

Walter D. Mignolo

The Geopolitics of Knowledge
and the Colonial Difference

In December 1998 I had the good fortune to be one of the commentators in the workshop “Historical Capitalism, Coloniality of Power, and Transmodernity,” featuring presentations by Immanuel Wallerstein, Anibal Quijano, and Enrique Dussel. Speakers were asked to offer updates and to elaborate on the concepts attributed to them. Reflecting on “transmodernity,” Dussel made a remark that I take as a central point of my argument. According to Dussel, postmodern criticism of modernity is important and necessary, but it is not enough. The argument was developed by Dussel in his recent short but important dialogue with Gianni Vattimo’s work, which he characterized as a “eurocentric critique of modernity.”¹ What else can there be, beyond a Eurocentric critique of modernity and Eurocentrism? Dussel has responded to this question with the concept of transmodernity, by which he means that modernity is not a strictly European but a planetary phenomenon, to which the “excluded barbarians” have contributed, although their contribution has not been acknowledged. Dussel’s argument resembles, then, the South Asian Subaltern Studies project, although it has

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been made from the legacies of earlier colonialisms (Spanish and Portuguese). Transmodernity also implies—for Dussel—a “liberating reason” (*razón liberadora*) that is the guiding principle of his philosophy and ethic of liberation. The dialogues between Dussel and Wallerstein, between philosophy of liberation² and world system analysis,³ and between philosophy of liberation⁴ and opening the social sciences,⁵ have two things in common. First, both are critical of capitalism, the neoliberal market, and formal democracy. Second, both (and Quijano as well) conceive of modernity as unfolding in the sixteenth century with capitalism and the emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuit. However, there is a break between Wallerstein, on one hand, and Dussel and Quijano, on the other: they stand at different ends of the colonial difference. To explain this intuition is the main thrust of this essay.

Dussel’s remarks can also be applied to Wallerstein’s conception of historical capitalism, in that it states that *Historical Capitalism* is a Eurocentric criticism of capitalism.⁶ By introducing the notion of colonial difference, I will be able to expand on Dussel’s notion of transmodernity and Quijano’s coloniality of power. I will be able also to compare the three in their approach to Eurocentrism and, toward the end of the article, to introduce Slavoj Žižek’s own take on “Eurocentrism from the left.”⁷ My first step, then, will be to distinguish two macronarratives, that of Western civilization and that of the modern world (from the early modern period [i.e., the European Renaissance] until today). The first is basically a philosophical narrative, whereas the second is basically the narrative of the social sciences. Both macronarratives have their positive and negative sides. While Western civilization is celebrated by some, its logocentrism is criticized by others. Similarly, modernity has its defenders as well as its critics. Dussel is located between the two macronarratives, but his criticism diverges from both the criticism internal to Western civilization and the critique internal to the modern world, as in world-system analysis.⁸ As a philosopher he is attuned to the first macronarrative, the macronarrative of Western civilization and its origins in ancient Greece. As a Latin American philosopher, he has been always attentive to the historical foundation of the modern/colonial world in the sixteenth century. He shares these interests with Wallerstein and Quijano, both of whom are sociologists. However, Quijano and Dussel share the Latin American colonial experience or, rather, a local history of the colonial difference. Wallerstein, instead, is immersed in the imperial difference that

distinguishes the philosophical critique of Western civilization in Europe and the sociological critique of modernity in the United States. In essence, then, the geopolitics of knowledge is organized around the diversification, through history, of the colonial and the imperial differences. Let me specify further the distinctions I am introducing here.

The following argument is built on the assumption (which I cannot develop here) that the history of capitalism as told by Fernand Braudel, Wallerstein, and Giovanni Arrighi and the history of Western epistemology as it has been constructed since the European Renaissance run parallel to and complement each other.⁹ The expansion of Western capitalism implied the expansion of Western epistemology in all its ramifications, from the instrumental reason that went along with capitalism and the industrial revolution, to the theories of the state, to the criticism of both capitalism and the state. To make a long story short, let me quote a paragraph by Sir Francis Bacon, written at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The passage reveals a conceptualization of knowledge that began to move away from Renaissance epistemology grounded on the trivium and the quadrivium and strongly dominated by rhetoric and the humanities. Bacon replaced rhetoric with philosophy, and the figure of the Renaissance humanist began to be overtaken by the figure of the philosopher and the scientist that contributed to and further expanded from the European Enlightenment. According to Bacon, "The best division of human learning is that derived from the three faculties of the rational soul, which is the need of learning. History has reference to the Memory, Poesy to the Imagination and Philosophy to the Reason. . . . Wherefore from these three fountains, Memory, Imagination and Reason, flow these three emanations, History, Poesy and Philosophy, and there can be no others."¹⁰ The three "emanations" have been expanded and modified in the subsequent years. However, the assertion that "there can be no others" has been maintained. And at the moment when capitalism began to be displaced from the Mediterranean to the North Atlantic (Holland, Britain), the organization of knowledge was established in its universal scope. "There can be no others" inscribed a conceptualization of knowledge to a geopolitical space (Western Europe) and erased the possibility of even thinking about a conceptualization and distribution of knowledge "emanating" from other local histories (China, India, Islam, etc.).

