

Rediscovering the Latin American nationalist idealism of José Ingenieros: a synthesis of his intellectual work and life

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English Abstract

The purpose of this article is to further the rediscovering of José Ingenieros' intellectual work as one of the most influential and eclectic thinkers in Latin America. Known as "Master of Youths" after inspiring the University Reform of 1918, his intellectual work goes from Psychiatry to Arts through Philosophy, Sociology, Ethics, and other disciplines. Unfortunately, for the world of science and philosophy; including the Latin American, Ingenieros' work has become more literature than a live voice for inspiration and reflection able to guide the creation of "superior men;" those called idealists that make humanity evolve to better life stages in knowledge, beauty, virtue, and justice. This paper summarizes Ingenieros' contributions about what he understood as an Idealism Based on Experience, as well as his conceptualizations regarding his ultimate own life ideal: the development of social justice in the continental Latin American nationality.

Resumen en español

Este artículo contribuye a redescubrir el trabajo intelectual de José Ingenieros; uno de los pensadores más influyentes y eclécticos en Latinoamérica. Conocido como "Maestro de las Juventudes" por haber inspirado la Reforma Universitaria de 1918, su trabajo intelectual va desde la psiquiatría a las artes a través de la filosofía, la sociología, la ética y otras disciplinas. Desafortunadamente, para el mundo de la ciencia y la filosofía; incluyendo la ciencia y la filosofía en Latinoamérica, el trabajo de Ingenieros se ha convertido más en una literatura que una viva voz de inspiración y reflexión capaz de guiar la creación de "Hombres Superiores"; aquellos llamados idealistas que hacen que la humanidad evolucione hacia mejores estadios de vida en conocimiento, belleza, virtud y justicia. Este artículo resume las contribuciones de Ingenieros sobre lo que él entendió como un Idealismo Basado en la Experiencia, así como sus conceptualizaciones sobre su propio y ulterior ideal de vida: desarrollar la justicia social en la nacionalidad latinoamericana continental.

Resumo em português

O objetivo deste artigo é aprofundar a redescoberta do trabalho intelectual de José Ingenieros como um dos pensadores mais influentes e eclécticos da América Latina. Conhecido como "Mestre da Juventude" depois de inspirar a Reforma Universitária de 1918, seu trabalho intelectual varia de psiquiatria para as artes através da filosofia, sociologia, ética e outras disciplinas. Infelizmente, para o mundo da ciência e filosofia;

incluindo ao América Latina, o trabalho de Ingenieros tornou-se mais literatura do que uma viva voz de inspiração e reflexão capaz de orientar a criação de “Homens Superiores”; aqueles chamados idealistas que fazem a humanidade evoluir para melhores etapas da vida em conhecimento, beleza, virtude e justiça. Este artigo resume as contribuições dos Ingenieros no que ele entendeu como Idealismo Baseado na Experiência, bem como suas conceituações sobre seu próprio ideal de vida: o desenvolvimento da justiça social na nacionalidade latino-americana continental.

Framing Jose Ingenieros' mindset

Known as “Master of Youths,” Jose Ingenieros was one of the most influential and eclectic thinkers in Latin America during the 20th century. In the words of Castellanos (1972), Ingenieros has been one of the greatest writers ever produced by the Latin American continent. Unfortunately, for the world of science and philosophy, including the Latin American, his work has become more literature than a live voice for inspiration and reflection.

Throughout his life, he held numerous degrees and roles as a psychiatrist, psychologist, criminologist, pharmacist, art critic, journalist, historicist, sociologist, philosopher, editor, publicist, educator, and moralist (Gomez 2009). Scholastically, he was not part of specific schools of thought nor assumed determined and permanent scientific positions since he believed in the evolution of ideas, knowledge, and interpretations. His contributions were able to cross different levels and disciplines but sharing the common ground of reaching for better human encounters and social interactions. Splitting his mindset and work according to the traditional scientific taxonomy could not be an easy task.

To rediscover and understand Ingenieros[1], it is essential to approach him by being aware of his life stages. In his youth, he could be described as a romantic believer of evolution and passionate about justice, social inclusion, and learning. As a young adult, biology, psychology, psychiatry, and sociology guided by a philosophical and ethical thought would speak of him as a positivist thinker but capable of going beyond mere materialistic approaches, elaborating thinking structures in which the spirit is the essence of life. Later, a profound Latin American nationalism will become his most important life purpose, and all his intellectuality and life experiences would converge into this final life oeuvre. He became president of the Unión Latinoamericana organization (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013). Therefore, Ingenieros should be understood as an advanced thinker that evolved toward different stages during his life and intellectual activity.

Controversial and rebellious could be a couple of categorizations to speak about Ingenieros. His adversaries would denounce him as racist, non-academic, anti-

democratic, and arrogant (Díaz 1998). Both defenders and opposers would agree on finding Ingenieros smart and humorist, a man who sustained that the future will always be better than the present. Nevertheless, *idealist* would be the best word to describe his unique personality and influential work. Indeed, Ingenieros was a Latin-Americanist idealist, not because of birth but conviction. He was born under the name of Giuseppe Ingegneri[2] in Palermo, Italy, during the spring of 1877. Then, as a child, Uruguay was his door to the American continent. But, since 1885 until his final days in 1925[3], Argentina was his homeland in the multicultural and diverse Latin America. As expressed by Gomez (2006, 3), “his life was short, but it has served as an example of his philosophy of constant change and idealism.” Socrates, Plato, Giordano Bruno, Spinoza, Kant, Darwin, Spencer, Comte, Emerson, Marx, Nietzsche, Florentino Ameghino, Freud, Domingo Sarmiento, and other contemporary thinkers, such as Maxim Gorky and Joaquin Trincado, played an important role in his thinking evolution and understandings of life. Furthermore, the aesthetic movements and some socialist ideas were also part of his eclectic mentality. All of these could influence Ingenieros because of the learning and social attitude taught by his father, Salvatore Ingegneri.

Salvatore Ingegneri and his wife, Mariana Tagliavia, were part of that European immigration that arrived in Latin America during the 19th Century, in which money could be a problem in the struggle for life. However, although money was a problem, Salvatore developed honed intellectual virtues and developed in-depth involvements within the socialist or left-wing political thought in Europe and Latin America. Indeed, he was an active member of the First International and former director of the first socialist newspaper in Italy. Later, in Latin America, he became a 33rd-degree mason very well known in Uruguay and was very involved in the Rivista Massonica (Masonic Magazine) of Buenos Aires, Argentina (Mastronardi 2009). As part of the working-class, he embraced a hard work lifestyle and channeled his son into this way of life. José Ingenieros himself asserted: “I have worked since I was a child; because my father was poor with brief intermittences, he was a journalist and taught me to correct printing tests, rewarding me that task with gifts of books, not poorly selected. To teach me Italian, French and English, I was in charge of translations priced at a rate of 5 cents per page; some were entire books and never were published, and later I understood that they were responding to an education plan”[4] (Ingenieros 1961a, 422).

