

PLURIVERSIDAD LATINOAMERICANA: WEAVING COMMUNITY, KNOWLEDGE, AND TRANSFORMATION THROUGH DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

WORKSHOP

YOLIET LOMBIDA PRIETO



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TERESA GUTIÉRREZ ARANDA



**Pluriversidad
Latinoamericana**

www.pluriversidad.org

BIO

Pluriversidad Latinoamericana is a constantly evolving collective that rethinks education from the Latin American reality and the perspective of democratic education, promoting personal and social development through shared knowledge, connections, and self-managed, intergenerational, and life-respecting learning, which is realized through seminars, student meetings, outreach activities, as well as support and advice to individuals and educational projects.

Yoliet Lombida Prieto is Cuban and lives in Chile. She is a professional artist, graduated from the National School of Music and the Higher Institute of Arts in Havana, Cuba. She trained at the Center for Montessori Studies and Research in Santiago, Chile. She accompanies children and young people in their self-directed learning processes. She is the founder and director of Escuela Democrática Lombida Montessori in Curacaví, Chile.

Patricia Meléndez Sánchez is Peruvian. She is a psychologist, therapist, and consultant in the clinical, educational, and community fields. Mother and companion to children and families. She is the co-founder of the Cultural Association El Ojo Interior – Seeds for Citizen Awareness, which promotes topics related to art, education, health, and care for nature; and of the educational project LIBRES Comunidad de Aprendizaje, a space that encourages free learning and play, as well as respectful parenting.

Jacquelin Gasco González is Uruguayan and currently resides in Argentina. She is a primary school teacher and yoga instructor. A mother, traveler, craftswoman, and empowered woman, she is also a lifelong learner exploring new perspectives and alternatives in Latin American education.

Marcel Boesch is Swiss and lives in Peru. He holds a Master of Science from the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. He has traveled extensively, particularly throughout Latin America, where he discovered his passion exploring learning communities that are seeking respectful and sustainable responses to the challenges of the 21st century and inspiring schools in improving learning processes. He is currently a teacher trainer at EESP Pukllasunchis in Cusco, Peru.

Teresa Gutiérrez is a teacher at a public high school in northern Peru. She promotes dialogue through democratic assemblies and gives voice to the interests of the students and the needs of the class.

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

The Pluriversidad Latinoamericana Collective, founded in 2018, presented its work through a bilingual virtual session. The group, formed by educators from several Latin American countries, promotes democratic education across the region and has organized annual 10-day intensive seminars in Peru and Chile. These gatherings bring together teachers, parents, students, and social workers - mainly from Latin America - to experience democratic education firsthand, build learning communities, and engage with local contexts. The seminars have inspired the creation of new democratic schools, student-led conferences, and classroom innovations such as the use of assemblies in conventional schools.

A central example is the Democratic School of Huamachuco in Peru, founded by Valerio Narváes Polo, whose work challenged local social, political, and environmental structures. Despite initial skepticism, the school has gained recognition and now graduates its own students. Participants also described the “Cafés de la Pluri,” virtual dialogue spaces that connect democratic education initiatives across Latin America, and highlighted the importance of embracing disagreement, transparency, and decentralization.

The collective emphasized the need to strengthen a distinctly Latin American network of democratic schools, one that acknowledges regional diversity, socioeconomic challenges, and cultural barriers around democracy. Financial sustainability remains a major issue, with schools experimenting with scholarships, flexible contributions, and community-based models to ensure accessibility.

The conversation also explored intersections between democratic education, eco-villages, and sustainable living, referencing key Latin American thinkers such as Paulo Freire, Claudio Naranjo, and Humberto Maturana. Several participants shared their personal journeys toward democratic education and highlighted diverse initiatives from Peru, Chile, Ecuador, and beyond. Throughout the discussion, the group underlined the value of human relationships, community, and cultural rootedness as core elements of democratic education in Latin America.

MORE INFORMATION

- www.pluriversidad.org
- [Presentation \(2025\) Colectivo Pluriversidad Latinoamericana \(English and Spanish\)](#)
- [AI Summary Presentación del Colectivo Pluriversidad Latinoamericana en la IDEC@EUDEC 2025 en Bélgica \(Spanish\)](#)
- [More Pluriversidad resources](#)
- www.escuelasactivas.com
- www.lombidamontessori.cl
- [INSTAGRAM libres.comunidaddeaprendizaje](#)