Western Civilization and the Modern/Colonial World System

The concept and image of modernity are not equivalent to those of the modern world-system. There are several differences between the two. First, modernity is associated with literature, philosophy, and the history of ideas, whereas the modern world-system is associated with the vocabulary of the social sciences. Second, this first characterization is important if we remember that since the 1970s both concepts have occupied defined spaces in academic as well as public discourses. During the Cold War the social sciences gained ground within cultures of scholarship, in the United States particularly in regard to the relevance purchased by area studies.¹¹ Consequently, postmodernity is understood both as a historical process in which modernity encountered its limits and as a critical discourse on modernity that was housed in the humanities, even though social scientists were not deaf to its noise.¹² Third, modernity (and obviously postmodernity) maintained the imaginary of Western civilization as a pristine development from ancient Greece to eighteenth-century Europe, where the bases of modernity were laid out. In contrast, the conceptualization of the modern world-system does not locate its beginning in Greece. It underlines a spatial articulation of power rather than a linear succession of events. Thus, the modern world-system locates its beginning in the fifteenth century and links it to capitalism.¹³ This spatial articulation of power, since the sixteenth century and the emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuit, is what Quijano theorizes as “coloniality of power.”¹⁴

Borrowing the word *paradigm* for pedagogical convenience, I would say that modernity and the modern world-system are indeed two interrelated, although distinct, paradigms. The advantage of the latter over the former is that it made visible the spatiality of Western history in the past five hundred years, along with the need to look at modernity and coloniality together. Modernity places the accent on Europe. Modern world-system analysis brings colonialism into the picture, although as a derivative rather than a constitutive component of modernity, since it does not yet make visible coloniality, the other (darker?) side of modernity. It is indicative of Quijano’s merit that he has shown coloniality to be the overall dimension of modernity, thereby distinguishing coloniality from colonialism. It is also to his merit to have brought to light the fact that the emergence of the Atlantic circuit during the sixteenth century made coloniality constitutive of modernity. If modernity is chronologically located in the eighteenth century, colo-

nality becomes derivative. Thus the Iberian foundational period of capitalistic expansion and coloniality is erased or relegated to the Middle Ages as the Black Legend, to which the Enlightenment construction of the “South” of Europe testifies.¹⁵ In this scenario, if modernity comes first, then colonialism and coloniality become invisible. Quijano and Dussel make it possible not only to conceive of the modern/colonial world-system as a sociohistorical structure coincident with the expansion of capitalism but also to conceive of coloniality and the colonial difference as loci of enunciation. This is precisely what I mean by the geopolitics of knowledge and the colonial difference.¹⁶

The eighteenth century (or more exactly, the period between approximately 1760 and 1800) was dominated by two distinctive shifts. First, there was the displacement of power in the Atlantic circuit from the south to the north. Second, the main concern in Europe, from the Peace of Westphalia (1648) until the end of the eighteenth century, was nation-state building rather than colonialism.¹⁷ England, France, and Germany were not yet colonial powers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and when they became so, they mutually reinforced nation building with colonial expansion, particularly starting in the nineteenth century. However, the strong preoccupation in the north with the Europe of nations placed colonialism on the back burner, so to speak. Colonialism was a secondary concern for nations such as England and France, whose presence in the Americas was geared toward commerce rather than conversion, like the project of Spain and Portugal. At that point, France and England did not have a civilizing mission to accomplish in the Americas, as they would have in Asia and Africa after the Napoleonic era. Current conceptualizations of modernity and postmodernity are historically grounded in that period. The second stage of modernity was part of the German restitution of the Greek legacy as the foundation of Western civilization.

Although there is a discussion as to whether the world-system is five hundred or five thousand years old, I do not consider this issue to be relevant. What is relevant, instead, is that the modern/colonial world-system can be described in conjunction with the emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuit and that such a conceptualization is linked to the making of colonial difference(s).¹⁸ The colonial difference is a connector that, in short, refers to the changing faces of colonial differences throughout the history of the modern/colonial world-system and brings to the foreground the planetary

dimension of human history silenced by discourses centering on modernity, postmodernity, and Western civilization.

The Liberation of Philosophy and the Decolonization of the Social Sciences

Dependency theory has not yet lost its posture, although it has been severely criticized. It is capable of holding its own in the middle of a critical tempest because its critics addressed the conceptual structure of dependency, not its *raison d'être*. The fact that dependency at large was and is the basic strategy in the exercise of coloniality of power is not a question that needs lengthy and detailed argumentation. Even though in the current stage of globalization there is a Third World included in the First, the interstate system and the coloniality of power organizing it hierarchically have not vanished yet. It is also not the point here whether the distinction between center and periphery was as valid at the end of the twentieth century as it was in the nineteenth century. If dependency in the modern/colonial world-system is no longer structured under the center/periphery dichotomy, this does not mean that dependency vanishes because this dichotomy is not as clear today as it was yesterday. On the other hand, *interdependency* is a term that served to restructure the coloniality of power around the emergence of transnational corporations.¹⁹ What Anibal Quijano terms “historico-structural dependency” should not be restricted to the center/periphery dichotomy.²⁰ Rather, it should be applied to the very structure of the modern/colonial world-system and capitalistic economy.

