

Mabel Moraña / Bret Gustafson
 (Hrsg.): *Rethinking Intellectuals in Latin America*, Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2010, 388 S.

Reviewed by
 Janet Burke, Tempe

Latin American literature and cultural studies have a fairly well established history among English speaking peoples, but its vibrant public philosophers remain relatively unknown. Many of them have never even been translated into English. This collection of essays starts to fill a hole in that regard. As is typical in collections of essays, the various parts of this volume go off in a multitude of directions and lack the strong thematic foundation of a monograph, but the editors have done an excellent job of assembling the ideas into a coherent whole. The result is a complex but quite extensive look at the various ideas and actions of intellectuals on the periphery at a time when that periphery is starting to move toward center stage. Many of the essays offer new ways of thinking about traditional subjects, and many venture into totally new areas of consideration. The various threads of thought offer the reader a rather exciting collection of novel ideas and thought provoking approaches to those ideas and, certainly, an appreciation of the challenges Latin American intellectuals face as they attempt to navigate their way through the intricacies of a world in flux. This collection brings together the ideas and insight of scholars from a variety

of disciplines, including literature, history, anthropology and sociology, on the timely subject of the rapidly changing world of the intellectual in Latin America. The essays grew out of the “South by Midwest”-Conference (November 2008) on “the role of intellectuals and the definition of intellectual practices in peripheral societies” (p. 10). The volume’s diversity of writers, writing styles and viewpoints is an appropriate reflection of the pluralism that engaged intellectuals currently face; it is a world in motion, a transformation of knowledge production and politics in Latin America, which the writers indicate they wish to document and encourage.

In his summative essay, “Pluralism, Articulation, Containment,” Bret Gustafson writes that “these shifts represent possibilities, ruptures, and interventions that create space for rethinking and addressing the region’s ongoing paradoxes – a history of monocultural nationalism in a region of vast plurality, vast wealth and intense gaps of inequality, democracy and racial and social exclusion, environmental degradation and an embrace of natural resource extraction and export, and zones of relative stability alongside regions of bloody war, violence, and criminality” (p. 355). Indeed the concept of pluralism is at the heart of the volume, and the tension described by many of the writers arises as this pluralism runs up against conservative elements of society that would contain it. In this unstable and quickly evolving world, the intellectual has a critical role to play: He or she is no longer the traditional member of the lettered elite or the revolutionary leader, but rather is now in think tanks, part of the media, an activist for various causes. Today’s Latin American intellectual

must “negotiate multiple scales and forms of intellectual activity and consider how these intersect with multiple modalities of analysis and representation” (p. 358). Besides thinking across national boundaries, different localities and traditional social and ideological orders, the contemporary intellectual must operate in a world that contains new forms of social and political agency and the heavy influence of technology.

Although grounded in the fluctuating world the Latin American intellectual of today must navigate, the volume explores a multitude of directions, including the role of literature; the importance of sacred beliefs and indigenous practices in this intellectual world and the concomitant need for the indigenous to participate in exploring their own knowledges; and the role of language, specifically English as the dominant global language because of its grounding in the sciences, and Spanish as an umbrella for a new Pan-Hispanism, built upon an intriguing mix of the discrediting of area studies, the growth of Spanish capitalism and transnational corporations, and Spain’s new international status.

Two essays glance back at the roots of the intellectual on the periphery to some of the earliest intellectual outliers: the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega and Blas Valera, whom José Antonio Mazzotti sees as the “colonial antecedents to elements of contemporary discourse on indigenous rights” (p. 29); and Jacinto Ventura de Molino, a black intellectual in 1820s and 1830s Montevideo who engaged with the public through his advocacy writing and law practice on behalf of black people. Looking at the challenge to contemporary intellectuals

as they seek to navigate national cultures, Jan Hoffman French examines the role of anthropologists as collaborators with and advocates for descendants of fugitive slaves in Brazil and other black people who live in quilombo, their traditional settlements, and seek government recognition and property rights.

Concentrating on Ecuador and Bolivia, Catherine Walsh looks at the social-political-ancestral movements of Indian and African descendent peoples, which she sees as “leading and orienting the most significant intellectual projects” (p. 200). These projects move away from the lens of Europe and the United States, she writes, and the two countries’ recently adopted constitutions create a new way of thinking about the State.

Walter Mignolo analyzes indigenous practices within the framework of pluriversality, as opposed to universality. Despite a tendency of many to see Evo Morales’s rise to the presidency of Bolivia as indicating the merging of indigenous decolonialism and the Latin American Left, in this pluriversality, there is no Right or Left; Indian decolonialism is not the equivalent of the Latin American new Left. From the Indian perspective, Marxism and capitalism are both part of Occidentalism, and the Indian revolution opposes both. Instead, decolonialism “focuses on racism that justified exploitation of labor outside of Europe and now inside of Europe because of immigration.” (254). The Aymara intellectual Félix Patzi Paco proposes that a communal system replace the liberal system, which would entail reconstituting the traditional indigenous *ayllusand markas*; this reconstitution defines what Mignolo’s plurinational state would be like: “The

idea is coming from the simple existence and memories of millions of Indians who are not convinced that they can live the existence and memories of millions of Europeans and their descendants in the Andes, whether these come from the Left or from the Right” (p. 255).

George Yüdice looks at technology as the ultimate transnational flow, the way the public sphere moves into the area where the private sphere used to predominate and takes it to the international level. Intellectuals have a major role to play in this world. As Yüdice argues, “Transcultural intellectual work does much of the translation necessary to render the communicative power of public spheres into law or administrative power” (p. 309). Examples from El Salvador and Brazil illustrate the complexities involved.

Although the volume covers a broad spectrum of ideas and both poses and answers many questions, it also points the way for future research; each contributor offers extensive bibliographies that might serve as a starting point. As editor Mabel Moraña writes, “Without a doubt, due to the changing nature of our cultures and the deep changes we are witnessing both at social and political levels in Latin America, all the answers that we seem to find to our questions today are necessarily provisional and subject to reconsideration. This book is intended as a modest but passionate contribution to this process of recognition and understanding (p. 23).”

**Jürgen Kocka / Günter Stick (Hrsg.),
Stiften, Schenken, Prägen. Zivilge-
sellschaftliche Wissenschaftsförde-
rung im Wandel, Frankfurt am Main:
Campus Verlag, 2011, 206 S.**

Rezensiert von
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Der hier zu besprechende Band bietet Einblicke in die gegenwärtigen und wohl auch zukünftigen Diskussionen um die Rolle von Stiftungen in der Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Lehre und Forschung an deutschen Universitäten. Die in dem Band versammelten Autoren nähern sich diesem Thema von fachlich verschiedenen Ausgangspunkten sowie unterschiedlichen Interpretationen und Grundüberzeugungen an. So ist Gesine Schwan davon überzeugt, dass nur eine staatliche Wissenschaftsförderung nicht willkürlich sein kann, während private Wissenschaftsförderung nicht demokratisch kontrolliert sei und daher Stiftungen willkürlich handeln könnten. Dem hält Jürgen Kocka in seinem Schlusswort entgegen, dass auch staatliche Wissenschaftsförderung intransparent und „meist nur in sehr vermittelter Form demokratisch legitimiert“ sei. Insgesamt widerspiegeln diese gegensätzlichen Ansichten die Grundlinien der Diskussionen unter Akademikern und Politikern und das oftmals generelle Unwohlsein gegenüber privater Anteilnahme an der Finanzierung öffentlicher Projekte in Deutschland. Hier wird allerdings auch ein begriffliches Grundproblem deutlich: Handelt es sich bei Stiftern um Akteure