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## Latin American Philosophy and Interculturality

**ABSTRACT:** The essay articulates the contribution of Latin American philosophy to the development of intercultural philosophy and dialogue. It describes the problems of cultural diversity and universality. It is focused on Raúl Fornet-Betancourt's project of intercultural transformation of philosophy as culturally embedded. The essay analyses his conception of "universality without signature" and its philosophical suppositions, including an inversion at the ontological and anthropological levels, and at the level of a philosophy of culture. The concepts of "border" and "disbordering" of cultures are considered. It affirms dialogue and coexistence as conditions of a genuine universality.

**KEY WORDS:** intercultural philosophy • culture • diversity • universality • border • dialogue

The idea of interrelations and dialogue among diverse cultures is articulated in the concept of interculturality. The term "intercultural philosophy" refers to both: a philosophical reflection on the phenomenon of inter-cultural relations and a view of philosophy itself from an intercultural perspective. Intercultural philosophy has become an important area of philosophical thinking in our culturally diverse world. This is reflected in the growing number of publications and conferences. It is not a mere invented construction of theorists, but rather an attempt of philosophers to understand the real processes of the contemporary world and to respond to its problems. The recognition of social-cultural diversity and of the necessity for the dialogical relationships among culturally different nations and groups became an imperative for the progression and even survival of humanity in a pluralistic and conflictive, while interrelated world, which faces many social and global problems. Their solutions require the joint efforts of peoples.

In hindsight, we can see that the issues of the cultural identity, diversity and the relationship among different cultures came to the forefront of social consciousness during the second half of the twentieth century. After the World War II and the establishment of the United Nations, the process of decolonization and the movements for national liberation and cultural identity stimulated the emergence of Latin American, African and other

“postcolonial philosophies”. The cultural identity issue manifested itself in the movements for cultural diversity and the recognition of minority rights. The interest in cultural identification had a positive impact in helping individuals regain the cultural dimensions of their personalities, and in uniting people in their cultural-spiritual resistance to the depersonalizing influence of socio-economic-political systems.

Philosophers from various countries contributed to the development of intercultural philosophy. Their works represent various perspectives and theories, in many respects overlapping or complementing each other, and forming a polyphonic interaction of creativity. In this polyphony, the voice of the Latin American philosophers stands out. Latin American philosophy, in the process of its development, forged many groundbreaking ideas which paved the way for interculturality.

### Latin American contribution to global philosophical dialogue

Latin American thinkers made a unique contribution to the idea of interculturality. Not only did they long ago address the relevant issues related to interculturality, but they also created in practice a new, original type of culturally embedded thought – Latin American philosophy. They helped develop the ideas of intercultural philosophy from the perspective of Latin America and other developing regions, applying them to the philosophical North-South dialogue in search for a solution to global problems.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Juan Bautista Alberdi and other progressive thinkers have expressed the necessity for Latin America to create its own philosophy, adequate to its needs. The theory of “perspectivism”, developed by the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, was creatively developed by Mexican philosophers Samuel Ramos, José Gaos, and later by Leopoldo Zea. They argued that different perspectives can be related not only to individuals, but also to nations. This supposes a pluralistic view of philosophy, and therefore the possibility of a philosophy created from the Latin American perspective. This distinguishes it from other philosophies. They “decentralized” the image of philosophy, indicating that beyond the European “center” there was a valid philosophical creativity. Thus, the unique historic-cultural experience of the Mexicans can and should be expressed in their philosophy. The same is true of other nations.

Latin American philosophy was baptized by fire: a hot debate which ensued in the 1950s-60s regarding the question of its existence, or even the possibility of such a philosophy. This debate brought to the forefront the problem of the interrelationship between the culturally specific and

the universal in philosophy. For some philosophers, the notions Latin American, African or intercultural seemed to be incompatible with philosophy as universal knowledge. Some Latin American authors exaggerated the culturally specific as opposed to the universal. Other Latin American thinkers criticized such excesses of ethnocentrism as “tropicalism”. They also criticized “abstract universalism” and the view of philosophy as a universal discipline which is not adopted on the basis of experience, a linear development of a certain system of logic and categories realized only in Western European history. They argued that philosophy has to do with particular cultural and historical points of view, and its conclusions are colored and affected by these perspectives. This debate contributed to the development of a broader and more pluralistic concept of philosophy, viewed as embedded in certain cultural and philosophical traditions while dealing with perennial questions, and aiming to give universally valid answers.

