

Towards Xenofuturism. Decolonial Future Figurations from Vernacular Semioverses

Original study

Cristina Voto (ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9448-6122>)
Università di Torino, Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero (cristina.voto@unito.it)

Rodrigo Martín-Iglesias (ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9109-6292>)
Universidad de Buenos Aires (rodrigo.martin@fadu.uba.ar)

Rocío Agra
Universidad Nacional de La Matanza (ragra@unlam.edu.ar)

Received: July 2022 Accepted: November 2022

Abstract: The goal of our research is to question the Global North's narratives of the Future through alternative vernacular semiotic constructions. We will analyze the impact that American vernacular semioverses have on the possibility of generating decolonial figurations of alternative futures, based on the theoretical framework of what we call *Xenofuturism*. Having its roots in Latin America, *Xenofuturism* has two complementary aspects: the recovery of an active memory of decolonial deconstruction and the understanding of radical alterity. Within these semioverses, we will explore the Aymara cultural figurations for which the future is not ahead but behind, disorienting us from the present, the only temporal dimension in which we exist. In the ancestral cosmogony of the Bolivian-Peruvian Andean, where the Aymara culture stems from the idea of future-past, or that the past can be seen as future, is central. Temporal hybridity tears apart the linearity of Western time and outlines the emergence of figurations of the future that contain a density of temporal tensions in the present.

Keywords: Xenofuturism, Future Figurations, Vernacular, Decolonial, Semioverses.

"...their bodies are processing a lot of information towards a jump to human, the dreams that shape their collective beliefs and practices, will be constructed, narrated and fictionalized from the mountains, the jungles, the southern seas, the fluorescent roots are that right to be and recognize themselves as monsters from the imagination, the Andean Density, fiction and science in contemporary narratives of neo-Andean mestizos, weird and creepy."
José Luis Jácome Guerrero, 2020

1. INTRODUCING THE FUTURE(S) FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

We live surrounded by figurations of the future, situated images that organize cultural practices and social relationships. Within a dense weave, these images make certain aesthetics visible and, at the same time, they design the chronotopes¹ of sociocultural storytelling. Condensing figurations, intended as "materialistic mappings of situated, i.e. embedded and embodied, social positions"

¹ In his research on the theory and aesthetics of the novel, Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) defines the chronotope as the way in which a work assimilates and processes the perception of time and space, not as transcendental

(Braidotti 2014, 179), futurizations can also determine which expectations of the future can be imagined and which are beyond intelligibility, which life expectations they can enhance, and which to dismiss or discard. In short, contextualizing figurations of the future requires thinking about the interruption of expectations that build the continuity of future futurizations. It is in this sense that we analyze some figurations of futures that exemplify the semiotics of the *xeno*, as the experience of being an alien, in the semioverses of the Global South. Within this perspective, the proposal of a Xenofuture, as a figuration of “localized and hence immanent to specific conditions” (Braidotti 2019, 34) of the future, emerges from embodying the hybridity of images and pictures² of radical otherness.

We root in and from Latin America³, where we can find two complementary and situated figurations: first, the discursive legacy of the colonial otherness as radically alien⁴; second, the piercing hybridity that embeds the discourses related to time-space. Within this context we find “a history of time of its own and a different time of history” (Quijano 1988, 61, our translation). Figurations of this radically hybrid otherness are woven in the Andean vernacular⁵ semioverses⁶: the semiotic universes where figurations resisting the colonial paradigm can be enacted. While for Juri Lotman the semiosphere can be understood as the space in which different cultural sign systems can endure and be generative (1984), we will refer to semioverses as those possible worlds that can be actualized in the colonial semiosphere thanks to figurative practices

such as world-building and storytelling. In this regard, semioverses have internal coherence and can vary in the modes they enact space and time. Those called vernaculars correspond to the discursive regimes that were, are, and will be spoken in territories that have been colonized. Like all semioverses, vernaculars produce futures and can suggest multiple spatiotemporal plots. Moreover, they are intrinsically decolonial and hybrid as they contain the discourses that have tried to be erased along with those installed by hegemony, as we will see in § 4.

Our study aims to understand in what we define as Xenofuture (Martin Iglesias, Voto & Agra 2020), a decolonial figuration of otherness as an open design for speculative semiotics in and from the Global South. Xenofuture is also our attempt to design a framework for the production of hybrid narratives capable of decentralizing the power of hegemonic figurations (as a colonial inheritance) about *alter-native* futures. It is a figuration shaped by situated and vernacular narratives that can provide both interpretative and creative tools with which to design and produce a new set of figurations for the imagination, and not just new images of the future. Within this proposal, in what follows, the enactment of Andean vernacular semioverses for the construction of alternative future thinking within a genre characteristic of the Global North culture, as science fiction, will be recognized. Our hypothesis is that thinking in terms of Xenofuture will allow the understanding of subaltern relations and provide tools for curing them. Thus, we might ask: in what way do figurations work as a device capable of creating decolonized images of the future?

but as ideological categories. For the author, the spatiotemporal conception of a product determines the image of the world embodied in it. In this sense, meanings – in order to access social experience - always have to assume a spatiotemporal expression, without which even the most abstract thinking would be impossible.

