*Debate*

Ethnicities

# Continuity and change in Hispanic identity

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According to the most recent US census, Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the USA. As a result, political commentators from various points on the political spectrum have discussed the effects both positive and negative that will result from the increasing number of Hispanics living in the USA. These political considerations demonstrate the need for philosophical investigation of the meaning of Hispanic identity. What kind of category is Hispanic? How was Hispanic identity formed? What individuals or groups count as Hispanic? What are the ruptures and divisions within the Hispanic category?

In the last 10 years, there has been a significant amount of philosophical work dedicated to the nature of Hispanic/Latino identity. Jorge Gracia's publication of *Hispanic/Latino Identity* in 2000 was a major landmark. Gracia has continued his investigation of Hispanic/Latino identity by publishing *Surviving Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality* (2005), *Latinos In America: Philosophy and Social Identity* (2008), and an edited anthology, *Race or Ethnicity? On Black and Latino Identity* (2007). A second important scholar who has worked on Hispanic/Latino identity is Linda Alcoff. In addition to a number of books and articles on epistemology and feminism, Alcoff has written a number of influential articles on Hispanic/Latino identity. Most recently she has published *Visible Identities: Race, Gender and Self* (2005b) and co-edited two anthologies, *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality* (with Mendieta, 2007) and *Constructing the Nation: A Race and Nationalism Reader* (with Ortega, 2009). A third scholar who has made a significant contribution to the discussion of Hispanic/Latino identity is Angelo Corlett. Corlett's *Race, Racism, and Reparations* (2003a) offered important insights into the nature of Hispanic/Latino identity particularly in connection to how we understand Hispanic/Latino identity for the purposes of public policy. More recently, Corlett has written *Terrorism: A Philosophical Analysis* (2003) *Race, Rights and Justice* (2009), and *Heirs of Oppression: Racism and Reparations* (2010).

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Although there are other important scholars who have offered significant contributions to the analysis of Hispanic/Latino identity, for the purposes of this article, I will limit myself primarily to Gracia, Alcoff and Corlett. In the first section, I will briefly summarize the accounts of Hispanic/Latino identity presented by Jorge Gracia, Linda Alcoff, and Angelo Corlett. In the second section, I offer my own account of Hispanic/Latino identity; and, in the third section, I articulate the ways in which my account of Hispanic/Latino identity is distinct from and superior to the accounts offered by Gracia, Alcoff, and Corlett.

## Jorge Gracia, Linda Alcoff, and Angelo Corlett

Gracia's approach to understanding the term 'Hispanic' is fairly Wittgensteinean in character. In *The Philosophical Investigations* (1953), Wittgenstein famously argued for the futility of attempting to present necessary and sufficient conditions for the word 'game'. Nonetheless, Wittgenstein argued that games have a family resemblance that we can use to identify what is and what is not a game. Along similar lines, Gracia argues that although we cannot connect 'Hispanic' to a unique set of properties, those who are Hispanic have a family resemblance.

Gracia argues that the family resemblance of Hispanics was generated from the encounters between colonists from the Iberian peninsula and the indigenous groups of Latin America that followed the 'discovery' of America in 1492:

> My thesis is that the concept of Hispanic should be understood historically, that is as a concept that involves historical relations. Hispanics are the group of people comprised by the inhabitants of the countries of the Iberian peninsula after 1492 and what were to become the colonies of those countries after the encounter between Iberia and America took place, and by descendants of these people who live in other counties (e.g. the United States) but preserve some link to those people. (Gracia, 2000)

Gracia believes that the use of 'Hispanic' is conceptually useful because it enables us to see historical and cultural realities that we would overlook without it. Specific political categories, for example, Argentinean, Cuban and Mexican, enable us to articulate the specific history and culture of distinct sociopolitical units. However, if in making use of these terms we fail to make use of the broader term 'Hispanic', Gracia claims we will miss out on the common situation and experience that unites Argentineans, Cubans and Mexicans.

In order to further explicate the emergence of Hispanic peoples, in Chapter 5 of *Hispanic Latino Identity* (2000), Gracia makes use of the term 'Mestizaje'. Although 'mestizo' was originally used to refer only to children born to Iberian and Native American parents, Gracia notes, 'mestizo was extended to include any kind of mixture and more recently to a mixture of cultures.' (Gracia, 2000) In comparing the Iberian Colonies of Latin America to the English and French colonies in what are now the USA and Canada, Gracia argues that because the Iberian peninsula had been subjected to more than 700 years of partial or complete

domination by the Moors, Iberian colonists were more likely to have sexual relations with Native Americans than Anglo-Saxon colonists.

> Unlike Anglo-Saxon settlers in North America, who were generally unfamiliar with dark-skinned peoples and therefore less prone to develop intimate relations with Amerindian women, most Iberians were accustomed to darker-skinned people, and did not look at them with the repugnance that other Northern Europeans did. Indeed, they considered the Moors to be rivals and heathen, but nonetheless had to recognize, even if only grudgingly, their superiority in many ways – in learning, technical advances, and so on. (Gracia, 2000)

Although this racial mixing is an important element, for Gracia, the process of mixing described by mestizaje involved cultural elements as well. For example, although the traditional music of Peru, Bolivia and Mexico makes use of the guitar, Gracia notes that there were no stringed instruments in the Americas prior to the arrival of the Iberians. Conversely, much of traditional Spanish cuisine makes use of tomatoes, beans and potatoes, yet all of these crops were first imported from the Americas. In the case of religion, the presence of different elements may continue to coexist. As an example, Gracia points out that in Cuba, 'a person might believe that Our Lady of Charity is the Virgin Mary and at the same time that she is Chango, an African deity.' (Gracia, 2000)

In summary, Gracia's vision of Hispanic identity is one which does not refer to a set of common properties. Instead, it is based on the Wittgensteinean family resemblance of the groups of people who emerged from the encounters that resulted from the 'discovery' of America. It is an identity that has resulted from a considerable mixture of different races and cultures, but in which specific individuals and groups retain their specificity.