Latin American philosophy had grounds on which to defend its legitimacy. It was based on new tendencies and principles, which were formulated in the transition from classical to contemporary philosophy, and which expressed a broader understanding of philosophical knowledge, its subject, the cognitive process, and the relationship of human being to the world. Latin American thinkers creatively assimilated these new approaches and tried to implement them in their philosophy<sup>1</sup>.

Latin American philosophy paved the way for the development of African, Afro-Caribbean, Asian, and other culturally embedded philosophical thought. In the early 1970s, the Latin American philosophy of liberation and the theology of liberation became influential in the region and well known world wide.

Latin American philosophy sparked an interest in Europe, including in Russia. In striving for its recognition, this philosophy found there support among philosophers who appreciated its innovative characteristics. The discovery of Latin America as a philosophical continent was made by Russian intellectuals through different ways. The specialists in Latin American literature recognized in the philosophy a new level of theoretical analysis of the problems which, in artistic form, were expressed in literature. The researchers in the theory of culture were attracted by the discussion about cultural authenticity and diversity. The specialists in Peninsular thought traced the connections to works of Spanish philosophers such as José Gaos who was exiled after the civil war to Latin America. Philosophers were at-

<sup>1</sup> See: *El pensamiento filosófico latinoamericano, del Caribe y latino [1300–2000]*, ed.: E. Dussel, E. Mendieta and C. Bohórquez, México 2009.

tracted by the novel phenomenon of Latin American thought which erupted into the established picture of philosophical trends, giving a new stimulus to the discussions regarding the problems of contemporary philosophy.

In the mid-1970s, researchers from the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow took the initiative in creating a research group for the study of Latin American philosophy. Scholars from the Institute of Latin America, the Institute of the World Literature and other academic institutions gravitated to this group. Their research resulted in the publication of articles and books<sup>2</sup>. Prominent Latin American philosophers such as Leopoldo Zea, Francisco Miró Quesada, Enrique Dussel, Raul Fornet-Betancourt, Horacio Cerutti-Guldberg visited Moscow and the Institute of Philosophy, and established contacts with the researchers. Of note is that the Institute of Philosophy of the RAS collaborated with researchers from the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Among them was Professor Eugeniusz Górski, specialist in Hispanic and Latin American thought, who visited the Institute of Philosophy in Moscow and was in dialogue with Russian philosophers<sup>3</sup>.

Discussions related to Latin American philosophy and its identity raised fundamental questions concerning philosophy of philosophy, the nature, aims, and methods of philosophy, as well as the character of the historical-philosophical process. These and other questions were the arena in which the progressive intellectuals challenged the obsolete views and the ideological basis of the status quo. For example, in surveying the dispute between Latin American philosophy and positivism, researchers appreciated the arguments in favor of a humanistic view of philosophy. The humanistic tendency of contemporary thought demonstrates that philosophy should not limit itself to the analysis of language or general intellectual concepts, but is also intent upon exploring universal moral, aesthetic, and other principles, which are related to and expressed in cultures.

Researchers criticized the assumptions made by generalism and particularism, which set up the view of them as irreconcilable dilemma. Rather, general and particular characteristics and identities can coexist. They argued that it would be untenable to fall into relativism, to exaggerate the culture-specific or national-specific manifestations of philosophical thought in some

<sup>2</sup> See in Russian: A. Zikova, R. Burgete, E. Demenchonok et alii, *Iz istorii filosofii Latinskoj Ameriki XX veka*, Moskva 1988; *Problemy filosofii i kultury v Latinskoj Amerike*, Moskva 1983; E. Demenchonok, *Latinoamerikanskaia filosofia osvobozhdenia*, "Voprosy Filosofii", 1986, No.10.

<sup>3</sup> See E. Górski, *Globalization and Universalism from the Perspective of Latin America and Eastern Europe*, "Dialogue and Universalism", January 2011.