Dependency theory was more than an analytic and explanatory tool in the social sciences.²¹ While world-system analysis owes its motivating impulse and basic economic, social, and historical structure to dependency theory,²² it is not and could not have served as the political dimension of dependency theory. Dependency theory was parallel to decolonization in Africa and Asia and suggested a course of action for Latin American countries some 150 years after their decolonization. World-system analysis operates from inside the system, while dependency theory was a response from the exteriority of the system—not the exterior but the exteriority. That is to say, the outside is named from the inside in the exercise of the coloniality of power. Dependency theory offered an explanation and suggested a course of action for Latin America that could hardly have been done by a world-system analy-

sis. World-system analysis in its turn did something that the dependency analysis was not in a position to accomplish. That is, world-system analysis introduced a historical dimension and a socioeconomic frame (the modern world-system) into the social sciences, thus displacing the origin of history and cultures of scholarship from ancient Greece to the modern world-system. The emergence of the social sciences in the nineteenth century was indeed attached to the epistemic frame opened by the second modernity (the French Enlightenment, German Romantic philosophy, and the British industrial revolution).²³ World-system analysis responded to the crisis of that frame in the 1970s, when decolonization took place in Africa and Asia and the changes introduced by transnational corporations brought to the foreground the active presence of a world far beyond Western civilization. The irreducible (colonial) difference between dependency theory and world-system analysis cannot be located in their conceptual structures but in the politics of their loci of enunciation. Dependency theory was a political statement for the social transformation of and from Third World countries, while world-system analysis was a political statement for academic transformation from First World countries. This difference, implied in the geopolitics of knowledge described by Carl E. Pletsch, is indeed the irreducible colonial difference—the difference between center and periphery, between the Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism and knowledge production by those who participated in building the modern/colonial world and those who have been left out of the discussion.²⁴ Las Casas defended the Indians, but the Indians did not participate in the discussions about their rights. The emerging capitalists benefiting from the industrial revolution were eager to end slavery that supported plantation owners and slaveholders. Black Africans and American Indians were not taken into account when knowledge and social organization were at stake. They, Africans and American Indians, were considered patient, living organisms to be told, not to be heard.

The impact of dependency theory on the decolonization of scholarship in Latin America was immediate and strong. In 1970 Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals-Borda published an important book titled *Ciencia Propia y Colonialismo Intelectual* [Intellectual colonialism and our own science], which today echoes a widespread concern in cultures of scholarship in Asia and Africa. The scenario is simple: Western expansion was not only economic and political but also educational and intellectual. The Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism was accepted in former colonies as “our own” cri-

tique of Eurocentrism; socialist alternatives to liberalism in Europe were taken, in the colonies, as a path of liberation without making the distinction between emancipation in Europe and liberation in the colonial world. Quite simply, the colonial difference was not considered in its epistemic dimension. The foundation of knowledge that was and still is offered by the history of Western civilization in its complex and wide range of possibilities, provided the conceptualization (from the right and the left) and remained within the language frame of modernity and Western civilization. Fals-Borda's book is still valid because it keeps in mind a current dilemma in cultures of scholarship. In fact, Fals-Borda's early claims for the decolonization of the social sciences echoes the more recent claims made by Boaventura de Sousa Santos from Portugal in his argument "toward a new common sense."²⁵ Granted, Santos is not focusing on Colombia or Latin America. However, the marginality of Portugal, as the south of Europe, allows for a perception of the social sciences different from that which one might have from the north.

While Wallerstein argues for the opening of the social sciences, assuming the need to maintain them as a planetary academic enterprise, Fals-Borda's concerns are with the very foundation of the social sciences and other forms of scholarship. In other words, the planetary expansion of the social sciences implies that intellectual colonization remains in place, even if such colonization is well intended, comes from the left, and supports decolonization. Intellectual decolonization, as Fals-Borda intuited, cannot come from existing philosophies and cultures of scholarship. Dependency is not limited to the right; it is created also from the left. The postmodern debate in Latin America, for example, reproduced a discussion whose problems originated not in the colonial histories of the subcontinent but in the histories of European modernity.

