

APPENDIX:
PHILOSOPHY AND PRAXIS*

Upon presenting a thought in English that originated in Spanish, I have to say with Kant that "despite the great wealth of our languages, the thinker often finds himself at a loss for the expression which exactly fits his concept."¹ But the difficulty in my presentation is not due only to language; it is much more due to the different points of view of the philosophical thinking of North Americans and Latin Americans, the daily realities of the two being so far apart.

A. PHILOSOPHY AND IDEOLOGY

Philosophy is not only thinking demonstratively or scientifically.² It is also thinking critically and dialectically,³ for it can think about its own principles. On the one hand, philosophy is not only to know (*Kennen*) objects or to have ontic knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) of the understanding (*Verstand*), but it is also an ontological or metaphysical knowledge (*Wissen*).⁴ Inasmuch as it is a metaphysical knowledge (*Wissen*), it always has reference to praxis; because of its origin and destiny, it is also wisdom. The inevitable reference to praxis, as we shall see—praxis understood in its fundamental meaning (as *Lebenswelt, ta endoxa*, as the total structure of the actions of an epoch)⁵—places philosophy on an ideological level, if by ideology is understood the systematic whole of ideas that explain, justify, and camouflage an entrenched praxis. All theoretical exercise has its own autonomy, but only a *relative* autonomy.⁶ The relative autonomy

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of philosophy, in this instance, has reference to the concrete historical totality from which it emerges and to which it returns—everyday praxis. I shall take two classic examples, easily comprehended, to demonstrate that even in the case of the greatest philosophers, it is impossible to avoid a significant share of ideological "contamination."

A.1 Aristotle and Pro-Slavery Contamination

In his *Politics*, I, 1, the founder of logic tells us:

Nature (*physis*) would like to distinguish between the bodies of freemen and slaves, making the one strong for servile labor, the other upright and altogether useless for such service.... It is manifest, then, that some men are by nature (*physei*) free, and others slaves, and that for these latter slavery is both expedient and right [1254b27-1255a2].

Noteworthy is the term "clear," "manifest" (*phaneron*), "evident," or "self-evident" (in German, *selbstverständlich*). Equally noteworthy is the certainty with which Aristotle attributes to nature the origin of the historico-political difference between the free man and the slave. The philosophical argument is totally contaminated by the ideological "daily evidence" of Hellenic slavery.

A.2 Thomas Aquinas and Macho Contamination

The example I shall give is essentially theological, but the argumentation is anthropological; we could say it belongs to philosophical anthropology. Talking about the transmission of original sin, Thomas Aquinas explains:

Now it is manifest (*manifestum*) that in the opinion of philosophers the active principle of generation is from the father, while the mother provides the matter. Therefore; original sin is contracted, not from the mother, but from the father: so that, accordingly, if Eve, and not Adam, had sinned, their children would not contract original sin

[*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 81, ad 5c]. Accordingly we must assert that if we consider the conditions attaching to these persons, the man's sin is the more grievous, because he was more perfect than the woman [ibid., II-II, q. 163, ad 4c].

Again something is "manifest," evident, obvious. It does not matter that the argument is from authority; what matters is that it is accepted by all that the male gives Being to the child; the woman gives only the matter (ibid., III, q. 32, ad 4c). Man is superior to woman. The masculine (macho) ideology is the totality of ideas that justify the domination of the male over the female (sexually, economically, politically, and pedagogically), and it contaminates all the reasoning of Thomistic moral philosophy.

To say that ideological moments contaminate philosophical reasoning does not mean that such reasoning is invalidated. It only indicates that it is a human, fallible, finite, perfectible discourse. That is to say, it is not an absolute knowledge (*Wissen*). This is so because its reference to praxis is to concrete historical action, unfinished and ambiguous.

B. DIALECTIC BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND PRAXIS

Philosophy finds itself relatively determined by praxis. There is neither an absolute determination nor an absolute autonomy. These types of determination touch all the instances of theoretical exercise.