country or region, disregarding the general achievements of philosophy in the world. On the other hand, it would be incorrect to only follow the teleological or Eurocentric approach to the development of philosophy, ignoring the concrete expressions of philosophical thought and their culture-related specificity. During the process of research and discussions regarding Latin American thought, the methodological approach to this new philosophy was crystallized. This approach consists of examining each type of philosophy as a factual, real phenomenon which exists objectively in its concrete historical form and within its own context, with its own content, problematics, forms of expression, and other peculiarities. It considers the originality of each philosophy related to its cultural background, while dealing with philosophical questions<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, no philosophy exists in a vacuum, and various types of philosophies are interrelated in their development. As a result of the joint efforts of intellectuals, a way was carved to a new understanding of what philosophy is, in its broader and multi-dimensional view, which includes its cultural-historical manifestations. Any emerging philosophy, including that in Latin American, must be analyzed in the context of the whole spectrum of contemporary world philosophical culture as one of its manifestations. This will provide a more complete picture and a better understanding of the plurality of philosophical knowledge and the polyphonic philosophical development in the world. Original philosophies and philosophical currents are interrelated in many ways – asserting themselves in dialogue with others, competing with and complementing each other, inheriting traditions and overcoming them through new discoveries, creatively assimilating and further developing ideas – and thus creating a pluritopic and multi-voiced polyphony of human search for wisdom.

Since the 1990s, in the new historical situation after the end of the Cold War, the philosophy of liberation straggled for its own renovation in order to be in a better position for understanding the new processes, including those related to globalization. This philosophy evolved toward more dialogical relationships with other philosophical currents, and contributed to the North-South philosophical dialogue. Latin American philosophers developed their critique of globalization from two theoretical perspectives: postcoloniality and interculturality. These two approaches are interrelated and complement each other. While postcolonial theories advanced by intellectuals from Third World countries expand the postmodern critique of Modernity and of Eurocentrism from the colonial difference,

<sup>4</sup> E. Demenchonok, *Filosofía latinoamericana: problemas y tendencias*, Bogotá 1990, p. 20–28.

ideas of interculturality – elaborated by theorists from both the industrially developed and developing regions – are focused more on cultures and their possibilities as the basis for creating an alternative to the homogenizing forces of globalization.

Since the late 1980s Latin American philosophers have actively participated in the development of intercultural philosophy. They also have promoted the North-South philosophical dialogue. In 1985, Raúl Fonet-Betancourt, a Cuban philosopher residing in Germany and working as a University Professor in both Bremen and Mexico City, organized the “First German-Latin American Ethics Session” in Buenos Aires. It was the beginning of a series of seminars in response to the need for an intercultural dialogue in philosophy, which would help to overcome the traditional dominance of Eurocentric discourse. The program of dialogue was coordinated by Fonet-Betancourt. Two main ethical currents came to the forefront and were selected for further dialogue: discourse ethics and the philosophy of liberation, represented respectively by Karl-Otto Apel and Enrique Dussel. The first seminar of this dialogue (on the theme “Philosophy of Liberation: Foundations of Ethics in Germany and Latin America”) took place November 23–25, 1989 at the Catholic Academy of the Archdiocese of Freiburg. The seminar was a crucial step in the clarification of strategy and the realization of the project of intercultural dialogue. “Discourse Ethics and Ethics of Liberation” was the theme of the second seminar which took place in Mexico City, from February 28 to March 1, 1991, at the Metropolitan Autonomous University (Iztapalapa) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico. They were followed by seminars on a regular basis on both continents, in which intellectuals from other regions of the world have also been participating<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> The papers of those seminars were published in: K.-O. Apel, E. Dussel, R. Fonet-Betancourt, eds., *Fundamentación de la ética y filosofía de la liberación* (México 1992); E. Dussel, ed., *Debate en torno a la ética del discurso de Apel. Diálogo filosófico Norte-Sur desde América Latina* (México 1994); *Ética do Discurso e Filosofia da Libertação: Modelos Complementares*, ed. A. Sidekum (Porto Alegre 1994); R. Fonet-Betancourt, ed., *Menschenrechte im Streit zwischen Kulturpluralismus und Universalität. Dokumentation des VII. Internationalen Seminars des philosophischen Dialogprogramms Nord-Süd* (Aachen 1999); R. Fonet-Betancourt, ed., *Theorie und Praxis der Demokratie in den Kulturen. Dokumentation des IX. Internationalen Seminars des Dialogprogramms Nord-Süd* (Frankfurt a. M. 2003); R. Fonet-Betancourt, ed., *Menschenbilder interkulturell* (Aachen 2008).

## Intercultural approach to diversity and universality

The intercultural approach to philosophy considers it as a way of thought as well as a way of life. Intercultural philosophy reflects on the impact of a cultural framework on philosophy as such, exploring the “fundamental differences of cultural coinages in the forms of thinking itself” (Wimmer 1). It takes into consideration the new hermeneutic situation of a world intercultural dialogue, including among philosophers of Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and their philosophical traditions. Intercultural philosophy develops a broader and more pluralistic concept of philosophy, viewed as embedded in certain cultures and traditions of thought, while dealing with philosophical questions. This approach is advanced in works of Enrique Dussel, Josef Estermann, Raúl Fornet-Betancourt, Heinz Kimmerle, Ram A. Mall, Raimon Panikkar, Antonio Sidecum, Franz M. Wimmer, Hamid R. Yousefi, among others.

