and its past. The approach from which *Empedocles: European Journal for the Philosophy of Communication (EJPC)* addresses the problem of communication has allowed us to analyse and collect a group of articles that highlight that, at present, conceptual, discursive and performative approaches to Latin America must be understood as a part of a communicative process, that is, as a hermeneutical phenomenon from which, as a community, we transform ourselves while we think together with others, considering their languages and contexts as well as they concern. In this sense, the starting point of this Special Issue is an idea of community from which language emerges as a means to think politically, aesthetically and conceptually, different dimensions of current Latin American reality. We believe that this Special Issue allows us to show the links between the editorial views of *EJPC* on communication as a contemporary problem in the field of humanities and the challenges of current Latin American thought. For both, the question about language and its power to form communities is essential, especially in times in which 'the performative' is understood as a privileged way of criticizing modernity and the so-called regime of representation. For this reason, the selection of articles that we present here also seeks to question prejudices about the region from the several standpoints whence Latin American thought is dealt with today.

Additionally, this Special Issue also seeks to highlight the flexibility<sup>1</sup> of the concepts from where we traditionally study Latin American thought. Thus, a concept such as *image*, – to cite an example – which is commonly linked to aesthetics, comparative literature or visual studies, will serve to enable both political and philosophical readings of ongoing social movements in Latin America. This flexibility, far from showing weakness or inconsistency, suggests that Latin American studies, as a field, is able to offer new connections and novel readings of traditional categories and problems related to our society. This exercise of reinterpretation – which can be called hermeneutical in this context –, is present in all the contributions to this Special Issue. Moreover, this approach gives us an important key to understand not only the problems analysed in each article, but also the methodologies that current Latin American studies uses to think about itself. That lets us (re)construct a field of study whose grounds do not depend on the consistency of a singular concept but on the way in which different methodologies dialogue with one another. We highlight this because we want to distance ourselves from any pretension to be 'spokespersons' for the Latin American condition. Today, the tacit agreement on Latin American thought is to let it flourish instead pigeonholing it, especially if we take for granted the conceptual fragility of which we previously spoke.<sup>2</sup>

About this point we want to be emphatic too: the use of *words* and *images* as narrative vehicles in close communion has been deliberately chosen as part of the subject matter dealt with in this Special Issue. *EJPC* has a long history in the study of these two concepts. During its trajectory, the journal

has provided a platform to reflect on the philosophy of communication with a focus on diverse kinds of communicative objects, such as cinema, theatre and literature, among others. That is why the edition of this Special Issue is a good reason to bring together current concerns in Latin American thought and such focal points, whereby *EJPC* addresses the communicative, pedagogical and aesthetic aspect of philosophy. The latter also points to the performative dimension of the concepts currently used in Latin American studies. In this connection, concepts such as 'power' and 'subject', as well as 'word' and 'image' themselves, can also be understood in terms of the place of enunciation where they are used. In this sense, thinking about Latin America, and more specifically, thinking about the performative dimension of the concepts that are used for its study, refers us to a series of sociopolitical, cultural and historical realities where these concepts come to life and become analytical tools. For this reason, in this Special Issue, we will find approaches to Latin American cinema, photography and literature, which at the same time tell us, for example, how one can think about Latin America's present within the Venezuelan or Brazilian realities, just to give two examples. Accordingly, compiling, editing or selecting reflections on current Latin American thought is also an exercise that shows how Latin American studies are connected to other fields of research that, while using Latin America as a pretext, are also interested in thinking about universal categories related to art, politics, cultural studies, history, comparative literature and philosophy.