Those were the early activities that nurtured Ingenieros’ multilanguage ability, hard work lifestyle, and sowed his avidity for reading, writing, and knowing[5] (Borda-Malo 2015; Díaz 1998). Then, as an adult, Ingenieros asserted that very often he had to write between 10 pm and 5 am because it was the only time on which he could enjoy that life luxury: “the more I study, the more I want to study” (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013).

As a teenager and young adult, his research ability and social interpretations were acknowledged after finishing his studies at the University of Buenos Aires. In 1903, his doctoral thesis called “Simulation of Madness”[6] was awarded by the Medicine Academy of Paris and won the Gold Medal of the Medicine National Academy of

Buenos Aires (Mastronardi 2009). In this work, Ingenieros focused on understanding the curious cases of patients who simulated affections and illnesses to stay at public hospitals. By being at the hospital as patients, the simulators of illnesses received free dairy foods and all the required attention to “heal” –not received if they were homeless or unemployed. He wanted to confirm his hypothesis of social parasite psychopathology. Ingenieros paid particular attention to criminals as these simulated to be mentally ill, so they could have access to state benefits and, according to regulations, avoid jail. He found that “in certain cases, the simulation of madness takes place in delinquents who have not yet been condemned and hoped to be declared irresponsible; avoiding the repressive action of criminal laws. Thus, the criminal uses simulation as an effective resource in his fight against the legal environment: to be considered crazy excluded responsibility and exempted him from punishment. This simulation of insanity is typical on prosecuted criminals” (Ingenieros 1968, 64). He concluded that life was fought by force in the past, but now it would be fought by cunning.

Due to these studies, Ingenieros developed abilities for discovering and understanding hidden patterns in social interactions scientifically. Furthermore, he became one of the most salient thinkers of positivism in Argentina (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013). Experience and proofing, but also imagination, were core elements in his way to understand life potentialities and development paths. One example of this is his conceptualization of morality.

For Ingenieros, morality is not about metaphysical conditions aprioristically set as a dogma –somehow, as he outlined some of the Kant’s moral studies. On the contrary, morality should go hand-by-hand with the real social experience –following a more Emersonian thinking approach. Ingenieros saw how ethics, through “revealed” and “rational” moral dogmas[7], tried to enforce specific social behaviors on individuals in order to establish *proper* social interactions. When ethics enforces specific moral conditions without considering the social environment conditions, no effective morality success should be expected because social agents would not be able to exert the pre-determined morality. This was the problem of ethics when it tried to channel a particular pre-configured social behavior based on the word of god and the philosophical or scientific reasoning. An effective ethics should understand that an effective morality is a social product which constantly renews as societies evolve so that there must not be any dogmatic moral structures[8]. In other words, all effective ethics should be a natural result of social experience. Accordingly, all ethical mindset should be able to understand social issues and promote a specific morality according to a specific space and time, and capable of evolving in direct relation to human development (Ingenieros 2008, 2004b & 2000a). The moral development comes from ideals capable of evolving as society does, not from dogmas unable to adapt to the constant social change. Philosophically, Ingenieros firmly opposed such ideals before those who would defend the immutability of knowledge and truth.

Consequently, Ingenieros' moral idealism criticizes both theological revelations (those that pretended to apply a unique morality structure to everyone) and the scientific method (in its intention to apply an individual and positivist moral rationality). The live experience should be the input for any moral thinking and improvement intended to divinize men individually and collectively (Ingenieros, 2004b). His moral idealism is the result of reasoning skills, the evolving social experience as the judge for all human behavior, and imagination as a superior human mind function able to foresee the unknown experience not yet occurred. This is how his philosophical and scientific contributions were beyond simple positivist approaches, revealing how individual and social morality issues can be understood holistically without imposing aprioristic theological approaches or the "scientific method" intended to filter all phenomena with its naturalistic-based epistemology. Correctly, Bernman (1926) and Felipe (2007) affirmed that labeling Ingenieros as a positivist is not proper. Eventually, one of his additional contributions to the philosophical field was the creation of *Revista de Filosofía* (Philosophy Magazine). Some of this review's salient discussions were Pacificism, the Role of Intellectuals in Society, the Feminine Condition, the Relative Theory, and Psychoanalysis (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013).

With that said, what is not clear is how he developed his Latin American sentiments and concerns, even though some clues can be found in his most known book: *The Mediocre Man*. In here, Ingenieros analyses the sociological struggle between mediocre men and superior men. At the end of this book, he presents Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, president of Argentina between 1868 and 1874, as a Superior Man: "his thoughts were slices of light in the gloom of American (Latin American) barbarism, opening the vision of future things. He thought so in a style that he seemed to have, like Socrates, some family demon that would hallucinate his inspiration. Cyclops in his work, he lived obsessed by the desire to educate; that idea gravitated in his spirit like the great incandescent moles in the celestial balance, subordinating to his influence all the minor masses of its cosmic system" (Ingenieros 2008, 193). Due to chronological events, his admiration for Sarmiento and his patriotism could have been forged since Ingenieros' high school studies at the *Escuela Nacional de Buenos Aires* (National School of Buenos Aires).

During the school, and after living during an economic momentum in Argentina, a dramatic economic crisis took place in 1890 as a result of financial distortions in international loans given to the Argentine state. The cost of living went high dramatically; Ingenieros witnessed the social picture of having a few massing high amounts of money while large populations suffered the consequences. It is important to understand that by this period, at the end of the 19th century, Argentina was known as the United States of the South, and Buenos Aires was seen as the Athens of Rio de la Plata, or the South American Paris (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013). The wave of growth and prosperity bolstered the country, and many immigrants felt attracted by the lands of San Martín. Indeed, Buenos Aires was honoring its own name[9]. Those airs changed in 1890.

With no doubt, Ingenieros' adolescence was influenced by those dramatic economic and social events of 1890[10] that produced, in subsequent years, some revolutionary movements and even a failed coup d'état took place where Ingenieros, as a young activist of 16 years old, played his role during the Radical Revolution of 1893. This is the only known armed operation that he participated in, which successfully controlled a police station in Bahía Blanca (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013; Sotelo 2005). Since very young he was passionate about justice and inclusion not only as an intellectual but as a man of action too.

Ingenieros' patriotism and activism must have deepened at the university. It is known that José María Ramos Mejía, a psychiatrist and humanist, was his most influential college professor. This man believed in public education at all levels as the key to construct the future of Argentina. Ramos Mejía was a constructor of an authentic "Argentinity" and, probably, he made Ingenieros' patriotic seed germinate and inoculated him with those austere anti-mundane attributes (Borda-Malo 2015; Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013).

From those educational moments in his school, college, and life experiences, the imagination of a better country overwhelmed his mind and guided his life. His thought would expand toward Latin America as a whole and would come to be expressed in a high number of books and short publications. His intellectual work influenced the mindset of millions around Latin America. An example is given by the University Reform Movement of Cordoba in 1918. It was a student movement mainly inspired by Ingenieros' ideas. With this movement, the university's autonomy was reached in Argentina and one of the most persistent colonial features was finally overcome. In his words, one of the last monarchy chains that served to the production of mediocre men was terminated: "the higher education should not be seen as a privilege to create differences in favor of the chosen few, but as a more appropriate collective instrument to increase human capacity in front of nature, contributing to the well-being of all men"[11] (Ingenieros 1920, 101). This university reform movement would enlighten the rest of Latin America in its quest for a better university system. From that moment, Ingenieros and other intellectuals were known as "Masters of Youths" (Borda-Malo 2015; Sotelo 2005; Díaz 1998). Besides, this movement demonstrated his commitment to participate in peaceful revolutions and social change for the good of society (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013).