Are there fundamentals of our knowledge and our world orientation which can claim universal validity? What is the role of the cultural contexts in our philosophical self-understanding and world interpretations? Intercultural philosophy brings to the forefront the problem of the interrelations between the cultural-specific and the universal in philosophy. According to R. Mall, in the expressions “European philosophy,” “Indian philosophy” or “Latin American philosophy” the adjectival differences are illuminating: “they may be complimentary, but they never deny or even undermine the universal unity of philosophical thinking”<sup>6</sup>. The examining of the cultural contexts of philosophical thinking has far-reaching implications. It introduces a new perspective into our understanding of what philosophy is, of the history of philosophy and of its role in today’s society.

Latin American philosophers significantly contributed to the development of the intercultural philosophy. The intercultural approach is used by Raúl Fornet-Betancourt in elaborating a project of “the intercultural transformation of philosophy”. It implies profound changes in the theoretical framework for understanding philosophical questions, in light of the fundamental role of culture in the development of philosophy. Intercultural philosophy is situated above the rationalism and subjectivism of modernity, above the limitations of analytical philosophy, and as an alternative to the nihilism of postmodern philosophers<sup>7</sup>. It is in tune with the existing critique

<sup>6</sup> R. A. Mall, *Intercultural Philosophy*, Lanham, MD 2000, p. XII.

<sup>7</sup> E. Demenchonok, *Rethinking Cultural Diversity: Intercultural Discourse and Transculture*, [in:] *Philosophy after Hiroshima*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, p. 459–460; *idem*, *Filosofia intercultural para la convivencia en el mundo diverso e interrelacionado*, [in:] *Mundo da vida, interculturalidade e educação*, G. Ghiggi, J. Pizzi, Brasil 2013, p. 219–221.

of scientism and with the call for a pluralistic and culturally rooted style of philosophizing.

A philosophy which accepts intercultural dialogue as a context of its reflection enters into a process of transformation that requires it to reconstruct its history, its methods and forms of articulation. A hermeneutic of intercultural philosophy does not conceive the categories, methods, concepts or view points as a priori universally valid and unchanging.

Fornet-Betancourt asserts the necessity of reviewing Eurocentric philosophical historiography and, based on the reconstruction of the history of ideas in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, of creating a new view of the history of philosophy. He criticizes claims of any philosophy to universality. The universalistic pretension of European ethnocentrism was “a type of self-proclaimed universality”. As he writes, “In this sense, the criticism is perfectly applicable to any other type of universality – whether African, Asian or Latin American – which would be the result of a monocultural proclamation”<sup>8</sup>.

Fornet-Betancourt applies these principles to Latin American philosophy and sketches some ideas of its transformation on the basis of an intercultural approach. This task requires a radical self criticism and the dissolution of the predominant logocentric and mono-cultural image of philosophy. It is also necessary to broaden the horizon of our thinking and to use various sources for the interpretations of reality and of life itself. Among these sources are the indigenous and Afro American traditions with “their symbolic universes, their imaginaries, their memories and rituals”, which need to be approached to not as a passive object of study, but rather as “a living word of the subjects with whom we have to learn and to study together”<sup>9</sup>.

He views intercultural communication as a possible means to transition from abstract universality to concrete and historical universalities, and thus the need for “a universality achieved through a mutual exchange between all the logos in which humanity speaks” and characterized by interculturality<sup>10</sup>. Intercultural dialogue creates conditions which allow a philosophy to reach a genuine universality, because it arises from shared communication between the different cultural universes of humanity.

Fornet-Betancourt develops the conception of “universality without signature”. This means first of all a recognition of the plurality of cultures and of the participation of different peoples in the creation of these diverse

<sup>8</sup> R. Fornet-Betancourt, *Transformación intercultural de la filosofía*, Bilbao 2001, p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 269.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 166.



cultures as an open process of actualization of their possibilities in reality, thus “universality escapes any intent to be ‘authorized’ as such by a concrete ‘signature’” and there is “no culture which would ‘certify’ with its signature what is the universal”<sup>11</sup>. This pluralistic and participative approach does not renounce the idea of universality, but rather suggests viewing interculturality as “a movement of increasing participation in the processes of universalization”. It implies the emergence of new possibilities and with this the continuing theoretical tasks of discernment about what makes us better in our humanity.

