

Puerto Rico: Art and Identity Policies

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Abstract

In the context of representing and meaning identity, culture and political art in Puerto Rico can assert a poignant reflection on the subject. This paper will examine works and artistic practices that expose the mechanisms of power and point to events and nationalistic discourses that, probably and paradoxically, support the colonial condition, contributing to rethink Puerto Rican art and cultural identity.

I will present the cultural forms that do not answer to the typical political structures and dominant practices that have been constructed around the idea of "Puerto Ricanness." Re-vindicating the place of the Diaspora as a counter field and determinant in the reaffirmation of identity and as a politically relevant space outside the island's hegemonic structures. In order to do that, a brief critical analysis of usual notions of art and Puerto Rican culture, agencies and traditional works, will be necessary to see what meaning and utility can have to preserve these models in the presence of evident symptoms of cultural revitalization, result of the migratory processes, the colonial condition *vis à vis* the USA, the access to the information and new discussions on interculturalism and hybridity.

I'll analyze three contemporary artists who, by some means or another, have attended to these discussions and who better approach these topics, and in their artistic practices foment a renovation of social and cultural discourses. I'm not trying to construct an antagonist canon of practices nor regulate what must be or for what must serve Puerto Rican political art, but to underline those works that cope with dissonances and elements inherent to a very complex cultural process, inside and outside the Island. These processes point to possible spaces of reflection and social evolution that can facilitate the reconstruction of a wider cultural and public sphere and provoke new ways of narrating Puerto Rican art and identity.

Key Words: Puerto Ricanness, colonialism, political art, identity, Diaspora, interculturalism, hybridity, cultural policies.

In many ways, discussions about identity categories demonstrate the intrinsic need to think over the concept and, as Amartya Sen affirms, consider its evident complexity. I do not intend to do an essential analysis of this concept; for what I would like to do is exemplify and reflect over one of the ways in which it presents itself, the national identity through art. In Puerto Rico, this notion of national identity appears in a suggestive and poignant way, and let's say, rather distant from that illusion of a unique identity, engine of the most despotic totalitarianisms to which Sen¹ tries to put in evidence. However, I intend to understand the examples that I will present from a comprehension of identity as a renegotiation of tradition that validates the hybridity produced by the social interstices (Bhabha) or / and identity as a construct and rhizome, in opposition to a unique root (Glissant) within the colonial condition. The above-mentioned identity nowadays is not only thought from the Island itself, but it also occupies an important place in the discourse of the diaspora. The diaspora appears as a space to articulate identity, which escapes from traditional narratives and proposes new forms of meaning and understanding of Puerto Ricanness or “puertorriqueñidad”. This new forms do not limit themselves to a particular geographical place, but expands towards new places where the need to rethink identity is urgent, considering the new forms of migration and the recent postcolonial history of the world.

The artists that I will present or rather the examples of their work, in my opinion, have achieved to strategically re-formulate the traditional representations of national identity, assuming their historical-political reality and cultural fragmentation to which we have been exposed to during more than half a century of colonial history. Highlighting the identity discourses and mechanisms of power that have contributed to the idealization -it is worth saying misrepresentation- of the values of a colonial past, they questioned its legitimacy in the presence of the current social dynamics. At the dawn of a new century, Puerto Rico remains one of the oldest colonies of the New World, and for the last 50 years the evident failure of North American colonialism under the formula of Free Associate State has been revealed.

In order to situate us to some extent from where this identity is constructed, I will summarize punctual events in the history of Puerto Rico, which are essential to the understanding of our cultural and social development. In 1898, Puerto Rico, which had been a colony of Spain since the 15th century, was invaded by North American troops and was yielded as plunder to the United States of America as a consequence of the Spanish-American War. From this moment on the legal status, along with the constitutional and civil laws of the Island are totally subjected to the authority

of the American Congress, in consistency with the Territory Clause, on which the Congress retains full constitutional authority to check or to revoke the power of self-government that the government of Puerto Rico exercises nowadays. Nonetheless, in 1952, the United States officially request to the United Nations General Assembly to withdraw the Island from the list of "non-self-governing territories," stating that Puerto Rico had total freedom to lead its own government in conformity with the federal laws and the Constitution of the United States of America². Consequently, Puerto Rico is eliminated from the list in 1953 and since then, no significant political changes have happened in the political relationship between both nations. The citizenship granted to Puerto Ricans in 1917 is neither constitutional, nor does it grant the right for a presidential vote. Furthermore, Puerto Ricans only have one representative, who have no say in the matters of the Congress, nor even those who can affect directly the Island. The Commonwealth or Free Associate State, which at first intended to be a transitory solution to the colonial problem, becomes a consolidated political status³.