In 'Latino vs. Hispanic, The Politics of Ethnic Names' (2005a), Linda Alcoff offers an account of Latino identity that is markedly different from Gracia's. Whereas Gracia attempts to offer a politically neutral account of Hispanic/Latino identity, Alcoff argues that metaphysical considerations cannot be separated from political considerations. Ethnic categories are a means through which groups of people validate and conceptualize their history; and, as such, the process of naming groups will always have political consequences. As an example, Alcoff discusses the political consequences of the term Chicano:

> It was not until the political resistance among Mexican-Americans became organized and mobilized that the term Chicano even came into existence, emerging as a self-conscious appropriation of a negative term (connoting low class) as a declaration of pride and class consciousness. Thus, various names can work for or against certain alliances, and can be a means to impart a particular account about the historical production of an ethnic group. (Alcoff, 2005a)

For Alcoff, historical and descriptive accuracy are necessary conditions for the appropriate choice of groups names, but she doesn't believe they are sufficient. As a result, she believes that political considerations should be taken into account as well:

> The criteria of descriptive adequacy underdetermines the answer to the question of names. This underdetermination calls for a political solution and makes a political solution possible in the sense that it makes a space to interject political considerations in the discussion. (Alcoff, 2005a)

In relation to the naming of Latin Americans and Latin American immigrants to the USA, Alcoff believes that the historical events surrounding the year 1898 are of significant importance. In 1898, at the conclusion of the Spanish American War, Spain ceded its political control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Phillipines to the United States. Alcoff argues that this year represents a turning point: after 1898, the dominant colonial power in Latin America was not Spain, but the USA. For Alcoff, there are a number of events before 1898 that anticipate the rise of the USA as the dominant colonial power, for example, the 1848 Treaty of Guadelupe Hidalgo, and a number of events after 1898 that involve the continuation of this colonialism, for example, the 1903 creation of the state of Panama.

Alcoff believes that the ethnic category 'Latino/a' should reflect these political events:

> Latinos are those people who have been constituted largely in and through a colonialism that has not yet left us, unlike the previous colonialism of Spain, which has a historical but less important present day salience in the contemporary political economy of the Western hemisphere. (Alcoff, 2005a)

Furthermore, drawing upon arguments first articulated by Ofelia Schutte, Alcoff argues that the use of any pan-Latino or Hispanic term in the USA decreases the sense of connection that individuals may feel to their particular country of origin. Thus, the use of broad ethnic names may aid the project of US imperialism in Latin America by reducing individuals' allegiances to countries subject to US colonial projects. Thus, Alcoff believes that one advantage of her account of Latino is that it specifically refers to the importance of US colonialism in a way that Gracia's account of Hispanic/Latino identity does not.

Having discussed Gracia and Alcoff, let us now look at Corlett. In his 2003 book, *Race, Racism, and Reparations*, Angelo Corlett offers the following account of Latino identity:

> That one is a member of a Latino group is a function of the degree to which one: (1) has genealogical ties to others who are Latino (a necessary and sufficient condition) (2) has some command of and respect for the Spanish, Catalonian, Castillian, and other Spanish-related language or their respective dialects, (3) has and respects

> his or her Latino name(s), should he or she have some, (4) respects and engages in some significant elements of Latino culture(s), however that is defined socially; (5) perceives himself or herself to be a Latino, while not doing so to deceive himself, herself, or others of his or her ethnic identity; (6) is perceived by other Latinos as being a Latino; and (7) is perceived by non-Latinos as being a member of a Latino group. (Corlett, 2003a)

On Corlett's account, the first condition, whether or not one has genealogical ties to others who are Latino is of central importance. For Corlett, this condition alone is necessary and sufficient for being Latino, while none of the other six conditions are either necessary or sufficient.

For Corlett, being Latino is a matter of degree. Individuals who are paradigmatically Latino will fulfill all seven criteria, yet because the first criterion is sufficient, an individual can be Latino without fulfilling the other six criteria. However, in some cases, the first criterion may only be partially fulfilled; as an example, Corlett presents the case of Jaime who has one European parent and one Latino parent. In cases such as Jaime's, the other six criteria help us to determine whether the individual is Latino:

> Although genealogical ties constitute, on my view, an anchoring consideration in ethnic categorization, cases of 'mixed' ethnicity (by far the larges class of cases of ethnicity) will require us to delve deeper into Jaime's cultural ties, language use, and name(s) in order to make a determination as to whether he is more Latino than European American, all things considered. (Corlett, 2003a)

As Corlett himself makes clear, his account is aimed primarily at public policy decisions. In particular, Corlett's goal is to offer an account of ethnicity that will be useful in determining which individuals should qualify as member of particular ethnic groups for the purposes of affirmative action and reparations:

> [My account] is not a metaphysical analysis of identity, but rather an ethical one geared toward the accurate (though not overly complex) identification of persons into ethnic groups for purposes of determining who might qualify for affirmative action programs [or] other governmental allocations of resources aimed at the members of certain ethnic groups. (Corlett, 2003a)

In responding to Corlett's genealogical criterion, Gracia has asked how many generations are necessary to determine a person's genealogical makeup. Should we look merely to a person's grandparents? Or to their great grandparents? Or to their great-great grandparents? Furthermore, Gracia points out that with most individuals their percentage of Latino/a genealogical heritage will increase or decrease depending on how many generations we determine to use for our criterion. Gracia argues that the selection of any particular criterion of generational depth will be arbitrary; thus, the percentage of genealogical heritage that we assign

to most individuals will also be arbitrary. Corlett acknowledges that this problem of arbitrariness does arise, but he doesn't believe it undermines his account. 'That the decision as to how much of a genealogical tie to a Latino group one must have in order to be a Latino is fraught with some degree of arbitrariness is not sufficient reason to refuse to decide whatever minimal percentage of Latinoness I need to qualify for affirmative action programs.' (Corlett, 2003a)

Despite these difficulties, an important strength of Corlett's position is that his genealogical condition is both necessary and sufficient for Latino identity; thus, his account could be directly employed by government agencies in making policy decisions. Having presented a summary of the accounts of Hispanic/Latino identity offered by Gracia, Alcoff and Corlett, I will now present my own account.

## A threefold account of Hispanic identity

On my account, Hispanic identity is understood in terms of three distinct Hispanic identities: a Colonial Hispanic identity, a National Hispanic identity, and a Latino/a identity. Colonial Hispanic identity is characterized by (1) the submission of the people of Latin America and the Iberian peninsula to the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs from roughly the 1530s to the 1820s and (2) the common culture that emerged among these people during this period. National Hispanic identity emerges as a result of the Latin American wars of liberation that resulted in the creation of independent nation states starting in the 1820s. One of my central claims is that although Spain and Portugal were part of the Hispanic world in the colonial period, they are excluded from the Hispanic world that emerges with the National Hispanic identity. Latino/a identity refers to the formation of a distinctive Hispanic identity within the context of the USA. The Latino/a identity begins with the US acquisition of half of Mexico in 1848. It is further shaped by the acquisition of Puerto Rico in 1898, and is influenced by the numerous racist practices that were and are employed by Anglos in relation to immigrants from Latin America. In what follows, I will present my account of these three Hispanic identities.

### *Colonial Hispanic Identity*

Prior to the arrival of the Spanish, two great empires were flourishing in the Americas. In the basin of central Mexico, the Aztecs had established an empire that controlled the territory from what is now the American southwest to the Yucatan peninsula. Aided by a smallpox epidemic, a military alliance with the Tlaxcalans, and indecision and mysticism on the part of the Aztec leadership, by 1521 Cortez was able to seize the Aztec capital of Tenochititlan. In the highlands of Peru, the Incas had established an empire that stretched from what is now Colombia through Equador and Peru to Bolivia and northern Chile. When the Spanish conquistador Pizarro arrived, the Incas were in the middle of a long and bloody civil war. Using the divisions created by the civil war for his own purposes,

by 1533 Pizarro had defeated the Inca empire. In the years that followed, the Spanish quickly established colonial control over New Spain (Mexico) and Peru. This control over huge territories, with millions of Indians under Spanish rule, provided the framework from which a Hispanic identity would emerge.

Another key element in the emergence of a Hispanic identity concerned the legal status of Indians. In response to reports from the Americas, which emphasized that the Native Americans engaged in all sorts of barbaric acts including human sacrifice, the Catholic Church in the early 1500s adopted the doctrine that Native Americans did not have fully human souls. In opposition, a Spanish priest, Bartolome de Las Casas, who had lived in the New World and directly witnessed the enslavement of Native Americans, dedicated his life to the elimination of slavery. Las Casas's belief that Native Americans had fully human souls was eventually accepted by both the Spanish crown and the Pope. As a result, the use of Indians as slaves was outlawed and Indians were given the right to join the Catholic Church, which eventually included the right to marry Spanish colonists.

Another decisive factor in the creation of a Hispanic identity was a change in the demographic make up of the colonies. Repeated outbreaks of small pox and measles drastically reduced the size of the Indian populations. In 1570, Indians comprised 96.3 per cent of the population in Spanish America, but only 41.7 per cent in 1825. In Portuguese America, the figures are even more shocking: Indians comprised 94.1 per cent of the population in 1570, but only 9.1 per cent in 1825 (Morse, 1964). On the whole, Indian women proved to be more resilient to the diseases introduced by the Iberians than Indian men, and, among the Spanish colonists, the men greatly outnumbered the women. These two factors created a situation in which there were, to borrow a phrase from Gracia, numerous 'encounters' between Spanish men and Indian women. As Skidmore and Smith assert:

> According to a study of Peru, for instance, white males outnumbered white females by at least seven to one. This not only created intense competition for the hands of Spanish women, it also led Spaniards to take Indian women as their consorts. Their mixed-blood children, often illegitimate, came to be known as mestizos. In time, the mestizo race would become the dominant ethnic component of much of Spanish America, including Mexico, Central America, and the Andean countries. (Skidmore and Smith, 2001)

In addition to interracial sex, the existence of the slave trade dramatically contributed to demographic changes in the colonies. As early as the 1530s, the Spanish and Portuguese began to establish sugar plantations. Climatic conditions made the Caribbean islands and northeastern Brazil ideal for sugar production, and, as a result, a large percentage of slaves were transported to those areas. According to historians Skidmore and Smith, 'Out of 10 to 15 million people sent to the New World as slaves, approximately 2 million found their way to the

Caribbean... Brazil, with its extensive sugar plantations, brought in about 3.7 million... Spanish America imported more than 1.5 million' (Skidmore and Smith, 2001).