An indirect continuation of Fals-Borda's argument for intellectual decolonization is the project that Enrique Dussel has been pursuing since the early 1990s.²⁶ Philosophy of liberation, as conceived by Dussel since the late 1960s, is another consequence of dependency theory and the intellectual concerns that prompted its emergence. One of Dussel's main concerns was and still is a philosophical project contributing to social liberation (I will return to the distinction between emancipation and liberation). His latest book is the consequence of a long and sustained philosophical, ethical, and political reflection.²⁷ Fals-Borda's argument was concerned not just with a

project in the social sciences for the liberation of the Third World; rather, it concerned also a project of intellectual liberation from the social sciences. In the case of Dussel, liberation is thought with regard to philosophy. Here again is the irreducible colonial (epistemic) difference between a leftist social sciences project *from* the First World and a liberation *of* the social sciences (and philosophy) from the Third World.²⁸

The logic of this project, from the standpoint of the colonial difference, has been formulated in Dussel's confrontations between his own philosophy and ethic of liberation and that of Gianni Vattimo.²⁹ In one short but substantial chapter ("'With Vattimo?'; 'Against Vattimo?'"') Dussel relates Vattimo's philosophy to nihilism and describes nihilism as a "twilight of the West, of Europe, and of modernity."³⁰ In closing this section (and immediately after the preceding description), Dussel adds,

Has Vattimo asked himself the meaning that his philosophy may have for a Hindu beggar covered with mud from the floods of the Ganges; or for a member of a Bantu community from sub-Saharan Africa dying of hunger; or for millions of semi-rural Chinese people; or for hundreds of thousands of poor marginalized in suburban neighborhoods like Neza-hualcoyotl or Tlanepantla in Mexico, as populated as Torino? Is an aesthetic of "negativity," or a philosophy of "dispersion as final destiny of being," enough for the impoverished majority of humanity?³¹

At first glance, and for someone reading from the wide horizon of continental philosophy, this paragraph could be interpreted as a cheap shot. It is not, however. Dussel is naming the absent location of thinking, obscured by the universalizing of modern epistemology and its parallelism and companionship with capitalism, either as justification or as internal critique, such as Vattimo's. Indeed, what is at stake in Dussel's argument is not just being but the coloniality of being, from whence philosophy of liberation found its energy and conceptualization. It is simply the colonial difference that is at stake. Dussel's point comes across more clearly in the second section of his article on Vattimo, when Dussel underlines the discrepancy between the starting point in both projects. As is well known, a room looks altered if you enter it from a different door. Furthermore, of the many doors through which one could have entered the room of philosophy, only one was open. The rest were closed. You understand what it means to have only one door open and the entry heavily regulated. Dussel notes that the starting point

for a “hermeneutic ontology of the twilight” (Vattimo) and the “philosophy of liberation” are quite different. Dussel framed this distinction in terms of the geopolitics of knowledge: the first is from the north; the second, from the south. The south is not, of course, a simple geographic location but a “metaphor for human suffering under global capitalism.”³² The first discourse is grounded in the second phase of modernity (industrial revolution, the Enlightenment). The second discourse, that of philosophy of liberation, is grounded in the first phase of modernity and comes from the subaltern perspective—not from the colonial/Christian discourse of Spanish colonialism but from the perspective of its consequences, that is, the repression of American Indians, African slavery, and the emergence of a Creole consciousness (both white/mestizo mainly in the continent and black in the Caribbean) in subaltern and dependent positions. From this scenario Dussel points out that while in the north it could be healthy to celebrate the twilight of Western civilization, from the south it is healthier to reflect on the fact that 20 percent of the earth’s population consumes 80 percent of the planet’s income.

It is no longer possible, or at least it is not unproblematic, to “think” from the canon of Western philosophy, even when part of the canon is critical of modernity. To do so means to reproduce the blind epistemic ethnocentrism that makes difficult, if not impossible, any political philosophy of inclusion.³³ The limit of Western philosophy is the border where the colonial difference emerges, making visible the variety of local histories that Western thought, from the right and the left, hid and suppressed. Thus there are historical experiences of marginalization no longer equivalent to the situation that engendered Greek philosophy and allowed its revamping in the Europe of nations, emerging together with the industrial revolution and the consolidation of capitalism. These new philosophies have been initiated by thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Rigoberta Menchú, Gloria Anzaldúa, Subramani, Abdelkhebir Khatibi, and Edouard Glissant, among others. Consequently, two points should be emphasized.

The first is the ratio between places (geohistorically constituted) and thinking, the geopolitics of knowledge proper. If the notion of being was invented in Western philosophy, coloniality of being cannot be a continuation of the former. Because of coloniality of power, the concept of being cannot be dispensed with. And because of the colonial difference, coloniality

of being cannot be a critical continuation of the former (a sort of postmodern displacement) but must be, rather, a relocation of the thinking and a critical awareness of the geopolitics of knowledge. Epistemology is not ahistorical. But not only that, it cannot be reduced to the linear history from Greek to contemporary North Atlantic knowledge production. It has to be geographical in its historicity by bringing the colonial difference into the game.³⁴ The densities of the colonial experience are the location of emerging epistemologies, such as the contributions of Franz Fanon, that do not overthrow existing ones but that build on the ground of the silence of history. In this sense Fanon is the equivalent of Kant, just as Guaman Poma de Ayala in colonial Peru could be considered the equivalent of Aristotle.³⁵ One of the reasons why Guaman Poma de Ayala and Fanon are not easily perceived as equivalents of Aristotle and Kant is time. Since the Renaissance—the early modern period or emergence of the modern/colonial world—time has functioned as a principle of order that increasingly subordinates places, relegating them to before or below from the perspective of the “holders (of the doors) of time.” Arrangements of events and people in a time line is also a hierarchical order, distinguishing primary sources of thought from interesting or curious events, peoples, or ideas. Time is also the point of reference for the order of knowledge. The discontinuity between being and time and coloniality of being and place is what nourishes Dussel’s need to underline the difference (the colonial difference) between continental philosophy (Vattimo, Jürgen Habermas, Karl-Otto Apel, Michel Foucault) and philosophy of liberation.

