

31.

**Classical Bulletin****Issue 4, 2018****doi: 10.33909/cb/94.2018.04.43**

---

## **Exciting information about workers, working-class politics, peasant economies of Germany**

**By: Joan Wallach Scott**

*Arizona Univ, Sch Mus, 1455 W Univ Hts Dr N, Flagstaff, AZ 86005 USA.*

---

### ABSTRACT

The German hyperinflation of the 20s, is one of the economic events most studied and cited by experts in the field. And also one of the most manipulated. The famous pictures of people with money carts going to buy things, have been used historically to pontificate on the "fiscal indiscipline", the "emission of inorganic money" and the "excess of monetary liquidity", all these put as cause of the widespread price increases then occurred. These "explanations" of German hyperinflation represent a classic case of incomplete proof fallacy consisting of citing partial or isolated data that seem to confirm the truth of a certain proposition, ignoring additional evidence that may contradict this proposition. In this case, the fallacy consists in highlighting only the aspects of monetary issue involved in hyperinflation once it has already been developed, concealing that such "uncontrolled" issuance arose as an effect and not as a cause of the inflationary phenomenon. What otherwise is another fallacy, this time of reverse causality (when you take an effect for cause).

Keywords: information, workers, politics, Germany

### Introduction

In this regard, the first thing we have to do is go back to the end of the First World War: 1918. After having lost the war, Germany was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles, where it not only assumed the full moral and political responsibility of had caused the same, if not, lowered the terms of surrender, had to disarm, make territorial concessions to the winners and pay exorbitant compensation. Such was the amount of this debt that almost one hundred years later, 2010, Germany paid the last tranche of interest derived from it.

The conditions of the Treaty of Versailles were so complex that even within the winning side itself they were questioned. Particularly notable was the case of the

English economist John Maynard Keynes, who in his first book, *The Economic Consequences of Peace* (1919), noted the following:

"Moved by insane illusion and selfishness without apprehension, the German people subverted the foundations on which we all lived and edified. But the spokesmen of the French and English peoples have run the risk of completing the ruin that Germany started, for a peace that, if carried out, will destroy for the future - having restored it - the delicate and complicated organization - already altered and broken by war (...) The policy of degrading Germany to the servitude of an entire generation, of degrading the lives of millions of human beings is hateful and repulsive (...) nothing authorizes nations to put on the children of their enemies the perversities of their parents or rulers. (...) If we deliberately aspire to the impoverishment of central Europe, revenge, I do not hesitate to predict it, it will not be long "

The hyperinflationary process was a direct consequence of that treaty. The monetarists who have studied the case, usually claim that everything started because Germany, to finance the war, was given the task of issuing currency. But although the latter is true (the rise in military spending), it can not be considered as the beginning of the hyperinflationary process, as several authors have limited (including Keynes himself), that was also done by all other opponents, including the victors and particularly the United States, without triggering any hyperinflation.

In August of 1922, in a new public intervention, Keynes would affirm: "Germany will succumb to the inevitable lack of payment". In December of that same year, and after an ultimatum of collection by England, the country was declared bankrupt (or as I would say now: in default). In January of the following year, French and Belgian troops invaded and occupied the Ruhr basin - a highly industrialized region - in order to pressure Germany to pay.

The situation of scarcity of which Germany was barely recovering after its defeat, added to the constant expenditure of resources to pay reparations to its winners, the debasement of the exchange rate and the flight of capital between upper and middle sectors linked to the commerce and the finances, they fired the inflationary process. Many savers saw losing their patrimony in German currency, added to the fact of not being able to take refuge in currencies (dollars, pound, etc.) or gold, since the available ones the government used them to pay the debt. This put further pressure on the exchange rate ... but it also fueled the speculation: the larger capitalists and many families with economic resources began to speculate with the land and movable and immovable property, the merchants with the products and so on.

From the passivity of the government to the monetary disorder

All the above was enhanced by the staggering passivity of the German government in the face of the situation, partly understandable by the military blackmail of foreign powers, but at the same time unable to find doors inside outlets to an economic instability that escaped more and more of the hands. It is for this reason that some of the authors who have studied this phenomenon, highlight its strong psychological nature, in the understanding that the expectations of worsening of the situation were imposed on a population increasingly hit by the crisis, humiliated by their neighbors , and incredulous of the ability of his government to do something about it.

Regarding the latter, it is worth mentioning Bernard Aftalion, a French economist of Bulgarian origin who was an eyewitness to these events. I have already quoted Aftalion at least a couple of times just to highlight the same psychological or uncertainty present in our Venezuelan case (See: [here](#) and [here](#)). In 1935, in a text called, *Monnaie, Prix et Change*, he wrote the following:

In this essay, I compare two narratives from different nations, Haiti and Mozambique, in order to analyze intersections between the postcolonial contexts in which each fiction is embedded. Two theoretical perspectives inform my reading of Nadine Pinede's "Departure Lounge" (2011) and João Paulo Borges Coelho's *Field of transit* (2007). I draw first on Vivek Chibber's argument (2013a; 2013b) that postcolonial studies fail to provide an adequate basis for a theory of human rights and a practice of global solidarity. I then introduces the Warwick Research Collective's elaboration of a new theory of world literature constructed around the concept of "combined and uneven development". My textual analyzes of "Departure lounge" and *Field of transit* Next focus on the fictional portrayal of emerging practices within traditional societies experiencing a process of modernization and the effects of the world capitalist system. I conclude by proposing a way out of the limitations of postcolonial studies based on the concept of "intersectionality".