Having summarized some of the central events of Latin American history, let us see how together they contributed to the creation of a new Hispanic identity. With the conquests of Pizarro and Cortes and as the Portuguese continued to push further and further into the interior of Brazil, the foundation was established for colonial rule of Latin America. Thus, with some notable exceptions such as the indigenous groups in southern Chile, Latin America was united under the rule of Spain and Portugal. When the Pope decided that Indians had fully human souls, indigenous groups became increasingly integrated by the religious practices of Christianity. The rise of sugar and the corresponding growth of the slave trade brought large numbers of Africans to the Americas. And, as all of these groups began to interact sexually and culturally, a distinctly Latin American type, the mestizo, emerged.

Gracia's metaphor of *ajiaco* – a rich Cuban stew in which all the ingredients mix together but continue to retain their own flavor – is a useful one. In colonial Latin America, there was a great deal of mixing of languages, food, religion, music and dance; however, the diverse elements did not entirely dissolve into a new common culture. Particular people were still recognized in terms of their African, Indian, or Iberian background; music, artworks, food and styles of dress continued to reflect their unique Mayan, African or Iberian roots. Because the colonists were constantly interacting with Spain and Portugal, Spain and Portugal came to share in the common Hispanic culture. As Gracia points out, tomatoes, beans and potatoes, all staples of traditional Spanish cuisine, were first imported from the Americas.

In conclusion, I would argue that during the colonial period, the Hispanic world can be defined in terms of two criteria. First, the mixing of African, Indian and Iberian peoples produced a common culture, in which many diverse elements continued to interact, that unified the people of Latin America and the Iberian peninsula. Second, the inhabitants of Latin America and the inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula were united by the rule of the Catholic leadership of the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs. On the whole, the Hispanic world of Portuguese and Spanish Colonialism and the corresponding Hispanic Colonial identity should be understood to last from roughly the 1550s, when most of Latin America was consolidated under Iberian rule, to the 1820s, when the majority Latin American countries gained their political independence.

## *National Hispanic identity*

One of the most important social class distinctions in the colonial period was the distinction between peninsulares and creoles. Peninsulares were whites born on the Iberian peninsula, while creoles were whites born in the colonies. Although creoles were allowed to own land and obtain lower-level government posts,

the important government posts were reserved for peninsulares. Creole resentment of peninsulares and of a colonial system that favored the financial interests of the Iberians would be one of the driving forces of the wars of liberation. However, the impetus for the wars of liberation would come not from the colonies but from changes in Europe.

In 1808, Napoleon took control of Madrid and appointed his brother, Joseph, as king of Spain. Napoleon's usurpation of the Spanish monarch, Ferdinand VII, was the event that began the wars of independence. With the authority of Spanish rule called into doubt by the usurpation of the Spanish crown, creole nationalists began to fight for the political independence of South America. Led by Simon Bolivar in Caracas and San Martin in Buenos Aires, pro-independence armies won numerous victories in territory after territory until the Spanish forces were decisively defeated in 1824 at the Battle of Ayachucho.

Although the different Latin American countries achieved political independence in different ways, there are three significant structural changes that resulted in all Latin American countries as a result of the wars of independence. First, the wars of independence led to the abolition of slavery and the slave trade. For example, the Congress of Chilpancingo that declared Mexico's independence from Spain in 1813 abolished slavery. Second, the wars of independence led to the creation of independent governments in Latin America. In many cases, within 30 years, the creation of independent nation states led to the beginning of democratic governments in Latin America. Yet, in some ways, the emergence of independent states allowed conservatives in Latin America to resist the liberal changes that were taking place in Europe; thus, the restriction of church power that came with the liberalization of Europe in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars did not take place in Latin America. Third, the wars of independence led to the opening of Latin American ports. As a result, commerce with England rapidly replaced much of Latin America's commerce with Spain and Portugal. As the British increased their economic influence in Latin America, their political influence also increased. Thus, England, not Spain or Portugal, was the primary European power involved in the Paraguayan War (also known as The War of the Triple Alliance) (Galeano, 1997).

Having discussed the overall history of the wars of Liberation, I think it will also be useful to examine the visions that inspired two of Latin America's most important revolutionaries: Jose Maria Morelos and Simon Bolivar. Jose Maria Morelos was a Mexican priest turned patriot who assumed leadership of pro-independence forces when Miguel Hidalgo was killed in 1811. In his plans for the future, Morelos desired, 'a new government, by which all inhabitants, except peninsulares, would no longer be designated as Indians, mulattos, or castas but all would be known as Americans' (Skidmore and Smith, 2001). In Morelos's statement, we see the desire for the formation of a new Hispanic identity that specifically excludes Iberians. Furthermore, Morelos's anti-Spanish sentiments were eventually realized by

a Mexican governmental decree that expelled all peninsulares from Mexico. As Skidmore and Smith state:

> The wars also had a direct effect on Mexico's social structure. In the late 1820's the new government issued a decree expelling all Spaniards from Mexico. This ruling not only allowed the public to vent its hatred for the Spaniards;... it also eliminated, at a single stroke, a leading segment of the nation's upper class or aristocracy. Now creole landowners, not Spanish-born, made up the upper echelons of Mexican society. (Skidmore and Smith, 2001)

Simon Bolivar, who was one of the most educated of the Latin American revolutionaries, tried to create a massive independent state, Grand Colombia, out of the independent territories that have now become Colombia, Venezuela, Equador, Peru and Bolivia. Bolivar believed that only a large Latin American nation state would be able to truly establish both economic and political independence. He feared that smaller independent nations (1) would be unable to develop internal markets large enough to promote industry and (2) that European nations would be able to manipulate the small Latin American states against each other for the benefit of Europe. Like Morelos, Bolivar dreamed of a future Latin America strong enough to maintain cultural and economic independence from Europe.