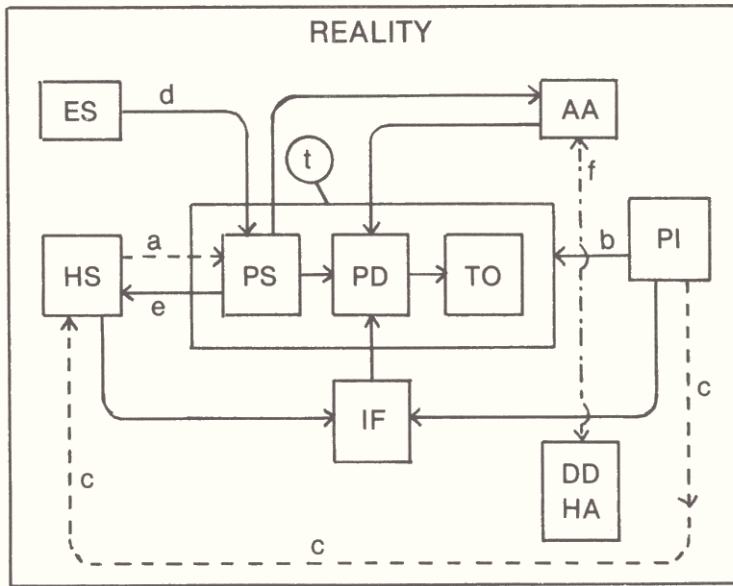
B.1 *Determination on the Part of the Subject:* *Interests and Goals*

The philosopher or subject of philosophical thinking (*PS* in diagram 12) is not an "absolute I" as Fichte claimed,⁷ but a finite subject, conditioned, relatively determined by the everyday world to everyday praxis, joined necessarily to a historical subject, to a social class, to a people, to a subject of basic practices.

Philosophical subjectivity (*PS*) clings to and depends upon (arrow *a*) the historical subjectivity (*HS*) that carries it. The *ego co-*

gito (I think) is first of all an *ego laboro* (I work), *ego opero* (I do), or *ego desidero* (I desire) of a group, of a people. It is true that one can make an abstraction and consider only the subject-object re-

DIAGRAM 12



-----> determination
 -.-.-.-> practical opposition
 —————> other types of relationship

- AA academic apparatus
- DD dominant discourse
- ES empirical subject
- HA hegemonic apparatus
- HS historical subject
- IF ideological formation
- PD philosophical discourse
- PI practical interest
- PS philosophical subject
- TO thematic object

lationship (indicated by *t*), but it is only an abstraction—that is, taking the part for the whole (the philosophical subjectivity for the practical overall reality).

In the same manner, as proposed by classical thinking, the human end (*beatitudo, telos*) is the object of tendency (*bonum*) or appetite, which is identified with Being (*esse*). Today we would call such an end a practical interest (*PI*) of a projected undertaking of a social class (to which the philosopher belongs). The "interest" situates the theory in a practical manner in two ways: because it establishes (arrow *b*) the relevance or pertinence of the thematic object (*TO*) to be thought philosophically, or because it also grounds (arrows *c* and *a*), as a project, the practical totality of the class, nation, or group that constitutes the historical subject situated "under" the philosophical subject.

Because Being (*esse*) is identical to "interest" (*bonum*), it is the foundation of the intelligibility and pertinence of the thematic object, which, moreover, must be thought about because of practical exigencies of praxis itself. Throughout history, the themes of philosophy have sprung forth primarily because of the practical exigencies of the age in which the philosophers lived. If Hegel began his ethics or philosophy of right in the following manner, it was because the prevailing capitalist praxis clearly determined it—not absolutely, but sufficiently:

Right is in the first place the immediate exterior being (*Dasein*), which freedom gives itself in an immediate way, i.e., possession (*Besitz*), which is property ownership [*Philosophy of Right*, §40].