Of course, comparing experiences between Haiti and Mozambique may strike one as arbitrary or at least as unusual. Nonetheless, it is my intention to do precisely that. My purpose is to show that, beyond their different historical costumers - not to mention the obvious dissimilarity in terms of their colonial agents and these colonizers' *modi operandi* - there exist striking (though perhaps not obvious) affinities between their postcolonial worlds. By analyzing the short story "Departure Lounge" (2011) by Haitian descendant Nadine Pinede, and the novella *Field of transit* (2007) by Mozambican writer João Paulo Borges Coelho, I intend to show how these two countries and their peoples share common experiences and identities that are frequently disregarded by postcolonial studies.

#### Postcolonial Studies: Strengths

Before commenting on detail on our two fictional works, I would like to draw attention to Vivek Chibber's critique of postcolonial studies as developed in his recent book *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (2013a) in the second section of my essay. In the third section, I will introduce the new theory of world literature being elaborated by the Warwick Research Collective from the perspective of the concept of "combined and uneven development". WReC's work resonates deeply with Chibber's ideas and critique. These contributions serve to frame my analysis of "Departure Lounge" and *Field of transit* and to enable my subsequent conclusions on how the study of World Literatures, especially those of the developing world, can benefit if we expand the repertoire of our theoretical and critical toolkit.

Following the Derridean impulse, Homi Bhabha emphasized what, rightly or wrongly, considered to be the *aporia* (undecidability ; intractable contradictions) of the subaltern's position and stressed (at least symbolic) potential for subverting colonial power through subaltern discourses, insofar as these may appropriate and resignify colonial logics. Ranajit Guha, whose work is informed and inspired the Subaltern Studies Group, stressed the importance of anti-essentialism in the construction of subalternity, as well as the need to write "history from below". And the art historian Siva Kumar contributed fundamentally to the notion of what he calls "contextual modernity". This view of modernity can be seen as a forerunner to the rearticulation in Marxist terminology by Chibber and WReC of the unevenness of modernity. Within postcolonial studies proper, Paul Gilroy's discussion of "double consciousness" also reverberates with Marxist understandings of contradictory class locations and contradictory class consciousness. Originally set forth in WEB Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903), the term "double consciousness" anticipates the feminist-Marxist concept of "intersectionality".

In Latin America, the Modernity / Coloniality Group (also known as the Decolonial Group) has produced major contributions from the perspectives of decolonization and opposition to imperialism and colonialism. This multidisciplinary group includes such prolific figures as the sociologists Anibal Quijano, Edgardo Lander, Ramon Grosfoguel and Agustin Lao-Montes, the semioticians Walter Mignolo and Zulma Palermo, the education theorist Catherine Walsh, anthropologists Arturo Escobar and Fernando Coronil, the literary critic Javier Sanjinés, and philosophers Enrique Dussel, Santiago Castro-Gómez, María Lugones and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. These scholars represent especially important influences in the development of the theories and practices of "Southern Epistemologies". And their main postulate - namely, that colonialism is not the opposite of modernity but rather part of its central dynamic (its "dark side") - can be made to dialogue with the Marxist idea of "combined and uneven development".

The research context of Portuguese postcolonial theory is dominated by researchers who are also broadly engaged with the project of identifying and elaborating "Southern Epistemologies". These include such brilliant scholars as Boaventura Sousa Santos and Maria Paula Meneses.

#### Postcolonial Studies: Limitations

Chibber focuses his critique of postcolonial studies primarily on the works by Ranajit Guha, Partha Chatterjee, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, all of whom are founding and key members of the Subaltern Studies Group. According to Vivek Chibber in *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (2013a), it was natural for these academics to take Marxism as their primary interlocutor. Nonetheless, I have argues,

The primary source of the engagement with, and rejection of, Marxism has been political: a sense that the world has moved on; That dilemmas of late capitalism, particularly in the Global South, can not be apprehended by the categories of historical materialism; Even more, that the failure of liberation movements in the twentieth century was, in substantial measure, the result of Marxism's abiding theoretical inadequacies. (Chibber, 2013a: 2)

As Pranav Jani explains:

In the past three decades, postcolonial studies has as a field acquired, certainly like no other literary critical trend, an outstanding visibility. Migrating quickly from literary analysis to other subjects, such as history and anthropology, and carrying with it a deep and abiding interest in culture and ideology, postcolonial studies replaced itself in the place previously occupied by Marxism. Thus, the main goals of the postcolonial theory would be to explain in a different way the function of capitalism and to enable a contrasting critique of its resulting inequities. Asserting itself not only as a theory, but also as a radical political practice, the fascination with postcolonialism spread all over, and it continues to thrive.

