

# A Post-Occidental Ontology of Desire and Subjective Return in Gregorio Martínez's *Crónica de músicos y diablos* (1991)

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## Abstract

How can the study of the force of desire generate post-occidental knowledge with regards to the return of the parallel development of material and subjective production? Can we rely on the connective force of desire and the subject's loss of the self to the environment as ways to think about freedom and slavery today? By locating the novel *Crónica de músicos y diablos* (1991) at the intersection of post-occidental thinking and Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the force of desire, I shall provide a reading of *Crónica* that addresses these questions by considering desire's involvement in the process of subjective return in the context of non-exploitive labor practices. This reading reconsiders the surviving colonial co-relation between race and labor, which in the novel promotes on-going divisions between subjective and material existence. In addressing this division, this reading of the text offers a summary of the novel, locates Martínez's writings within the national literary context and considers the ontological question of the jeopardized parallel between material and subjective existence. At the end of this article, the reader will appreciate the direct consumption of musical surpluses leading to the possibility to overcome the surviving colonial stereotypes and the relationship between race and forms of rural exploitation.

## Introduction

In an interview published in 1992, the Afro-Peruvian author Gregorio Martínez explains that the communities of African heritage on the southern coast of Peru were still suffering from the parallel effects of slavery and capitalism well into the twentieth century. In his novel *Crónica de músicos y diablos* (1991), Martínez refers to this situation and depicts an ontological, or relational way to capture the jeopardized parallel between subject production and consumption. Through the ontological and connective force of desire, the reader elucidates this desubjectivated state as the characters become aware of the parallel between material and subjective production.

In portraying the restoration of this parallel, Martínez reminds us of the goals of post-occidental thought. In line with Eduardo Mendieta's theorization of post-occidental thinking, Martínez's characters respond through their own language of musical revolt to the demands of those who try to jeopardize the parallel between material and subjective production through the co-relation of race and labor set by colonial domination surviving in the twentieth century.

A summary of the novel, a literary contextualization of Martínez's writings and a reading of the second half of his novel *Crónica de músicos y diablos* shall make clear Martínez's ontologically oriented and post-occidental perspective on the Afro-Peruvian experience.

## Summary of the Novel: Revolt vs. Revolution in *Crónica de músicos y diablos*

The Afro-Peruvian Guzman family expects a State pension as reparation and reward for their ancestors' participation in the wars of independence. Instead, they receive a set of old musical instruments from the president, who hopes to get rid of the family and undermine their historical claims. But the family becomes what Deleuze and Guattari call a war machine, that is, a machine that can resist statist codification, which in contemporary times takes the form of wages, class division, the bureaucratic apparatus, and the machinery of military defense. At the same time, the family resists the rural capitalists' social control, that is,

their codification/definition/territorialization into a peasant class, which is defined by its need to sell its labor power and produce surplus value. In the novel, this resistance takes place by way of revolt rather than revolution.

Bartola, the mother, shares a stand on the family's departure from Cahuachi. This is a critique to the idealization of legal and economic inclusion generated in a center of power like the capital city of Lima. At first, Bartola is reluctant to negotiate the departure to Lima. In fact, the narrator acknowledges her disbelief in the outcomes of the trip: Bartola says that "resultaba preferible que cada quien, a través de su propia experiencia, se desengañara de las quimeras" (CDMD 138). When she confronts the officer, who receives the family in Lima, it becomes obvious that what she resists is the exclusionary violence, that sustains the institution and makes itself felt through its offices and personnel.

In challenging the codification or the family's integration in capitalist rural production, Martínez alludes, not only to the way in which the family turns into a war machine, but also to the State's own war or musical machine. The latter machine parallels the violent and anti-productive machine connected to the Parcona massacre. This deadly machine motivates Bartola's need to leave Lima and return to Cahuachi. The family acts as a war non-violent machine, although they are not nomads in the strict sense of the word. As they walk back, the connections created cause them to become part of a diaspora that occupies spaces temporarily and transforms surviving colonial stereotypes. Despite being in the epicenters of violence and political neglect, the family's apprenticeship into music is the means used by the family to change the locals and the landowners as they go back to Cahuachi.

The character known as Moquillaza makes it clear that, through the acceptance of the instruments, the family is not rewarded with a pension and historical recognition. Instead, they are "rewarded" with the opportunity to submit to the State's thirst for surplus extracted from the peasant classes. Since music epitomizes a type of manual labor out of which surplus can be produced and consumed by producers, Martínez shows that capitalist extraction, in other contexts, involves the suspension of subjectivity and the imposition of an intensive or pre-subjective state that limits the direct and joyful capture in relation to labor. The narrator recognizes the accidental yet important intervention of the president in imposing this state of mind in connection to labor practices. It could have resulted in the family's indebtedness, the State's economic codification, and parallel pre-subjective existence:

Mientras firmaba la exoneración de aduana delante del sorprendido furriel, el presidente continuaba pensando que ya tenía la solución perfecta para dejar contentos a los Guzmán y dijo: ¡école cuatro! que era su frase preferida, y entonces ordenó que enseguida recogieran los viejos instrumentos de música para entregárselos a los huéspedes alojados en el cuartel de Borbones, como

una recompensa oficial, como una donación del estado en lugar de arrumarlos entre los estrebejes que iban a servir para alimentar los hornos de la fábrica de municiones del ejército. (CDMD 201)