Fornet-Betancourt indicates some new philosophical suppositions for this conception of “universality without signature”. Philosophically it supposes at first glance a paradoxical vision that “it is the reality in its plurality which makes us universal” and that it implies a participation in its dynamics. More specifically, it supposes an inversion at the ontological level, postulating that “reality does not belong to us but rather we are who belong to the reality, in the form of realization of this belonging in which the degrees of universality are decided”<sup>12</sup>. It also supposes an anthropological inversion which implies that a human being comprehends his/her realization not in terms of appropriation, but rather as participation or sharing. Thus to be human is not “to appropriate” the other but to participate in and to share with the other. At the level of a philosophy of culture it supposes that the cultures should not be used as the instruments of appropriation of the reality, but rather should be lived as “the concrete possibilities of participation in realization of the universality of reality.” This requires rethinking our cognitive and cultural belonging to reality as “co-belonging”, which disavows any pretension “to reclaim with a signature any exclusive property right”<sup>13</sup>.

In intercultural philosophy an important role is played by the notion of “border”. In general, this notion means something corresponding to an object and separating it from everything outside of it and different. One of the philosophical methods is defining an object through characterizing its border. This notion is used in philosophy of culture and cultural studies. For example, Mikhail Bakhtin in his philosophy of dialogue he uses the conceptual pair borderzone-outsidedness. This notion challenged the universalistic claims of a dominating culture, pointing out that it is limited within its own borders and thus arguing for the plurality of cultures. It also emphasized that the border of each culture is a zone of contact and interaction with the

<sup>11</sup> *Idem*, *Interculturalidad, crítica y liberación*, Aachen 2012, p. 130.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 131.

other neighboring cultures, calling for transcending the borders and more openness to other cultures and a dialogical relationship between them.

Intercultural philosophy champions free growth of cultures and their dialogical relationships as equals, their symmetric interaction and communication in equal conditions. In this ideal case, the disappearance of the borders would play a positive role as a “condition for the symmetric interaction” and “communication, provided the equality of conditions”<sup>14</sup>. However, the real situation is quite different, and it is permeated by the homogenizing effects of globalization, which destroys the unique native cultures, and by the asymmetrical relationship among peoples imposed through hegemonic domination. The cultural impact of this situation is characterized as annulment of borders or “disbordering” of cultures and thus the loss of their independence and originality.

Intercultural philosophy is critical of the use of current discourses about universalism and cosmopolitanism as a guise of hegemonic ideologies, and speaks in defense of the “borders”. The borders are considered necessary, comparable to a membrane of the cell, in their positive role of shaping and preserving each culture and protecting it from a destructive intrusion of another culture, either as the stereotypical patterns of a hegemonic culture or that of the commercialized “mass culture”.

In facing homogenizing globalization, the borders resist to and protect from the “disbordering”, which reduces the world to a “world market”, and which is the strategy of domination and “colonization of time and space of the different cultures of humanity”<sup>15</sup>. Each culture deals with the cultivation of forms of life, value systems, and other peculiarities, through which a certain historical community is recognized. For the culture, its borders are necessary for profiling its essential and unique features, its “face”, and for maintaining its originality. Because the uniqueness of cultures are developed within certain borders, they need these borders “which show the particular and the unique”<sup>16</sup>.

Cultures are contextual and historical formations with the contingency of their traditions which profile them. Cultures deal with the cultivation of the peculiarities (forms of life, value systems, *etc.*) through which the certain historical communities are recognized. As Fornet-Betancourt writes, “the cultures are the processes on a border”<sup>17</sup>. The cultural profiles and borders

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 76.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup> *Idem*, *La filosofía intercultural*, [in:] *El pensamiento filosófico latinoamericano, del Caribe y latino [1300–2000]*, ed.: E. Dussel, E. Mendieta and C. Bohórquez, Mexico 2009, p. 641.

are described as processes of relationships which form “fronts”, but which remain dynamic and developing. The cultures confront the human beings – individually or collectively – with borders. Each person as a member of a specific culture “inherits” borders, which refer to the system of relationship from which a corresponding peculiarity emerges<sup>18</sup>.