Chibber comments, however, that "the challenge faced by postcolonial studies is strikingly similar to the one accepted by Marxism a century ago - to generate a theory adequate to the needs of a radical political agenda" (2013a: 2). He calls, nonetheless, attention to the differences:

[...] the most obvious one being that Marxism's initial development and spread was almost entirely based on working-class organizations and political parties, while its foothold in universities was infinitesimally small. Postcolonial studies is its mirror image, having developed entirely within the university and, although drawing some inspiration from movements, rarely in more than symbolic contact with them. (2013a: 2-3)

Chibber highlights one of the major problems with this field of studies, ie, the lack of a research agenda and its presentation more as a political orientation than as a

theory per se. Postcolonial studies do not offer a coherent methodology, but only a political agenda and perception. And Chibber adds:

It is not that postcolonial studies is an assemblage of theories while Marxism was not - in fact, Marxism always comprised an eclectic range of theories, much as does the former. The difference is that Marxism always sought internal coherence and while postcolonial studies resists any compulsion to bring together and assess its various strands. Thus, as its influence has spread, the variations in what falls under its rubric have tended to increase. From literature and cultural studies, to historiography, the philosophy of history, and anthropology, it is now possible to find postcolonial theory in all these areas and elsewhere, but with the common "theory" increasingly hard to discern. (2013a: 3)

It is then easy to understand why Chibber criticizes postcolonial theory. From his point of view, he tries to do the same as Marxism - ie, to explain the world and how to proceed in order to change it - and it fails in both realms. Postcolonial theory not only fails but also has serious conservative implications. For example, it revives such Orientalist ideas as that the West profoundly differs from the East: "it relentlessly promotes Eurocentrism [by portraying] the West as the site of reason, rationality, secularism, democratic culture, and the like, and the East as an unchanging miasma of tradition, unreason, religiosity, and so on". According to Pranav Jani, we can compare Chibber's formulation with that of Sarkar, a founding member of Subaltern Studies "Who famously left the editorial collective after it turned decisively toward postmodernism" (2014: 108). Jani adds:

In "The Decline of Subaltern in Subaltern Studies" Sarkar argued that the "detachment from socio-economic contexts and determinants" in Subaltern Studies had led to a simplistic vision of the "subaltern" (the marginalized, the oppressed) as being frozen in time, outside of modern life. As both Chibber and Sarkar contend, postcolonial theory and subaltern studies take us back to the same orientalist representations the colonizers peddled - now repackaged by this movement in the language of radical theory. (2014: np.)

By setting itself as an opponent of the universalization propagated by Marxism, postcolonialism claims that people are not influenced by their culture, but fully constituted by it. In Chibber's words, "That means their socializations is so strong, their culture and cultural indoctrination are overriding, that it is their understanding of their basic needs and interests, like the importance of physical well-being or individual harm" (2013b: 41). For Chibber, a lot is at stake if we accept this statement, since any conception of human rights stops making sense. Chibber asserts that culture is always an important element of subjectivity, but it can not be taken as the essence of subjectivity if it makes people ignore their overall well-being.

Another argument put forward by Chibber in *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* is that, while Marxism positions itself as a part of an international and universal struggle against capitalism - defending the idea that, beyond religion, color, gender, etc., the oppressed populations of the planet have interests in common in the struggle against capitalism - postcolonialism asserts that workers from non-western societies are not motivated by the same concerns as Westerners, that they do not even think in terms of their interests, ie, that they have a motive, basically different from westerners. For Chibber, this conception is reminiscent of the one used by the imperialist and colonizer countries when they then deny rights to Asians and Africans. In this sense, Chibber's argument rests on the clearest of principles:

If you think people in postcolonial cultures deserve the same rights as people in rich countries, you can only make that argument if you also believe they have the same needs and interests as the latter. To deny this is to insist that Easterners and Westerners live in different worlds. Such a theory can not possibly sustain and support international movements as internationalism within the working class. (2013b: 42)

Chibber also addresses and challenges the claim made by postcolonial theory - one which is arguably one of its major fallacies - that Marxism is not different from colonial ideology because it is Eurocentric as the latter was. Nothing could be more false, however, if one looks at Marxism's history during the twentieth century. Chibber argues that, in fact, Marxism is the only theory that inexorably and incessantly engaged the eastern world. In his words, "The idea that it is a theory that ignores the nonwest or that it imposes western categories artificially, or that it is blind to the realities of the nonwestern world, is pretty far-fetched" (ibidem: 42). As Jani states, "PTSC offers a defense, from a left-wing perspective, of universalism, totality, reason, truth, reality, progress, knowledge, and other terms and concepts that have been denigrated and caricatured by postcolonial theorists and others [...]" (2014: np.).

Regarding the lack of internal coherence in postcolonial theory, Chibber explains the analytical confusion of postcolonialism in terms of a typical phenomenon of university culture:

This is the eagerness among academics to appear au courant, at the cutting edge, to display familiarity with the very latest conceptual advances. The most common means of doing this is to roll for the neologisms in order to pepper one's work with them, even if only for symbolic purposes. The result is a kind of conceptual inflation, in which the substantive influence of a framework appears to extend far beyond its current reach. (2013a: 3)

Moreover, the accusations leveled by postcolonial theorists against Marxism are only a way to build their own credentials:

[I]f you want to establish yourself as a radical in academia, and you do not want any of the hits to your career that come with being to 'Marxist,' the first thing you have to do is say something negative about Marxism. It establishes that even though you're on the left you're not 'one of them'. (2013b: 43)

By way of summarizing Chibber's proposals, and beyond the positive aspects that he finds in postcolonial studies - such as the maintenance of the idea that colonialism was extremely destructive and that it engendered a pernicious ideology - what happens in general with postcolonial theory is that we are served a quantity of scholarship and argumentation that is interested in criticizing the dominant order, but which is not anti-capitalist. In the end, Chibber underscores, this is all that postcolonial studies have to offer. Chibber goes even further by claiming that what we have is a theory that imports from leftist academic culture the empty and presumptuous verbosity that one can find in graduate seminar rooms. According to Chibber, it is necessary "to push back against some of the silliness and obscurantism that has been propagated by postcolonial theory" (2013b: 44). And, as Jani once again points out, "Chibber also reinvigorates debates about universalism, asserting that, in order to understand a world brought together by capitalism, we need to see the world as one - not by ignoring diversity across regions but by explaining how capitalism thrives on the creation of difference and heterogeneity" (2014: np.).