Under State control, the paying of the "small debt" through secondhand instruments plays the opposite role of liberating the Guzmán family from their socioeconomic burden. However, this burden has motivated them to leave Cahuachi in the first place as part of the stoppage of local production within the capitalist cycle that pushed the people in the rural world to the cities. The induction of indebtedness in the novel echoes Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the state's induction of debt. The philosophers explain that "it has often been remarked that the State commences (or recommences) with two fundamental acts, one of which is said to be an act of territoriality through the fixing of residence, and the other, an act of liberation through the abolition of small debts" (AO 195). In light with the Pacific Coast trends of cultural capture posed at the outset of this thesis, Martínez depicts the family's nomadic situation to show the factors that lead to the modern State's creation of contexts of indebtedness through cultural production.

To resist this exclusionary violence, Bartola, her husband and her children opt for a non-violent form of musical revolt. Martínez's depiction of the difference between revolt and revolution echoes the distinction and disappointment experienced by Deleuze and Guattari in May 1968, in relation to the tension between structural or paralyzing forces in France and *evental* or unstructured forms of political struggle. Françoise Dosse (2010) explains the difference between revolt and revolution. Revolution brings down the whole institution or power structure in what seems to be the end of the history of domination, which in return entails the unplanned reterritorialization of the class in power. The musical revolt depicted by Martínez, in contrast, entails daily forms of post-occidental resistance that keeps oppressors accountable, transforming them and the bureaucratic apparatus through which they operate. It is in the context of the ethics of institutional responsibility threatened by postmodernity that we see in Martínez elements of Dussel's theory of liberation, which are compatible with Mendieta's idea that under a post-occidental perspective historically oppressed groups see their existence and their current demands as extensions of the colonial experience.

Like Martínez in his novel, Deleuze and Guattari tell us that the leading classes' interests persevere through revolution. In the novel, the interests are sustained through colonial stereotypes. Revolt, which takes place in the novel through desire machines involving the connection between human and musical instruments, happens as the characters engage in musical production. Desire is a force that makes it possible for people to exist in terms of their potential to become inter-connected subjects. In light of this idea, Deleuze and Guattari define the subject in terms

of its mechanical qualities. They explain that “while there is a real machine that at a basic level connects the child to the mother’s breast, for example, beyond the household and within the household itself, . . . [e]verywhere it is machines—real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections” (AO 8).

Desire machines are the product of the connection between human and nonhuman realms. As the musical conglomerates bringing together the characters and their instruments, Martínez shows that the characters and their instruments function as a *modus operandi* that create a generalized, subjective transformation that does away with the paralyzing power of revolution. In a thematic dialogue between paralyzing modern European-inspired revolution and post-occidental Latin American revolt, Martínez relies on a seemingly everyday experience akin to the *Event*’s antistructural consumption/processing of material conditions in which structures are forced to undergo a moment of destratification (the community’s loss of its boundaries of labor to the environment of leisure). Under this de-stratifying state, the elites cannot be reterritorialized as part of molar or transcendental structures like the State. In *Crónica*, the peasantry, and the former peasant family, which has now become a group of musicians, brings about the subjective transformation of both the peasants and the elites. Martínez writes:

La presencia de los veintisiete Guzmán que habían vuelto a Cahuachi, reencarnados en una competente banda de músicos que aparecía alhajada hasta de vicio con las alpatanas más deslumbrantes del artilugio filarmónico [...]. Sin embargo los ricos de Nasca, por pura soberbia de cogotudos engreídos, se hacían los que ignoraban aquel hecho tan visible. De manera tal que cuando tuvieron que pensar en una banda de músicos para animar la fiesta patronal del 8 de septiembre, los ricos de Nasca jamás tuvieron en mente a los Guzmán. Los ignoraron adrede, de modo flagrante e intencional para que de una vez desde el inicio, empezaran a caer en la postergación, en el soslayamiento, y resignadamente volvieran mejor a la condición de meros peones de chakra. (CDMD 265)

In the previous lines, it is possible to see the parallel sources of destratification deployed by the landowners to direct the forces of desire of the family to maintain the social divisions. This source of control is Lima’s Guardia Republicana. In tension with the guardia republicana’s ability to change rural bodies is the family’s music-affective charge. It is in this tension that war machines at work in the Deleuzian and Guattarian sense. It is by zooming into pre-personal intensities and desire machines in a musical context that one can see the generation of a carnival.

Music thus reveals the extraction of surplus by a third party. Producers like the family of musicians become

examples of what it means to produce a surplus that is immediately consumed rather than transferred from the producers to the elite classes. The partial organs of the body involved in musical production, and the assemblages that they shape as they connect to the musical instruments, play a central role in this process. If we bear in mind that Deleuze and Guattari define the ontological force of desire as a connective force leading to subjective development and its very parallel consumption, the pre-personal force of desire functions as a pre-personal binding force leading to musical production and to its parallel, enjoyable, and immediately available to consume musical surplus. After a contextualization of Martínez’s writings, the article will discuss the socio-historical and inter-ethnic effects of this parallel consumption.