Dussel’s insistence on the *punto de partida diferente* (distinct starting point), in relation to Vattimo, could be supported by arguments made by Native American lawyer and intellectual Vine Deloria Jr. and by Robert Bernasconi, an expert in continental philosophy. Vine Deloria’s reflections on space and time (sacred places and abstract and symbolic time) touch on and make visible the irreducible colonial difference that Dussel emphasizes in his philosophy of liberation. In both Deloria and Dussel there is a need to establish the limits of Western cosmologies. Although this is done from the experience of a Native American and from a descendant of European immigrants in Latin America, the colonial difference is entrenched in their distinct experiences. Of course, European immigrants in former colonial worlds, such as Argentina, do not have the same experiences as Native

Americans. However, both groups experience the colonial difference that can be either narcotized or revealed. They both choose to reveal and think from it.

Deloria makes a simple, albeit fundamental, point: “Conservative and liberal, terms that initially described political philosophies, have taken on the aspect of being able to stand for cultural attitudes of fairly distinct content. Liberals appear to have more sympathy for humanity, while conservatives worship corporate freedom and self-help doctrines underscoring individual responsibility. The basic philosophical differences between liberals and conservatives are not fundamental, however, because both fit in the idea of history a thesis by which they can validate their ideas.”³⁶ One could add *socialist* to *conservative* and *liberal*, thus completing the political-ideological tripartite distribution of the late-nineteenth-century North Atlantic political and ideological spectrum. These three varieties of secular political ideologies are also in the same frame of Christianity. For all of them, time and history are the essence of their cosmology.

Furthermore, Deloria adds, when the domestic (e.g., in the United States) ideology “is divided according to American Indian and Western European immigrant, however, the fundamental difference is one of great philosophical importance.”³⁷ The “fundamental difference” is indeed the “colonial difference,” since it is not just a case of incommensurable cosmologies or worldviews but a difference articulated by the coloniality of power. Consequently, the two are historically and logically linked to each other in a relation of dependency. This is a dependency related to the universality attributed to time, in domestic ideology, and the particularity attributed to place in the same movement. Place, of course, is not naturally particular but historically so according to the location attributed to place by hegemonic discourses assuring the privilege of time and history.

I am not proposing here that some merging of time and space, which we could term *spacetime* from one side of the domestic ideology (either the Western European immigrants or the social sciences), will solve the problems created by a hegemonic discourse of time, history, progress, and development. The terrain of epistemology is not far removed from the map Deloria traced from the domestic political ideology (e.g., liberals and conservatives, to which I added socialists). Wallerstein has traced the map of modern epistemology, which was first divided between science and philosophy (and the humanities), or in effect between the two cultures. Later this

division was bridged in conflictive ways by the emergence of the social sciences, with some of the disciplines leaning toward the sciences (economy, sociology, and political sciences) and others toward the humanities (cultural anthropology and history). Wallerstein described two basic concepts of spacetime in the social sciences: the “geopolitical or episodic spacetime” and “eternal spacetime.”³⁸ The first concept alludes to the explanation of the present and particular. The second alludes to what is valid across time and space. After indicating the limitations of these two types of spacetime, Wallerstein underlined other dimensions that the social sciences have left out of consideration. These include the “cyclical-ideological spacetime,” the “structural spacetime,” and the “transformational spacetime.”³⁹ Arguing in favor of including these new dimensions in the future of the social sciences, Wallerstein advanced the arguments, and the hope, for a “new unifying epistemology” that will overcome the classic divorce between the sciences and philosophy (or the humanities), leaving the social sciences in an uncomfortable middle ground. If this is possible, what will be left out? In this case it would be the entire space of the colonial difference to which Wallerstein, like Vattimo, is blind.

Let me begin my explanation by quoting Deloria: “Western European peoples (and of course later U.S. people) have never learned to consider the nature of the world discerned from a spatial point of view.”⁴⁰ The consequences of such a statement, which once again underlines the colonial difference, are enormous for religion, epistemology, and international relations. Time and history allowed global designs (religious, economic, social, and epistemic) to emerge as responses to the need of a given place that were assumed to have universal value across time and space. The experience, in which global designs emerged, is emptied when a given global design is exported and programmed to be implanted over the experience of a distinct place. However, this project (that was the project of modernity from Renaissance Christianity to the contemporary global market) is no longer convincing. “Space generates time, but time has little relationship with space.”⁴¹ Consequently, the universal ideology of dis-incorporated time and history reached the point in which space and place can no longer be overruled. The world, therefore, is not becoming, nor can it be conceived of as, a global village. Instead, it is a “series of non-homogeneous pockets of identity that must eventually come into conflict because they represent different historical arrangements of emotional energy.”⁴² Therefore, the ques-

tion is no longer a new conceptualization of spacetime within a Kantian paradigm, with space and time as invariants, but their discontinuity on the other side of the colonial difference. I am thinking here of spacetime without such a name (e.g., Pachakuti among the Aymara people in the Andes) on the other side of the colonial difference that the Kantian model made invisible.⁴³ Wallerstein's reconceptualization of spacetime remains within the domestic ideology of Western cultures of scholarship, with the assumption of their universal scope, valid for all time and all societies. Deloria's radical conceptualization of time and place situates the discussion elsewhere, beyond the social sciences, looking not for an epistemology that will unify the two cultures but for an epistemology that will be built on the irreducible colonial difference. The consequence is the right to claim epistemic rights from the places where experiences and memories organize time and knowledge.