2 We are referring to the distinction made by W. T. J. Mitchell (1984) where the art historian recognizes in an image a composition made up of abstract relations, while the picture is a socially relevant technical materiality.

3 It is known that the term Latin America was invented and popularized in France during the reign of Napoleon III to justify the occupation of Mexico between 1862 and 1867, but it had “already been used in 1856 by Central and South Americans protesting U.S. expansion into the Southern Hemisphere. Less well known is the fact that these Latin Americans who resisted also feared European intervention, although to a lesser extent. Such fears involved not only French designs on Mexico but also Spain’s efforts to regain territories lost in the Spanish-American wars of independence. Opposition to U.S. and European imperialism thus underpinned the idea of Latin America” (Gobat 2013: 1346). Within this perspective we recover the term and apply it to that geography that crosses the continent from Río Bravo del Norte to Ushuaia.

4 With the idea of an alien figuration, we are not dealing with a metaphor but, as suggested by Braidotti, with “material and semiotic signposts for specific geo-political and historical locations.” In this regard, we also recover the cultural memory of Blackfuturism where the figure of the alien is pivotal, cfr. Eshun (1998).

5 From Latin *vernacūlus*: born in one’s home. Said especially of language or tongue: domestic, native, of one’s own house or country.

6 We found few previous uses for this term: for Roy Ascott (2000) it is something that emerges from a hypermedial work of art, and, although he does not explain much more than that, it gives us the idea that multiple semioverses are possible. On the other hand, for Carsten Herrmann-Pillath (2013) “the semioverse is, in fact, the domain of new things in the world.” In this case, we don’t agree on the existence of only one semioverse. An innumerable number of semioverses exist and continue to appear (and disappear) constantly. Each one of them is a singularity of energy, matter and semiotic information, from whose discursive relations derive their chronotopes and semiotic laws. They are singular as they manifest properties that differentiate them from others, and these properties provide their internal coherence. A semioverse can be perceived as a consistent whole but it may contain contradictions and absurdities without losing its internal coherence.

2. NO FUTURE AND DENIED FUTURES

During times of systemic crisis, such as those we are currently experiencing and that can be understood within the Anthropocene⁷, it is common to seek solace by deepening an elaborate figuration of the future away from the present. However, the pragmatic force of such imagination will never be as powerful as that which exudes from an elaborate reconstruction of the past. In the age of the Anthropocene, we find a pervasive figuration of the future imbricated in what anthropologists Déborah Danowski and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro call *the end of the world mythologies*, i.e., discourses that manifest “the downward turn of the Western anthropological adventure, that is, as efforts, though not necessarily intentional ones, to invent a mythology that is adequate to our times” (Danowski, Viveiros de Castro [2014] 2019, 6). It is this contemporary tragic teleology of the West that propagates the apocalyptic atmosphere and the consequent instability of the present that, we can state, does not so much consist of assuming that in the future we will have to live in a world full of risks, but rather in assuming that we will have to live in a world that will have to decide its future in conditions of insecurity it will have produced and fabricated itself (Beck 1986).

In the same sense, author Mark Fisher (2009) defines the failure of Western futurizations as the institutionalization of risk-free cultural models and weakened foresight policies. What the historian Frederic Jameson called postmodernity (1991), Fisher conceives in terms of capitalist realism (2009): a practice of colonization of all inventive capacity of an alterity that naturalizes the axiomatic violence of destiny for which there is no alternative to what we know. For capitalist realism, it would seem that there are no social possibilities or narrative tools that make the imaginative emergence of new forms capable of guaranteeing the projective capacity of their realization and, at the same time, the material concreteness of its sustainability possible. This does not mean that there is no place for the emergence of the potential of the actual in the present, but that we rather have a compulsion to repeat what is sinusoidal: “a novelty emerges in the imaginary and becomes fashionable; then it declines and is relegated to the ranks of kitsch. Finally, it comes back with force and is transmuted from a virtual context to an actual one” (Surace, Voto 2020, our translation).

Given the force with which these anthropocenic directions have been culturally sealed, it would seem that there is no other way out than nostalgic yearning: a return to

the future as a persistent iteration undertaken by a subject of dysphoric doing, connotated by the performance of that meta-subject that brings the narrative position of the subject caught in its *hic et nunc* on the narrative simulacrum summoned, bearer of an original euphoria (Greimas 1991). Nostalgia, therefore, would be the dysphoric consciousness of a disjunction in or on time, the superimposition of a dysphoric pathetic state of melancholy that presupposes another pathetic state of regret, which in turn presupposes the disjunction from a euphoric situation of conjunction with an object of value. It is a condition already recognized by Antonio Gramsci (1951) during the days of his imprisonment: “The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum⁸ a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.”