Ingenieros' Idealism Based on Experience

To understand what Ingenieros believed was the motivation for life and evolution, it is essential to understand his main considerations regarding "ideals":

- "When you put the visionary prow towards a star and you tend the wing to such elusive excellence, eager for perfection and rebellious to mediocrity, the mysterious spring of an Ideal is in you" (Ingenieros 2008, 15).

- “The ideal is a gesture of the spirit towards some perfection” (Ingenieros 2008, 16).
- “An ideal is a point and a moment between the possible infinities that populate the time and space... [Ideals] are not aprioristic formulas but induced by a vast experience; over this experience, the imagination foresees the sense in which humanity varies” (Ingenieros 2008, 17).
- “Every ideal contains a particle of utopia... In a few things, man can reach the ideal his imagination points out: the glory of a man glory is in marching towards his [ideal], always unreached and unreachable” (Ingenieros 2008, 28).
- [Ideals] “are always individual. A collective ideal is the coincidence of many individuals in the same desire for perfection. It is not that an “idea” put them together, but an analogous way of feeling and thinking converges towards a common “ideal” to all of them” (Ingenieros 2008, 19).

Idealism for Ingenieros is not about a particular privilege of metaphysical doctrines that have used it to oppose “materialism,” suggesting that matter is the antithesis of “idea,” after confusing “ideal” with “idea” and this with the spirit as a transcendent entity in the world. Idealists are not ideologists. On the one hand, Idealism is the life philosophy of a man who strives to be better –not more– according to its social environment. On the other hand, Ideology is a set of ideas on which many men are grouped. If *the ideal develops the personality toward a specific and imagined perfection*, ideas are mental representations that offer determined understandings. Ideals are “expressions of hypothetical states of equilibrium between the known past and the imaginable future, ideals are postulated as anticipated representations of processes that are continually gestated in the unstable social reality (Ingenieros 2000a, 113).

Ingenieros’ *ideas* suggest a total antidogmatic vision of life[12] . An ideal is a live force that makes life evolve; it is not a static precept but an evolving belief (Barreto 2018; Ingenieros 2008 & 2000a). Once you have imagined your ideal for life, now you would have to set your mind and arm in order to reach your ideal. And, once you get there, it already has moved forward and higher but made you move in the path of reaching lower levels of imperfection. Ingenieros was passionate about evolution and reaching lower levels of imperfection (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013).

From a philosophical basis found in Plato, he considered four fields on which all human beings can find its path to perfection: science (truth), art (beauty), moral (virtue), and justice (social affairs). All ideals will move toward one of those four directions, never being antagonistic because beauty is not the opposite of wisdom, nor wisdom is the opposite of virtue or justice. Copernic and Giordano Bruno, Dante and Michelangelo, Socrates and Seneca, as well as Jesus and Sarmiento were his common examples of an idealist who went after the perfection in knowledge, beauty, virtue, and justice. They were his main examples of idealists as Superior Men. Therefore, and from a more collective and sociological perspective, idealism –or the lack of it– is what creates three classes of men[13].

- Inferior man: it is a human animal. The biological inheritance condenses his mentality and instinctual tendencies as the “species soul.” His inability to adapt prevents him from adjusting to the social environment. His personality does not reach the current social level; he lives under the dominant moral and culture, and, very often, out of the legal corpus of society.
- Mediocre man: it is a shadow projected by society. By essence, it is imitative and adapts perfectly to the environment, reflecting routines, prejudices, and dogmatisms. Imitation is its fundamental trait. It represents the “society soul.” They represent the majority but ignore their social function: to maintain the current status quo. Because of them, society should not go back, but it will not go forward either.
- Superior man: it is a *useful accident* for human evolution. He is original and imaginative. He mismatches the social environment to the extent of its own variation. He is capable of becoming an “individual soul” from the “species soul” and overcoming the “society soul.” Thinking better than the environment in which he/she lives allows his/her ideal to be above of the routines of others. They live as their ideals were true and are aware of their social function: to create a better future with the best of the present.

Although there could be infinite individual differences, human beings can be included in those approximate classifications due to their functionality/aptitude and dysfunctionality/inaptitude in society. Regardless, of determined biological and social variations, education is critical for both the character strengthening and ideals formation. Here, it is essential to understand that education can increase the capacity of men for social life, but it cannot level everyone to the same degree, nor for the fulfillment of the same functions in society (Ingenieros 2000a, 121). Education would suggest the ideals that are presumed to promote perfection (Ingenieros 2008, 18). Then, some men, inferiors, will struggle with adapting to the social environment and recognizing the suggested ideals. The majority, mediocre men, will recognize those ideals but may not work toward them. A minority, those who tend to be superior men, will not only recognize those suggested ideals but will understand them, work toward them, and suggest new ideals intended to increase perfection in science, art, virtue, and justice.

Based on the aforementioned ideas, one can say that the inferior man goes against society; he does not have any social contribution. Since Ingenieros always thought about the social contributions of individuals, he could have strong positions before those inferior men not able to contribute to the good or, at least, the maintenance of society. One of his controversial assertions as a young adult referred to the social function of medicine. He stated that “medicine should be the biological defense of humankind. With selective oriented-goals, medicine should strive for the preservation of the species’ superior characters and pleasant extinction of the incurable and degenerated. By doing this, it would be possible to avoid the social parasitism of the inferiors and, at the same time, move away from the possible hereditary transmission of useless or harmful characters to society” (Ingenieros 2004a, 131-2). Although this was a

theoretical discussion, he projected an ethical, political, and sociological debate for the future of medicine as a proactive discipline in the preservation of humankind and its better future. These inferiors may not be a product of society, but an “accident” of evolution.

People with a recurrent criminal background could be examples of inferior men. They do not contribute to any good; they corrupt and harm society. Some of these, as it was said previously, could be grouped within the *social parasite psychopathology*. It is the case of those criminals that he studied; those who simulated to be ill in order to avoid jail, remaining in public hospitals with all the attention and receiving free dairy foods. At the same time, other inferior men could be the result of *an educational approach or sociopolitical and economic system that was unable to increase their aptitude capable of contributing to society*. For these men without biological or irremediable clinical and moral problems that hinder them to make social contributions, education should be the tool to make them fit into the social life. In every case, if we talk about arts, criminals would be like those who destroy both the work of artists who keep the current status of painting and those who are creating the next innovation jump in painting with new pigments, canvases, and techniques, just like Da Vinci did with the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*. Inferior men destroy the paints not because they are ignorant but do not understand how painting could be an expression of life and humanity.