That is, the thematic object that was imposed on Hegel as first in his practical philosophical discourse and as the first determination of "free will" is private property, the bedrock of the capitalism that is mirrored in his philosophy.

B.2 Methodical and Categorical Exigencies

Praxis determines philosophy, although not absolutely, in a much more intimate manner in the constitution of philosophical discourse, be it because of the method chosen, or be it because of

the necessity of constructing categories that adequately correspond to the practical *a priori* totality. In effect, if one chooses a reformist praxis or one that basically reaffirms the system in force, one will discard critical, holistic, or dialectical methods—and one will claim to discard them because they are naive, non-scientific, invalid. Karl Popper, with his methodical proposal of "falsifiability" of great precision,⁸ falls into superficialities in his work *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, where he confuses dialectics with the predictability of future events.⁹

In the same manner, from the point of view of a practical option, the world (*Welt*) for Wittgenstein, comes to be identified with "the sum total of reality" (*Die gesamte Wirklichkeit*)¹⁰ so that he says later on that the "feeling (*Gefühl*) [of] the world as a limited whole—it is this that is mystical."¹¹ For this reason *beyond* the world "it is impossible to speak about the will insofar as it is the subject of ethical attributes."¹² With this idea philosophical ethics is impossible: if "the *sense* of the world must lie outside the world" as that about which nothing can be said, one has to keep quiet on these topics.¹³

All these antidialectical, antiholistic thoughts are perfectly coherent to a praxis that reproduces the system. They are the philosophy of domination or of justification of oppression because they are anti-utopian—utopia here understood as the projected undertaking of liberation of the oppressed in the present system. It is a perfectly ideological scientific objectivity.¹⁴

The adoption of a dialectical method is demanded by a praxis of radical commitment to the oppressed.¹⁵ Radical criticism is not exercised over the parts of the system; it confronts the totality in its entirety as a totality. If one "cannot speak about this" (*man nicht sprechen kann*), one would have to silence, by assassination, the millions and millions who cry out "I am hungry!" Does this "proposition" make sense? Those who believe that it does not have meaning should stop eating so that they can feel in their corporality the wound of hunger that has no reality because it is found beyond the system.

In the same manner, certain categories—"substance," for example—do not permit critical philosophical analysis of certain concrete historical situations of praxis. But the category of "to-

tality," the fundamental category of dialectics, and that of exteriority¹⁶ allow for a more adequate discourse because of a radicalization of meaning in the most material sense.¹⁷

The philosopher will not give in to the fear of losing a professorship, of being expelled from a country, or of being discriminated against because of a praxis that intrinsically challenges the dominant philosophical discourse. Affective-erotic subjectivity always articulates itself within social structures. The conduct of the petit bourgeois philosopher in systems of violence has been studied by Rozitchner.¹⁸

B.3 *Philosophical Hegemony and Relative Autonomy*

One fundamental aspect in the relationship between philosophy and praxis is almost always overlooked. There is no philosophical practice without an academic "apparatus" for instruction and learning. This has been true from the Academy and the Lyceum to the universities, periodicals, and conferences of today.¹⁹ Needing to create a consensus, the dominant classes organize a hegemonic ideologico-academic apparatus. Philosophy plays a central role in the dominant ideological formation and within the hegemonic apparatus.²⁰

From what has been said, we can conclude that all philosophy is determined by its dialectical relationship with praxis. It is clear that philosophy has its own autonomous theoretical status: no one denies the specificity of theoretical philosophical discourse. This autonomy, however, is not absolute (*simpliciter*) but relative (*secundum quid*). Within concrete, historical, integral reality, philosophy is relative to praxis because of its historical subjects (that is to say, the philosophical movement, apparatus, class, nation, epoch, etc.) and their interests. Philosophy is also relative to praxis because of the thematic objects, the method, and the categories it uses. Not to keep in mind these conditions of possibility, these relative determinations, is to make of philosophy a complete abstraction (*totum abstractum*), an ideological fetish that will be enshrined at the center of the hegemonic academic apparatus of the dominant classes in the developed countries. Thus a

national and worldwide consensus will be created that will justify the capitalistic exploitation perpetrated by the so-called free or "Western and Christian" civilization.