Today, the question about fertile conditions to design the future implies not only a revision of what obturation conditions are but also about what openness conditions of morbid phenomena are, as described by Gramsci (1951). It is a simultaneous call for a revision of the repeated tropes and replicated images: dystopian narratives about the future flood us with rotten landscapes of dead lands, societies enslaved by artificial intelligence, cities collapsed under the rust of environmental pollution, bodies immobilized by a virtual reality where misogynistic violence is territorialized in the figure of the feminized cyborg while speciesist colonialism and interplanetary imperialism are naturalized as the only possible logic of survival. In these narratives, we see a principle of reality incapable of being erased: a spectral key, which from the recognition of the abrasive immobility into which the ontological nature of the postmodern historical loop sinks us, can operationalize the speculative claim of what was, what might have been, or even what might become. It is the phantasmatic condition that can be positioned as a virtual agency of political-emotional reorganization over the advent of the possible, the concretization of the other, and the sustainability of the *alter-native*: the *xeno*.

3. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME

The first and fundamental difference between figurations of the future in the Global North and the Global South is that, for the former, time is thought of as linear and progressive while, for the latter with a particular focus on Latin America and the Andean region, time is cyclical, with constant rebirths (Estermann 2009). In the

7 With Anthropocene we refer to the paradigm designed for understanding humans' alteration of the Earth on a geologic scale.

8 “The term ‘interregnum’ was originally used to denote a time-lag separating the death of one royal sovereign from the enthronement of the successor. These used to be the main occasions in which the past generations experienced (and customarily expected) a rupture in the otherwise monotonous continuity of government, law, and social order. Roman law put an official stamp on such understanding of the term (and its referent) when accompanying interregnum with a proclamation of *justitium*: that is, as Giorgio Agamben reminded us in his 2003 study of the *Lo stato di eccezione*, an admittedly temporary suspension of laws heretofore binding, presumably in anticipation of new and different laws being possibly proclaimed” (Bauman 2012).

context of the Global North, the Newtonian program is the foundational design for figuration of the future concerning linear and progressive advances, from simple to complex, by perfecting methodologies and strategies coordinated with the practices of disciplining nature and society. This program draws from Greco-Latin traditions and installs a temporal arrow defined by the design of analytical strategies and forms of abstraction that make it possible to address increasing degrees of complexity: “absolute, true, and mathematical time, by itself, and by its very nature, flows uniformly, without regard for anything external” (Martin Iglesias 2017, our translation). Both René Descartes and Francis Bacon also considered time as essentially linear. For centuries linear and sequential figuration also constructed the rhetoric about causality oriented towards the design of an evolutionistic socio-cultural horizon that persists: the Anthropocenic order also remains Newtonian.

In his *Sediments of Time: On Possible Histories* (2001), the German philosopher and historian Reinhart Koselleck argues that, in modernity, expectations have become increasingly detached from concrete experiences. To talk about modernity implies referring to social and historical processes that have originated in Western Europe since the emergence of the Renaissance. In this sense, modernity is simultaneous to the colonization process, the subalternation and exploitation of resources, populations, and knowledge. It is an ontological change in the way in which social reproduction is regulated, based on a transformation of the temporal sense, where the future violently replaces the past. The founding experience of modern subjectivity is not the Cartesian “I think” but the Cortesian “I conquer”. Modernity is a synthetic image of the entire colonialist process to which the Global South was subjected (Escobar, A. 2007) since it is not an event that spreads to other continents but rather the product of the exclusionary inclusion of constitutive otherness, of which Latin America is the first analog (Dussel 2007). Latin America has always been modern because of its traumatic colonial heritage, so it is not surprising that it is in this colonial periphery where we can find the first critical counter-discourses to modernity, such as the chronicles of Bartolomé de las Casas⁹ (Dussel 2008) and, more recently, the research by historian Silvia Federici in *Caliban and the witch: women, the body and primitive accumulation* (2004). Federici states that, at the beginning of the 3rd millennium, along with a new global expansion of capitalist relations, there has been a worldwide return of a set of phenomena usually associated with the genesis of capitalism. This work, centrally focused on the development of capitalism from a feminist viewpoint,

exposes the resurgence of witch-hunting as part of certain modernization processes in Africa and Brazil.

Additionally, Bolivian sociologist and activist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2010) affirms the need to historically reconstruct the genesis of Latin America from two categories: short- and long-term memory. Within this proposal there is the challenge of thematizing the future in close correspondence with the density of its past: The rupture of memories caused by the conquest and evangelization, the prescription of an imaginary “short past” for a “new” continent, and the usual scarcity of historical consciousness, meaning that the future in Latin America has little articulation with its past. These categories, short-term and long-term memory, would operate dialectically within the struggles and resistances of the continent, highlighting those colonial vestiges still very present in Latin American societies today and making possible an image of the future by looking forward to the possible past.