#### Literary Studies: Combined and Uneven Development

In their collaborative work, which recently appeared under the title *Combined and Uneven Development-Towards to New Theory of World-Literature* (2015), the Warwick Research Collective (WREC) proposes a new way to redefine and reinvent the field of literary studies, that is, how it emerges from its current crisis. WREC first

lends support to Chibber's understanding of the significant ways in which postcolonial studies have failed, arguing in turn that, [i]f [Raymond] Williams's identification of a crisis in literary studies in 1981 can be taken to mark the emergence of various new initiatives - among them, postcolonial, ethnic and women's studies, cultural studies itself, the epistemological and methodological interventions of poststructuralism, postmodernism and deconstruction - perhaps the current moment is marked by the recognition that these 'new formations' have themselves now passed their sell-by dates. (2015: 4)

1. The authors explain that Trotsky amplified Marx and Lenin's work by formulating an "elaborated theory (...)

WReC then moves to resituate the problem of "world literature" by "pursuing the literary-cultural implications of the theory of combined and uneven development" (2015: 6, see also Davidson, 2014, Trotsky, 1906). This paradigm shift involves reconceptualizing the notion of modernity, which means "de-linking it from the idea of the 'west' and yoking it to that of the capitalist world-system" (WReC, 2015: 15). The theory of combined and uneven development originated in the work of Engels, Lenin and Trotsky<sup>1</sup>; more recently, Fredric Jameson has described the world literary system as "one and unequal" (1981; 2013). As WReC authors remark: "The theory of 'combined and uneven development' was therefore devised to describe a situation in which capitalist forms and relations exist alongside 'archaic forms of economic life' and pre-existing social and class relations" (2015: 11). So, in the first instance, WReC defines 'world literature' "as the literature of the world-system - of the modern capitalist world-system, that is" (ibidem : 8). This implies that we need to understand modernity as governed by unevenness. In other words,

The historically determined 'coexistence', in any given place and time, of realities from radically different moments of history [...]. The multiple modes in and through which this 'coexistence' manifests itself - the multiple forms of appearance of unevenness - are to be understood as being connected, as being governed by a socio-historical logic of combination, rather than as being contingent and asystematic. (ibidem : 12)

2. WReC here is following Harootyan insights that "If modernity is understood as the way in which c (...)

In the same way, WReC argues that we need to recognize that capitalist development does not "smooth away but rather produces unevenness, systematically and as a matter of course" (ibidem). Another key element is that "modernity is neither a chronological nor a geographical category. It is not something that happens - or even happens first - in 'the west' and to which others later gain access" (2015: 13). Capitalist modernization entails development, "but this 'development' takes the forms also of the development of underdevelopment, of maldevelopment and dependent development" (ibidem). WReC thus emphasizes that the "idea of some sort of 'achieved' modernity, in which unevenness would have been superseded, harmonized, vanquished or ironed out is radically unhistorical" (ibidem). "Alternative" modernities, as they have been attempted in recent state projects (for example, in Mozambique or Cubanized Angola), thus do not really represent a solution, since they derive from an "assumption as to the 'western' provenance of modernity - rather than [from] situating it in the context of capitalism as a world-system -... both misguided and unnecessary" (2015: 14). These modernities are better understood, in the authors' perspective, as "modernities (as long as they are understood only as a relationship to the centers of capitalism [...]), in which all societies shared a common reference provided by global capital and its requirements" <sup>2</sup> (WReC, 2015: 14). According to WReC, such an

understanding should challenge our uncritical habit of conflating epistemological and chronological primacy ('modernity happened in Europe first and best, and then in other places', etc.), and get us into the habit of systematic thinking in terms of non-linear conjunctions. ( *ibidem* : 15)

On these questions, also see Jameson, 2013 and Jameson, 1981.

As we ready ourselves to analyze and to compare specific works of Haitian and Mozambican fiction, we do well to keep in mind two main ideas drawn from WReC : 1) capitalism should be understood to be the substrate of world-literature (its "political horizon "; 2) modernity should be understood as constituting world-literature's subject and form:" modernity is both what world-literature indexes or is 'about' and what gives world-literature its distinguishing formal characteristics "(2015: 15) 3.

In their analysis, they treat "the novel paradigmatically, not exemplarily, as a literary form in w (...)