However, regardless of having clinical and moral problems or not, Dr. Joe Dispenza’s current discoveries in neuroscience demonstrate men’s ability to heal and become better (good) just by changing the vibration of thoughts. Neuroscience is demonstrating how the power of harmonious and congruent feelings and thoughts are capable of improving human life scientifically (Growth Events 2018; Dispenza 2019). This is re-invigorating the role of education and might be challenging Ingenieros by indicating that it is not necessary to *extinguish the incurable pleasantly* for the good of society because of new educational approaches. However, at the same, it is reinforcing Ingenieros’ intellectual work by suggesting that ideals, as a live-fire of the spirit towards some perfection, have the power to shape better and more useful men: the power of an ideal lies in its capacity to be believed and felt so that the personality structure accommodates to it. This is his idealistic philosophy of life becoming pragmatic in individual psychological traits and health through education, and neuroscience is demonstrating this today.

That being said, mediocrity and superiority are able to contribute to the society. However, mediocre and superior men are destined to struggle with each other. This is how, in Ingenieros’ perspective, being mediocre does not mean to be bad aprioristically, but, obviously, it is not good either; it is mediocrity, flatness. While the mediocre man maintains the current status in society, the superior man or idealist is who makes the society evolve. If Socrates had to deal with the judges, Jesus had those who imposed the cross; if Giordano and Joan of Arc dealt against those who put them in the bonfire, Copernic was faced by the Inquisition office, and Nikola Tesla suffered the mediocrity of

businesspersons; if Simon Bolívar had to deal with those who banished him from his own country; Martin Luther King Jr. fought against the white supremacists and Mandela struggled with the apartheid groups. The few are superior men; the majority are mediocre men who fight to keep the current status quo. If the few have ideals able to move knowledge, beauty, virtue, and justice forward; the majority will defend the status quo; they cannot conceive a better stage of life, they only maintain it. In the future, the mediocre men will maintain what the superior men moved forward in the past, but now, the superior men will be ahead in another quest for perfection. One represents the revolutionary spirit; the other ones represent the conservative spirit. But, how to distinguish what are legitimate ideals and what are not? How to distinguish who are legitimate idealists and who are not?

On the one hand, since all idealism is a faith in every perfection possibility, every ideal is respected: “because it is a belief, it can contain a part of error, or be an error completely; it is a remote vision and, therefore, exposed to be inaccurate” (Ingenieros 2008, 16). The experience will distinguish what ideals are legitimate from those that are not. That experience is the future experience; that outcome coming from the complex equation where superior and mediocre men battle each other. The mediocre priesthood could crucify Jesus, shortening the life of that superior man. Nevertheless, they did not overcome Jesus’ ideal, and the experience coming after Jesus proved that the ideal of loving your brother is kept alive and has made humanity more human.

The experience will decide on the legitimacy of the ideals in each time and place. While the experience does not give its verdict, every ideal will remain as a respected hypothesis of the possible future. The only bad thing is to lack ideals and being a slave of immediate practice contingencies (money, superstitions, social and economic biases, political calculations, dogmas, etc.); renouncing to the possibility of any moral perfection (Ingenieros 2008, 2004b & 2000a). In other words, if people do not have ideals and work toward them, they are mediocre men.

For Ingenieros, idealism is about bringing the future to the present by imagining it from the knowledge coming from the past (Ingenieros, 2000a). The idealist calculates the potential trajectory of society. Then, the experience will validate if that trajectory was drawn correctly. In society, the ideal is a hypothesis waiting to become a thesis by the upcoming social experience: “the future philosophers, to approach forms of expression that are less and less inaccurate, will leave the beautiful privilege of figurative language to poets; and future systems, detaching from old mystic and dialectical residues, will be placing experience as the foundation of any legitimate hypothesis” (Ingenieros 2008, 16).

Thus, in his philosophical thought, idealism, experience and society, are a tripod by which he analyzes the human being and society (Barreto 2018; Gomez 2006). It is not an idealism faced against materialism, nor an idealism as a synonym of ideology because it is not about shaping a particular set of ideas to understand social issues. Ingenieros’ idealism conception is about illuminating the human mind and heart to

develop the personality toward a selected perfection. Be free to dream for the better, be free to imagine the higher, be free to evolve constantly, do not let immediate contingencies restrict you and your action, and let the upcoming experience be the judge of what has not happened yet. Embrace yourself and your moral forces; become the master light of your house, become the leader of your own growth, become the entrepreneur of your own enterprise; and move the society to *less imperfect stages*.

In this regard, a legitimate idealist is that man who will not follow the men herd, but his own path toward a greater good. It would be that man who will not look for the approval of his surroundings but his unselfish desire for glory. Glory is not equal to success. Socrates, Jesus, and Michelangelo were glorious men. They could have been successful at their times but were strong enough to keep moving forward instead of stopping to rejoice the chants coming from the crowd, feeling flattered and important. In almost every time, glory comes in the afterlife because the current experience social does not have the ability to judge the events yet. It was the upcoming experience that revealed how Socrates, Jesus, and Michelangelo were, indeed, men of another age; men who should be admired in all times. That is the power of idealism when it is imagined and worked with perseverance: glory.

Accordingly, Ingenieros sustains that superior men don't think, do, create, or declaim because of the need to receive the pompous compliment; that is something for mediocre men (Barreto, 2018). This idealist is an eagle; that mediocre man is a turkey. While the first one throws his gaze beyond our reach, the second one tries to hide his "erectile mucus" (caruncle); if the first one crosses the sky, the second one stays on the ground because he cannot fly; while the first one hunts his ideal, the second one is hunted by social conventions; while the first one does not pay attention if we are admiring his extraordinary flight abilities, the second one always struts to get your attention on his hundred Argos' eyes planted on its tail. That is how Ingenieros differentiates those men who could be the archetype of upcoming times from those who are not and will not be.

The Ideal of a Latin American Nationalism

As the Latin American thinker of idealism based on experience, Ingenieros must have had an ideal; if not, he would be the antithesis of his own thesis. Certainly, many projects clouded his mind, but none had the power to move his personality as the construction of the Latin American nationalism, or what is known for some Latin Americans as the "Patria Grande" –the Great Fatherland. In his last life stage, from 1918 to 1925, and as an academic man and political activist, he was surrendered to this ideal. The construction of a united Latin America, spiritually and territorially, would become the summit of his ideals (Borda-Malo 2015; Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013; Sotelo 2005; Díaz 1998). It was here in which hope and optimism would feature his philosophical and political mindset.

During his life, Ingenieros understood that Latin America was a big set of separated, weak, and not-well organized countries that struggled for its own space between old and new world powers (Barreto 2012; Ingenieros 1922). It was a genuine understanding rooted in original Latin American sources, enriched by field research experiences in both sides of the Atlantic ocean, and able to intuit some Eurocentric and Anglocentric biases in the way how the region was approached (Ingenieros 1961b; 2000a; 2000b; 2004b; 2008). In this global battlefield, he, like many others, conceived that Latin American should be an independent agent able to defend its position and national destiny; in particular from the United States geopolitical influence:

No historical convergence seems more natural than a federation of the peoples of Latin America. Disaggregated a century ago by uncommunication and feudalism, they can now raise again the problem of their future national unity, extending from the Rio Grande to the Strait of Magellan. This historical possibility deserves to become a common ideal since the hopes of progress and the dangers of vassalage are common to all these peoples. It is time to repeat that, if this destiny were not fulfilled, its colonization by the imperialism that has been stalking them for a hundred years would be inevitable: the oblique Monroe Doctrine, the firm will of the United States, today expresses its decision to protect and exploit our Latin America, captivating it without violence; through the dollar diplomacy. Their accomplices are political tyranny, economic parasitism, and religious superstition, which need to keep our peoples divided; exploiting their reciprocal hatreds in favor of vested interests in a hundred years of traditional feudalism. (Ingenieros 2000a, 157)

To understand the origin of these assertions, it is of the utmost importance to realize that the Monroe Doctrine had a historic momentum during Jose Ingenieros' times. In his view:

If during the past century [19th Century] the Monroe Doctrine could have seemed a guarantee for the "principle of nationalities" against the "right of intervention," today we note that this doctrine, in its current interpretation, expresses the United States "right of intervention" against the "Latin American nationalities." A hypothetical guarantee has become an effective danger.