Quoting Walter Benjamin’s *Passages*, Rivera Cusicanqui postulates that hybrid coexistence in the presence of diverse temporalities poses the existence of *syntagms of the past* (2018), that is, units of figurations coming from diverse historical horizons, charged with unresolved conflicts. These syntagms design constellations, which allude to the possibility of images of the past being actualized in a present, with the capacity to recognize oneself in them and to ignite latent explosive materials. Different temporal horizons and different syntagms coexisting in this multi-temporality enter into constellations with each other and with the present: “This native Amerindian dwells in our memory, and his or her presence has given us the primordial mark of otherness: he/she has inscribed it in our body and in our subjectivity. The possibility of a dialectical image that combines this ancestral background with the aggressive modernity of our times is open to a new constellation because history is not linear” (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018, 89, our translation). These constellations are capable of linking future figurations with present and past ones, from the prism of alien temporality. Through this constellation, the figurative hybridization is not reduced to the forth-coming but experienced as a be-coming, harmonizing the experience, the narrative, and the expectation of today and yesterday.

Rivera Cusicanqui’s proposal starts by making the Aymara vernacular aphorism *Qhip nayr uñtasis sarnaqapxañani*—which can be translated as “looking at the past to walk through the present and the future”—the core of her analysis since it “points out the need to always walk through the present, but looking at the future-past; in this way: a future behind and a past in front. This is

9 Bartolomé de las Casas was a 16th-century Spanish chronicler, theologian, philosopher, jurist, Dominican friar, priest, and bishop, famous as a historian and social reformer. He arrived in Hispaniola as a layman and later became a Dominican friar and priest. He was named the first resident bishop of Chiapas and the first officially appointed “protector of the Indians.” His extensive writings, the most famous of which are *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* and *Historia de Las Indias*, recount the first decades of colonization of the Spanish Antilles and describe the atrocities committed by the colonizers against the indigenous peoples.

walking as a metaphor for life" (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018, 84, our translation). This idea of future-past, or that the past can be looked at as future, fuses the two-time dimensions alluded to and arranges them by living in co-existence in the present. This hybrid interconnection tears down time's linearity and outlines the emergence of a time that contains a density of historical dimensions in tension at the present moment. According to the vernacular Aymaran aphorism "the future is not ahead, but behind". It is a burden that we carry on our backs, that weighs and deceives us because the attempt to orient ourselves by the idea of progressive linearity disorients us and makes us desist from the present. The future is in the past and the present may be the only real-time but, in its superimposition of temporalities, traces of the most remote antiquity emerge and are woven with other perspectives and stories

Situated always in the present, what we have in front of us is not the future but the past and when we look to the past as the future, we find in those community forms that survive, despite all attempts to banish them, an alternative logic, from which we can draw inspiration to update more organic, healthy, and humane ways of doing things [...] In Aymara, the past is called *nayrapacha* and *nayra* are also the eyes, that is, the past is in front; it is the only thing we know because we can look, feel and remember. The future, on the other hand, is a kind of *q'ipi*, a burden of worries, which is better to have on your back (*qhilpha*), because if you put it in front of you, you cannot live, you cannot walk. (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018, 51–84, our translation)

The past as future can be understood as 'to return,' 'to reconstruct,' 'to restitute' as in the Andean concept of *Pachakuti* (*pacha*: space-time; *kutiy/kutyña*: to turn around, to return), that is, a disordering logic of turning space-time upside down. In this sense, 'returning' or 'reconstructing' is not equivalent to 'restoring,' however, it is a space-time disordering-reordering movement, which transcends human decision alone, for it is part of space-time's rhythm, the movement of the *Pacha*. More than a dialectical necessity of revolution, there would be a *Pachakuti*, as supra-intra-human Spatio-temporal conditioning (Mamani 1992), a way of naming the chronotope of the past-present-future where humans alone do not explain the changes in space-time; there would be cyclical rhythms of *Pachakuti*. The past can be transformed "into a dialectical, reverberating image, a political category capable of shaking the present time and awakening us from the lethargy in which we have sunk" (Rivera Cusicanqui 2018, 97). Looking to that past, which is reborn

in the present and makes it tremble, is not a nostalgic movement but an event of celebratory actualization and re-appropriation. It is a call to trace and re-establish Latin America's utopian and emancipatory potentialities. In this way, alternative pasts, or *uchronies*, are constituted as a way out of the limits of what is marked in blood, of imposed designs, or the non-existence of a future, not only in terms of subjectivity, since "it is very likely that each human group (...) cuts out, in the space it occupies, where it really lives, where it works, utopian places and, in the time it occupies, uchronic moments" (Foucault 1984, 19), but also in the horizons of collective expectations. Because this strategy reaffirms that "the historical project of things produces individuals, the historical project of bonds produces community" (Segato 2018).

4. SPECULATIVE FICTIONS IN LATIN AMERICAN VERNACULAR SEMIOVERSES

In the Global South, writings, art, and mythologies have always allowed the development of figures of "cultural resistance" (Escobar, T. 1993, 32, our translation), assuming images of westernization, without becoming westernized, but comparing and managing them to keep alive the expectations of a possible otherness, a possible world. It is in this perspective that we think about vernacular Aymaran semioverses: as semiotic universes of situated figuration where the *xeno* resists through a web of hybridizations. In what follows, thus, we will begin an excursion into cultural productions where vernacular figurations from Andean semioverses condense Xenofuture's figurations.