WReC's argument can be condensed into the following summary assertions: "a single but radically uneven world-system; a singular modernity, combined and uneven; and a literature that variously registers this combined unevenness in both its form and its content to reveal itself as [...] world-literature "(2015: 49). World-literature is thus an analytical category and not one centered in, or by, aesthetic judgment. 4 In WReC's view,

the value of literary-world systems theory lies in the fact that it enables the comparison of discrepant literary subunits and social formations of the world-system, both at the same point in chronological time and at congruent conjunctures in the recurring rhythmic cycles of capitalism - Russian and Brazilian novels of the 1880s, for instance, or those from the Austro-Hungarian empire and Ireland in the early twentieth century... ( *ibidem* : 68)

In my opinion, it is by following WReC's proposed reconceptualization of world-literature that a comparative perspective is possible without following the same, well-known pitfalls of postcolonial theory.

#### Intersectionality

"Intersectionality" is a concept whose relevance to the argument of this essay will not be made clear until my conclusion. Nevertheless, it is useful to introduce "intersectionality" at this point if only as a suggestion for readers to keep in mind as they evaluate my interpretations of Pinede's and Borges Coelho's narratives. As a way of concretizing "intersectionality", let us consider cases of what is often termed "identity politics". These will illustrate and confirm two points: (1) the symbolic creation of new identities requires materialization in political practices, and (2) identities are never singular, and that fact opens up the possibility of solidarity.

For example, the recognition, celebration, and appreciation of Afro-American culture within the African-American population in the United States helped centrally to consolidate an Afro-American identity. But Black liberation would have been impossible without the organized struggles carried out by The Universal Black Improvement Association, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, The Black Panthers, or The Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, as well as by other lesser-known groups. In this way, the formation of an Afro-American identity during the twentieth-century required materialization in social practice as a condition for Black self-emancipation.

And what is true for the forms of the struggle that was in the 1960s? Black liberation movement, creating new Afro-American identities from older Afro-American subjectivities, is also true for other self-determining assertions of identity (Black Lives Matter today; for Women; the LGBTQ movement; Aztlan and the Chican @ movement; the American Indian Movement). Indeed, the successful emergence of such identities requires materialization in social practices, and in that sense, the mobilization of social

movements can be said to transform "subjects" (individuals and groups as passively defined by a social system) into "agents" (individuals and groups as actively transforming a social system).

There subsists, of course, to a certain reification of "identity" in what we have just affirmed. Even in the case of identities based on self-determination - those that are articulated for the purpose of self-emancipation - These in fact lack seamless homogeneity. They may be said to embody their own (stronger or weaker) contradictions, in particular historical conjunctures, such as tensions between women of color and white women, Cuban-American Hispanics and Mexican-American Latinos, gays and lesbians, Native Americans who continue to live on reservation territories and those who have relocated, full-time workers and the precariat, Oprah and Sojourner Truth.

Moreover, and now in a positive sense, identities lack seamless homogeneity because aspects of any individual subject's identity simultaneously converge with other social identities, even when the individual's subjectivity is constructed by an identitarian discourse as, in its essence, divergent. That is why it is necessary to introduce the concept of "intersectionality" into any discussion of "identity". And, indeed, for our purposes "intersectionality" has much to contribute to a discussion of the relations between the identities of the global North and West, on the one hand, over and against the global South and East, on the other, as they are constructed as antinomies in the context of postcolonial theory.

"Intersectionality" is a concept put forward by Black feminist scholar Kimberle Crenshaw and developed in various ways by Patricia Hill Collins, the Combahee River Collective, Barbara Smith and Angela Davis, among others. It is meant to capture two realities: (1) an oppressed individual, such as a Black woman, experiences multiple forms of oppression simultaneously (gender, race, and, in the majority of instances, social class); and (2) systems of oppression transcend singular identities. Thus Black men are ensnared in the same practices of racism that afflict Black women. Forms of oppression and exploitation based on sexual preference, social class, religion, and ethnicity similarly cut across gender boundaries, nationalities, roots, and creeds. In all of these cases, the isolation and vindication of a singular identity masks (1) the fact that multiple oppressions are integrated into an overall social system; and (2) the fact that those who suffer a particular form of oppression, which others do not suffer, still have an interest in allying with those others, since at some point (s) the oppression (s) each one experiences intersects with the oppression (s) experienced by others.

Views of knowledge and of politics based on "intersectionality" thus avoid the worst consequences of the kinds of "identity politics" that have become so fashionably dominant in the academic world. "Intersectionality" means precisely that one has an interest in fighting against all forms of oppression and exploitation. Moreover, it means that one does not need to personally experience a specific form of oppression (racial, gender, national, class) in order to become an effective fighter against that oppression. In this sense, "intersectionality" reveals the limits of social movements based on "identity", including nationalist or regionalist movements whose politics reify the identities on which they are based.

"Intersectionality" is a key to understanding the limits of postcolonial theory regarding the cognitive and political insularity and incommensurability of North and South and East and West.

Departure and Transit

The relevance of WReC in this essay will quickly become apparent in my analysis of Pinede's "Departure Lounge". The relevance of Chibber must await my analysis of Borges Coelho's field of transit, as well as my CONCLUSION in Which the relevance of "intersectionality" Also appearing will. Succinctly put, these theories facilitate the analysis of formal structures as well as the ideologies conveyed by these literary forms. Since I do not want to be accused of "oversimplifying", and therefore of being a "reductionist, mechanical Marxist", I wish to stress from the outset that our fictional texts are not mere "reflections of reality" nor are they mere "pretexts" for the interpretive perspectives I employ. On the contrary, I consider that each fictional narrative intervenes in specific political-ideological circumstances and, in doing so, produces insights embodying genuine cognitive import.