### *Martínez’s Literary and Political Context*

Through an exploration of Martínez’s literary and political context it is possible to appreciate the way in which Martínez’s oeuvre rejects transcendental categorizations that reiterates the colonial co-relations of race and labor without problematizing them. Through his writings, Martínez shows that these conditions are both Statist in nature and literary. One such categorization shows how Martínez’s novel clarifies various characteristics of the boom period. Ismael Márquez explains that

entretreídos la evocativa filigrana de Ricardo Palma, la exuberancia lingüística de García Márquez, el diálogo crítico con los procesos históricos de Vargas Llosa, la política de la rebelión de José María Arguedas, el cuestionamiento de la historiografía de Guamán Poma, el anacrónico barroquismo de Espinosa Medrano, el Lunarejo, y la vena humorística de Cabrera Infante. (Márquez 54)

In terms of Martínez’s Afro-Pacific contexts, his writings are in dialogue with urban authors of the Afro-Peruvian experience like Nicomedez Santa Cruz. For Heidi C. Feldman, Santa Cruz’s writings are a response to his predecessors who were part of a complex “Afro-criollo movement [that] swept Latin America beginning in the 1920s. This sensibility first manifested itself in the *Negrismo* of white writers who depicted blacks and their ‘picturesque’ traditions” (Feldman 86). She then explains that “Felipe Pardo (1806–1868), whose stereotyped black characters spoke a parodied black Spanish, was an early predecessor to *negrismo*” (Feldman 86). A novel from this period is Flora Tristán’s *Peregrination of a Pariah* (1838).<sup>1</sup> Paulk suggests that “a narrative such as Tristán’s is structured around the home, which is posited as the center of political and social life, and excursions made to and from the residence. Tristán closely resembles a nineteenth-century bourgeois, female social reformer as she visits and critiques the various institutions in Arequipa and Lima” (Paulk 199).

Then, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Peruvian *negrista* coincides with the *indigenismo* movement. The writings of Rosa María Macedo, a nonblack author from the 1940s, are a good example of the combination of both these literary movements. She is the author of *Ranchos de Caña* (1941) and *Rastrojo* (1944). Her narration of local stories, which coincide with the local stories about slavery in the Cauca Valley, are entry points to a discussion of the direction of the movement of enslaved bodies between the two countries.

In a very concise definition, Feldman speaks of the latter movement, *mestizaje*, as one “in which urban mestizos celebrated Peru’s indigenous/Inca heritage” (Feldman 84). It is in this environment—in which *indigenismo* and *negrista* coexist—that the depictions of black and indigenous voices in *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (1971) by Arguedas Altamirano find their place within both literary traditions. In relation to the *negrista* movement in Peru, the major works were the neo-realist texts *Estampas mulatas* (1938) by José Diez Canseco and *Matalaché* (1928) by Enrique López Albújar.

These texts were produced in the context of an interest in the Aprista politics that evolved from “the heirs of González Prada [who] were (1895–1980) and José Carlos Mariátegui” (Martin 117). After this period, the committed authors of *indigenismo* went on to form the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria. These authors discussed “unresolved debate[s] on nationalism, Americanism, *aprismo*, socialism, communism and *indigenismo*” (Martin 118). Martínez describes this environment in *Canto de sirena* as his character Candelario, a black peasant who had become a security guard in Lima, struggles to find a place within the existing political environment upon his return to Coyungo.

In 1945, Candelario turns briefly into an oppressor of the Aprista supporters in Acarí. Candelario’s realization of his confusion speaks to Martínez’s concerns for the black and indigenous landless mobile labor force that had been caught up in the upheaval of land reform but did not benefit from it as expected. In addition to being caught up in a network of poverty, the figure of the dispossessed rural character is caught up and reproduced by Lima’s literary circles. The rural black “Other” is depicted as being an inherently disposable character.

Martínez questions literary depictions in which the black Others struggle to fulfill their current needs as these do not contextualize the surviving *latifundismo* and modes of contemporary slavery under capitalism. In one of his last interviews in 2013 (Carrillo-Jara), Martínez spoke about how this political and literary environment affected his writing. He explained that he was neither with the intellectuals who appropriated *lo popular* during the Velasquista period of land reform, such as “Hugo Neira, Julio Ortega, Alfredo Barnechea, Mirko Lauer, José B. Adolph, Leónidas Cevallos, aún Alejandro Romualdo y Julio Ramón Ribeyro” (Carrillo-Jara 196), nor with the Shining Path.

Throughout his life, he rejected the elitist appropriation of committed literature, as can be seen through the

fictionalization of real life authors like Ribeyro and through the opinions he shared during his interviews. As a reaction to this, *Crónica* shows the lower classes’ aspiration to control the means of communication and musical production. In light of this aspiration, in his interviews Martínez explained that “el ideario tiene que remontarse a la etapa anterior al marxismo, a la época de Proudhon, cuando los trabajadores producían directamente su prensa y literatura política, sin la mediación de los ‘intelectuales’ y teóricos del socialismo” (Carrillo-Jara 196).