We have seen how the figuration of the *xeno* is understood as the embodiment of radical otherness, culturally incommensurable as expressed in the semioverse of Andean vernacular cultures, such as the Aymara, but also those associated with the Aztec world. On the other hand, hybridity is the embedded condition of the existence situated in Latin America, a distinctive feature of a deeply mestizo continent where the future acquires a differential value. In this context, even regarding culturally installed productions, such as literature, the tendency to mix hybrid syntagms of time is predominant, especially in comparison with the literature of the Global North, as well as the alien's persistent figuration. We will refer to this both discursive and vernacular horizon as Latin-american speculative fiction, a very broad phenomenon that goes from Cuban Daína Chaviano's vivid *Caribbean gothic* (Chaviano 2017) to Chilean Jorge Baradit's *cyber-shamanism* (2005), through Argentina's cultivated cosmopolitanism and the influence of native ancient cultures on Bolivian, Ecuadorian, and Peruvian authors¹⁰.

10 In order to enter the world of speculative fiction in the Latin American scenario, two texts stand out. One is Rachel Haywood Ferreira's work *The emergence of Latin American science fiction* (2011), with references to the science fiction literature of Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. The other is Luis Cano's work, *Intermitente recurrencia: la ciencia ficción y el canon literario hispanoamericano* (2006), which reviews the legacy of autochthonous future figurations in Latin American literary production. As a starting point, Cano distinguishes nineteenth-century science fiction from the more sophisticated productions of the mid-twentieth century, and points out that scientific novelties

The speculative fiction within Latin American literature works as a platform to build other possible worlds through hybrid scenarios. Alien characters governed by vernacular laws, open paths to emancipation from colonial inheritance. The novel *De cuando en cuando Saturnina: una historia oral del futuro* (2004), written and edited by the Anglo-Yungueña¹¹ anthropologist, teacher, and cocallera¹² Alison Spedding, is part of a trilogy that narrates the reincarnations of Saturnina Mamani Guarache, better known as the *Satuka*. In the 17th century, when the protagonist is a *cacica*, i.e., a local leader, the literary genre used is Andean picaresque (*Manuel y Fortunato*, 1997); in the 1980s, incarnated as a truck driver, she goes through a narco context in an action novel (*El viento de la cordillera*, 2001); and finally, in the future of 2084, the genre the author adopts and perhaps parodies (in the sense of dialoguing with) turns out to be cyberpunk science fiction.

The space navigator *Satuka* is a political activist who rises to interplanetary fame after her rash involvement in the 2079 destruction of the Martian moon Phobos (the final bastion of white supremacy). Identified as the ringleader of the “Flora Tristan” Commando, an anarcho-feminist revolutionary group, that among its main objectives aims to destroy any form of “imperialist” and “patriarchal” domination, she is apprehended. The arrest comes after the group destroys the recently restored Coricancha, the ancient Inca Temple of the Sun in Cusco, Peru, in a terrorist attack. Thus, through the wild exploits of this character, it would be possible to access the interior of a world so far inaccessible to outsiders. (Gutiérrez León 2011, 75): the history of the Qullasuyu Marka, which encompasses most of ex-Bolivia and Peruvian Puno.

De cuando en cuando Saturnina is: “the first original science fiction novel written in Andean Spanish, Aymara, and Spanglish,” as proclaimed on the novel’s back cover. We add the first science fiction in the Aymaran vernacular semioverses. *Satuka* travels freely among the stars as well as between the living and the dead. This is a transgression of gender canon, hybridization between science fiction and neo-gothic topics. In western literature, the world of the dead and the living is divided. Vampires and zombies do not coexist (usually) with robots and clones. The first series of tales deal with the “symbolic field of death” (Link 1994) while science fiction is structured around questions about life and its conditions. In the repertoire of possibilities that Spedding deploys, any

weapon can be used to combat racism and *macho* imperialism, whether Western or indigenous. Witchcraft, hacking, bombs, or hill spirits are all alternatives (Gutiérrez León 2011, 83). *Satuka* is aware that time in the Zone is cyclical: the past, or “immemorial time” (Yanapara 1992, 224), will always be ahead, reclaiming memory. The author travels freely and uses all the narrative tools available to her, leaping continuously between various instances of past and future that merge into an intricate temporal web, breaking with any linear conception of story or history. As the “user manual” at the beginning of the text explains: “The text that follows consists (...) of a series of narratives and/or conversations, rather than interviews per se, making up in total thirty-four chapters of varying length. They were conducted with different people on different occasions. They do not, therefore, form a single linear account, and it is possible to read them in different orders, apart from the general narrative order chosen by the compilers” (Spedding 2004).