From these realities, not a large, but significantly radical group, throughout the political history of the Island, has taken the task of denouncing what for them is clearly a violation of constitutional and political rights. These have influenced enormously the cultural development of Puerto Rico and are key to understand Puerto Rican social evolution across the 20th century. Society who in the moment of the North American invasion, according to Eugenio Maria de Hostos was: "a society in a primary degree of national formation and suffering from enormous social ills..."⁴. This society "... determined fundamentally by the scanty development of its productivity forces was incapable to go beyond their reformist aspiration character."⁵ According to Jose Luis Gonzalez: "what Puerto Rico was in 1898 only can be defined, mythologies apart, as a *nation in formation*. This way Hostos saw it, and saw it well."⁶

Parting from the 1979 essay, *The Four-Storey Country* by Jose Luis Gonzalez we can configure an idea of the racial and socio-economic aspects that characterize Puerto Rican society in the moment of the North American invasion, and how it develops from that moment on. I bring up this text, because it will serve me as referential frame in the analysis of the new ways of depicting Puerto Ricanness from the diaspora.

In an display of Marxist critique and using the metaphor of cultural nation building from several stages that are put in top of the other, Gonzalez emphasis the popular culture, -and till then ignored within the official discourse-, as the ground on which the current Puerto Rican society is built. While, the North American invasion burst into the national identity formation

process, according to Gonzalez its corollary allows the emerge of popular culture, which displaces some of the values of the dominant class. In this stage of the construction, are develop and established the dynamics and nationalistic agencies that governed the standards of Puerto Rican identity that still continue to be in force nowadays. A strong cultural nationalism will emerge and will bring with it one of the biggest issues, from this moment on, and relevant characteristics of Puerto Ricaness: *assimilation without adhesion*. This can explains the social, political and cultural development of Puerto Rico in the last seventy years.

When we assess the implications of our colonial history -one riddle with previous and present inequalities- beyond leading to a "reactionary culture", unlike other Latin-American nations, our way of understanding nationality was forged, indeed, around our Hispanic inherited traditions, but also in a particular opposition of Puerto Rican vs North American identity. Given that in the moment of the invasion Puerto Rican culture was not, far from it, a homogeneous block, therefore the recognition of a "unique Puerto Rican identity" was not possible. Consequently, the claim of independence at that moment sited its basis, more than in the political in-viability of colonialism, in the struggle for preserving "national identity". It is here that we are faced with a complex paradox. Along with the inevitable imposition of the Anglo-Saxon culture, the Puerto Ricans manages to strengthen under these conditions a feeling of "national cultural identity" in opposition to the impossibility (at least immediate) of a politically sovereign nation. I think it is in this condition of possibility of a "national cultural identity", where lies the interesting and singularity case of Puerto Rican. As Gonzalez indicates:

"No Spanish-American country had come to national independence in the 19th century as result of the culmination of a process of national formation, but for the need of be provided with a political and juridical instrument that would assure and encourage the development of that process."⁷

If on one hand the Puerto Ricans remains ascribed to a certain colonizing mystification⁸, the truth is that the social transformation of which they been subject in last decades is owed in part to the mystification of its other colonial history.

As part of the modernist campaign, in the decades of the forties and fifties in the last century, Puerto Rico experienced a dramatic socio-economic transformation. Art played a significant role as an educational tool in the venture of creating Puerto Rico's cultural identity. New versions about the

nation were articulated and the utopic forces of the modernization validated a new iconography. The educational system and cultural institutions, especially the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture (ICP) founded in 1955, intervened decisively in the construction of cultural associations and identities matching the hegemonic class/culture of that time. Which was dictated from the cultural and social reminiscences of the former Hispanic Empire. Instead of reaffirming the hybrid character of the Puerto Rican, as any other colonial discourse, it is fixed on the valuation and identification of racial elements under the trope of racial mixture. Consequently, the ambassador of the Puerto Rican identity will be the peasant, a characterization of the miscegenation as the white rural man. This caused the segregation of those who did not fit into the official stereotype of national identity, which was the majority of the population.