Martínez’s interest in establishing a literary connection that captured the uniqueness of the Afro experience in Peru can be appreciated in the writings in which Martínez turns real authors from other Pacific Coast authors into fictional characters. Although Martínez refers to authors like Ribeyro and other authors from other regions with a rich Afro-Pacific presence in order to do away with hierarchies, María del Carmen Cuban’s reading explains that transcultural processes affected Martínez’s relationship to writers of African heritage because “Esta modernidad se extiende a toda la cultura y establece un sistema jerárquico. El patrón aristocrático, con una élite intelectual, se apropia de la literatura e impone las normas no sólo en la metrópoli, sino en la diversidad de regiones, incluso en el campo” (Cuba 16).

Her statement suggests that Martínez felt that his *ideario* might have been closer to that of well-known authors like Juan Ramón Ribeyro, who were interested in the experiences of Afro-Peruvians in urban centers like Lima. In Ribeyro’s narrative, subalternity is seen as the position in which an underprivileged group benefits from the redemption brought about by intellectual intervention. This urgency, reenacted by Ribeyro, is connected to “el ser subalterno [que] existe únicamente en la muerte y en el dolor” (Elguera Olórtegui 20). Martínez’s writings make it clear that this external redemption and interest in focusing on the pain and death of the Other in need of external redemption is problematic.

In *Crónica*, Martínez moves beyond racial and geographical divides and looks into the manipulation of desire and its connection to a lack, which is the very cause and source of subjection of communities to poverty and death in different regions of Peru. Martínez’s narrative shows how colonial forms of production, surviving in the twentieth century, are tackled by shedding light on the displacement of the force of desire from the side of production (subjective emergence/connectivity with the outside) to consumption of the outside as an isolated externality.

Under colonial and post-colonial exploitive conditions, the outside is to be grasped as something that does not constitute the subject and must be transformed while the subject produces a surplus for a third party. Embedded in a novel like *Crónica* and his other writings, Martínez is not only producing a Pacific Coast post-occidental cosmology of relations that can be explored through the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari but also enters into a dialogue with an awareness of the colonial forms of perception and power distribution. Anibal Quijano

explains that “raza se convirtió en el primer criterio fundamental para la distribución de la población mundial en los rangos, lugares y roles en la estructura de poder de la nueva sociedad. En otros términos, en el modo básico de clasificación social universal de la población mundial” (Quijano 780).

Precisely, in Martínez’s novel, the role assigned to the characters occurs in accordance with racial markers and with the fact that groups of African heritage, in the urban and rural settings that he depicts, are extensions of the natural environment of exploitation. The characters in *Crónica* challenge the order of domination of people and their own transformation into an extension of the territories to be conquered and exploited.

We can see Martínez’s complex understanding of the Pacific’s post-occidental condition in his understanding of ongoing colonization as a process of exploitation that survives well into the twentieth century and includes both land and people. His novel suggests that under the continuing colonial conditions as he depicts them, the domination of the land and its people do not cease to exist but rather function as part of a neo-colonialist assemblage in post-colonial domination. In the novel, the survival of this assemblage of domination make clear the importance of the control over the land and the people that has been noted by Peter Hulme. Hulme explains that although “la etimología de la palabra ‘colonia’ no sugiere que tiene que colonizarse gente, a menudo la tierra es el asunto crucial” (Hulme 35). Clearly, for Martínez the issue at hand is not only the land, as a material priority, but also the people, their subjective control and/or desubjectivation through labor via the internalization of a lack in the midst of great abundance of rural land.

In order to introduce a conscious rejection of the environment of exploitation, Martínez depicts socially organized arrangements, known as desire machines, which initially place the subject in a state of communion with its environment. As we come to learn later in the story, this state of lost boundaries of the self to production may not always be amenable to subjective development. In the novel, this loss of boundaries is channeled for the purpose of extracting surplus out of laborers.

Bearing in mind the extraction of surpluses generated through the loss of boundaries of the self in the environment of labor, Martínez gives a central role to desire in his post-occidental narrative. If the connective force of desire can promote the loss of the boundaries of the self, it can also act as a force that brings together individuals or social territorialities. These territories are manifested through alternative values and an alternative language. This language and values are different from the transcendental or molar images embodied in the language of power associated with state aggregates (productive arrangements, bureaucracies, military machines, oppressive family units, the law, and so on). In fact, Martínez challenges the need for external redemption and in *Crónica* the groups themselves resolve the mutual objectification that takes place between them.

The ability to solve inter-ethnic tensions can be explained by the fact that Martínez, like Deleuze and Guattari, was part of a generation that contested the idea that desire was connected to a lack rather than to the abundance of the drive to connect. In other words, they understood that subjective and material experience depended on the engagement and disengagement of the subject’s body from the environment and from other bodies before any profit/meaning could be brought about, so as to give rise to cultural and material life. For this reason, Martínez felt conflicted in relation to authors who simply described people of African descent as a needy population. For Martínez, it was important to first consider how an unfair land reform created the conditions for the reproduction of molar-scale subjectivities of lack. Lack functions as a transcendental and distorted life principle that is associated and territorialized through blackness.