Latin America is a permeable space under permanent discussion. Although this position takes us away from certain decolonial views (mainly Mignolo's and Dussel's), it brings us closer to some other views – that can also be called decolonial but in a different sense – which conveniently prevent us from delimiting a field of study that is cross-disciplinary and in constant growth. It is true that, as a field, Latin American studies has been developed differently in different academic spaces. For example Caribbean Latin American studies must face the challenge of studying theoretical, aesthetic and political practices from the standpoint of their own cultural, racial and linguistic complexity, which is a very different setting from, say, that of the Andes, the Southern Cone or Brazil. In the context of US academia in the last 40 years, Latin American studies has been developed primarily within the limits of comparative literature, historiography, art and cultural studies. Meanwhile, in Central America, Venezuela and Colombia (and to an extent in Chile and Argentina) scholars have implemented different approaches to Latin American studies and, under the name of Latin American philosophy, have encompassed a form of political thought dedicated to criticizing the different ways in which power has been established and deployed in the region according to capitalist and a colonial logics. It should be noted that, rather than trying to establish a field of studies confined to the university, contemporary Latin American thought developed outside the United States has sought to establish itself in politics, culture, aesthetics and social movements, finding in academia a space for its consolidation, not for its genesis. Differences between the ways in which Latin American studies has developed in recent decades suggest that it has emerged from different views about the concepts inherited from the Enlightenment and modernity. It also shows that Latin American studies works on its own agenda and not only to satisfy the immediate needs of the university space. On the contrary, the interests of Latin American studies are built around a constant reflection that is not necessarily institutionalized or even recognized by formal academia.

With this in mind, we collected seven articles carefully chosen from a group of works previously discussed in several symposia, seminars and working groups. Most of them were presented at the second edition of the international seminar 'Latin America in perspective', held on 23 and 24 May 2019, at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University and at the Real Harvard Complutense College, respectively. The texts compiled here are: "'Fuera de lugar": Roberto Schwarz y la centralidad de la experiencia periférica' written by Jordi Maiso, 'Errant anarchaeologies, the disjunction of Borges and the yagán dog' by Gonzalo Díaz Letelier, "'La herida de un hombre no es una novedad": Gender, violence and performance in *Azul y no tan rosa*' by Katie Brown, "'Potencia, no poder". De la fotografía como gesto de resistencia y migración' written by Elena Cardona, '(U)topías del pensamiento decolonial. Guamán Poma y Euroamérica' by Rodrigo Castro, and 'Bolívar Echeverría y las asimetrías de la modernidad capitalista: ethos barroco y blanquitud' by Cristina Catalina, and 'Clarice Lispector y la desistencia de ser' by Sergio Villalobos Ruminott. Most of the articles are in Spanish in order to serve as a bridge between Spanish-speaking communities that work on Latin American studies and *EJPC*. We believe that offering spaces for discussion in multiple languages is a tremendously valuable activity in a world that we constantly try to enrich through diversity.

In the first article of this Special Issue, "'Fuera de lugar": Roberto Schwarz y la centralidad de la experiencia periférica', Jordi Maiso begins by explaining Roberto Schwarz's critique of a certain branch of contemporary decolonial studies that locates the centrality of thought about Latin America in the quest for its identity. Then, Maiso analyses Schwarz's account of how global capitalism introduces (and seeks to justify) a narrative about progress in which Brazil (and Latin America in general) should always be condemned to lag behind any form of development. In this sense, Maiso studies Schwarz's view about the political, social and cultural risks that Latin America faces when trying to overcome global capitalism without questioning the categories from which it conceives reality and power. Therefore, instead of seeking to overcome barriers that are insurmountable by design, Maiso finds in Schwarz's reading about Brazil's political experience a way to construct peripheries that, when shaping its culture, do not seek to imitate or repeat capitalist formulas. For this reason, this article should be understood in dialogue with the text 'Bolívar Echeverría y las asimetrías de la modernidad capitalista: ethos barroco y blanquitud' written by Cristina Catalina. Both articles analyse Brazil (and Latin America in general) as a space to construct an alternative modernity that would not be indebted to those forms of advanced capitalism that constantly impose 'evolutionary' or 'developmental' narratives, which displaces interpretations made in Latin America about Eurocentric or Anglo-American concepts.

In the second article, 'Errant anarchaeologies, the disjunction of Borges and the yagán dog', Gonzalo Díaz Letelier approaches the hermeneutical and methodological problem proposed by Erin Graff Zivin in *Anarcheologies: Reading as Misreading* (2020). According to Graff Zivin, interpretations, even if they are called canonicals, are the result of breaks, collisions and transpositions between readings, which makes it impossible to have a univocal or authorized 'interpretation' of a text. Graff Zivin exemplifies this from different readings of fundamental works of Latin American literature. Gonzalo Díaz Letelier gives an account of the distinction made by Graff Zivin according to which there are two main readings (in conflict) in relation to Latin America: one is charged with understanding the Hispanic imperial logic and the other, opposed to that,