Dussel's dialogue with Vattimo's philosophy goes in the same direction, albeit from different motivations. There is a partial agreement between Vattimo and Dussel, as one could imagine a similar partial agreement between Deloria and Wallerstein. The important question, however, is that of the irreducible epistemic colonial difference on which Deloria and Dussel build their claims for the future of ethics, politics, and epistemology that can no longer be built on categories and premises of Western philosophy and social sciences. While Deloria's argument could be taken as an indirect argument to decolonize (and not just to open) the social sciences (as the claim made in Latin America by Colombian sociologist Fals-Borda in the early 1970s, mentioned above), Dussel's argument is a direct claim for decolonizing philosophy. According to Dussel, "An Ethic of Liberation, with planetary scope ought, first of all, 'to liberate' (I would say decolonize) philosophy from Helenocentrism. Otherwise, it cannot be a future worldly philosophy, in the twenty-first century."⁴⁴

The irreducible colonial difference that I am trying to chart, starting from Dussel's dialogue with Vattimo, was also perceived by Robert Bernasconi in his account of the challenge that African philosophy puts forward to continental philosophy. Simply put, Bernasconi notes that "Western philosophy traps African philosophy in a double bind. Either African philosophy is so similar to Western philosophy that it makes no distinctive contribution and effectively disappears; or it is so different that its credentials to be genuine philosophy will always be in doubt."⁴⁵ This double bind is the colonial

difference that creates the conditions for what I have elsewhere called “border thinking.”⁴⁶ I have defined border thinking as an epistemology from a subaltern perspective. Although Bernasconi describes the phenomenon with different terminology, the problem we are dealing with here is the same. Furthermore, Bernasconi makes his point with the support of African American philosopher Lucius Outlaw in an article titled “African ‘Philosophy’: Deconstructive and Reconstructive Challenges.”⁴⁷ Emphasizing the sense in which Outlaw uses the concept of deconstruction, Bernasconi at the same time underlines the limits of Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive operation and the closure of Western metaphysics. Derrida, according to Bernasconi, offers no space in which to ask the question about Chinese, Indian, and especially African philosophy. Latin and Anglo-American philosophy should be added to this. After a careful discussion of Derrida’s philosophy, and pondering possible alternatives for the extension of deconstruction, Bernasconi concludes by saying, “Even after such revisions, it is not clear what contribution deconstruction could make to the contemporary dialogue between Western philosophy and African philosophy.”⁴⁸ Or, if a contribution could be foreseen, it has to be from the perspective that Outlaw appropriates and that denaturalizes the deconstruction of the Western metaphysics from the inside (and maintains the totality, à la Derrida). That is to say, it has to be a deconstruction from the exteriority of Western metaphysics, from the perspective of the double bind that Bernasconi detected in the interdependence (and power relations) between Western and African philosophy. However, if we invert the perspective, we are located in a particular deconstructive strategy that I would rather name the decolonization of philosophy (or of any other branch of knowledge, natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities). Such a displacement of perspective was already suggested by Moroccan philosopher Abdelkhebir Khatibi, which I have discussed at length elsewhere.⁴⁹ However, certainly Bernasconi will concur with Khatibi in naming decolonization as the type of deconstructive operation proposed by Outlaw, thus maintaining and undoing the colonial difference from the colonial difference itself. That is to say, maintaining the *difference* under the assumption that “we are all human” although undoing the *coloniality of power* that converted differences into values and hierarchies. “The existential dimension of African philosophy’s challenge to Western philosophy in general and Continental philosophy in particular is located in the need to decolonize the mind. This task is at least as important for

the colonizer as it is for the colonized. For Africans, decolonizing the mind takes place not only in facing the experience of colonialism, but also in recognizing the precolonial, which established the destructive importance of so-called ethnophilosophy.”⁵⁰ The double bind requires also a double operation from the perspective of African philosophy, that is, an appropriation of Western philosophy and at the same time a rejection of it grounded in the colonial difference. Bernasconi recognizes that these, however, are tasks and issues for African philosophers. What would be similar issues for a continental philosopher? For Europeans, Bernasconi adds, “decolonizing the colonial mind necessitates an encounter with the colonized, where finally the European has the experience of being seen as judged by those they have denied. The extent to which European philosophy championed colonialism, and more particularly helped to justify it through a philosophy of history that privileged Europe, makes it apparent that such a decolonizing is an urgent task for European thought.”⁵¹

My interest in developing at length Bernasconi’s position is not, of course, that of repeating the authoritative gesture of a North Atlantic philosopher validating the claims of African philosophers. Quite the contrary, it is Bernasconi’s humble recognition of the limits of continental philosophy, from inside continental philosophy itself, in which I am interested. By recognizing the colonial difference, Bernasconi breaks with centuries of European philosophical blindness to the colonial difference and the subalternization of knowledge. Credit should be given to African philosophers for successfully raising the issue and projecting a future, taking advantage of the epistemic potential of thinking from the colonial difference. Credit should also be given to Bernasconi for recognizing that here we are in a different ball game, where the contenders, although in sportive friendship, have different tasks and goals.