The image of a needy pool of dispossessed laborers shapes the works by authors of the *indigenismo* period and the writings of the period that follows it. In “Denuncia estética y apertura hacia una nueva comprensión narrativa de la generación del cincuenta,” Christian Elguera-Olórtegui finds that Ribeyro made visible the exacerbating reality of racism and poverty that accompanied the movement of landless and jobless peasants to the capital city. In his short urban stories “Alienación” and “De color modesto” (1975), Ribeyro explores external and self-inflicted or internalized forms of oppression without considering the forces of capitalism that propel these internalizations in the first place. Thus, his black characters are caught up in the capital city’s deadly contradictions. They have opportunities to purchase goods, but it is impossible to fulfill this socially and economically imposed lack.

Because Ribeyro’s stance in relation to capitalism was only partially critical, Martínez’s intellectual relationship to him was a tense one. They experienced ideological and creative disagreements. In *Gloria del Piturrín*, a text in which Martínez mixes short stories, music, popular culture, myths, and literature, he displayed his political disagreement with Ribeyro’s support of *velasquismo*. In this text, Martínez refers to the city settlers who, like unwanted and invasive weeds depicted by Ribeyro, managed to survive Lima’s socially hostile environment. Ribeyro immortalized this urban experience in his short story “Al Pie del Acantilado.” In *Gloria*, Martínez connects Ribeyro to the rural world he might have seen only through the urban settlers and their adoption of a system of needs that always saw them as foreigners in spite of their consumption of “white culture.”

The impoverished black people produced by the mediation of capitalism inspired Ribeyro, but he did not acknowledge the effects of incomplete land reform. The settlements at Lima’s urban fringes were then a visible result of the conditions of deterritorialization affecting the mobile community in the rural world. In other words, these settlements were a physical and racialized territorialization. Martínez believed that the Velasquista-period intellectuals did not fully grasp these conditions.

Although Cuba has maintained that Martínez considered to be better than the authors from other rural regions like Antonio Gálvez Ronceros, Martínez's writings in fact show that he reached out not only to writers from Lima but also to authors from Chíncha in the Ica region. In referring to these authors, he created a literary network through his writings. Furthermore, he challenged the imposition of an intellectual *insularismo* in Peru that had separated the depictions of Afro-Pacific authors from the depictions by authors from other regions of Peru. For example, the narrator of *Biblia de Guarango* expresses the desire to communicate the regional, economic, and historical commonalities of the landless peasant workforces from Chíncha Alta in Ica and Martínez's Coyungo, in Chíncha Baja. He asks about the different ways to talk about the *lucracos*,<sup>2</sup> and through this comparative interests, he depicts a fictional conversation between himself and another writer of the Afro-Peruvian experience: Antonio Galvéz Ronceros. Martínez asks: "¿Será el chánguano que mienta Antonio Galvéz Ronceros?" (BDG 200).

In this fictional dialogue with the literary world, Martínez plays with dialectical variations to connect experiences in divided areas of rural production. In *La orgía lingüística y Gregorio Martínez: un estudio sobre canto de sirena* (1998), Milagros Carazas explains that Martínez turned Antonio Gálvez Ronceros into a fictional character. Gálvez Ronceros is in fact, the author of *Monólogo desde las Tinieblas* (1975) and a member of the group "Narración" of which Martínez was also a member. In his work, Martínez does not turn Julián Huanay, author of the short story "El negro perico" (1968), into a fictional character. Similarly, he does not turn José Matos Mar and Jorge A. Carbajal, authors of *Erasmus: Yanacón del Valle de Chancay* (1974), into fictional characters. However, Carazas connects them to Martínez's narrative effort to capture the experiences of people of African descent in Peru in the wave of authors that followed Santa Cruz.

To summarize the central role played by Martínez in the depiction of the experiences of people of African descent within the national imagination, it is helpful to cite the introductory note for *Las máscaras de la representación* (2005) by Marcel Velázquez Castro. Estuardo Núñez situates Santa Cruz's and Martínez's writings as part of a third wave of Afro-Pacific authors. Martínez not only represents the voices of black Peruvians but also speaks from within about the experiences of Afro-Peruvians. Most recently the Afro-Pacific scholar Juan Manuel Olaya Arocha has referred to José Campos, another author from this wave, in his blog.

*Las negras noches del dolor y para educar hombrecitos* (2004) is a text that according to Olaya

se enmarca dentro de una literatura comprometida con las reivindicaciones de la memoria histórica afroperuana al confrontar el registro oficial desde el discurso literario. José Campos no duda en aprovechar las licencias de la ficción para recuperar, reconstruir y llenar los vacíos historiográficos sobre la población negra. En este intento, nos ofrece un

proyecto de nación que reconoce la variedad étnica del país, donde se consolida un discurso transcultural afro-andino en su propósito de resistir el dominio esclavista.<sup>3</sup>

José Campos and Martínez rely on literature to reconstruct the history of slavery and tackle the subsequent invisibility of people of African descent that followed emancipation. This is an interest that Martínez shares with poets like Antonio Preciado-Bedoya from Ecuador. This interest is articulated by considering how intensities from physical encounters survive and feed literary depictions of labor and physical abuse usually associated with communities of African heritage.