The means used to prioritize this ideal of national identity was the visual arts, especially through Printmaking. This technique facilitated, because of its multi-exemplary nature, the diffusion of this ideology to a population mostly illiterate. However, a group of artists motivated by the Afro-Antillean nature of the society took the baton to lead an artistic generation characterized by a strong sense of nationalism. Known as the "Fifties Generation" and endorsed by government initiatives, they shaped their own style within the Latin-American Graphic Arts. They transformed the propagandistic use of posters, to an educational tool and as a testimony of Puerto Rico's political and social transformations. The social realism praised by this generation extends to the end of the seventies and positioned itself in an irreconcilable way in the presence of other international movements like that of abstraction, minimalism, conceptual art and installation. Nevertheless, the ideological polarization of these years is seen to diminish with the new social forms, due to the emerging middle class of the eighties and the wastage of the social problems that in a beginning supposed the creation of the mentioned institutions. The current function of the poster is far-off from the ones that originally gave it relevance. Now they are the graphic testimony of an economic, political and social project, whose results in its moment were real and are easily proven. But, as was to be expected from a project built on the basis of a colonial ideology, it could only end in the demolition of the populist and archaic ideas of a nostalgic society, established by the Free Associate State, as Gonzalez warned:

"-after having caused, essentially to satisfy the expansionist needs of development of the metropolis, a series of transformations that determined a very real modernization-in-to-dependence of the Puerto Rican society- now it is only capable of pushing this society to a blind alley and to

a general chaos which symptoms precisely alarming we all have at sight: massive unemployment and marginalization, demoralizing dependence of a false foreign welfare, an uncontrollable increase of delinquency and criminality to a great extent imported, depoliticizing and civic irresponsibility induced by institutionalized demagoguery and a whole queue of diseases ..."⁹

In the presence of such socio-cultural factors as: hegemony of the popular speech in the Puerto Rican society, multi-positioning in front of the presence of North American government and culture, overcrowding of national symbols and the reappearance of conservative slant discourses bias towards the national *vs* diaspora, some Puerto Rican contemporary artists have set off to work with the task of reinventing the national imagery. This reinvention takes a particular place from the diaspora.

The discourses generated in the contemporaneousness about decentralization, nomadism, diaspora, multiculturalism and hybridity, come to question the nationalistic explosion that starting in the fifties materializes itself with the "liberation of the colonies" from their western colonizers. Along with the end of colonialism, the number of voices in the world community multiplied and this entailed a pondering over the universal suppositions of modernism, and its denial on the part of these cultures newly emancipated. The discourses and theories that arise from this moment can enlighten possible strategies for the Puerto Rican situation. Nevertheless, as Frantz Fanon stated, "decolonization have disguised multiple forms, the reason hesitates and it prohibits to say what is a real or false decolonization"¹⁰ and in this case, the particular relation *vis à vis* the United States, makes it even harder to identify the forms in which decolonization is possible.

Puerto Rico, like the Caribbean, experienced postmodernism in a different way, in the reaffirmation of a culture that emerges from an irrevocable past. Compensating the previous losses with the exaltation of the collective memory, with a constant state of evolution and dialogue among the differences that coexist and who will continue relating in the same place. Therefore, what postmodernism tries to dismantle, as the beliefs, myths and other folkloric traditions, is what the persistence of the Caribbean societies depend to a great extent. Without them these cultures might not reveal their ambiguities and complexities.

Regarding Puerto Rico's case, the anxiety of identity, especially ethno-national, the threat of dissolution that is in the habit of hovering over proscribed national discourses, unties an excess of identity affirmation that is

a basic characteristic of "Puerto Rican aesthetics"¹¹. The "national issue" is the compound that comes to refill an empty space inside of a presumable original national identity, with historicist and populist devices. The anxiety that provokes to be consolidated in a spiritual principle¹², and:

"The tendency to the simulation of the difference is the one that has made possible to compose the national thing transmuting it in spirited and consensual Puerto Ricanness, not as a peculiar case isolated by their insularity; fewer yet as a passing ephemeral and aberrant agenda, but as one of the outlines with which the horizon itself of society is sketched ..."¹³

Then, in a certain way, the incursion of the diasporic community in the issue remarks the current binary nature of identity. The particularity of the national thing is confronted with another geographical space. This population of approximately four millions inhabitants distributed in different states of the US, but particularly in New York, comes to be the attic in the construction of the different stages of Puerto Rican identity. Unlike other Caribbean nations, the possibility of travel between both places has created a bridge of exchanges and displacement of cultural values unique to any other Latin-American nation.