So I begin here by analyzing "Departure Lounge" and I try to show how it is only "by grasp [ing] it as the literary registration of modernity under the sign of combined and uneven development" (WReC, 2015: 17) that it is possible to compare with Borges Coelho's *Golf trânsito*. World-literature in this sense encompasses

[...] modes of spatio-temporal compression, its juxtaposition of asynchronous orders and levels of historical experience, its barometric indications of invisible forces acting from a distance on the local and familiar - as these manifest themselves in literary forms, genres and aesthetic strategies. Any typology of combined and uneven development will offer a catalog of effects or motifs at the level of narrative form: discrepant encounters, alienation effects, surreal cross-linkages, unidentified freakish objects, unlikely likenesses across barriers of language, period, territory - the equivalent of umbrellas meeting sewing machines on (animated) dissecting tables. (ibidem)

By compressing spatio-temporal periods of Haiti's history, Pinede's short story falls within WReC's understanding of world-literature. "Departure Lounge" tells the story, narrated in the first person, of Fabienne, a tour guide who is supposed to show Haiti to Miranda Wolcott, a well-off food journalist. As she waits for Miranda at the airport, Fabienne tries to justify her coming back to Haiti by invoking her dead grandmother's "signs" from the grave. During her trip with Miranda, on which they are going to visit co-ops in Cap-Haïtien accompanied by Manuel, the agronomist and program manager at Plant for Peace, and Alexis, the director of Plant for Peace, Fabienne's stream of consciousness narration goes back and forth, a strategy used to make the reader aware of some crucial events in Haiti's history. Examples are the Massacre River, "where in 1937, the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo ordered the slaughter of at least twenty thousand Haitians" (2011: 256), and the need for Fabienne's parents to leave Haiti because of the brutal government of Papa Doc Duvalier.

In "Departure Lounge" one is faced with inequality on multiple levels. For one, there is open racism: "Then we moved to the US, where my classmates asked me if I stuck pins into Vodou dolls. Oh, and if we were responsible for AIDS" (WReC, 2011: 251). Another topic of inequality falls into the category of belittling / discrediting Haiti's cultural / historical importance: "Maybe the sad state of my birthplace is embarrassing me, though I will never admit that to her. It's complicated to try and explain how I can be proud of the most people see as a hopeless basket case" (ibidem : 252). Issues of sexism and gender inequality are also portrayed: "The smoke snaked along the poteau mitan, the middle post holding up the temple. Grandmère Lucille would always say women were the poteau mitan of the world. Then one day I asked why the priests at our church were men" (2011: 247). Besides other aspects, the short story also conveys the feeling of being from one's own culture: "I can understand my parents' language but can not use it here, now, for a simple greeting. I can translate long speeches from Creole to English for Miranda, yet can not string together one simple

sentence when I need to. I am functionally illiterate in what should be my mother tongue, a fumbling tourist in what should be my homeland "( *ibidem* : 257).

Nonetheless, it is the worker's struggle – their protests and potential use of violence as a means of social/political power – that surfaces as one of the most striking features of the narrative: "The farmers begin to tell stories of being threatened and forced to sell their land so as a free-trade zone can be built. 'We will fight for this land until we die!' they yell, waving their machetes. But some say they're afraid of what may happen if they don't sell. Alexis listens to all of it along with us, then he asks if there's a way they can put their heads together" ( *ibidem* : 257).

By paralleling individual and collective suffering, the narrative can be taken from its historical and geographical context, in order to become a text that speaks to and about humanity:

"You are crying", says one of the farmers. I look up and recognize his face. Earlier, when we were walking through his land, I had spotted me and called out in Creole, "You are Haitian, are not you? I can tell by your beautiful skin. " But now his voice is sharp: "You are crying, but we are the ones with a reason to cry." I have a reason too. I can understand my parents' language but I can not use it here, now, for a simple greeting. ( *ibidem* : 256-257)

Not to dismiss Fabienne's own struggle with her split identity, it is nevertheless the farmers' quest against the government for better working and living conditions which makes this story valuable as an example of world-literature.

Turning our attention now to Borges Coelho's fictional work, *Field of transit*, will allow us to establish some parallels between the two narratives and to draw a few conclusions.

The plot of *field trânsito* is in September around the life of the protagonist, J. Mungau, located in a transit camp. Mungau is taken there in the middle of the night and never knows the reasons for his arrest. Even though it is easy to associate the narrative with a critique of the reeducation camps established in Mozambique after its independence, Borges Coelho asserts that is necessary to avoid such a reading:

In this sense, the book of referentiality is simultaneously connected and not connected to the reality of Mozambique and can be situated in the context of global civilization. As WReC puts it, this Mozambican text should be considered together with the Haitian text discussed above because they both "bear testimony - in their own distinct ways, and in both their form and their content - to the 'shock of the new', the massive rupture effected at the levels of space-time continuum, lifeworld, experience and human sensorium by capitalist modernization "(2015: 50). Even though the space is described, there are no references to an identifiable geography. It is this particularity that opens up the narratives to and for the "juxtaposition of asynchronous orders and levels of historical experience, its barometric indications of invisible forces acting from a distance on the local and family" ( *ibidem* : 17).