The cultural interaction is a relationship with the other. The border is viewed not so much as dividing and separating one’s own from another’s, but mainly as a common neighboring area shared with the other. This is characteristic not only of the relationship between the different cultures: “The border is produced and established inside of our own culture. The other is within, not outside of our own”<sup>19</sup>. Each culture is an open process of “the contract and trade” with another, and it includes the necessity “of growing with and from the other”.

Fornet-Betancourt uses the notion of “border” in developing his conception of “universality without signature”. The borders are necessary in order that “the universality will be really a process of growth in common”. The borders are “the manifestations of the *c o n t i n g e n c y* needed for every universality which grows without separating from the contextuality of the world”<sup>20</sup>.

As he suggests, the realization of an authentic universality does not need to suppress the cultural identities and the territories of their development. Instead what is needed is “the development of the politics of dialogue between them; because the co-existence with the other and his/her ‘confines’ is what creates true universality”<sup>21</sup>. Intercultural philosophy affirms dialogue and coexistence as conditions of a genuine universality.

Intercultural philosophy is focused on the situation of culture and of its creator – the human being – in today’s globalized world. It contributes to the better understanding of globalization in a broader cultural context. Culture is not just an artistic heritage or an issue of the inner life of an individual, rather it plays an extremely important public role as a sphere of social creativity and organization and as a center of a life-world. However, this essential social function of culture is undermined by a homogenization and other negative effects of the leveling globalization. In the variety of cultures, Fornet-Betancourt sees a real basis for different life-worlds and alternatives for humanity. He develops the idea of interculturality as an alternative to globalization.

<sup>18</sup> *Idem*, *Interculturalidad, crítica y liberación, op.cit.*, p. 80–81.

<sup>19</sup> *Idem*, *La filosofía intercultural, op.cit.*, p. 641.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, *Interculturalidad, crítica y liberación, op.cit.*, p. 143.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81.


The idea of and cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are used by Fernet-Betancourt not only as a criterion for the critique of the negative consequences of globalization but also as a “regulative idea” in creating an alternative to it. Each culture has the right to the necessary material base for its free development. Thus, intercultural dialogue becomes “an instrument of the cultures for their struggle to have their own worlds with their specific values and goals”<sup>22</sup>. This intercultural dialogue creates a new framework for philosophical reflection. It breaks the image of world homogeneity and affirms the plurality of cultures which represent various visions of the world. It shows that the present historical world, shaped by globalization, is not limited by its formal, technical, and structural contextuality. It is challenged by intercultural dialogue as an alternative program for the communication of cultures. There is the homogeneous influence of globalization, but on the other hand, there is also the plurality of many cultural worlds in which the diversity of humankind is reflected.

First of all, human beings have the right to their own cultures. While globalization is standardizing the world, cultures are maintaining the differences and plurality of world views. In contrast to globalization which promises “one world” imposed through the homogenization and suppression of the different, interculturality implies a new understanding of universality as a dialogue of cultures. Culture is not only a realm for the cultivating of the plurality of world views and mutual respect among them. The plurality of cultures presupposes their interrelation and dialogue. Interculturality also serves as a guideline for the concrete realization of the plurality of the real worlds. It requires the reorganization of the world order in such a way that it will guarantee fair conditions for communication between cultures as worldviews which will be materialized in the real world. Interculturality is seen by Fernet-Betancourt as a basis for a movement which will organize economically, politically, and socially an ecumenical union of nations and cultures. Such a movement will universalize tolerance and coexistence. This universality is growing from grass roots, recognizing the particular, the other, and uniting people “in a common goal to make life possible for everybody”<sup>23</sup>. This universality presupposes the liberation and realization of all cultural universes. The similar approach is expressed by Enrique Dussel, who revises universality by combining it with the recognition of cultural differences, and calls it a “diversality”.

The philosophy of interculturality reminds people that history and the future are not predetermined and that they are the subjects forging the

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 85.

<sup>23</sup> *Idem*, *Transformación intercultural de la filosofía*, *op.cit.*, p. 382.

future. Cultures can help people in liberating the world and history from the dictatorship of the currently predominant model. Cultures are realms of freedom, creativity, and realization of the human beings. This freedom is also presented as historical possibilities of innovation and transformation. Fornet-Betancourt emphasizes a transformative role of intercultural philosophy, which orients us in this search for an alternative, finding its inspiration in “a creative continuation of the tradition of critico-ethical humanism as an open tradition which transmits the principle of subjectivity as a driving force of the foundation of society which champions community and coexistence, and in which everybody lives in harmony and peace with their neighbor and with nature”<sup>24</sup>. 

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 320.