We call its guarantee "hypothetical" in the past; the facts prove it. Did the Americans impose the Monroe Doctrine in 1833, when England occupied the Malvinas Islands, belonging to Argentina? Did they impose it in 1838 when the French squadron bombed the castle of San Juan de Ulúa? Did they impose it in the following years, when Admiral Leblanc invaded the ports of the Rio de la Plata? And in 1861, when Spain reconquered Santo Domingo? And in 1804, when Napoleon III founded the empire of Maximilian of Austria in Mexico? And in 1866, when Spain blocked the Pacific ports? And a hundred times more, when under the pretext of collecting their investments and protecting their vassals, the European nations committed compulsions and violence against our republics?

That wrongful doctrine, which never managed to impose itself against European interventions, has had at last the function of ensuring the exclusivity of American interventionism... (Ingenieros 1922, 7-8).

According to his understanding, the Monroe Doctrine was not a foreign affairs policy but the projection of power driven by a small group of people in the United States with selfish interests for wealth and profit; Latin America turned out to be the first and main victim of the Monroe Doctrine in the world. However, part of the criticism that Ingenieros and his peers faced refers to their silence regarding the influence of other powers in the region, such as England, Spain, and France. In fact, the very Ingenieros said it: “Did the Americans impose the Monroe Doctrine in 1833, *when England occupied the Malvinas Islands*, belonging to Argentina? [...] And in 1804, *when Napoleon III founded the empire of Maximilian of Austria* in Mexico? And in 1866, *when Spain blocked the Pacific ports?*” (Ingenieros 1922, 7). According to Díaz (1998), this predisposition to highlight the USA interference over any other influence is a consequence of that Leninist mindset, which characterized many of the unifying movements in Latin America: imperialism as capitalism’s final stage. Indeed, it is not a minor detail that Ingenieros was involved in socialist political parties and promoted these ideologies since very young due to his father influx (Barreto 2019; Mastronardi 2009). In this same regard, he was part of a European immigrant family, thus pointing out potential European influences in Latin America could not have been easy due to the personal implications.

That being said, it is important to understand that between 1914 and 1925, European countries suffered World War I and were trying to reconstruct all their infrastructure, economy, and social tissue. Specifically, France and Britain were quite busy in organizing their new lands in Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Europeans did not have a sustained foreign policy of control toward Latin America as the USA had under the Monroe Doctrine and its diverse implementing modes, such as Roosevelt’s Big Stick and Taft’s Dollar Diplomacy. Accordingly, regardless of Ingenieros European ideological and personal affiliations, there were no reasons to consider that Europeans or any other powers would compete with the United States in controlling Latin America politically, economically, militarily and, most importantly, culturally.

Therefore, for Ingenieros, Latin American unity was of the utmost importance to deal with the Pan-American system disloyalty as an expression of the Monroe Doctrine:

We are not; we do not want to be more; we could not continue being Pan-Americanists... The powerful neighbor and laborious friend [USA] has developed to the highest degree the capitalist production regime and has achieved the financial hegemony of the world in the last war [WWI]. With the economic power, the voracity of its privileged caste has grown, pressing more and more the policy in an imperialist direction, turning the government into an instrument of syndicates [lobbies] without other principles that to capture sources of wealth and speculate with the work of the humanity, which is enslaved already by a strong bankocracy [government of the banks] without fatherland and moral[14]. (Ingenieros 1922, 6)

Due to referred Ingenieros’ perception, Latin American countries were just that; countries, not nations embraced by the people patriotism:

Countries are geographical expressions, and States are forms of political balance. A fatherland is much more and it is something else: synchronism of spirits and hearts, uniform tempering for effort and homogeneous disposition for sacrifice; simultaneity in the aspiration of greatness, in the modesty of humiliation, and in the desire for glory. When there is no community of hopes, there is no fatherland, there cannot be: we must have common dreams, yearn for great things together, and feel determined to do, with the assurance of marching together to the position of an ideal, none of us will be in the middle of the road counting their moneybags. The fatherland is implicit in the solidarity sentiment of a race and not in the conspiracy of politiquists who walk in the shadow. (Ingenieros 2008, 163)

All these words enclose both Ingenieros' Latin American dream and the threats to this dream. Fatherland, synchronism of spirits, aspiration for glory, and solidarity were threatened by the mediocrity of those who exert political tyranny, economic parasitism, and religious superstition; those mediocre men unable to embrace the dream of a great nationality but easily tempted by the "dollar diplomacy."

Ingenieros understood that the time for reaching common values and ground were the basis for a long-standing Latin American unity required to be anticipated once again. The demonstrated bad experience for Latin Americans brought by the Monroe Doctrine and its Pan-Americanist system implementation during the last one hundred years were unquestionable and created the conditions to promote a Latin American unification. In order to do this, the patriot fire needed to be ignited in the heart of young Latin Americans: "blessed are the peoples of Latin America if the young people of the New Generation discover in themselves the moral forces necessary for the great enterprise: to *develop social justice in the continental nationality*" (Ingenieros 2000a, 19-20). Clearly, social justice, youth, and nationalism and patriotism are three core concepts in Ingenieros' idealism as a human being.

When Ingenieros speaks about social justice, there is a direct call to solidarity or fraternity as a basic political principle (Barreto 2018). He understands that social justice refers to guarantee man all his rights. This goes hand by hand with attending or fulfilling all the individual duties, and all this creates the formula of individual dignity. Social justice intends to avoid any parasitism socially and economically by assuming the love to work and being useful (Bolívar 1819): who always talks about our duties betrays justice; but it defiles our dignity who preaches duties that are not the natural consequence of the rights actually exercised (Ingenieros 2000a, 77). It is essential to recognize how this solidary emphasis based on love to work and being useful finds its roots in the very life of Ingenieros. As it was said before, he came from a socialist and progressive worker family where, because of ideological features, it was easy to see how a few may take advantage of the work of many unfairly. He witnessed how some politicians and rich men were instruments of the crisis in 1890; while they became richer, the majority suffered. Later, he studied how criminals took advantage of the

public health system by simulating being sick. Parasitism and false merits are an antithesis of Ingenieros.