also called *marrana* by Moreiras (2016), focuses on describing Latin America by using concepts such as hegemony, post-hegemony, subalternity, decoloniality or infra-politics (to name just a few) that would be responsible for analysing the multiplicity of Latin American contemporary thought. Díaz Letelier's reading of Erin Graff Zivin's view invites to think about Latin America from the idea that hermeneutical processes are the result of multiple readings in conflict. Now, this process of interpretation that Erin Graff Zivin proposes, as Díaz Letelier says, requires the deconstruction of readings and concepts that seem to be untouchable – as they are canonical – in the field of Latin American studies. Moreover, Díaz Letelier's reading of *Anarcheologies: Reading as Misreading*, states that, when reading about and from Latin America, we frequently presuppose concepts of identity and autonomy that must be questioned. Therefore, if we follow Graff Zivin's idea, an 'anarchaeological' reading of Latin American literature claims to deconstruct the categories from which the canonical tradition has assumed the concepts of identity and autonomy (and if you want, sovereignty) in the field of Latin American studies. To highlight this, Díaz Letelier analyses the way in which Jorge Luis Borges reads and criticizes his own interpretations of Plato made in the past and proposes that, precisely, the exercise of (re)reading himself shows the fissures of every interpretation. From this perspective, by presupposing a canon from which Latin American narrative production must be read, we foster, by 'legislating' on any given interpretation, a counterproductive practice that prevents criticism as the unequivocal expression of the autonomy of the subject. Valuable additional reflections in this regard are extracted from Díaz Letelier's article. His study of Graff Zivin's proposal shows the versatility from which the field of Latin American studies unites categories from philosophy with categories from literature and politics. Although it is true that these interdisciplinary intersections have always existed, and that Latin American thought, in general, has been nurtured by them, it is essential to make explicit the transversal analysis that lets us review the supposed institutional – and even administrative – borders that philosophy, Hispanic studies and comparative studies usually show. In the light of the complexity of all hermeneutical operations involved in the field of Latin American studies, the borders of those fields seem obscure, as Díaz Letelier remarks in his reading of Graff Zivin's analysis.

Thirdly, we have Katie Brown's "La herida de un hombre no es una novedad": Gender, violence and performance in *Azul y no tan rosa*. In her article, Brown analyses the problem of violence and the heteronormative logic from which masculinity is built, specifically, in the Venezuelan middle-class context where, to this day, little has been done to minimize violence against LGBTQI+ collectives. Based on the feature film *Azul y no tan rosa* (Ferrari 2012), Brown studies how critiques against Latin American heteropatriarchal logic (particularly the Venezuelan one) seek to transcend the academia and the legal context by locating itself in the mass media – as is the case of cinema. This highlights such a logic of power by remarking the violence that Venezuelan society shows against non-heterosexual groups that want to understand gender beyond the traditional binary logic between masculine and feminine.

In her article, Brown deals with the elements that Ferrari uses to build the characters and the plot of his film. This allows her to explore a topography of different representations meant to delineate unorthodox forms of subjectivity, which break the traditional heteropatriarchal logic from whence the notion of gender has been built in Latin American society. Thus, Brown

gives an account, for example, of how transsexual aesthetics (inspired by 1980s aesthetics and embodied in the character of Delirio del Río, played by Hilda Abrahamz), is used as a means to establish links between the public that watched the film and the way in which violence against sexual diversity is present in our days. This transsexual aesthetics and its musical-pop correlate in Venezuela's 1980s scene enables the encounter of Venezuelan heteronormativity with its non-heteronormative underground alter ego, depicted by a drag queen that reaffirms themselves from the male body and attempts to break, deconstruct and denounce the prevailing heteropatriarchal logic. Thus, heels, wigs, makeup and the lyrics of the song 'No soy una señora' (Melissa 1984) serve as a construct from where, following Brown's view, femininity is doubly reinforced thanks to a performative display rooted in the male body. This reinforcement, also studied by García (2013), highlights the impossibility of essentializing sex, as Butler (2007: 199) points out in their discussion with Foucault. Furthermore, the destabilization of the categories running through the heteronormative logic exposed in *Azul y no tan rosa* allows Brown to study how this logic affects women and exposes them to situations of vulnerability that threaten not only their autonomy but also their corporality and their psyche.

In this sense, Brown's article analyses Ferrari's film in a de-essentializing key, that is, emphasizing how heteropatriarchal logic is sustained by a conception of gender derived from a teleology in which 'man' is depicted as the centre. The critique of this essentialism could well be considered, following Oliver Marchart (2007), as post-foundationalist, namely, a view that analyses politics without attending to metaphysical preconceptions that try to impose themselves as dominant views.