C. EXIGENCIES FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERATION

I call philosophy of liberation the strictly philosophical discourse, the scientific-dialectical knowledge (*Wissen*), that gives thematic priority to the praxis of liberation of *the oppressed*. The oppressed are considered historically and socially as a class, geopolitically as a nation, sexually as repressed by macho ideology and practices, pedagogically as alienated and completely enclosed by an idolatrous fetishism. *Philosophy* of liberation also gives priority of origin and foundation to the liberation of philosophy from the naivety of its allegedly absolute autonomy as a theory. *Philosophy of liberation* is a theoretical knowledge (*Wissen*) articulated historically and concretely by the praxis of liberation of the oppressed—the first preconditioned for the possibility of such thinking. Far from agreeing that "all philosophy is a criticism of language,"²¹ it affirms that philosophy is a criticism of oppression and a clarification of the praxis of liberation.²²

C.1 *Exigencies for a Philosophical Theory of the Praxis of Liberation of the Oppressed*

The oppressed as "origin" and "space" that gives rise to critical-liberating philosophical discourse indicates that it is a practical, ethical discourse. The point of departure of this discourse is the human situation produced by the praxis of domination. That is, the practical precondition for the possibility of beginning a true discourse makes philosophy of praxis the first philosophy (*prima philosophia*). It is not a philosophy of any praxis whatsoever but of the praxis of *liberation*, the criterion or absolute tribunal of the truth of its discourse. Liberative orthopraxis permits a pertinent philosophical discourse that penetrates reality here and now.

The oppressed are the *poor* in political terms (person, class, nation), the *woman* in the macho sexual system, the child, youth,

the *people* in the pedagogy of cultural domination. All the problems and topics of logic, philosophy of language, anthropology, and metaphysics acquire new light and new meaning when viewed from the absolute and nevertheless concrete (the opposite of universal) criterion that philosophy is the weapon of the liberation of the oppressed.

Sub lumine oppressionis, from the viewpoint of the oppressed, all ideology or philosophy of domination allows a glimpse into what it conceals—domination. Surpassing the horizon of Being of the system, philosophy of liberation reaches out to the exteriority of the other (the oppressed as other than the system), to the fount from which proceeds the light of being (the *Erkenntnisquelle* of Schelling).¹³ Schelling, who was, in effect, Hegel's teacher, had indicated that beyond the Being (of all system) one can find the Other: "the originating cause is free." "The Lord of Being (*Herr des Seins*) is a much higher and more appropriate notion than the one that says that God is Being itself."¹⁴ In the totality of the system (contrary to Wittgenstein, who thinks that "God does not reveal *in* the world"),¹⁵ *in the world*, the self-revelation of the absolute Other takes place through the oppressed.¹⁶ The very body, the corporality, the flesh of the oppressed (their hungry, tortured, violated bodies), when exposed (as the hero is "exposed" before the firing squad) within the system, is a subversion of the law and order that alienates them. It is the revelation of the Absolute in history as an epiphany, not only a phenomenon, an epiphany through the poor. The face (*pnin* in Hebrew, *prosopon* in Greek), the person, the corporality, the flesh (*basar*) of the poor is itself the originating word (*dabar*) from which arises the philosophy of liberation. Philosophy of liberation does not think about words; it thinks about reality.

Thus when the oppressed who struggle against the death that the system allots to them begin, through the praxis of liberation, the struggle for life, novelty irrupts in history beyond the Being of the system. A new philosophy, a positive one, necessarily makes its appearance. The novelty is not originally and primarily philosophical; it is originally and primarily historical and real; it is the liberation of the oppressed. It is secondarily a philosophical theory as a strategic instrument or weapon of liberation itself.