In his ideal of developing social justice in the Latin American nationality, youths are the fundamental asset on which all the best efforts and social lights had to forge freedom, justice, solidarity, and the aspiration for greatness. Ingenieros strived to inspire the youth to embrace their moral forces; those required for the historical quest of uniting the continent. Education would be the most important factor to develop that required moral personality to cross this steep road.

The young generations are and will be the highest hopes for every nation (Ingenieros 2000b). It is here, in the young generations, where Ingenieros' idealism also bridges to pragmatism, so the experience can give its verdict. His ideal translated into pragmatic actions by constituting an intellectual and educational force to suggest the unionist ideal in the youth human energy that took place in Latin American universities: "educating the energy; teaching to admire it, new destinies of the people will be reflected. Let us repeat to the youth of our America that no beautiful ideal was served by paralytics and obtuse: the cripples cannot march far away, nor can the blinds contemplate the luminous dawn. The young people who do not know how to look at the future and work for it are miserable lackeys of the past and live asphyxiating among its rubble" (Ingenieros 2000a, 31). If the Latin American young generations could embrace the patriotic ideal, they would become the superior men and women able to establish social justice in the confederated continental nationalism[15].

Indeed, in current times, ideas about patriotism and nationalism are often quoted to call for the people support and justify social, political, economic, and military actions locally and globally. Commonly, these words suffer the same luck of other terms, such as democracy, human rights, love, and even God. For this reason, the construction of a genuine nationalism from an inner patriotic sentiment should not be the venture or call of any mediocre man simulating to be a superior patriot: "it is only a patriot the one who loves his fellow citizens, educates them, encourages them, dignifies them, honors them; the one who fights for the welfare of his people, sacrificing himself to emancipate them from all the yokes; the one who believes that the fatherland is not the cell of the slave, but the site of the free man. No one has the right to invoke the fatherland until he proves that he has contributed to honor and magnify it" (Ingenieros 2000a, 151).

It should be clear that the problem is not patriotism or nationalism per se, but the intentionality by which superior and mediocre men mention them. In particular, those mediocre men categorized as political simulators are mere opportunistic politicians that may use these words only to fulfill personal interests and cover his mediocrity before a crowd that could be mediocre too (Ingenieros 2004a). For Ingenieros, this is part of the democratic problem in current societies (20th century).

Ingenieros criticizes democracy strongly because of its capacity to level the social morality among eminent men with merits and those without. From his

perspective, an accentuated moral declining featured the *democratic* governments at the beginning of the 20th Century: “Plato, unwittingly, by speaking about democracy as the worst of the good governments, but the best among the bad, defined the mediocracy” (Ingenieros 2008, 160). When morality passes through those declining periods, there is no space for the superior men. In here, elections highlight the times for adulations. While the cradle aristocrats invoke the divine right and intellectual skill to gain more followers, demagogues invoke the rights of man. Winning the elections is of the utmost importance. *Neither the golden cradle nor the invocation of rights give aptitudes to become a superior governor*. Nevertheless, this is just one side of the problem. Adulations also go from the ruling class toward *the people*, and this is demagogue populism. People transmutes from a qualitative category, as a political concept with philosophical and anthropological features, into quantitative terminologies: population, voters, majorities, minorities, numbers, percentages. Accordingly, the discussion to uncover the *vital lies* and preach *vital truths*, simply, does not take place. Those are mediocracy times: government of the mediocre, for the mediocre, by the mediocre: “how many Jesus or Socrates are still condemned by democracy through its principle of *respect for the will of the majority* and due to a problem with moral consciousness?” (Barreto 2018, 105).

Therefore, for Ingenieros, patriotism is not about conventional demagogue or populist calls. When those demagogue and populist *patriots* agitate that mythical cult as an abstraction outside the social reality, they are immolating their citizens and dishonor the nations. And they may invoke the fatherland to cover their moral bastardy, but they are enemies of nationality and the people as a real depositary of the national soul. He continues his assertions by saying that patriotism also finds enemies in those who serve and flatter the powerful and despots. Then, he finishes his verdict by stating: “the patriotic lie of the merchants is the antithesis of that tender feeling which constitutes the heart’s patriotism and spiritual harmony. [...] The conventional patriotism of politicians is to the naive nationalism of the people like fireworks to the sunlight” (Ingenieros 2000a, 150).

However, besides the demagogue populism exerted by mediocre men, Ingenieros understands another and worst way to attempt against patriotism. It takes place when these mediocre men attack or hate the fatherland of other men, assuming that there is only one land in which a genuine love among men and willingness to sacrifice can exist: theirs. When this happens, a pragmatic and idealistic truth is covered: “each people is an element of humanity; the yearning for national dignity can be an aspect of faith in human dignity. Ascend each nation to its highest level, and by the effort of all, the level of humanity will be higher” (Ingenieros 2000a, 154). This is how he calls for harmony in the concert of many nationalities and patriotisms; because we can be different and have dissimilar ideals, but it does not mean we are antagonistic. As it was said before, every ideal is respected “because it is a belief” and a hypothetical path toward a perfection that does not struggle with other possibilities of perfection. The only bad thing is not to have ideals (Ingenieros 2008). Each patriotism represents an expression of the humankind and suggests a way to perfect that particular piece of

humanity. In the end, the entire humanity is the fatherland's ideal, and the Latin American humanity development was his most sublime ideal.

In summary, as long as young Latin Americans become superior men and women, in that same rhythm, the experience would be able to validate the legitimacy of Ingenieros' ideal regarding his Latin American understandings in terms of a country, nation, and fatherland. Of course, because perfection is an endless path, once Latin Americans get a national union, this ideal should have had already evolved or changed; thus, Latin Americans will continue their walk to new horizons. Perhaps, after becoming a united Latin American country from Mexico to Argentina filled by the patriotic heat of social justice, they would have to become a better nation in terms of politics, economy, social development, etc. Otherwise, if the Latin American unity becomes a reality without having the youth as the protagonist nor achieving the continental social justice, it means that Ingenieros' ideal was partially precise. But, if the Latin American nationalism never becomes real and the young generations are unable to become superior men, it means that his ideal was not right; it was a chimera. In this sense, Latin American countries will never have a unique nationalism nor a common patriotism. In simple words, Latin American countries would always be countries: geographical expressions with some kind of political balance. The upcoming experience will have the final word. For the moment, his ideal is valid still: "all contemporary history converges to predict the growth of social justice and the grouping of weak related states into powerful communions. An enlightened minority of the New Generation believes that the peoples of our Latin America are predestined to confederate in the same continental nationality. They affirm it solemnly and seem ready to tempt the road, believing that if this destiny were not fulfilled, its colonization by the powerful imperialism that has been prowling for a hundred years would be inevitable" (Ingenieros 2000a, 24-5).

Final comments

In Ingenieros' times, several movements and personalities were around and shaped the world we have today. It was a change of era between the 19th and 20th centuries. Because of an uprising use of electricity, rapid evolutions took place in science, societies, and politics. Those were the times of Sigmund Freud, John Dewey, Albert Einstein, Nikola Tesla, Vladimir Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Antonio Gramsci, Mary Parker Follet, Mahatma Gandhi, Alexander Fleming, and many others. José Ingenieros was part of those who represent the intellectual contributions, scientific developments, and sociopolitical aspirations of an entire era of advanced human progress.