Fourthly, we include the article "Potencia, no poder". De la fotografía como gesto de resistencia y migración' by Elena Cardona. The author supplies a hybrid reading of recent output by three photographers based on visual studies. On these grounds, she goes on to examine Venezuela's current socio-political and affective reality from the standpoint of the ontology and scope of the photographic image. Cardona analyses the work of Gabriel Osorio, Vladimir Marciano Sifontes and Gabriel Méndez. In the case of Osorio, Cardona examines his work framed in the so-called Venezuelan Spring or April Rebellion that occurred in Venezuela in 2017 in which around a hundred Venezuelans lost their lives in demonstrations, many of them at the hands of state security forces. Osorio's work allows Cardona to highlight how a mode of resistance against authority and institutionalized violence in contemporary Venezuela can be narrated through images. There, Cardona identifies gestures and symbols of such resistance as the emotional key to understand current demonstrations against the Venezuelan government. In Osorio's photography, so the argument goes, state violence finds a form of oppositional singularity in the body of the Other that it attempts to repress to preserve its logic of domination.

Thus, according to Cardona's analysis of Osorio's work, his photographs are a public interpellation that questions this logic of domination, which is relentlessly struggling against diversity and plurality. This also points to a conflict between parts that, rather than being involved in a friend-enemy scheme (following a Schmittian logic), shows the incapacity of the Venezuelan state to impose its authoritarian logic over symbolic forms of resistance such as those represented by the half-naked teenage demonstrators portrayed by Osorio. Then, Cardona analyses Marciano Sifontes *The Tempest* (also produced in the context of the Venezuelan Spring). The author dwells on how, relying

on the binomial 'body-image', Marcano Sifontes depicts the gesture of resisting emphasizing the role of the skin, its texture, its elasticity and its vulnerability in demonstrations against the Venezuelan government. The bodies of the demonstrators appear in Marcano Sifontes's work decontextualized and half-naked, confronting Venezuela's state security forces as sacrificial bodies in a ritual that, rather than trying to bend power through force, seek to show through the gesture of their fragility the abjection of authority and its cruelty. Finally, based on Gabriel Méndez work, Cardona mulls over how photography is transformed into a migratory narrative, that is, a narrative of displacement and uprooting as a product of despair and chaos in the Venezuela of today. Cardona's article gives us some clues to understand current Latin American political problems by thinking of the role of photography from various perspectives. She allows us to review political and philosophical categories starting from visual narratives. This shows that contemporary Latin American studies go beyond traditional research fields and understand themselves against the backdrop of relatively younger fields of study as photography and visual studies. Cardona's proposal allows us also to link current Latin American studies with research on communication and language, since the works she considers here are the result of discursive practices that lend themselves to the analysis of the captured-object as well as the capturing-subject of photography. Both of them resonate with the materiality of current conflicts beyond their symbolic and conceptual representation.

Hence, Brown and Cardona study violence in Latin America nowadays from different points of view: in Brown's article, violence is examined by criticizing heteronormative logic in Venezuela's middle-class context. In Cardona's, violence is analysed by focusing on how Venezuela's repressive agents use force against individual bodies. Both thinkers find in cinema and photography, respectively, a nourishing field of study that depicts Latin America from the standpoint of its material and affective dimensions at the same time. This, in the context of this Special Issue, is an essential contribution, since it not only helps to show the diversity and transversality from which current Latin American studies are understood, but also lets us to contribute with *EJPC* to the study of the communicative phenomenon, that is, a phenomenon in permanent (re)interpretation, always entangled in cultural and historical categories under constant analysis.

In fifth place we include Rodrigo Castro's '(U)topías del pensamiento decolonial. Guamán Poma y Euroamérica'. Castro's article is a critical reading of Walter Mignolo's (2007, 2011) interpretation of Guamán Poma's *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*. Castro starts from the well-known distinction – born in the field of Latin American subaltern studies – between decoloniality as the study of the elements that constitute Latin American identity, and decoloniality as a critique of European categories and concepts. On these grounds, Castro advances a critique of Mignolo's view that the *New Chronicle* must be understood as a form of *topia*, that is, as a critical formulation of colonial thought that demands to be read as a concrete realization of original Latin American thought. On the contrary, Castro remarks, and here lies the core of his reasoning, that Guamán Poma's *New Chronicle* must be considered within the logic of Euro-American concepts and, therefore, its orientation must clearly be utopian instead of *topian*. In this vein, Castro states that Guamán Poma's work is itself structured in accordance with such a logic and consequently could not be said to subsist outside of the colonial reasoning

from which it comes. That is why, at the end of his article, Castro states that Guamán Poma's *New Chronicle* is nothing but a Castilian dream.