However, these strategies are not only intended to break the linearity of Western time but also, as Mancosu observes, “the narrative disorder of the oral history recounted in *De cuando en cuando Saturnina* is, in fact, only apparent. The novel refers to a notion of Aymara time, to a past and to “concentric” stories that manage to break away from the temporal linearity of Western ontology, to break the implicit norms of historical narrative and to deconstruct a concept of universal history. Science fiction, with its flexibility, irony, and parody, suggests another way of narrating the past and manages to go beyond the distinctions between myth and history, real and unreal, possible and impossible” (Mancosu 2017, 20, our translation).

Each temporal division (or *pacha*) is restricted to a certain space, according to Andean mythology’s spatio-temporal idea. In the novel, it is possible to recognize three chronotopes. The first is the *taypi*’s age, which conjures up images of multitude and diversity, as well as a potential microcosm through which space and time could be understood. *Taypi* is a place where people of all backgrounds may cohabit, and it harkens back to the beginning of time. The age of *puruma*, which alludes to the sunset, comes in second. This is the point when things start to happen. The age of *awqa*, or *pachakuti*, is the third *pacha* and the most interesting to read *De cuando en cuando Saturnina*. Although *awqa* and *pachakuti* can be translated as “enemy” and “season of warfare”

and the introduction of inventions in the continent influenced this literature. However, this techno-cultural dimension did not prevent the autonomous and creative growth of aesthetics, which intended to appeal to the Western literary canon. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that beyond classifications, as the semiotician Umberto Eco suggested in *Lector in fabula* (1979), the counterfactual speculation about a structurally possible world is made by extrapolating, from some tendencies of the real world, the very possibility of the futurible world.

11 Alison Spedding was born and educated in England, she has lived in Bolivia since the 1980s and defines herself as Anglo-Yungueña.

12 The cocallero identity emerged from coca leaf farming, as an alternative identity to the Amerindian identity or the identity of the urban poor, as it takes elements from the indigenous subject and from mining unionism, transmitted to the farming area by relocated miners, organizers of the first unions.

respectively (Bouysson-Brahet 1987, 192), the latter also refers to everything antithetical, opposite, and it cannot be combined and doesn't coincide: "The world that turns around, the end of one world and the beginning of a new one" (Spedding 2004, 331).

However, this opposition must not be understood as a dialectical relation. As Gutiérrez León points out, "Aymara thought has found two ways to reconcile these antagonistic states: one, through encounter, *tinku*; and the other, through alternation, *kuti*. *Tinku* is the name of a ritual fight between two opposing sides, and it can be expressed as the meeting of two complementary halves. Although it has the appearance of combat, being a rite, its function is to measure forces and to reestablish balance, because it allows a coincidence, a moment of symbolic union. Another answer for the reconciliation of the *awqa* elements is alternation, expressed in terms of the *kuti*, which speaks of a change of turn, of a complete turn" (Gutiérrez León 2011, 77, our translation) As we have seen, unlike the Western linear conception of time, in Aymara's cosmovision time is circular. Everything returns. Just as animals, plants, and nature are cyclical, cultures also have a cycle. The past is in front because it is what is known, what has already been seen; on the other hand, the future, which is something that cannot be seen, is behind.

As Rivera Cusicanqui states "we indigenous were and are, above all, contemporary beings and peers, and in this dimension [*aka pacha*], we perform and display our own commitment to modernity (...). The project of indigenous modernity can emerge from the present in a spiral whose movement is continuous feedback from the past to the future — a 'principle of hope' or 'anticipatory consciousness'— that both discern and realize decolonization at the same time" (2010b, 96, our translation). Beyond our fascination with Spedding's work, examples do not end there. The *fotonovela* *Los mundos que amo*, by Cuban Daína Chaviano, considered one of the three most important Latin-American female writers of fantasy and science fiction literature, does not use a typical structure of retrospection in the historical recovery of the past (beginning with the end of the story and thus offering a teleological progression and a false origin from which the narrative is produced). The protagonist's journey through time-image problematizes stories that previously may have had some relational cause with the present. That is, it dismantles the hegemony of a single official reading of the universal past. "Transnationality, transdisciplinarity, and transsexuality mark categories that are located both at the crossing of disciplinary borders and beyond hegemonic continents, such as the sovereign nation, discipline, and dual-gender (masculine, feminine). The 'trans' locates its strength in the beyond of metanarratives linked to monolithic, generic, and disciplinary national identities" (Belausteguigoitia, 2009, 108, our translation).

Furthermore, other examples serve to illustrate the aforementioned statements. *The First Peruvian in Space*

(*El primer peruano en el espacio* 2014), by Daniel Salvo, recounts how, after the extraterrestrial 'whites' have invaded and conquered the earth, Anatolio Pomahuanca is the first indigenous-terrestrial-Peruvian astronaut to make a space trip. If, in the rhetoric of colonial discourse, the *other* has always been the indigenous, represented as primitive, barbaric, and located at the limits of the human, in Salvo's story the alien is the 'white' who, in his colonizing expansion, reveals his monstrosity. In his last short story, "*Quipucamayoc*," he presents a protagonist who seeks to avenge his people from Incan tyranny, and for this purpose, he becomes an expert in *quipus* to bring down the empire's accounting system, a Hacker of antiquity, perhaps the only pre-cyber Andean story written until today (Novoa 2020). The author thinks of this text as "Andean retro science fiction" or "*cholopunk*".