Regardless of some controversial assertions and actions, Ingenieros' intellectual work and life struggle are inspiring and deserve proper recognition (Gomez 2006 & 2009), not only because of its relevancy but also due to its contemporary influence and validity in philosophy, sociology, political science, education, ethics, psychology, and other disciplines (Barreto 2018; Growth Events 2018; Dispenza 2019). He continues imposing himself due to the force of his ideas, the ethical intention of his action, and his

scientific works (Secretaría de Cultura de la Presidencia de la Nación 2013). He firmly believed that philosophy and science must help in the construction of a better society by promoting better cultural expressions so that philosophy should not be the hostage of a few, even though a few could be the more advanced in thinking and morality.

Indeed, Ingenieros believed in the existence of an elite capable of moving the society forward. But this elitism is not about socioeconomic or political privileges. On the contrary, this elitism is about morality and being able to contribute to the good of society, even though society could not be able to understand those contributions yet. Socrates, Jesus, and Bruno are part of that elite. In their times, society was not able to understand their value. Years, decades, centuries, and even millenniums have passed and their contributions are remarkable but are remarkable for this current society, not theirs. If Socrates dealt with the judges, Jesus was imposed onto the cross, and Bruno found the bonfire as the last star to study. Current times may find those judges and inquisitors as immoral, but not theirs. Those mediocre men were defending the status quo while stopping the evolution of humankind. Today, this current society is able to understand or, at least, recognize their contributions because the experience has validated that Socrates, Jesus, and Bruno's ideals were reachable and necessary.

Accordingly, Ingenieros' elitism is not about belonging to specific cultural, social, political, economic, religious, or military groups, but a sublime moral assembly. He proclaims an elitism based on ideals, and ideals may be imagined by every man and woman. Regardless of biological conditions, education is pivotal in making human beings capable of becoming useful, striving to have them become as superior men. His philosophical and scientific work allows the current society to understand better, and from an ethical perspective, social interactions, social movements, revolutions, human struggles, and the work of those few individuals who strive to become useful for the good of society. Furthermore, epistemologically, Ingenieros' framework emerges as a heuristic way of thinking to approach social matters from an interdisciplinary standpoint not tied to the traditional Anglocentrism and Eurocentrism.

From a Latin American perspective, his thought is unique in its capacity to discover, outline, and define the Latin American spirit that fulfills and guides every Latin-Americanism. It is not about his uniqueness in terms of shaping or creating the ideal of a united Latin America, but his *epistemological framework to understand* those who, as same as him, thought about this possibility and historical need. This is how Ingenieros' idealism and a significant part of his intellectual work suggest effective ways to philosophically, sociologically, politically, psychologically, economically, and ethically understand the Latin American life and struggles, as well as the experience of relevant personalities, such as Bolívar, Sucre, Miranda, San Martín, Manuela Sáenz, Morazán, Martí, Cienfuegos, Pancho Villa, Perón and Evita, Eloy Alfaro, Neruda, María Chinchilla, and many other superior men and women in Latin America who strived and strive still for justice, moral, truth, and beauty.

All those who can be interested in reaching in-depth comprehensions regarding Latin American affairs will find Ingenieros philosophical, sociological, psychological, ethical, and political thought as an eclectic and original source. In simple words, Ingenieros is a way to understand Latin American from inside. It is not possible to understand Bolívar's independence project from a classical Marxist perspective: how can we understand a rich man who fought for the greatness of an entire race spending all his money in this quest? Is he a rich man sacrificing his high-class lifestyle due to the cause of slaves? From a classical Marxist perspective, simply, the bourgeoisie does not do that (Barreto 2018). Ingenieros is able to see the human spirit behind any political, economic, military, academic, or social status. As such, Bolívar was an idealist who became a superior man and moved society to better levels of truth, moral, and justice. Ingenieros' intellectual work is worthy of being considerate, known, and taught in order to understand Latin American affairs better. Indeed, he strived to reframe the proclaimed "superior" and hypothetical world of ideas within the irreverent expression of social and international conflicts (experience) to accentuate the affirmation of a Latin American continental identity (Ingenieros 2005 & 2000b). His very ultimate life ideal is an example in this regard.

Ingenieros' ultimate and consolidated ideal found its root in one hundred years of Monroe Doctrine. This U.S. foreign policy, implemented through the Pan-American system and by an American privileged caste, stalks every Latin American's wealth to satisfy its interests; and its own interests only. Ingenieros' last thoughts and efforts promoted the Latin American national unity spiritually and territorially (Ingenieros 2005 & 2000b; Díaz 1998). Then, Ingenieros' ideal comes up as a *project for self-defense and emancipation*. Accordingly, axiologically, fatherland, synchronism of spirits and hearts, aspiration for glory and Latin American solidarity, are the core values that should be suggested by an inspirational education aimed to develop social justice in the continental nationality (teleology). Here, the new generation of Latin Americans emerges as the energized lever that should make this ideal more real than utopia:

To the part of humanity by which we belong, it is fair to wish for an outpost in the struggles for progress and civilization. In a pleasant hour of youth, we anticipate these explicit words: "We aspire to create a national science, a national art, a national policy, a national feeling, adapting the characters of the multiple original races to the frame of our physical and sociological environment. Just as every man aspires to be someone in his family, every family in his class, every class in his town, we aspire also that our people be someone in humanity." And in the ovation that underlined those words, we thought it as a tribute to the revolutionaries of America [Latin America], who, a hundred years earlier, had been moved by similar feelings, emancipating the people from that oppression which degraded them (Ingenieros 2000a, 149).

The young Latin American generations can find in Ingenieros an autochthone voice that speaks to them from their own reality and life circumstances. It is not about becoming better human beings by copying how others behave and think. Rather it about becoming better by knowing themselves in their past experiences and current challenges. Latin

Americans can find in Ingenieros a source to be original and superior, to reach the Latin American *Patria Grande*. Every part of the world and nationalism have different levels and stages of imperfection, so no one should follow the same path to perfection. A fatherland represents a segment of another piece that other fatherland lacks. This is why all fatherlands complement each other in the great concert of the human family: we can be different without being antagonistic (Ingenieros 2008 & 2000a).

Nevertheless, although Ingenieros' philosophy was originated in the Latin American context, it is able to go beyond any Latin-Americanism or Latin American epistemology. It is a philosophy that can be universal because it is a philosophy for every incarnated young spirit who aspires to become a Superior Man, a man able to overcome any superficial and social convention in his intention to move the humanity forward in knowledge, beauty, moral, and justice. Everywhere a superior man is struggling with mediocre men, Ingenieros' philosophy will find a place. It is not about simple regionalisms or nationalisms; it is about humankind striving for the better. We can call them Confucius, Nelson Mandela, Socrates, Jesus, Emerson, Neruda, Vivaldi, Alighieri, Joan of Arc, Da Vinci, Mary Parker Follet, etc. All of them were idealists. It is not about geography, but about understanding those spirits that carry out perfectionism. In summary, it is an eclectic philosophical source that directly:

- Makes people embrace their moral forces (Ethics)
- Develops the cognitive processes of reasoning and imagination as superior human traits (Psychology)
- Increases higher levels of social involvements and interactions (Sociology)
- Promotes the political consciousness evolution and improves human coexistence (Political Science)
- Suggests new civilized ways of human encounter, culture, and social productivity (Anthropology, Law, and Economy)
- Develops noteworthy ways to educate every human being to be a man or woman of good (Education).