C.2 *Exigencies on the Part of Historical Subjects,
Their Interests, and the Thematic Object*

In the philosophy of liberation the coherent, organic articulation of the philosopher in union with a historical subject (class, women's liberation movement, culturally oppressed people; *HS* in diagram 12) is a decisive question. Concrete articulation from within a people is a *conditio sine qua non* for the philosophizing of liberation (arrow *e*). It is not some "experiment" that has to be conducted at a certain time. It is a permanent way of life, integrated into the everyday life of the philosopher under penalty of mere repetition, ideologization, loss of reference to the truth of reality—that is, to the actual, ever changing, historical manifestation of reality.²⁷

The empirical subject (*ES* in diagram 12), who can be a member of the oppressed classes or a petit bourgeois by origin, is called to be an organic philosopher of liberation by a conversion to critical thinking (indicated by arrow *d*). The philosopher thus enters into a space of risk, anxiety, and danger, in a new lifestyle—that of philosophical subject (*PS*). To be a philosopher of liberation can mean losing one's freedom in prison, enduring the pain of torture, losing a professorship at a university, and perhaps being killed, given the situation in Latin America.

To be "organic" (arrow *e*) with the historical subject means to resolutely acquire a *class position* with an oppressed people; it means to become involved in and form part of the popular movement of the working class or of marginal groups, in movements for national liberation or that of women, or in groups organized for popular ideological, racial, or cultural struggle.

The philosopher elaborates the philosophical discourse (*PD*) of liberation on themes that must be grounded theoretically at the highest levels of abstraction in order to give to concrete political analysis all its practical effectivity.²⁸ Only thus will it respond, on the one hand, to the necessity of clarifying to the utmost degree the class consciousness of the oppressed and, on the other hand, to the explicit philosophical formulation of the ideological formation (*IF*) of these classes. Philosophy of liberation is, to be precise, a philosophy that responds to the implicit content of the ideological formation of the oppressed and, in the final analysis,

to the interests of their class, nation, sex. Philosophy of liberation is, then, a "weapon" of the oppressed; it thinks through and clarifies the most urgent themes; it organizes its own rational resources; it explains its articulations; it transforms itself into a standard of the ideological struggle against the dominant discourse (*DD* in diagram 12) of the system in force and against its hegemonic apparatus (*HA*). Of course, the philosophical antidiscourse also needs to start promoting its own (antihegemonic) academic apparatus (*AA*)—schools of philosophy, publications (books, magazines), symposia, and movements.²⁹ The antihegemonic apparatus can be expected to be the object of the violence of persecution, the sadism of oppressors.

The struggle (arrow *f* in diagram 12) between philosophy of domination and philosophy of liberation manifests on the theoretical level the violent class struggles provoked by domination. On this level, as on others, the philosophers of poor countries will need the solidarity of philosophers of wealthy countries, who are responsible for what their transnational corporations, their political leaders, and their armies cause outside their country's boundaries.

C.3 Method and Categories

Some of the exigencies at this level were mentioned in B.2, above. I shall now touch on other aspects. In the first place, if the dialectical or ontological method is accepted as the appropriate one to discover the meaning of the functional parts of a given system—a problem avoided by logical neopositivism, sociological functionalism, and various other philosophical positions—philosophy of liberation gives particular importance to the analectic moments of the dialectical process. In its essence, the dialectics of the dialectical method consists in the rational movement that passes from the part to the whole, or from a whole to a more extensive whole that includes it.³⁰ But the possibility of such passage—not the "Holy Thursday of reason" as Hegel would say, but the "Easter of reason"—does not rest only on the negation of negation in totality (moment of negativity) and not even on the affirmation of totality (which would not "surpass" it with a radical metaphysical—not merely an ontological—surpassing