Having examined the ways in which the wars of independence radically changed the political and social makeup of Latin America, let us consider these events in relation to Gracia's account of Hispanic/Latino/a identity. As we have seen, on Gracia's account Hispanic identity consists in a historical connection to the multiple encounters between Africans, Iberians and Amerindians that took place in the wake of the Conquest. Because his account makes connection to the encounters of the Conquest a necessary condition for Hispanic identity, Gracia implicitly denies that the wars for colonial independence were partially constitutive of Hispanic identity. In fact, Gracia's book fails to discuss the wars of independence in any depth. In one passage where he does discuss them he says the following:

> Even the bitter fight for independence of the Spanish colonies in America did not cut the ties which had been established during the more than 300 years between Iberians and Latin Americans. The encounters, then, gave birth to a new child, the Hispanic world. (Gracia, 2000)

On Gracia's account, (1) the wars of independence did not contribute anything significant to the formation of Hispanic identity and (2) after independence Spain and Portugal continued to be part of the Hispanic world.

On the basis of historical evidence, I think we can consider Gracia's first claim to be refuted. As we have seen, the wars of independence led to significant changes in Latin America: the beginnings of democracy, the abolition of slavery, the

establishment of open ports that would lead to British dominance of Latin American commerce, the preservation of the powers of the church (as opposed to the liberal changes in Catholic countries of Europe), and the beginning of military and political disputes between Latin American countries.

In relation to Gracia's second claim, as we have seen, the historical evidence provides a number of reasons to deny that Portugal and Spain continued to be part of the Hispanic world after the wars of liberation. First, the goal of the revolutionaries was to create an independent Latin America that would be free of European influence. In South America, Bolivar tried to establish a nation state large enough to be able to maintain its economic and political independence. In Mexico, Morelos envisioned a new Hispanic brotherhood that excluded peninsulares, and his dream was at least partially realized by the expulsion of peninsulares from Mexico in the late 1820s. Second, in the course of the wars of liberation, the colonial trade rights of Portugal and Spain were abolished in favor of open ports. Furthermore, in the years that followed, commerce with England came to replace much of the trade with Spain and Portugal. As a result of these considerations, I conclude that the wars of liberation initiated the emergence of a new National Hispanic identity.

## *Latino/a identity*

The creation of the Latino/a identity began with surrender of Mexico at the end of the Mexican American War. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in February of 1848, the USA acquired possession of Texas to the Rio Grande and the territories that are now New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, California and part of Colorado. For this huge landmass, which had comprised nearly half of Mexico, the US government paid $15 million.

Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Mexican inhabitants of the newly acquired territories would be guaranteed 'the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of the United States according to the principles of the constitution.' (Takaki, 1998) In addition, the US government promised that Mexicans who had owned land under the Mexican government would continue to possess their lands under the new US jurisdiction. Yet, both of these rights, the rights to land and citizenship were eventually denied to the new Mexican residents of the USA.

In "Occupied' Mexico', Ronald Takaki discusses the various ways in which Mexican citizens had their land stolen from them. In California, Mexican ranchers who did not speak English had to rely on Anglo lawyers, who often required one fourth of the land as payment for the settlement of cases. Furthermore, on the average, the court system took 17 years to settle land dispute cases. Thus, in the process of winning the rights to their land in court, many Mexican ranchers were forced to take out loans from Anglo bankers. Thus, even if they eventually won their land in court, much of it was immediately lost to the bankers who had offered them credit. In the Territory of New Mexico, which included Arizona until 1905,

Takaki argues that the court system strongly favored Anglos over Mexicans in land dispute cases:

> In New Mexico, the state surveyor general handled conflicts over land claims until 1891, when a Court of Private Land Claims was established. Dominated by Anglo legal officials, the courts confirmed the grants of only 2,051,526 acres, turning down claims for 33,439,493 acres. The court's actions led to Anglo ownership of four-fifths of the Mexican land grants. (Takaki, 1998)

In addition to losing their land, the new Mexican citizens of the USA found that their political rights were compromised in a number of ways. In California, a foreign miner's tax of $20 a month was routinely applied to the new Mexican citizens. Furthermore, in a number of cases, Mexican miners were attacked by Anglo miners and forced to give up their jobs. In Texas, Takaki notes that, 'During the 1890's, many counties established "white primaries" to disfranchise Mexicans as well as blacks, and that the legislature instituted additional measures like the poll tax to reduce Mexican political participation' (Takaki, 1998). Furthermore, Mexicans were permitted to buy food only at the takeout counters of Anglo restaurants, and they were permitted to shop at Anglo businesses only on Saturdays. In addition, the Texan school system was segregated. Because they aimed to reproduce the Mexican workforce, Anglo educators openly acknowledged that a lower level of education was offered at Mexican schools (Takaki, 1998).