During the period of social modernization of the fifties, stimulating a massive exodus of the poorest and less educated strata of the Island solved the unemployment and agglomeration problems in peripheral zones of San Juan. This population mainly congregated in the area of East Harlem (El Barrio) was harshly discriminated against and marginalized in New York, as in Puerto Rico, because of class, cultural and political reasons. However, the situation of exclusion and the desire to maintain an affective bond with the Island remains symbolized through language (Spanglish) and a particular excess of aesthetics. Formulating this way a discourse that ranges comfortably between indetermination of identity on the basis of belonging to a particular place and the possibility of transmuting the cultural, to subvert all the identity discourses of the Island.

I think that the diaspora has wrested the baton from the popular culture, which in its moment came up to restore a marginalized and oppressed group, to elevate their cultural values over the dominant ones. The same process repeats itself but from the interstices. Now the diaspora subverts the stereotype of the colonial subject. Seeks to revise and to set in motion new forms of representation or recognition of our contemporary society, which means the beginning of a change in the conception of our

inherited identity, that will allowed us to understand us and to articulate us dispossessed of any prejudice. For Homi K. Bhabha:

“The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation. The 'right' to signify from the periphery of authorized power and privilege does not depend on the persistence of tradition; it is resourced by the power of tradition to be reinscribed through the conditions of contingency and contradictoriness that attend upon the lives of those who are 'in the minority'. The recognition that tradition bestows is a partial form of identification. In restaging the past it introduces other, incommensurable cultural temporalities into the invention of tradition. This process estranges any immediate access to an originary identity or a 'received' tradition.”¹⁴

In the case of Puerto Rico, this articulation of identity from the periphery makes the constitutive heterogeneity of national identity more evident, as well as the interdependence between both places. I will present three works, which to me better exemplify these dynamics of restaging of the identity.

The work of Pepón Osorio is an evident example of the anxious need of the reaffirmation of the identity in the diaspora. Through the exaggeration, the hyperbole and the excess of ornaments the work Osorio reflects the adoption of a particular aesthetics by the Puerto Rican community in New York, which functions like a subversive mechanism.

Since the middle eighties, Osorio has employ the kitsch aesthetics as a way to explore the Puerto Rico's cultural identity, while at the same time disguising a severe political message. So, in the spectacular delight of the aesthetic disdain, he conforms in the pastiche the social realities of a poor and marginalized society. Behind the pastiche underlie the metaphor of richness, at least from the identity reaffirmation. The appearance of abundance shelters a history of deprivations and constant fear of recession. His aesthetic is a hyperbole of those dark anxieties for the reaffirmation of the tradition and the belonging to a particular place, encapsulating their lifestyle in a nostalgic vision of the fifties migration, which culturally distinguishes them, both from the islanders and from the society to whom "they" "belong" in the actuality.

The best materialization of this situation is depicted in the piece that he presented for the 1993 Whitney Biennial, *Scene of the Crime (Whose Crime?)*. The work is a recreation of the interior of a "typical" Puerto Rican house where apparently a crime has occurred. The spectator immediately succumbs to the first intention of the artist, associate the scene with the typical domestic violence crime. However, this perception changes in the view of the welcome rug that had inscribed this phrase: "*Only if you can understand that it has taken years of pain to gather into our homes our most valuable possessions; but the greater pain is to see how in the movies others make fun of the way we live.*" This phrase alludes to the discriminated constructs that are pre-formed in the American culture on the Puerto Ricans. His work is inscribed in the "in-between" space that Bhabha proposes as the encounter of the past and the present, which represents a new state where interstice becomes part of the need, not the nostalgia, of living"¹⁵.

Another artist who his work depict the dynamics and "interstitials" of a new period, is Miguel Luciano. With a highly social and political conscience, Luciano achieve -through the appropriation of religious images, popular and commercial iconography-, a very incisive commentary that reconstructs and establishes new hierarchies that redefine the Puerto Rican paradigm. From cereal packages and comic strips, to publicity labels and historical and political icons, all form part of the extensive and complex array of visual references, which he utilizes to represent the shrillness and complexity of the socio-political processes that had taken place in the Puerto Rican history. His visual strategy lies in the absurd and anachronistic confrontation of the icons and symbols that create farfetched sceneries of struggles, humoristic in appearance, but openly violent. They are the representation of the colonial symptoms, as stated by Gonzalez, that have taken the Puerto Rican society to the demoralizing dependence of the false social and economic well-being under the American government. The electoral politics, consumerism, poverty, racism, sexism, demoralization, stigmatization and alienation under the American colonialism are recurrent themes in his work, which he articulates by means of cultural nostalgia, humor and excess.