*Field trânsito* alludes to a possible scenario Situations Where all the Conveyed by a totalitarian State emerges Where the capitalist order reigns, transforming into a collective Individuals Where Their human individuality as well as Disappears Their social rights. None of the book's characters have a proper name, with the exception of the protagonist. They are either identified by numbers, by their profession (Village Chief, Professor, Director), or by some other characteristic (Professor's Wife, Egret, Pitted). We can observe here striking similarities with Pinede's "Departure Lounge" where the farmers who live in Haiti's border are described as a collective voice that can be placed in any corner of the world, where the peasants are threatened and forced to sell their land to comply with the capitalist processes and forces imposed by the

intervention of imperialist countries. It is the lack of democracy that links Pinede's peasants and Borges Coelho's people at the reeducation camps, all of whom are forced to abandon their lands, displaced, and with no choice other than compliance.

While it is customary simply to take at face value Frelimo's claim that it implemented "socialism" (...)

Another similarity suggested by both narratives can be located in the vicious attacks perpetrated by the State on its individuals: Manuel, as we have seen, gets abducted by a group of armed men and has not been seen since, as many have also disappeared at the reeducation camps in Mozambique. This also leads to the idea of massacres on a greater or lesser scale, carried out by the country's government - as in the case of Mozambique as portrayed by Borges Coelho's narrative (where a supposedly socialist State tries to impose on its inhabitants a new mentality based on Marxist-Leninist principals 5) - or by neighborhood governments - as in the reference made in Pinede's short story to the 1937 slaughter ordered by Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, which took the lives of at least twenty thousand Haitians.

One of field *trânsito*'s MOST interesting features is the class Taught by the Professor in Which I instructs the prisoners in regard to the virtues of collectivity vis-à-vis the disease of individuality. In Mungau's opinion, "a colectividade é um corpo só, um corpo what result gives União das várias singularities "(Borges, 2007: 75). On the other side, Prisoner 13.2 believes, in opposition to Mungau, that " uma união simple of singularities SW Poderia be numa singularity that, embora Maior, would continue to be também ela limited "( ibid : 76). Transformation would be the solution-

" uma colectividade é, isso sim, uma união de colectividades transformadas!" (Ibidem : 76). The Professor then shows the importance of the collectivity by comparing the garden labored by Prisoner's 13.2 group with his wife's, emphasizing the vitality of the first in opposition to the poor quality of the second. According to his point of view, the lesson is obvious: "Is it worth such individual stubbornness? Both excesso, say assim, of singularity? Vale worth desafiarmos sozinhos to natureza "? (Ibid : 77). The dutiful students reply that no, it is not worth it to defy nature alone. Nonetheless Borges Coelho's narrative suggests something else, since it places in the hands of the Professor's Wife - a character apparently without voice and power, submissive to her husband who mistreats her violently - the agency of the Director's murder following his rape of her while she worked in her garden:

Espreitando from behind do rochedo Mungau tem enfim to visão gives horta give s Mulher do Professor. A meio dela, on top das rickety couves, holds com or Director of calças falls até years tornozelos, com as Perninhas fortes bem à Mostra. Segura Mulher do Professor, muito maior do that ele, com as suas duas energetic Aranhas ; obriga - a a manter -se of cats no chão enquanto prossegue com uma arrastada prelecção. Sublinha aquil o what diz com puxões secos what to obrigam to twist a cabeça ea impedem to be lifted. (Borges, 2007: 123)

Later, she asks Mungau : " Entrepreneur- me a tua faca. Tenho de fazer um trabalho what só com ela posso fazer. I return- assim that or conclude" (Borges, 2007: 142). Mungau's thoughts convey the awakening of a woman against her oppression not only by men, but also by the capitalist power embodied in the Director's character: É a primeira time what lhe ouve a articulated voice assim, proferindo a whole sentenc e inteira. Não são nem uivos roars gives fera, nem sequer you gemidos de uma brutaliza da vítima. É apenas uma voz de mulher. E di -

lo enquanto se vira fugazmente para trás, na direcção gives moribunda horta. Co mo se só aquela faca fosse capaz de a fazer reviver. (2007: 142)

This act will change life in the fields. Perhaps the sexual violence can be understood as analogous to the crimes committed against the people and the land by capitalism's penetration of pre-capitalist societies. The Professor's Wife contains in herself a powerful negative critique of the social and political system that is in place. She also can represent the potential for resistance to the physical and psychological violence that is imposed on her and on the people of Mozambique. The same can be said about Manuel. Even though he is kidnapped, and his disappearance may imply his death, he was resisting the power of capitalism in a society highly dominated by American and European imperialism and capitalism. Alexis and the peasants who survived "the vicious attacks that took place yesterday in Hinche against peasants leaving the Congress" (ibidem: 261) will keep on fighting "against globalization" (ibidem: 258).

At the end of the novel, one observes the dissolution of the totalitarian organization spread across the three fields – the Old, the New and the Transit one. The prisoners of the two first ones revolt and threaten to invade the third, which lost its leadership. In the midst of the chaos, out of which there seems to be no other way except imposing a new absolute order, the Professor's Wife keeps working on her garden apparently oblivious to her surroundings:

Her resistance to the totalitarianism imposed by the new post-independence government can also be interpreted through the world-literature analysis proposed by WReC as a reflection of the multiple temporalities extant in the combined and uneven development of a periphery. Her way of cultivating her garden can be seen as a traditional mode of subsistence which, along side of the cruel attempts at destruction by the colonialist order, remains alive and still struggles against the new system of modernization. Mungau's position of critical opposition, which he maintains until the end by fighting against the absurdity of his arrest, parallels in "Departure Lounge" the actions of the Haitian activists, who never stop voicing against the absurdities of their nation.