Just as Martínez gives a central role to his character Bartola in *Crónica*, José Campos also gives a role of central importance to women in his texts. Soledad in *Reconciliándome con la vida* (2009), for example, is a woman of Spanish descent. As a child, she experiences a deep feeling of connection with the genuine welcoming attitude of descendants of former slaves with whom she grew up. After she marries an Afro-Peruvian her children are faced with the counteracting force of racism.

Her children's friends internalize the appearance of whiteness as the standard of sociability and leadership in the post-occidental world depicted by Campos, and so they mock the undefined appearance of Soledad's children. In his novels, José Campos also talks about the promise of equality, which has never been fulfilled. In a dialogue with this concern, Martínez depicts his characters' claim of freedom and inclusion. This promise has been made since the nineteenth century in order to keep the descendants of black people indebted to the State. Since the landowners will clearly never do justice to the former slaves, the government claims that they must rely on the state, which leaves them in a condition of dependence. In *Reconciliándome con la vida*, characters like Lorenzo el Macho, who fought with San Martín against Spain, live in tension with the landowners who leave for France without ever distributing the lands promised to former slaves.

In order to comment on this pending concern of historical retribution and inclusion, my focus of analysis for the second half of *Crónica* will be the Guzmán's family apprenticeship as musicians. From an ontological perspective, Martínez captures the loss of the self in non-exploitive forms of the communal existence. This loss allows them to gain an insight with regards to the history of exclusion during the family's return from Lima to Cahuachi. This is a time of social awakening for the family, who come to see the trickery of the state, and the way in which types of labor have become associated with race. Martínez alludes to Quijano's idea that

En América, la idea de raza fue un modo de otorgar legitimidad a las relaciones de dominación impuestas por la conquista. La posterior constitución de Europa como nueva identidad después de América y la expansión del colonialismo europeo sobre el resto del mundo llevaron

a la elaboración de la perspectiva eurocéntrica de conocimiento y con ella a la elaboración teórica de la idea de raza como naturalización de esas relaciones coloniales de dominación entre europeos y no-europeos. (Quijano 779)

In line with Quijano's criticism, the family renounces the Eurocentric division of labor and their turning into an extension of the exploitive environment. The family no longer fits the colonial roles assigned to the community. Through this geographical movement, which is also subjective, as desire comes to mediate the characters' connection to the community and to their material conditions, the family acquires a new understanding of their relationship to the means of production. Rural and coastal Peru are thus elucidated "no como lugares geográficos sino como formas de y pensamiento capaces de generar subjetividades concretas" (Hulme 53). The summary of the novel introduced at the beginning reveals the way in which the musical revolt depicted in the novel results in the possibility to consume, without intermediaries, the product of labor and its surplus as the co-relation between race and labor is overcome by the characters and their rural community.

This surviving relationship of domination in the twentieth century, which motivates Martínez's characters to speak for themselves can be seen in Gregorio Martínez's native Coyungo, a territory to which he returns in his novels *Tierra de caléndula* (1975), *Canto de sirena* (1977), *Gloria del piturrín y otros embrujos de amor* (1985), and *Crónica de músicos y diablos* (1991). He explains that "[i]n the social ambiance in which [he] was born and lived, everyone, children and adults, men and women, bore the burden of hard labor from morning to night" (Martínez in Flores 516). After leaving Coyungo to gain official forms of education in Lima, he then tells us, "It was brutalizing labor. I was seven or eight years old. I already received a fixed wage. We children worked, well-behaved, culling cotton, heaping up stones" (Martínez in Flores 516). In his personal experience of rural production, in which women and children produced goods for a third party under conditions of wage labor characterized by the extraction of a surplus in which the experience of the parallel of subjective and material existence are jeopardized.

### *The Return of Material and Subjective Existence in Crónica*

How do Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of return and deterritorialization help elucidate and analyze *Crónica's* depiction of the return of the parallel of material and subjective existence? My reading of the novel proposes to retrace Martínez's ontological understanding of the return, both subjective and geographical, as a way to articulate his post-occidental perspective of the Peruvian Pacific. In the subjective return depicted by Martínez, inter-ethnic alliances

are restored and the characters themselves enjoy surpluses, both material and immaterial, as they enjoy the local music played by the Guzmán family. It is in this context that the character's apprenticeship into music becomes key in understanding the parallel processes shaping them.

It is important to note that in this reading of the novel, the ontological approach functions as an entry point Martínez's post-occidental views. Thus, this reading takes as its starting point the connective force of desire as a constitutive force of the subject and the subject's relation to his environment of material existence. In the novel, material existence, broadly understood, also incorporates forms of cultural expression such as myth and music. As part of leisure, they are central in defining a relationship to the rural world and its exploitive practices. In order to derive a post-occidental reading of the text that takes as its starting point an interest in ontology, the article creates a dialogue between Deleuze and Guattari's ontology and Eduardo Mendieta's understanding of post-Occidentalism. For him, as in the case of Martínez, "El pensamiento postoccidentalista es aquel donde el otro contesta, responde en su lenguaje" (Mendieta 123). So in what ways do Martínez's character respond to the surviving colonial conditions and those who create them but in their own language?