His work, *Platano Pride*, forms part of the titled series *Pure Plantainum*, which consists of a series of platinum plantain sculptures. The plantain is a referential symbol of a labor and exploitation history between the banana colonies of the Caribbean. In Puerto Rico, the plantain is imbued with local references of race and class. The plantain *stain* has been converted into a euphemism that refers not only to the blackness, but also to the belonging to a culture and a particular geographic space. What was before a

pejorative stigma of the cultural heritage, has transformed into a colloquial assertion of the Afro-Antillean past.

In *Platano Pride*, there is a direct reference to consumerism and the reggaeton culture, to which nowadays is identified with the Puerto Ricans. The “bling-bling” of platinum, a piece of pristine jewelry that covers the real decomposition of the plantain that is inside. So, the artist used real plantains to cover with the noble metal. Beyond its evident connotation towards fetishist materialism and consumerism, that according to the artist was what inspired the series, it seems to me really interesting how the work opens itself towards more reflection. At the same time that the “bling-bling” connotes the social realities of a marginal society it extols its history. The recognition of the plantain stain cancels the distance with our past, restoring the Afro-Antillean character of the identity. This recognition symbolizes our power and, at the same time, our alienation. For Fanon, one of the more relevant aspects of the colonial context is the difference or the recognition of a different race. The impugnation of the violence with which the supremacy of foreign values has been imposed, is the threat of the recognition of a dignity that has been until now beaten down by domination. His work keeps a narrow relation with Osorio’s work, for both artists emphasize the access and the community participation as a priority in their work. Compromising his work to the celebration, exaltation, reflection and critical public awareness of the Latin community in the United States. His works create links, joins and celebrates the human will for liberty, respect and auto determination.

This next artist parts from a different place to approach the issue of the identity in his work. In the lack of a reactionary imagery from his political reality, Osvaldo Budet celebrates the will or the desire to form a part of politically charge historical moments. He submerges himself inside the history to expand the imaginary one of the political condition of the Puerto Rican. With an evident passion for the document, his work is inscribed in the film documentary aesthetics. As the saying goes: *everything changes with the lens with which it looked*, the formal aspects in his work do direct reference to the film material. Through the use of iron oxide, silver painting, aluminum, diamond dust, varnish, etc ... his depictions are produced as the photographic still of personal liberation history. His work is, in effect, like a liberation project. He recognized himself inside the stridencies and current complications of Colonialism and he goes in search of forms of restaging himself inside the painting, but not as active agent in the narrated conflict but as spectator or participant. In this restaging, the artist asserts his national identity and the desire of a sovereign nation as the engine of his creation. Conscious of the political asymmetry relations between the oppressor and the oppressed, Budet acts as reporter of these dynamics, appropriating of the

history as working material and adding curious winks to events or persons who are a reference for his work.

In *Because we are all Marcos*, he portrays the image of the Puerto Rican movement for national liberation. Still, left behind and tired, like that the artist sees the fight for the independence. In the presence of these symptoms of failure, the artist portrayed a possible reference: we are all Marcos. A direct reference to the Zapatistas¹⁶ he introduces an unfamiliar Latin American history for the majority of Puerto Ricans. This history that seduces him makes him conscious that the Puerto Rican society will not be able to change its circumstances, without first understanding its own history. This is the motivation behind his work, as a documentary maker he researches, depicts and provides politic information. On the other hand, the mode in which he depicts the information, shrewdly can present the facts and also reflect his convictions, which do not terminate the reflection space.

In *Traigo Mazkamba Para El Que Se Lamba*, Budet irrupts in one of the most relevant political moments in the fight for Civil Rights in the United States. In the famous image in which the President Lyndon B. Johnson and Martin Luther King converse, the artist appears not as a mere spectator, he constructs a new narrative that supplants the original story. Dr. King appears as mediator between the President Johnson and the artist, who by the physical expression or body language seems to be demanding something. It's not complicated to guess or assume, by his outfit or gestures, even for the obvious political affiliation what could be object of his demands. But a more precise idea we can conclude if we get the title of the piece.