The representation of space in both narratives also exceeds the description of its physical characteristics, "as the political and cultural implications are joined to intimations of the 'irreal'" 6 (WReC, 2015: 88). Mozambique and Haiti mark a verifiable position in the map, but they also allude to a place of fantasy in the imperial imagination – the Soviet Union and China in the former's case; the United States, the IMF and the World Bank in the latter. Also, the realities lived in the context of these physical spaces extend beyond their national borders and are felt throughout other world peripheries, as highly suggested by Borges Coelho's omission of proper names and country designation in his novel. Both narratives intersect at the human level where human beings are being oppressed and exploited by the capitalist system. Both also envision a way out by portraying the union of the individuals in a common cause. Borges Coelho's novel describes that space of encounter – revolution? – in a moving manner:

He murmurs -everything or unoccupied- on the benches two feirantes, na camarata two guards, we labirínticos corridors between the casinhas two prisioneiros, not crowded with crianças, velhos, mulheres and domestic birds to which chamam de Aldeia Nova Chamam, - murmurs - It is also known that it is located in the Campo Novo junction in the Campo An-tigo algures to Meio do Caminho. São agora uma horda só. Ao braço forte e desarvorado juntou - is a perfidious inteligência. As luvas cinzentas, able to cash in turn as tenazes, têm agora pairs oculi of lentes grossas that as guiem.

Knowledgeable destes zunzuns, you feirantes embalam you seus produtos, recusam - is to sell -the ainda what lhes seja offered or dobro do preço that before pediam. You keep, for the time being, planting weapons inside do chão as hardy villages traveling through unseen and metallic sementes, burying their own bundles as circumspect coveiros, libertam -se of passed identities, fazem as Contas das that lhes convém assumir. [...] Já is fala em liberdade, fear -se or pior. (2007: 192)

#### Conclusion

It is not true that inflation and the subsequent German hyperinflation have started as monetary phenomena, in the sense that they have been caused by an uncontrolled issuance of currency by the German government and central bank. The exponential issuance of coins and bills was a deliberate measure taken by both instances before the inflationary phenomenon, which arose after the economic but also political and social effects caused by the German defeat in the First World War and the sanctions to which it was exposed.

While it is true that the issuance of a new currency was key to the defeat of hyperinflation, it was not, however, a sufficient measure. In fact, it was not even the most important one. Without the renegotiation of the terms contemplated in the Treaty of Versailles, which allowed the refinancing of Germany and its large corporations, the new currency would not have had the success it had.

The Dawes and Young plans that drove the so-called German economic miracle of the interwar with its dizzying industrialization, was a measure not humanitarian but political: the idea was to turn Germany into a wall of contention against the USSR that could even face it militarily, hence the passivity of the Allies at the beginning of the Second War before the advances of Hitler.

From the strictly economic and institutional point of view, the key role played in situations like these was demonstrated by the State's willingness to solve them: when the German Central Bank abandoned its passive and ambiguous role in the face of the crisis, it was able to face and defeat it.

The deep consequences left by hyperinflation and all the associated crisis suffered by the German interwar society, coupled with the inability of the left to have a less mechanistic reading of the situation, favored the advance of fascism and the subsequent rise of Nazism. As we have denounced innumerable times: when, by economic means, the logic of the strongest is imposed, fascism ends up imposing itself as a political correlate.

#### References

1. Engels, "Sinopsis de El Capital", en Sobre El Capital, La Habana, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975, pp. 71-155.
2. McLellan, David; Marx, su vida y sus ideas, Barcelona, Crítica, 1983, p. 390
3. Ibid. p. 410.
4. Ibid. p. 407)
5. Marx, Postfacio a la segunda edición de El Capital, Tomo I, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1999, p. XVII.
6. Mandel, La formación del pensamiento económico de Marx, México, Siglo XXI Editores, 1877, p. 3.
7. "Esbozo de crítica de la economía política", en Breves escritos económicos, México, Grijalbo, 1978, p. 20. p. 21
8. Ibid. 22.p. 415.
9. Engels, "Esbozo de crítica de la economía política", en Breves escritos económicos, México, Grijalbo, 1978, p. 10.

10. McLellan, David; Op. cit. pp. 154-155.
11. Lenin, "Federico Engels", Marx, Engels, Marxismo, Pekin, Ediciones en lenguas extranjeras, 1980, p. 59.
12. Engels, "Contribución a la historia de la Liga de los comunistas", en: Marx, Engels, Obras escogidas en tres tomos, Tomo III, Moscú, Progreso, 1976, p. 190.
13. Marx, Manuscritos Económico-Filosóficos de 1844, México, Grijalbo, 1968, pp. 74-75.
14. Ibidem.
15. Ibidem.
16. Ibidem.
17. Ibid. p. 111.
18. Engels, La situación de la clase obrera en Inglaterra, España, Esencias, 1974, p. 21.
19. Ibid. p. 44.
20. Ibid. p. 190..
21. Ibid. p. 38.
22. Engels, La situación de la clase obrera en Inglaterra, España, Esencias, 1974, pp. 44-45
23. Citado en: McLellan, p. 386