This cultural production continues to grow and mutate but also to open figurative spaces for alternative possible worlds, spaces of radical otherness where the impossible becomes real, a phenomenon that has long sought its self-determination outside current taxonomies. In the words of Marcelo Novoa (2020) at least "the non-realist literature written in Latin America should pursue a new nomenclature, which would go beyond the old slogan of Tzvetan Todorov, Roger Callois or Luis Vax, who were still in shock for having witnessed live and direct the bestial intercourse between romanticism and naturalism. Thus, what for us will be constant democratic chaos, annoying daily delirium, and horror during office hours; for Europeans meant diving into the aberrant depths of their most vulnerable ontology. For that, which is so unbearable for the First World, is nothing but our daily survival."

5. CLOSING REMARKS

The ways in which cultures understand, communicate, and represent time are extremely significant and represent the core of this inquiry. First of all, focusing on future figurations leads us to revisit the concept of *aspect*, a key part of the sign of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory. Aspectuality is the set of discursive means to signal not the quantity of time but rather the expressive aspect with which it is possible to construct a temporal ideology. It is, in this regard, a useful tool to describe the quality of time as it is performed in concrete events. For semiotics, the interest lies in capturing how a certain amount of a particular action can generate pragmatic effects of meaning that influence how the event is understood. Events contain simulacrum of the strategies that guide interpretation, including the interpretation of temporality. It is within this perspective that we can ask how to frame the quality of the future, and it is with this aim that we recognized in some Latin American semioverses the future figurations of Xenofutures. Xenofuture is not just a particular status of existence neighboring the possible, the eventual, the in-potency, nor the veiled, the transcendent unknown. It is necessary to distance the future from an enigmatic, potential, or transcendent condition but also from its

consideration in terms of final cause. It is not a matter of something that may be but rather that inexhaustible capacity to produce possible qualities, the fragile in-between, the virtuality of events, and the very possibility that there might be something instead of nothing.

REFERENCES

- Ascott, R., 2000. *Art, Technology, Consciousness*. Bristol, UK: Intellect.
- Baradit, J., 2005. *Ygdrasil*. Col. «Nova». Huechuraba, Chile: Ediciones B.
- Beck, U., 1986. *Risk society: towards a new modernity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Belausteguigoitia, M. (ed.) 2009. *Enseñanzas desbordadas*. México, D.F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México Press.
- Bouysse Cassagne, T., Harris, O., 1987. "Pacha: en torno al pensamiento aymara". In Bouysse Cassagne, T. (Eds.), *Tres reflexiones sobre el pensamiento andino*. La Paz, Hisbol, pp. 11-57.
- Braidotti, R., 2014. Writing as a Nomadic Subject. *Comparative Critical Studies*, 11(2-3), 163-184, available at: < <https://www.eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/ccs.2014.0122> >.
- Braidotti, R., 2019. A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36(6), 31-61, available at: < <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276418771486> >.
- Cano, L.C., 2006. *Intermitente recurrencia: La ciencia ficción y el canon literario hispanoamericano*. Buenos Aires: Corregidor.
- Chaviano, D., 2017. *Extraños Testimonios. Prosas ardientes y otros relatos góticos*. Madrid: Huso.
- Danowski, D., de Castro Viveiros, E., 2019. ¿Hay mundo por venir? Ensayos sobre los miedos y los fines. Buenos Aires: Caja Negra.
- Dussel, E., 2007. *Política de la liberación, vol. I: Historia mundial y crítica*. Madrid: Trotta.
- Dussel, E., 2008. "Meditaciones anti-cartesianas: sobre el origen del anti-discurso filosófico de la modernidad", *Tabula Rasa*, nro. 9, pp. 153-197, available at: < <https://revistas.unicolmayor.edu.co/index.php/tabularasa/article/view/1497> >
- Eco, U., 1979. *Lector in fabula: la cooperazione interpretativa nei testi narrativi*. Milan: Bompiani.
- Escobar, A., 2007. *La invención del Tercer Mundo Construcción y deconstrucción del desarrollo*. Venezuela: Editorial el Perro y la Rana.
- Escobar, T., 1993. *La belleza de los otros. Arte indígena del Paraguay*. Asunción: Centro de documentación e investigaciones de arte popular e indígena del centro de artes visuales. Museo del Barro: R P Ediciones.
- Eshun, K. 1998. *More Brilliant than the Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction*. London: Quartet Books.
- Estermann, J., 2009. La filosofía quechua. In Dussel, E., Mendieta, E. & Bohórquez, C. (Eds.), *El Pensamiento Filosófico Latinoamericano del Caribe y "Latino" (1300-2000)*. México: Siglo XXI, pp. 36-40.
- Federici, S. 2004. *Caliban and the witch: women, the body and primitive accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia.
- Fisher, M., 2009. *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*. London: Nero Books.
- Foucault, M., 1984. *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*. Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité 5.
- Gobat, M. 2013. The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race. *The American Historical Review*, 118(5), 1345-1375, available at: < <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/118.5.1345> >.
- Gramsci, A., 1971. . *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, p. 276
- Greimas, A., 1991. "Della nostalgia. Studio di semántica lessicale". En Pezzini, I.: *Semiotica delle passioni. Saggi di analisi semántica e testuale*, Bologna: Esculapio, 1991, p. 19-26.
- Gutiérrez León, A., 2011. Después del Pachakuti. Tiempo mitológico aymara y ciencia ficción. *Mitologías hoy*, Vol. 3, pp. 75-84, [Cited 03/04/2022], available at: < <https://raco.cat/index.php/mitologias/article/view/283869> >.
- Haywood Ferreira, R., 2011. *The Emergence of Latin American Science Fiction*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Herrmann-Pillath, C., 2013. *Foundations of Economic Evolution: A Treatise on the Natural Philosophy of Economics*. New Horizons in Institutional and Evolutionary Economics series. UK: Edward Elgar Pub.
- Jácome Guerrero, J.L., 2020. La densidad andina, el universo Khipunk. *PRAXIS*. post(s) 6(1), available at: < [https://doi.org/10.18272/post\(s\).v6i1.1895](https://doi.org/10.18272/post(s).v6i1.1895) >.
- University Press.
- Koselleck, R., 2001. *Los estratos del tiempo: estudios sobre la historia*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Link, D., 1994. *Escalera al cielo, utopía y ciencia ficción*. Buenos Aires: La Marca.
- Lotman, J., 1984. The semiosphere. *Soviet Psychology*, 27(1), 40-61, available at: < <https://doi.org/10.2753/RPO1061-0405270140> >.
- Mamani Condori, C. 1992. *Los aymaras frente a la historia. Dos ensayos metodológicos*. La Paz: Aruwiwiri Chukiyawu.
- Mancosu, P., 2017. Tiempo e historia en De cuando en cuando Saturnina. *Bolivian Studies Journal / Revista de Estudios Bolivianos*, 23-24, 2017-2018, available at: < <https://dx.doi.org/10.5195/bsj.2018.181> >.
- Martin Iglesias, R., Robles, M., 2017. Topoheterocronies: analogical models for time