The title is part of the chorus of a song by the reggaeton singer Tego Calderón, who speaks on the racism and the social marginalization inside the Puerto Rican society. Budet extend the demands of this historical claim, to the Puerto Ricans, who has been always excluded within the American legal speech.

These works reflect on the national identity not in the basis of a preference over a particular heritage or set of values, but in the historicity of having a particular recognition towards a cultural identity or towards the Puerto Ricanness.

The discourses about the national identity have had a leading role inside the island politics and cultural policies. For this reason, the works of these artists mull over the common public spaces of reflection, and occupy the place of the dissensions demonstrations of the policy. They propose new formulas that help in the task of revitalization and reconstruction of what till

now has been understood as "national cultural identity". I think, like Édouard Glissant, that before this activity, no operation of political, economic or social nature, will be capable of even light to a solution, nor in a slightest way, if the imagery does not re-form and reverberates in the mentalities and sensibilities of the societies, to stimulate them to change positively in their own benefit¹⁷. This reconfiguration of the imaginary, will allow us to deal understand in a better way with the affairs and social dissonances of Puerto Rico.

Devoid of a serious political agenda, without an integral knowledge of our own history and with a divided society because of a fixed cultural identity, which is not homogeneous but basically binary, the horizon of the Puerto Rican society does not appears much clearer than 100 years before. Though "there are neither functions nor necessary effects of the works of art"¹⁸, the aesthetic experience contribute to configuration of a common space and produce the necessary distance to prosecute spaces of reflection. In any case, these spaces of contemplation, they generate indeed, possible functions and effects in relation to situations or particular matters. Regarding Puerto Rico, I believe that this type of work restores the dignity, provoke an evolution in the discursive forms; revolutionize the eye and the aesthetic criteria of the cultural nationalism. Art can tackle social, political or any kind of matters, which otherwise can be difficult to undertake. The artists that I have present, express and cope with ambiguity, not as a pejorative mark of the Puerto Rican array, but rather as the result of particular dynamics, which re-define the concepts of identities as I have tried to discussed until now. They are the dawn, in my opinion, of a more serious art socially and aesthetically compromised for Puerto Rico.

Notes

¹ See *Identidad y violencia: la ilusión del destino*. Katz, 2007.

² Report By The President's Task Force On Puerto Rico's Status, December 2007.

³ "The commonwealth system **does not**, however, describe a legal status different from Puerto Rico's constitutional status as a "territory" subject to Congress's plenary authority under the Territory Clause "to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory ... belonging to the United States". On: *The President's Task Force on Puerto Rico's Status*.

⁴ Taken from the text of Gonzalez, José L. *El país de cuatro pisos: y otros ensayos*. Ed. Huracán: 2007, page, 14.

⁵ Ibid, page, 16.

⁶ Ibid, page, 26.

⁷ Ibid, page, 15.

⁸ Concept of mystification taken from the text: Memmi, A. *Retrato del colonizado*. Ed. De la Flor, 3^a ed., Buenos Aires: 1975, page, 139.

⁹ Taken from the text of Gonzalez, José L. *El país de cuatro pisos: y otros ensayos*. Ed. Huracán: 2007, page, 38.

¹⁰ Fanon, F. *Los condenados de la tierra*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México: 1896, page, 52.

¹¹ Puerto Rican understood aesthetics not as a distinction between the manners of "doing", but as a distinction between the manners of "being". See *Sobre políticas estéticas* of Jaques Rancière.

¹² It comes from Ernest Renan's definition of nation as " ... a spiritual principle, resultant of the deep historical complications; is a spiritual family, not a group determined by the configuration of the soil".

¹³ Torrecilla, A. *La ansiedad de ser puertorriqueño: etnoespectáculo e hiperviolencia en la modernidad líquida*. Ed. Vértigo, San Juan: 2004, page. 42.

¹⁴ Bhabha, H. *El lugar de la cultura*. Ed. Manatí, Buenos Aires: 2002, page. 18-19.

¹⁵ Ibid, page. 24.

¹⁶ The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, EZLN) is an armed (nonviolent and defensive against military) revolutionary group of Mexico. Their main spokesperson is Subcomandante Marcos.

¹⁷ Glissant, E. *Introducción a una poética de lo diverso*. Ediciones del Bronce, Barcelona: 2002, page. 90.

¹⁸ Vilar, G. *Las razones del arte*. Ed. Machado Libros: 2005, page, 252.

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