In addition to the Mexican American War, the Spanish American War was a second historical event that contributed to the formation of a Latino/a identity. At the end of the Spanish American War in 1898, the US took control of Puerto Rico. The right to self-government was granted to Puerto Rico in 1947, and they were officially granted 'commonwealth' status in 1952. In the 1950s and 1960s, with the support of the federal government, Governor Luis Munoz Marin launched Operation Bootstrap, a package of economic incentives that encouraged businesses to relocate to Puerto Rico. Although Operation Bootstrap shifted much of the Puerto Rican economy from agriculture to industry, massive unemployment followed. As a result, many Puerto Ricans migrated to the US mainland, mostly to New York. As Skidmore and Smith state, '40% of Puerto Ricans now reside [on the US mainland]. Fully one-half of the migrant population – that is 20% of the total – now lives in New York City' (Skidmore and Smith, 2001).

In addition to the USA's 1848 acquisition of Texas, California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and half of Colorado in the Mexican American War and the 1898 acquisition of Puerto Rico in the Spanish American War, the formation of a Latino/a identity has been made possible by wave after wave of Latin American immigrants to the USA. Mexican immigration began in the 1850s as immigrants moved north to find better job possibilities and/or to live with family members. In some cases, immigration has been spurred by political instability

in Latin America. For example, in the 1960s, thousands of Cubans immigrated to the USA as a result of Castro's revolution. Similarly, in the 1980s, thousands of Salvadorans fled political instability in El Salvador and immigrated to the USA. Thus, for a number of different reasons from 1850 to the present day, immigrants from all parts of Latin American have come, and continue to come, to the USA.

Upon arriving in the USA, Latin American immigrants from different countries are united by two factors. First, most Latin American immigrants are united by the fact that they speak Spanish. Second, Latin American immigrants are united by the fact that many people living in the USA treat them as if they were members of the same group. To be more specific, many US citizens conceptualize all Latin American immigrants as being 'Mexicans'. Thus, immigrants from Peru, Brazil, Guatemala, and Chile will all have in common the experience of being categorized as members of the same group.

As a result of these two factors, Latin American immigrants have formed communities and engaged in collective projects that contribute to the formation of Latino/a identity. For example, in cities throughout the USA, Latin American immigrants have come to live together in Latino/a neighborhoods. In responding to their needs, Latino/a restaurants, supermarkets, churches, newspapers, night clubs, and radio and television stations have all developed. Furthermore, Latino/a groups have organized to fight for their political rights at all levels of government.

In discussing the nature of Latino/a identity, it is important to recognize that in addition to a Latino/a identity there are many Latino/a identities. In other words, like other ethnic groups, Latinos are divided in a number of important ways. Puerto Ricans have a different history and culture from Mexicans. Latinas experience and interpret the world in different ways from Latinos. Union organizers will have a different conception of their identity from Fortune 500 executives. Homosexual Latinos will have different conceptions of family, community and identity than straight Latinos. And, undocumented immigrants live in a very different world than Latinos who are citizens. Gracia, Alcoff and Corlett, all recognize that such differences exist between different Latinos, but all three of these authors believe that different Latinos have enough in common for us to conceptualize them as a group. Like the three authors who have inspired this article, I also believe that despite the differences between Latinos it makes sense to speak of a Latino/a identity.

Although a great deal more can be said about the formation of the Latino/a identity, the account I have offered here should be sufficient to demonstrate that being a Latino/a in the USA has a radically different meaning from being Hispanic in a Latin American country. Thus, I conclude that the Latino/a identity constitutes a third Hispanic identity that markedly differs from the two preceding Hispanic identities I have outlined. Having offered an account of these three Hispanic identities, let me now attempt to offer an account of the relationship between these three identities.

### *Relationships between these three Hispanic identities*

Let us begin with an examination of the boundary between the Colonial Hispanic identity and the National Hispanic identity. When exactly does the Colonial identity end and the National identity begin? On my account, the boundary between Colonial identity and National identity was marked by a declaration of independence that in most Latin American territories led to a corresponding military struggle. However, because different regions of Latin America fought for independence at different points in time, the date that marks the boundary between a Colonial identity and a National identity will vary from country to country.

I think we can identify three distinct patterns of change in Colonial Hispanic identity. First, for the majority of Latin Americans, the Colonial identity was replaced by a National identity through the fight for independence. This pattern emerges in Mexico, Central America, all of South America (with the exception of the Guianas), and in some Caribbean countries (Cuba, The Dominican Republic). Second, in some areas in or near the Caribbean Sea, a Colonial Hispanic identity was replaced by a British, Dutch or French Colonial identity as these countries took control of various territories. On my account, these territories cease to be Hispanic when non-Iberian European countries acquire them. Territories in this category include British Honduras (Belize), Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the Netherlands Antilles (St. Martin, St. Eustatius, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao), and the Guianas (Guyana, Suriname, Guyane). Third, in the unique case of Puerto Rico, the fight for independence did not lead to the creation of an independent state, but to control by the USA. Thus, in Puerto Rico in 1898, the Hispanic Colonial identity was replaced not with a National identity, but with a Latino/a identity.