This is precisely the point that Dussel has been trying to make since his early polemic dialogue with Apel, Paul Ricoeur, Habermas, and, more recently, Vattimo.⁵² However, Dussel is in a position more similar to the one defended by African philosophers than to the position articulated by Bernasconi. Like Outlaw and others, Dussel calls for a double operation of deconstruction-reconstruction or, better yet, decolonization (to use just one word that names both operations and underlines the displacement of perspectives, tasks, and goals).⁵³ His is a claim made from an epistemic subaltern position in which Latin American philosophy has been located by

Western philosophy. Dussel's preference for a philosophy of liberation is both a liberation of philosophy and an assertion of philosophy as an instrument of decolonization. Dussel is clearly underscoring Vattimo's blindness to the other side of modernity, which is coloniality: the violence that Vattimo (or Nietzsche and Heidegger) attributed to modern instrumental reason, the coloniality of power forced on non-European cultures that have remained silenced, hidden, and absent. The colonial difference is reproduced in its invisibility. Dussel's claim for decolonization, for an ethic and philosophy of liberation, is predicated on a double movement similar to the strategy of African philosophers. On one hand, there is an appropriation of modernity and, on the other, a move toward a transmodernity understood as a liberating strategy or decolonization project that, according to Bernasconi, includes everybody, the colonizer and the colonized.⁵⁴

I have highlighted philosophy, but what I said about it applies to the social sciences as well. It is a commendable move to open the social sciences but, as Dussel said about Vattimo, it is not enough. Opening the social sciences implies that the social sciences will remain in place, will be exported to places whose experiences do not correspond or correspond partially, and overlook the fact that modernity revealed its other side, coloniality, in non-European locations. As in the case of philosophy analyzed by Bernasconi, social sciences in the First World trap the social sciences of the Third World in a double bind. Either the social sciences are similar to North Atlantic social sciences all over the planet so that they do not make any distinctive contributions, or they are not social sciences and social knowledge is not being recognized. Social scientists from the Third World have not raised their voices as loudly as philosophers have. Yet they have not been silenced either, as the examples of Fals-Borda and Quijano in Latin America and the South Asian Subaltern Studies group illustrate. We may not subscribe today to the recommendations made by Fals-Borda in the 1970s. However, the solution that Fals-Borda suggested should not be an excuse to dismiss the problem he raised. Or, if you wish, the solution suggested could be read as a way of raising the problem rather than as a solution that would be expected to be valid today. The belief that social scientists with goodwill toward social transformation will be endorsed by the "people," whose interest the social scientist claims to defend, would be difficult to sustain today. First, this is because the people (e.g., social movements of all kind) do not need intellectuals from outside to defend their interests. Second, the transformation of

knowledge (and social transformation, of course), to which the social scientist could contribute, is located not so much in the domain of the people as in learned institutions and the mass media. Certainly, there is a wealth of knowledge that has been subalternized by modernity/coloniality, but that knowledge is not necessarily in the minds or the interests of the people, whose interests, in turn, may not coincide with those of the social scientist.

In any case, Fals-Borda's perception of the double "diaspora of brains" in the Third World remains valid today. Brains are not being stolen when a social scientist leaves a country in which there are limited research conditions and moves to a country and institution with better resources. Instead, this happens when the social scientist remains in a country under limited research conditions and reproduces or imitates the patterns, methods, and above all, the questions raised by the social sciences under different historical and social experiences. This is another version of the double bind in which North Atlantic scholarship and sciences placed the production of knowledge and which reproduces the coloniality of power. If opening the social sciences is a good step but hardly enough, "indigenous sociology" is also an important contribution, yet it does not carry the radical force articulated by African philosophers or by philosophy of liberation.⁵⁵ Insofar as it remains indigenous, sociology solves only part of the problem. In order to be decolonized, sociology and the social sciences must be submitted to the double movement of appropriation and radical criticism from the perspective of the indigenous to the point of revealing the colonial difference in the social sciences. Sociology, even with its opening, cannot do the job.⁵⁶ Like Derrida's deconstruction, North Atlantic social sciences are reaching the limits of the colonial difference, the space where alternatives to philosophy and the social sciences are necessary.