According to post-occidentalist thought, post-occidentalist thought is more appropriate to Latin American dynamics than postcolonial thought because postcolonial thought assumes that colonial relations and forms of production have come to an end whereas post-occidentalist thought assumes a continuation to be addressed through, for example, regional divisions and internal colonialism. This division is clear through Martínez's depiction of the displacement of his characters from Cahuachi to Lima.

Bearing in mind that Deleuze and Guattari understand desire as a bridging force able to connect and undo the subject's experience of the inside and the outside as the experience of the outside is produced and consumed, one aim of post-occidental thought depicted by Martínez is to make visible the connection rather than the separation between the two that has been supported by the modernizing project, a project that through the colonial enterprise accentuates the subject-object division and the center-periphery tension. This division takes territorial dimensions that separate subjects from the epicenters of political power and turns them into objects of power to be dominated by the center dating back to the colonial period. In the words of Alfredo Dussel,

Entre el "sujeto" que conoce y el "objeto" conocido solo puede existir una relación de exterioridad y de asimetría. Por ello, la "ontología de la totalidad", característica central de la civilización europea, ha mirado todo lo que no pertenece a ella (la "exterioridad") como "carencia de ser" y "barbarie." (Dussel 59)

In the context of the novel, the ontological exploration of the undoing of the subject-object division as a manifestation of a subjective return, has implications for an understanding of an Afro-Pacific relational cosmology through which Martínez is able to articulate post-occidental goals: the restitution and healing of his characters from the lingering effects of colonization and its structures.

In *Crónica*, the characters experience their subjective emergence or their subjective return in the context of a material or socially productive existence that has been previously jeopardized due to the history of colonization. This return, in the local context of coastal Peru depicted by Martínez, is therefore a way to speak of a return to a conscious or internal ontological state in relation to an outside of production that has been previously internalized as external or foreign. The return, a synonym of the experience of freedom in postcolonial times, is to be understood as an active process of consumption of the environment of labor that parallels a conscious process of production.

Trying to understand the parallel between subjective and material existence under non-exploitive and exploitive conditions of production of the means of life is difficult. In this context, Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of territorialization (abstraction and consumption of the outside) helps the reader elucidate Martínez's concerns about the complete deterritorialization (loss of the self to the environment of labor and its dynamic flows). It is in the understanding of these two ontological processes that Martínez's post-occidental perspective emerges.

In relation to production and consumption, leading to subjectivity Deleuze and Guattari explain:

Hence everything is production: production of productions, of actions and of passions; productions of recording processes, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; productions of consumptions, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties, and of pain. Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly reproduced (AO 4).

As in the parallel between production and consumption elucidated by Deleuze and Guattari, Martínez depicts the return to the close relationship between production and consumption, as parallel process leading to a free post-occidental subjectivity.

In fact, by the end of the novel, the reader appreciates this form of return in two ways: through their internal or musical transformation experienced by the characters as they directly consume what they produce, for instance, the joy of music, and through the way the family is perceived or visually processed by the locals as they return from Lima. In the first type of return, in the chapter "Los músicos de cahuachi," the narrator comments that "Cuando los Guzmán estaban con los ojos puestos en el papel y los dedos en el respectivo lugar del

instrumento y los labios pegados a la boquilla, se especulaba entonces que cualquiera que los veía podía creer que habían nacido sabiendo ese oficio" (CDMD 268).

The act of accepting the manuscript, and being able to read it, carries within it the further transformation of the character of the family (the family experiences a subjective residue that is produced and consumed in parallel to the task of learning music). The emergence of subjectivity in which material production and consumption of a joyful surplus coincide, attains a molar dimension. This molar transformation manifests itself through the new communal striation brought about by musical destratification. These limits are now permeable and welcome the entrance of the family. In this regard, through his character Huapaya, Martínez shows "how social production and relations of production are an institution of desire, and how affects or drives form part of the infrastructure itself" (AO 63).

Martínez focuses on the organs of the Guzmán family and on the desires that drive them back to their place of origin. At the same time, the characters establish new relationships in the form of social alliances. Furthermore, Martínez's novel shows that his narrative adds a different perspective to the racialized historical accounts that have located slaves and former slaves in a relationship of need controlled by Lima's political body. These historical accounts lead to a center-driven nomadism. Every line of flight takes the oppressed back to its oppressor's and its means of socio-economic codification.

In the second form of subjective return, the narrator refers to Felipe Guamán Poma in order to establish a subjective transformation brought about by music. During his discussion of the perception of the person of African heritage in Sondondo, the narrator evokes an image of racial fear from Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala's *Nueva Crónica y Buen Gobierno* (1615). Through this example, the narrator confirms the individual and molar transformation experienced by the characters. In so far as music challenges racial values that have gained a transcendental value or surface in consciousness, the community's transformation is of a molar type. Before the family's apprenticeship into music "se lo imaginaban tizado y maligno, con una apariencia más espantosa que el propio demonio" (CDMD 271). This perception is challenged through the possibility of finding enjoyment through the emotions produced by their musical performance.