Castro's analysis of Guamán Poma's work as well as his critique of Mignolo's view let us include the discussion about the origins of the concepts used by decolonial thought. As Moreiras and Villacañas (2017) state in their study on the origin of postcolonial studies, Latin American studies have come into being not only due to disciplinary intersections but also out of a revision of the concepts of modernity and of the problems inherent to Latin America's endeavours to find its own identity by using languages inherited from the European tradition. In this sense, as Castro points out at the beginning of his article, there have been several attempts to define Latin American studies, led by either a quest for identity or a general critique of the language of modernity and colonialism. The problem is that the perspectives from which decolonial thinking has been developed are not always compatible. This problem is part and parcel of current affairs in Latin American thought, which is why its physiognomy remains blurry. However, this does not mean that, as a field of study, Latin American thought should focus on establishing its limits only. On the contrary, and here we agree with Castro: what is important is to show the historical, conceptual or hermeneutical possibilities that open up when thinking about different forms to understand Latin American thought beyond the mere search for identity. For this reason, the discussion we seek to foster is focused on the analysis of common concepts and a common logic inherited from modernity and shared with the European tradition. That is what Castro's article highlights, namely, the impossibility of establishing definitive divisions between the field of Latin American studies and the context from which its languages emerge.

In the sixth article, 'Bolívar Echeverría y las asimetrías de la modernidad capitalista: ethos barroco y blanquitud', written by Cristina Catalina, the author analyses distinction made by the Ecuadorian philosopher between modernity and capitalism. This distinction allows Catalina to account for his view on Latin American reality, one that is neither 'lagging behind' nor in a permanent state of 'development' but rather in constant production of mechanism of resistance against global capitalism. In this way, Catalina engages Echeverría's view that modernity should not be considered as synonym of capitalism. On the contrary, modernity in this view must be conceived as an attempt to overcome a condition of scarcity to which modern capitalism cannot offer any solution. Far from that, capitalism is said to produce yet another logic of scarcity without regard for the concerns of modernity as an epochal project. For this reason, continuing with Catalina's analysis, alternative forms of modernity in Latin America should not be read as forms of modernity in debt to a pre-existing Eurocentric modernity, that is, as lagging modernities constantly wishing to be part of a European modernity already underway. Rather, Latin American modernities are answers on the fly to the capitalist logic. Those answers, in many cases, lead back to the original concerns of modernity as a political, economic and cultural project focused on overcoming feudal reasoning. Therefore, and following Catalina's analysis, Echeverría proposes the use of the category 'whiteness' to remark the Anglo-Saxon form of the capitalist project that conforms to a model of cultural homogenization identified with a kind of subjectivity whose vital purposes coincide with the expansion and development of the logic of scarcity. Hence, in rejection of this model of homogenization, Echeverría focuses his analysis on the conformation of the Latin American baroque as an experience in which

a mystical, alternative and half-blooded subjectivity emerges as a mechanism of resistance against the ongoing capitalist homogenization process.

Catalina's article is also related to Castro's article, since both propose ways to understand Latin American thought from categories that urge us to identify how concepts from modernity determine our comprehension of the present. In this sense, in the case of *New Chronicle* according to Castro's reading, Guamám Poma's manuscript emerges from a shared thinking, hybrid if you like, that thinks colonial utopias according to modern concepts. Meanwhile, Catalina reviews Echeverría's work based on the premise that Latin American modernity must be understood in a non-linear way. Thus, Castro's and Catalina's articles insist in the idea of considering Latin American realities not as realities in permanent lag by reference to the European world but just as alternatives construed in their own terms.

