

Thinking Philosophically from Mexico

[English Version]

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About Carlos Pereda's book, *Pensar a México Entre Otros Reclamos*.

The latest book published by the philosopher Carlos Pereda (UNAM-Gedisa, 2021) offers a set of essays aiming at exposing methodological routes and novel epistemic constructions to reflect on philosophy from Mexico. However, it seems that Mexico is the pretense to test the always open paths of what Pereda calls "nomadic thought." This is distinct from static thought, placed in *arrogant reason* plagued by colonial vices, that shelters either in an abstract and empty universalism or in particularisms without major explanatory horizons; the *porous* reason unfolds along multiple paths that the author names 'detours.' Additionally, it avoids colonial vices to try to explain the phenomena of its dynamics. This means, learning to ascend from the abstract to the concrete or from the universal to the particular and descend back to the abstract to enrich concepts and categories, among other things.

Pensar a México entre otros reclamos is made up of three essays. Each one has its own approach; they are well articulated when thinking, from nomadic perspectives, about philosophy in Mexico. The first of them, "Colonial Vices. A Sketch of a General Perspective," brings us closer to a critique of colonial vices that affects the production of philosophical thought. Pereda develops *craving for novelty*, *subaltern fervor*, and *nationalist enthusiasms*, among these vices. These are three vices that become a straitjacket for arrogant reason, their prejudices can lead one astray in the understanding of phenomena. An alternative to not falling into such vices is to approach certainty and truth through a porous reason that

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uses detours to think critically. The first chapter lays out the author's epistemological and methodological foundations.

In the second essay, "Fragments of Mexican Philosophy, for Example," Pereda moves from the universal or abstract to approach the particular and concrete with examples of thinkers who reflect on Mexico, to test the viability of their methodological paths. This time, the author of *Vértigos Argumentales* revisits Ignacio Ramírez's — who called himself *Nigromante* — and Luis Villoro's proposal, to explore nomadic thinkers who were concerned with concrete problems, microphysical experiences of injustices, marginalization, and exclusion without renouncing the panoramic explanations, and pretensions for universality in the construction and management of concepts, but without reproducing colonial vices.

The third essay, "Uncomfortable Mexican Thinkers, and, in Addition, Irreverent Claims," is aimed at testing the methodology announced in the first chapter, but this time based on Enrique Uranga and José Revueltas' proposal. The former is an important but little remembered exponent of the Hyperion Group, and the latter, a strong critic of it, as he did not share the idea of being able to reduce Mexicanness to a certain identity or substance.

Regarding Enrique Uranga, Pereda analyzes his interest and his gaze on scrutinizing the Mexicans. The need for "substantializing" the Mexican being through an ontology that determines that being is striking. However, this ontology is accidental, unforeseen, and unexpected. The accident becomes the nourishment for Pereda's nomadic philosophy which, far from closing itself on a philosophical system or certain axioms, attempts to explore, question, and reason. Pereda as Revueltas distrusts labels and prejudices to impose determining an identity which is itself indeterminate; thus, somehow, we are what we are becoming.

Nothing is written in advance. Despite the Marxist context and the economic analysis of the phenomena that characterized it, Revueltas had the virtue of *enclosing* the schematism of his time and considered what Uranga enunciated but did not see: the accident.

Only a nomadic attitude can allow for the exercise of a porous reason that learns to read events as the emergence of hidden stories and abrupt counter-knowledge hegemonically disqualified.

The path of *claims*, typical of Carlos Pereda's nomadic thought, alerts us to: "be careful with words." And, indeed, words denote the world, shape statements, and sharpen arguments. If words are misused, our cognitive edifice is undermined, what we think we know we do not know and we are shipwrecked in the drift of vices.

Still, in a world with a lot of violence and great injustices, *Pensar a México entre otros reclamos* offers a breath of fresh air: the deontological perspective is not abandoned; on the contrary, it is used to argue claims and denounce relations of domination. Not only does it teach us to go beyond the obvious, but also to ask ourselves why the consolidation of the obvious.

These days, *nomadic thought* exercised through a *porous reason* can become a paramount tool for critically thinking about organized crime and its social roots in terms of costs and opportunities, femicide and the patriarchal organization of the social fabric together with frustrations and circles of violence, migration and capitalist civilization, the subjugation of market forces over State institutions, and the decline of the latter as a guarantor of rights and freedoms.

Some concerns arising from Carlos Pereda's book are: what to do if the stationary thinking of arrogant reason considers the critique of nomadic thought arrogant, which in turn claims a porous reason? Is the truth and certainty approach of power relationships safe? Or in other words, is hermeneutics safe from power relationships? As long as there are open questions, philosophy will continue its nomadic wanderings.