[*Aufhebung*]). It is possible because of the affirmation of exteriority, which is more essential than is negation for a philosophy of the oppressed as an originating and a liberating fulfillment. For example, the liberation of Nicaragua, as a process in which a nation dependent on the United States passes to being a free country (from a first totality to a second totality), does not take place only because of the negation of the oppression produced by capitalism (negation of negation). Nor is the process liberating only because of the affirmation of the democratic bourgeois potentialities of prerevolutionary Nicaragua. The liberation occurs also, metaphysically speaking, because of the affirmation of what Nicaragua is as *exteriority* (to capitalism), *as a totality* (what Nicaragua is, as an origination from the precapitalist, humane, heroic, and historic past; and what Nicaragua is today as a *proyecto*, a real utopia not contained even as a potentiality within bourgeois prerevolutionary Nicaragua).

The analectical moment of the dialectical method (ana-dialectical method) gives absolute priority to the *proyecto* of liberation of the other as new, as other, as distinct (and not only as different within the identity of the whole). In the final analysis, it can be affirmed that the analectic moment of dialectics is founded on the absolute anteriority of exteriority over totality, even to affirming the priority of the Absolute Other as creative origin over creation as a work, as a finite and therefore perfectible totality. The metaphysics of creation is the ultimate foundation (*Grund*) of political historical liberation (social revolutions), the erotic liberation of women, and the pedagogical liberation of the child and of the people. Beyond Being (if *Sein* is understood as the horizon of totality) *there is* reality; there one can find reality in its most consistent, future, and utopian horizon: anthropological exteriority (the other, the needy, the poor) or absolute exteriority (the absolute other, the Creator who appeals to the system through the epiphany of the poor when the system becomes lulled into a fetishistic, antidialectical "normalization").

In the same manner, a category such as face-to-face, which measures all practical human relationship as the origin and the end of history, gives sufficient light to interpret the injustice or alienation of the other as a mediation of the *proyecto* of the whole, from the immediacy where one lets the other be other than

oneself in that other's real, metaphysical exteriority. From the experience of respect for and service to the other as other is judged every human political, pedagogical, or erotic relationship that is a "reifying instrumentalization" of the other as a mediation for one's own *proyecto*. The relevance or pertinency of both, and the method and categories used, depend on the articulation that the philosopher carries out with the praxis of liberation.

C.4 Political Space, Repression, and Antihegemonic Apparatus

Latin America today finds itself in an exceedingly complex situation. It is suffering the agonizing pains of giving birth to a new historical era. Philosophy of liberation is a theoretical and strategic product of a profound revolution that encompasses South and Central America and the Caribbean.

Philosophical thinking must have at least a certain modicum of freedom. When it lacks minimum freedom, philosophy emigrates; it exiles itself; it dies, and the body of the philosopher goes to jail, from Boethius to Gramsci (imprisonment is a form of dying), or to the cemetery (as my colleague from Mendoza, the philosopher Mauricio Lopez, and my philosophy student, Susana Bermejillo, a young woman beaten to death by undercover police in 1975).

C.4.2 Critical philosophical discourse has a growing political "space" in Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Santo Domingo, and Panama, given the crisis of military dictatorships and the opening up to certain types of social democracies. The road is difficult; a long history of oppression and a lack of critical thought make the way difficult. The temptation of many is populism, because radical revolutionary positions are not "acceptable."

C.4.1 Philosophy of liberation is repressed today in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Political "space" for critical thought is nonexistent. The military ideology of national security—learned in great part in the schools of the United States, such as West Point or the School of the Americas in Panama—does not tolerate, not even physically, the philosophical subjects of liberation or their dialectic and popular counterdiscourse. Re-

pression reaches even to the psycho-social level, and torture is used as a means to persuade "anarchists" to return to the Western and Christian "order."³¹ To be a philosopher of liberation in this situation is to be in mortal danger. In any event, the danger of accepting self-censorship (*autocensura*), or of holding hands with reformism or developmentalism (*desarrollismo*), is always there.