Finally, we include 'Clarice Lispector y la desistencia de ser' by Sergio Villalobos Ruminott. This article focuses on *La hora da Estrela* (Lispector 2011). The author advances a critique of the concept of representation as a pivotal structure used by modern thought to supply a stable and epistemologically transparent standpoint of subjectivity. Villalobos Ruminott analyses this 'transparency' bias by studying the game of opacities that Lispector enables in her novel. There, the writer takes distance from the main character (Macabéa) through the presence of another character (Rodrigo) who narrates the story. Thus, Lispector's voice is projected, but also reduced, due to the fact that Rodrigo's subjectivity serves as an obstacle to her own voice. In this regard, Villalobos Ruminott argues for the impossibility of establishing permanent mechanisms of translatability for the meanings of any representation. This highlights the congenital precariousness of every representation and the difficulty of establishing permanent guidelines for its disclosure, understanding and translation. It is precisely this idea of concealment, found in Lispector's novel, that Villalobos Ruminott uses to challenge the modern concept of representation by remarking its opacity. Moreover, Villalobos Ruminott seems to point out the inconsistency of the old Cartesian foundational paradigm according to which transparency of the subject is essential for the subject itself. The character of Macabéa in Lispector's novel, as Villalobos Ruminott suggests, would be far from having this privilege of transparency as long as her unhappiness remains hidden from herself. This game of opacities analysed by Villalobos Ruminott shows the inconsistencies of the so-called regime of representation imposed by modernity, since the subject can be, at least partially, blind to itself. For this reason, according to Villalobos Ruminott, Macabéa is an indecipherable sign, semantically livid for herself and for the others.

Having in mind some of the concepts studied in the articles compiled in this Special Issue, Macabéa may be said to be subaltern, baroque, resistant and testimonial in a phenomenological sense, that is, she is a presence with diffuse borders, hidden for oneself, others and herself, exposed but impossible to apprehend completely through language. That is why, perhaps, Macabéa's overwhelming lust is invisible for herself and, in consequence, also partially for us. By mentioning her lust, Rodrigo points out the fact that, as a narrator, he knows her subjectivity to a limited degree, which reminds us also that Macabéa remains hidden even to herself. Florencia Garramuño, in accordance with Villalobos Ruminott's position, maintains that in *La hora da Estrela*

3. The original text reads:

the reference to history and the social context appears through devices that have nothing to do with the devices of representation, that rather, constantly interrupt Macabéa's story with the story of the writing of that story.

(Garramuño 2011: 66–67, translation added<sup>3</sup>)

Villalobos Ruminott's is the last of the articles compiled in this Special Issue. It has not been easy to choose contributions that show the conceptual and performative complexity from which Latin American studies is currently developed. We are aware that many topics, methodologies, approaches and practices in current Latin American studies have been left out (a matter to which we have referred elsewhere; Vásquez 2018). However, we would feel satisfied if, at least, the reader grasped the idea that Latin American studies today, beyond its transversality, is characterized by its irreducibility to a specific terminology, to one methodology or a single topic. Moreover, the fact *EJPC* hosts this Special Issue allows us to play with the versatility of current Latin American studies that we have been entertaining since the beginning of this introduction. We believe that the profile of this journal very well accommodates a research field in permanent change, always open to interdisciplinary work, with a transversal spirit and an emphasis on the visual and the communicative, a field invested in furthering debates that may allow us to know more about, and from, Latin America.

la referencia a la historia y a lo social aparece a través de dispositivos que nada tienen que ver con los dispositivos de la representación, que, más bien, interrumpen constantemente la historia de Macabéa con la historia de la escritura de esa historia.

(Garramuño 2011: 66–67)

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### CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Miguel E. Vásquez R. is an associate lecturer in philosophy at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Vásquez started his career as an assistant professor at Universidad Central de Venezuela (2006) and was also a lecturer at the Faculty of Law at Universidad Monteávila (Caracas-Venezuela) from 2009 to 2015. His research interests are early modern political and epistemological thought, Latin American philosophical and political thought (specifically focused on Venezuela) and contemporary philosophy and its relationship with literature and cultural studies. He has also published several articles on Latin American political and philosophical thought, early modern epistemology, Cartesian thought and its relationship with sensory experience, history of Venezuelan political thought and the influence of Cartesian philosophy in contemporary thought. He is a co-director of the seminar 'Latinoamérica en Perspectiva', which focuses on contemporary Latin-American thought, and also co-director, with Jacques Lezra, of Policrits Research Group, which focuses on the political dimension of contemporary philosophical, literary and poetical concepts.

E-mail: miguelev@ucm.es

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