Through the imperfect, Martínez alludes to the fact that musical flows transform the body internally. This transformation then leads to the replacement of the previously formed imaginary surface. In terms of subjectivation, the transformation of the community occurs in relation to the family. It amounts to their subjective emergence. This results in the production and consumption of a new way to process the appearance of the person of African heritage.

By enjoying the music played by the Guzmán family, the Sondondo people are able to rethink their perception



of whole persons identified with darkness and evil. The Sondondo people rid themselves of an overpowering emotion derived from the internalization of a despotic colonial order that has caused oppressed and oppressor to live under constant suspicion. Given the creation of racial surfaces in consciousness discussed in the theoretical chapter, the *comuneros* go through a process involving the transformation of the imaginary surfaces through which bodily encounters are processed and articulated.

In these examples, Martínez evokes subjective or ontological processes reminiscent of what Deleuze and Guattary understand as parallel processes leading to the development of consciousness. Through the processes of creating a desire machine involving the instruments and the colonial perceptions, Martínez alludes to how the parallel between subjective and material production initially involves the loss of the boundaries of the self. But this loss does not stop there because in the novel the Afro-Pacific subject, in tension with the Andean subject emerges in relation to its participation in material and cultural production. In *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari explain this emergence in terms of three syntheses that involve the bridging force of desire. In the first synthesis of consciousness, the subject's physical organs and senses become connected to the external world as we see through the characters' connection to the instruments and through their stereotyped perceptions. Initially, the pre-subject loses itself to the flows of racism because of the body's tendency to become connected, to create assemblages, and then to create an interiority out of the connectedness to the surrounding universe (territorialization). This loss of the self becomes an exploitable labor source. Then, in what Deleuze and Guattari call the second and third synthesis, Martínez's characters evolve and develop an economically, socially and historically conscious subjectivity. Consequently, in *Crónica*, the characters experience an instance of recollection, a reterritorialization of their connection to the surrounding environment of production that they are able to consume. This recollection comes into being due to music. Music functions as an alternative source of desire through which consciousness comes into being due to connective desire machines. These machines allow the characters to produce and consume music in parallel as the very manifestation of their existence.

## Conclusion

This article has attempted to produce a reading of the *Crónica de músicos y diablos* by relying on the study of the central force of desire. By looking into this connective force, the novel can be located at the intersection of an ontological or relational approach and decolonial thought in the form of post-Occidentalism. It is by placing Martínez's characters at the intersection of these two approaches that the characters

are able to restore jeopardized inter-ethnic relations and speak back to those who have kept them in the colonial limits of the race-labor co-relation. This is all possible as they experience a subjective return. This article has also provided socio-historic, biographical and bibliographical context in connection to the author. Through this contextualization, the article generates a post-occidental reading of the text in which the reader can see the author's criticism of the appropriation of the Afro experience in Peru. In terms of the content, the analysis has read the transformation of the Sondondo people, and the way the family challenges the State, by producing an alternative set of values through which they establish a new sense of community.

The new sense of community functions as a manifestation of an alternative body without organs or de-stratified social structure produced through the family's musical acquisition. This new alternative social structure results in a parallel sense of subjectivity connected, for example, to conscious understandings of extraction of surpluses and resolution of racial and class tensions (colonial subjective territorializations that survive in a post-occidental environment). These resolutions, generated after a joyful cultural destratification, are alternative territorializations or "designate regions in this [social] body" (AO 5). The body in question is one that calls attention to the transmodern condition of the characters and their world of exploitation. In depicting this transmodern condition, Martínez aligns with the goals of the post-occidental critique in which the effects of the colonial condition are still recognized as present and as generated from within existing social structures: "Lo vil no está más allá, sino adentro. En efecto, la crítica post-occidentalista empieza por descubrir lo abyecto altérico desde adentro" (Mendieta 122). More importantly, by intercalating musical machines produced through the connective force of desire and the local history of exploitation, the characters speak a language of liberation and attain their subjective and material states of freedom.

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**NOTES**

1. For a reading of this text that takes into account the role of European women travellers and their ambivalent replication of racist views, see Julia C. Paulk's "Representations of Slavery and Afro-Peruvians in Flora Tristan's Travel Narrative" in which Paulk relies on Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* (1992).
2. See the pamphlet "Plantas importantes de Ica," which was produced through the Darwin Initiative. This global initiative to gather and distribute local knowledge is supported by the British government around the world. The pamphlet provides the following information:

Nombre común: "Lucraco, Negrillo." Nombre científico: *Waltheria ovata* (Fam. Sterculiaceae) Útil para: apibotánica (miel de abeja-polen), medicinal, conservación de humedad, contenedor de las dunas, fertilidad del suelo, leña, hábitat para biodiversidad. Asociado con: Asociado con abejas, lagartijas, insectos.

The *lucraco* embodies biodiversity in Martínez's narrative.

3. See the blog article Juan Manuel Olaya, "La narrativa afroperuana de José 'Cheche' Campos: recuperación de la memoria histórica en Las negras noches del dolor." <http://juanmanuelolayarocha.blogspot.co.uk/2016/11/la-narrativa-afroperuana-de-jose-cheche.html>.

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