Those of us who are in exile, in the more ample political "space," develop our discourse of liberation with a twofold purpose: on the one hand, to fashion a clear and radical criticism of theoretical errors (such as populism in political philosophy) and, on the other hand, to set ourselves to the task of clarifying the great strategic themes that are expected to be the most relevant in the coming decades.

C.4.3 It seems, on the contrary, that the political "space" for philosophical thinking is closing in Colombia, where the military makes its presence felt more and more in national life as farmer and worker movements emerge. The philosophy of liberation grows there, and it still has possibility in populist and Christian thought, even if it has to be camouflaged. The situation is disquieting. Renowned social scientists have been imprisoned and tortured.

C.4.4 The philosophical discourse of liberation can be exercised with relative freedom in Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico. That is, they are "spaces" of philosophico-critical productivity that can be "exported" to countries submerged in the most horrible repression or countries where a philosophy of liberation has not yet come to life. Again, it is at this level that the philosophers of developed countries can help us form a double front in a true "alliance for critical philosophy": on the front of the repressed countries (publishing critical works and sending them to countries we cannot enter, not even by means of books), and on the First World front (creating a trend of opinion favorable to critico-liberating thought developing in the countries of the Third World).

C.4.5 In the socialist process in Cuba and Nicaragua, philosophy of liberation, in the near future, will have to treat topics different from those in other countries where revolution is still a future event. The central thought to be explored within the situation of present growth in Cuba is not so much the political but the

technologico-productive and ideological. On the one hand, the increase of productivity, development of productive forces, is in need of a philosophy of production, which I would call a philosophy of poiesis. In this manner, philosophy of liberation would open a new chapter, affirming that technology is not universal, is not absolutely autonomous, but that it corresponds to needs and requirements determined by the degree of development of social formation and by participation in the scientific-technological revolution.

A second fundamental question in the socialist Latin American countries is that of being able to formulate a new theory of religion. This theory would from the Marxist discourse where atheism as antifetishism and materialism as a last instance of worship (to offer to another a product of work) permit religion to be constituted as praxis and infrastructural work, as a positive and liberating structure. This question is a strategic one for the Latin American revolution, and for every other Third World revolution, because it would allow a whole people to be impelled, with a profound religious consciousness, into the liberating process, not only not denying its ties to religious transcendence but also relying on it to furnish absolute motivation for revolutionary praxis.

D. TOWARD AN INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF PHILOSOPHICAL LABOR

Philosophy of liberation, as philosophy of the oppressed and for the oppressed, is not a task only for thinkers of the countries of the Third World. Philosophy of liberation can be exercised in all places and situations where there is oppression of person by person, class by class, racial minority by racial majority. Depending on the "space" where the discourse arises, diverse topics will be relevant. The themes can be different, but not the type of discourse, or its method, or its essential categories. In the United States it is possible to work out a philosophy of liberation from the experience of the oppression of the people by a system of consumption where the rationality of profit-making is beginning to show its true irrationality; from the suffering of the black and Hispanic minorities; from the humiliation of women not yet liberated; and specially from the ideological manipulation that con-

ceals from the public what "the empire" does outside its boundaries to poor peoples that it impoverishes even more.

In the countries of the center, philosophy sometimes turns in upon itself and reduces its task to justifying itself (philosophy of language, of logic, etc.), without thinking through the great issues relevant to the final years of the twentieth century. In Asia and Africa philosophy concerns itself with other topics of liberation (dialogue with ancient cultures, authenticity, the question of neocolonialism). In Latin America, with differences from country to country, I have already sketched some thematic spheres within diverse political "spaces."

In conclusion, an international division of the philosophical labor, assigning to diverse groups and countries distinct tasks, would permit us to begin a fruitful dialogue where uniformity of themes would not be demanded, nor would certain thematic objects be spurned because they are not relevant to one or another group. Respect for the other's situation begins with respect for the other's philosophical discourse.