Finally, Ingenieros shed light on individuals and societies that strive to create a better future with the best of the present. He seems to join Confucius and Socrates in the maieutic projects of knowing thyself and pursuing higher levels of virtues and excellency. Am I an inferior man and why? Am I a mediocre man and why? Am I a superior man and why? Do I interfere with social evolution? Do I maintain the social, scientific, economic, political, or any other status quo? Do I contribute to the establishment of a better society? How can I become a superior man? How can I be a more useful man? How can I emulate the better? How can I become the best of myself? In parallel, Ingenieros also asks every human collectivity. Are we a mediocracy? How do we facilitate the emersion of those new Socrates and Jesus? How does our patriotism speak about ourselves and others? Are we a nation in which social justice exists? How can we ensure the development of social justice? Are our public officers and statemen moral enough to rule our society? Are we a society where the highest moral values are incarnated in every human being? Ingenieros is a source of wisdom that challenges

every human being and society by asking about inferiority, mediocrity and superiority in moral, beauty, truth, and justice.

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Notes

[1] In "Rediscovering the Philosophical Importance of Jose Ingenieros" (2006) and "Rediscovering the Philosophical Importance of Jose Ingenieros: A Bridge between two Worlds- Jose Ingenieros and his Impact" (2008), Manuela Gomez made some contributions on rediscovering Ingenieros' intellectual work and relevancy. These contributions were useful to see a few intersections between American and Latin American philosophies. However, Gomez's efforts regarded Ingenieros in connection to Ralph Waldo Emerson's thought, mainly. In order to understand Ingenieros' life, contributions, and importance, it is necessary to approach him from himself and not from Emerson and his U.S. context only. Furthermore, for Ingenieros, "Emerson was not a philosopher; not a bad or good one, he was not. Those of us who study philosophy have the right to reserve this name for the investigation of the most general and distant problems of current or possible experience, which are beyond the methods of the sciences and exceed their limits: at all times and places, it has been the domain of metaphysics. [...] Philosopher is the one who proposes new solutions to philosophical problems or presents them in different ways, or renews the already established solutions with originality. [...] Emerson had the good sense not to confuse his ethics with

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a philosophy. He moved in the domain of religious beliefs and not in that of metaphysical doctrines.” (Ingenieros 2004b, 70). In Ingenieros’ view, Emerson was an ethicist. Accordingly, this article strives to rediscover the essence of Ingenieros’ intellectuality, philosophy, and life struggles from his perspective as a working-class man who fought against mediocrity, forged innovations in the world of philosophy and sciences, and keeps enlightening the path for the new generations.

[2] He also used the pseudonyms Julio Barrera Lynch and Raúl H. Cisneros to publish a monthly newsletter named "Renovación" [Renovation] in 1925.

[3] It is necessary to say that Ingenieros lived in Spain for three years as a self-exiled after not winning the faculty position for the Legal Medicine course at the Universidad de Buenos Aires in 1911. He had the most prominent academic career among his peers, but the President of Argentina, Roque Sáenz Peña, interfered and designated another candidate. Ingenieros, indignant and in pain, went out of the country and promised not to return to Argentina while Sáenz Peña holds the presidential office. He returned in 1914.

[4] This excerpt is part of his “Autorretrato “[Self Portrait] published in 1915. It became part of a posthumous book titled “Antología. Su pensamiento en sus mejores páginas” [Anthology. His thought in its best pages]. This book was published in 1961 and edited by Ingenieros’ daughter, Delia Ingenieros de Rothschild, under the pseudonyms of “Delia Kamia.”

[5] Perhaps, this early life experience also contributed to his understandings of happiness and money: “the secrets of dignity: be satisfied with what you have, restricting your own needs. A free man does not expect anything from others, he does not need to beg. The happiness given by the money regards not being worry about it” (Ingenieros, 2008). An anecdote says that he asked the university for some flexibility in his payment schedules due to having financial problems. As part of the students with the highest grades in the class, he strongly affirmed that financial misery cannot be a premise to disqualify the condition of a regular student: financial misery cannot punish talent.

[6] Ingenieros dedicated this thesis to the Medicine School’s gatekeeper, Maximino García. Apparently, this man helped Ingenieros in expediting the thesis defense.

[7] “Revealed” dogmas refer to those moral precepts expressed by the “Divinity” or its representatives, and sometimes by some men who proclaimed themselves as receivers or interpreters of inspirations coming from God. This theological notion of dogmas presume that all dogmas should be respected and followed by believers in its entire expression; no questioning is allowed since these revelations come from a supreme divine authority. On the other hand, “rational” dogmas stands for immutable proposition delivered by the all-wise thinkers: philosophers. In here, reason is to divinity as god representatives are to philosophers. The reason has laws that allow the existence of aprioristic moral principles: all behavior should follow the immutable and illuminated power of the reason. “Theological dogmas are like the work of a geologist who, in his interest to study a river, starts building dams to immobilize the river’s waters; rational dogmas equal to a biologist’s opinion who wants to understand the human life functions, so he proceed to distill a corpse in an alembic” (Ingenieros 2004b, 22).

[8] It is clear that freedom was a subjacent political principle across his sociological and philosophical thought.

[9] Buenos Aires translates into “Good Airs.”

[10] This is the period known as the “Pánico de 1890” [Panic of 1890].

[11] Although Ingenieros believes in an intellectual and cultural elitism in terms of that not all men have the ability and character to perceive and imagine an ideal, he disliked the idea of having a few who were destined by their “golden cradle” or chosen by an ignorant mass without any merit (Ingenieros 2008 & 2000a): “Not all enrapture, like you, before a twilight; not all dream in front of an aurora or shake in a storm; nor like to walk with Dante, laugh with Moliere, shake with Shakespeare, creak with Wagner; or be speechless before the *David*, the *Last Supper* or the *Parthenon*. It is of a few that restlessness...” (Ingenieros 2008, 73-4).

[12] Maybe, his only one dogma was to not have a dogma.

[13] “Men” is a generic term that involves both men and women. Philosophically and linguistically, there is not an intention to discriminate, even though we should understand that between the 19th and 20th Centuries there was a more male-centered society that in current times.

[14] Since this voracious “privileged caste” with no fatherland sentiment and morality has enslaved the U.S. Government, it is clear for Ingenieros that this small group is also a great threat to the very American people and its values of freedom, prosperity, democracy, and happiness. It is important to consider that Ingenieros developed in-depth conceptualizations regarding the American society; including those understandings and unitarist transcendentalist lives and ideas expressed by people, such as Horace Mann, William Channing, Ralph Emerson, David Thoreau, George Ripley, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, George Bancroft, Frederick Henry Hedge, Clara Barton, Dr. George Bartol, Orestes Augustus Brownson, Elizabeth Peabody, etc.

[15] He had some pragmatic results with the university movement in Cordoba.