I think it is important to point out that although there are significant events that mark the beginning of the transition from a Colonial Hispanic identity to a National Hispanic identity, the change from the former to the latter is a gradual process. For example, it seems reasonable to argue that San Martin's successful defeat of the Spaniards at the battle of Chacabuco in 1817 marks the beginning of a National Hispanic identity in Chile. Yet, even after the first Chilean constitution, there were still a number of royalists in Chile who hated the new constitution and wanted Chile to return to the status of a Spanish colony. It seems clear that these royalists did not think of their identity in terms of what I have called a National Hispanic identity. Similar comments can be made about the transition from a National Hispanic identity to a Latino/a identity. For example, although the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 marks an important event in the formation of a Latino/a identity, it seems crazy to claim that with the signing of the treaty, all of the Mexicans who were living in the territory that would become Texas, California, Arizona and New Mexico were instantaneously transformed from a National Hispanic identity into Latinos/as! It makes more sense to think that the formation of a Latino/a identity was a gradual process that was initiated in large part by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Although the Latino/a identity applies primarily to immigrants living in the USA, its effect on the inhabitants of Latin America, especially Mexicans, should not be underestimated. The migration of Mexican workers for temporary employment in the USA has taken place since the early 1900s. This migration of (mostly) male workers has become an intergenerational pattern that has deeply effected the economy of rural Mexico. As Gerald P. Lopez argues:

> Richard Mines's study of Las Animas, a long-time and prototypical source pueblo in the central plateau state of Zacatecas, is illustrative. An analysis of pueblo sources of disposable income revealed that, on average, fully 60 percent of each household's income was annually derived from wages earned in the United States. (Lopez, 1998)

Furthermore, in rural Mexico, the structure of the family has changed to adjust to the need for migrant labor: 'it is considered the duty of the man to migrate and the duty of the woman to assume a disproportional share of the domestic obligation during periods of absence' (Lopez, 1998). As Lopez's work demonstrates, not only do large numbers of Mexicans spend part of their lives working in the USA, but the structure of rural Mexican society has been changed by the common practice of temporary migration. Thus, participation in the Latino/a experience of immigration effects both Mexicans living in the USA and their families in Mexico.

An important aspect of Latino/a identity is that this identity encourages Hispanic Latin American immigrants to see themselves not in terms of a narrow National identity, but in terms of a more inclusive characterization that includes all Hispanic Latin America immigrants. Emerging within the USA, the Latino/a identity suppresses National identities as immigrants from different countries build communities based on shared language and resistance to Anglo racism.

In summary, on my view, the Colonial Hispanic identity marks the beginning of the Hispanic World. With the wars of liberation, the National Hispanic identity gradually came to replace the Colonial Hispanic identity in most of Latin America. Within the context of the USA, the Latino/a identity suppresses the importance of various national identities by building a community of immigrants from all Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking Latin American countries.

## Why my account is different from Gracia, Alcoff and Corlett

Although Gracia has offered an insightful and detailed account of historical and cultural practices that contributed to the original formation of Hispanic/Latino identity, Gracia's account ties Hispanic/Latino identity too tightly to one particular set of historical events. For Gracia, the Conquest is *the* definitive moment in the formation of Hispanic identity; Hispanics are defined by their connection to the Conquest. Yet, in opposition to Gracia, it seems appropriate to ask, in addition to the Conquest, have other historical events contributed to the formation of Hispanic identity? What about the 19th-century wars for independence? Did these events change the meaning of Hispanic identity for those people who fought in the wars,

or who lived in the newly independent nation states? As a second example, doesn't the meaning of Hispanic identity undergo a change for immigrants living in the USA? Doesn't the experience of living in a country in which English is the dominant language and in which others view Hispanics as members of a racial minority change the meaning of their Hispanic identity? My answer to all of these questions is Yes! As my account makes clear, the wars of independence brought about a epistemic rupture (in the Foucaultian sense) of the meaning of Hispanic identity. So also the experience of immigrating to the USA or becoming a US citizen as a result of the territorial expansion of the USA resulted in a new sense of Latino/a identity.

A second major difference between my account and Gracia's is that people of Spanish and Portuguese descent who live in Spain and Portugal are Hispanic/Latino on Gracia's view, while on my view they are not. Although Gracia can point to a number of significant cultural connections between the Iberian countries and Latin America, on my view, the wars of independence involved a decisive break with the past. The 20th-century history of the Iberian countries linked them closely to the events of Europe. The First and Second World Wars had a much greater influence on the Iberian countries than it did on Latin America. Spain and Portugal are members of NATO and the European Union, while no Latin American country is a member of either of these groups. One of the major themes that links the cultural and economic development of Latin American countries during the 19th and 20th centuries is the expanding economic power of the USA. Whether it took the form of CIA-backed coups, occupations by the US marines, or losses of territory to the USA, the politics and histories of Latin American countries have been decisively shaped by the great empire to the north. Not surprisingly, concern with the influence of the USA and its imperial ambitions is a major theme for a number of influential Latin American writers such as: Enrique Rodo, Jose Vasconcelos, Jose Marti, Justo Sierra, Ruben Dario and Octovio Paz. Simply put, the Latin American experience of and preoccupation with US colonialism is something that marks a significant divide between Latin American and the Iberian countries. Thus, I think it is a strength of my position vis-a-vis Gracia that on my account, since the wars of liberation, the inhabitants of Spain and Portugal are no longer Hispanic/Latino.