Voto, Martin-Iglesias, Agra

- visualization. *VIRUS*, 15., 02 semester, available at: Martin Iglesias, R., Voto, C. & Agra, R., 2020. Xenofutures: towards Design as Care-Cure. In: *Congreso SiGraDi 2020*. São Paulo: Blucher, pp. 40–45.
- Mitchell, W.T. 1984. What is an image? *New Literary History*, 15(3), pp. 503–537.
- Novoa, M., 2020 Ciencia Ficción Andina: Una Introducción. *Latin American Literature Today*, 1(7). University of Oklahoma. [Cited 03/04/2022], available at: < <http://www.latinamericanliteraturetoday.org/es/2018/agosto/ciencia-ficci%C3%B3n-andina-una-introducci%C3%B3n-de-marcelo-novoa> >.
- Quijano, A., 1988. *Modernidad, identidad y utopía en América Latina*. Lima: Sociedad y Política Ediciones.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S., 2010. *Oprimidos pero no vencidos. Luchas del campesinado aymara y quechwa*, 4º Ed. La Paz: La Mirada Salvaje.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S., 2010b. *Ch'iixinakax utxiwa. Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descoloniales*. Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, S., 2018. *Un mundo ch'ixi es posible. Ensayos desde un presente en crisis*. Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón.
- Salvo, D. 2014. *El primer peruano en el Espacio*. Lima: Ediciones Altazor
- Segato, R., 2018. *Contra-pedagogías de la crueldad*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo.
- Spedding, Alison, 1997. *Manuel y Fortunato*. La Paz, Bolivia: Aruwiyiri.
- Spedding, Alison, 2001. *El Viento de la cordillera: Un thriller de los 80*. La Paz: Mama Huaco.
- Spedding, Alison, 2003. Quemar el archivo: un ensayo en contra de la Historia. *Temas, Sociales. Revista de Sociología - UMSA* 24, 367–400, available at: < http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0040-29152003000100030&lng=es&nrm=iso >.
- Spedding, Alison, 2004. *De cuando en cuando Saturnina. Saturnina from time to time. Una historia oral del futuro*. La Paz: Editorial Mama Huaco.
- Spedding, Alison, 2011. *Descolonización. Crítica y problematización a partir del contexto boliviano*. La Paz: ISEAT.
- Surace, B., Voto, C., 2020. Il volto che sar(er)à - Considerazioni semiotiche sul futuro che è già stato. Video essay In: *the 2020 Conference of AISS (Italian Association of Semiotic Studies)*, held online on October 24, 2020, available at: < https://youtu.be/Qic2I_cmf18 >.
- Yanapara, S., 1992. La sociedad aymara y estructuras sociales de los Andes, In Van der Berg, H., Schiffers, N. (eds.), *La cosmovisión aymara*. La Paz: Hisbol.