One of the strengths of Alcoff's conception of Latino identity is her recognition that historical events of the 19th and 20th century have contributed to the formation of Latino identity. Unlike Gracia, who places a primary emphasis on the original formation of the Hispanic world in the 1500s, Alcoff argues that more recent political events, in particular the political events surrounding the year 1898 have played a decisive role in forming Latino identity. I agree that 19th-century political events have played a decisive role in the formation of Latino identity. Like Alcoff, on my account, the events of 1848 and 1898 are both highly influential for the formation of Hispanic Latino identity. Despite these similarities, there are three significant differences between Alcoff's account and my own.

First, although her account makes reference to the events of 1848 and 1898, Alcoff doesn't refer to the events of the 1820s. The revolutionaries of the 1810s and 1820s set out to create a new world free of Spanish influence. And, although the new states established at the end of the revolutionary period often didn't match the dreams and hopes of the revolutionaries, on my account, these events mark a significant rupture with the past and a new era in the formation of Hispanic/Latino identity.

Second, my account establishes a distinction between people living in Latin America versus Latin American immigrants to the USA, yet Alcoff's account does not. On Alcoff's account:

> Latinos are those people who have been constituted largely in and through a colonialism that has not yet left us, unlike the previous colonialism of Spain, which has a historical but less important present day salience in the contemporary political economy of the Western hemisphere. (Alcoff, 2005a)

So, for Alcoff, in so far as they have been constituted by US imperialism, both Guatemalan citizens living in Todo Santos, Guatemala and Chilean immigrants in New York are Latino in the same sense. On my account, there is a significant difference between these two groups. Guatemalans living in Todo Santos might self-identify as Guatamalan, or they might identify more strongly with their regional or cultural group. Like the Guatemalans, the Chileans might identify themselves with the country of origin. Yet, their circumstances would lead them to view themselves not just as Chileans, but as Chilean expatriats living abroad or as Chilean-Americans. Or, it is possible that the Chileans might view themselves as Latinos – a category that applies to all Latin American immigrants to the USA. This broader category of Latinos is one that is not applicable to Guatemalans living in Guatemala because this particular category only exists within the context of the USA. Thus, I think it is a strength of my position, vis-a-vis Alcoff, that I establish a distinction between individuals living in Latin American countries who have a Hispanic National identity and Latin American immigrants to the USA who have developed a Latino/a identity.

One of the clear strengths of Corlett's account is his ability to determine who counts as Latino/a for affirmative action and other public policy purposes. By establishing genealogical descent as a necessary and sufficient condition for Latino/a identity, his account has a degree of precision useful for public policy purposes that the accounts of Gracia and Alcoff both lack. Because he is concerned with public policy issues, Corlett is critical of broad racial terms that often include individuals who should not qualify for public policy benefits. As an example of Corlett's nuanced thinking on these matters, consider his rejection of the racial category 'Black' in favor of a more tightly defined category:

> We simply cannot use race as a way to adequately categorize people into groups for purposes of positive public policy administration. 'Black' will not suffice to identify

> the groups of persons who deserve reparations based on the U.S. slave trade for example.... It would include those with black or dark skin, whether or not their roots trace to U.S. slavery.... [this] group would pose serious difficulties for anyone interested in reparations for U.S. slavery. Just as in a legitimate class action lawsuit one cannot include as plaintiffs those who have not been harmed by the defendant's harmful wrongdoings, inactions or attempted actions, one cannot rightfully include as plaintiffs Blacks whose ancestry does not trace back to U.S. slavery, though such folks might well be included in a legal action against the U.S or other countries on different charges. (Corlett, 2007)

Along similar lines, Corlett argues that although recent immigrants to the USA from Spain and Portugal should count as Latinos, they may not qualify for affirmative action benefits. In describing who counts as Latino, Corlett states: 'I use the category 'Latino' as an inclusive one to refer to a number of ethnic groups such as Mexicans, Dominicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Central and South Americans, and other of us folk who are in some way descendants of (*and including*) the Spanish and Portuguese' (Corlett, 2003a). Yet, when it comes to looking at affirmative action, Corlett argues that only those groups that suffered the historical harms of racism and discrimination should receive benefits. Latin American immigrants to the USA have been affected by US colonialism in various ways. Many Mexicans lost their lands and political rights following the end of the Mexican American War. Many Central and South Americans were subjected to periods of political and economic instability as a result of US occupations and coups supported by the CIA. Recent immigrants from Spain and Portugal clearly weren't affected by US colonialism in these ways. Thus, Corlett argues that although the history of US colonialism in Latin America provides compelling reasons for granting affirmative action benefits to Latin American immigrants, the same argument does not apply to recent Iberian immigrants.

I agree with Corlett that the history of US colonialism justifies affirmative action benefits for US citizens of Latin American descent, but not for those of Iberian descent. Yet, whereas Corlett classifies both groups as Latino, my account does not. On my account, Latin Americans whose territory was absorbed into the USA in 1848 or 1898, Latin American immigrants and the descendents of these two groups are Latino/a, but recent Iberian immigrants to the USA are not. Thus, by claiming that after the wars of independence, Iberians are no longer Hispanic or Latino/a, my position should aid Corlett in establishing a more precise and just taxonomy for public policy purposes.

## Conclusion

Jorge Gracia, Linda Alcoff and Angelo Corlett have all offered rich and compelling accounts of Hispanic/Latino identity. Although each of these accounts has important strengths, I have attempted to show some of the weaknesses of each of these three positions. As an alternative, I have offered a threefold account of Hispanic

identity that recognizes a Colonial Hispanic identity, a National Hispanic identity and a Latino/a identity as separate and distinct forms.

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