Historical Capitalism and Coloniality of Power

The preceding discussion set the frame and stage for a shorter treatment of historical capitalism and coloniality of power in relation to transmodernity. Wallerstein's concept of historical capitalism (introduced in the early 1980s) complements his earlier key notion of the modern world-system. Instead of the structure and the law of capital accumulation studied by Marx, Wallerstein focuses on its historical expansion and transformations. Wallerstein characterizes the economic system identified as capitalism by its purpose:

capital accumulation and, as a necessary consequence, self-expansion. The second aspect is its historical emergence, which Wallerstein locates somewhere in fifteenth-century Europe. These first two features presuppose that (1) until the fifteenth century, in Europe and the rest of the world, there existed economic systems that were not capitalist, and (2) the emergence of capitalism supplanted and erased all other previous economic organizations. Consequently, Wallerstein's first characterization of historical capitalism is hampered by the conceptions of linear time and newness, which are two basic presuppositions of capitalistic ideology and modern epistemology. In other words, the assumption that once something new emerges, everything preceding it vanishes does not leave much room for maneuvering beyond current market philosophy.

The linear conception of time (logically necessary for the notion of progress) that Wallerstein identifies as a third basic characteristic of historical capitalism, along with its newness, works toward an image of capitalism as a totality that erased all other existing economic alternatives from the face of the earth. In a sense, it is true that capitalism began to overpower all other alternative economic organizations it encountered in the history of its expansion, from the fifteenth to the end of the twentieth century. On the other hand, it is not true that overpowering also means erasure. What is missing in Wallerstein's conception of historical capitalism is exteriority of capitalism, that moment in which "living labor" is transformed into "capitalist labor," the exploitation of the plus-value.⁵⁷ By exteriority I do not mean the outside but the space where tensions emerge once capitalism becomes the dominant economic system and eliminates all the possibilities of anything outside it, but not its exteriority. Wallerstein's conceptualization of historical capitalism presupposes a totality without exteriority. I would say that transmodernity and coloniality of power are to historical capitalism what Levinas's philosophical reflections on being are to Heidegger's being and time. The analogy is appropriate because of Dussel's translation of Emmanuel Levinas's exteriority to the colonial experience.⁵⁸ The analogy is also relevant because of the parallels between the fracture in the narrative of Western civilization, between Greek and Jewish philosophical traditions, on the one hand, and the fracture between modernity and coloniality in the narrative of the modern/colonial world-system, on the other.

Wallerstein's frame for historical capitalism, as well as Arrighi's, allows us to tell the story of imperial conflicts and, consequently, to identify the

imperial difference (i.e., the difference in the interiority) of the system.⁵⁹ However, it leaves the colonial difference out of sight, in the very obscurity in which capitalistic expansion placed it and where capitalistic expansion goes with violence, physical as well as epistemic. Consequently, Wallerstein's notion of historical capitalism goes with his criticism of the social sciences and his predisposition to open them. Yet it maintains the social sciences in an overarching epistemic totality that parallels the overarching totality of capitalism. Alternative economies in tension with capitalism as well as alternatives to capitalism have no place in Wallerstein's conception of the social sciences, in which the very notion of historical capitalism is founded. Since the colonial difference is blurred in Wallerstein's notion of historical capitalism, it is impossible to foresee the possibility of thinking from it or of thinking the tensions between capitalism and other economic organizations as well as the alternatives to capitalism from subaltern perspectives.

There are several possibilities open to the future, of which I would only underline some with the purpose of making visible the colonial difference, its epistemic potential, and the alternative futures it allows us to imagine. Otherwise, the more refined analysis of historical capitalism will contribute to reproduce the idea that the power of capitalism, and the desire for expansion and accumulation, eliminates all possible difference. This is the risk of opening the social sciences without questioning and replacing their very foundations, as Fals-Borda and Santos have been arguing.⁶⁰ I suspect also that Dussel's and Quijano's arguments point toward decolonizing rather than opening the social sciences.

Could we say that capitalism puts alternative economies into a double bind, similar to what continental philosophy did to African philosophy? Could we say that alternative economies shall be either similar to capitalism (and disappear) or be condemned to remain so different that their credentials as genuine economies will be in doubt? I think that the analogy can be defended and that there are several grounds on which the argument can be built. First, there is the survival, through five hundred years, of American Indian economies in which the goals are not accumulation and expansion but accumulation and reciprocity. When accumulation goes with reciprocity its meaning changes.⁶¹ The final orientation is accumulation for the well-being of the community rather than for the well-being of the agents of accumulation and expansion without regard to the interests of the com-

munity. Remembering the emergence of capitalism as an economic system, as outlined by Wallerstein, may help make this idea more concrete. Capitalism emerged as an economic system from a subaltern perspective: the commercial bourgeois class felt constrained by the power of the church and landlords. The French Revolution, which Wallerstein highlights so much as the moment in which the geoculture of the modern world-system (and historical capitalism) finds its moment of consolidation, was indeed a bourgeois revolution. Therefore the Russian Revolution, as its counterpart, remained within the logic of capital accumulation and expansion and proposed that the ruling agents be the workers rather than the bourgeoisie. The struggle for power between liberalism and socialism concluded with the victory of the former. Socialism was not able to replace the desire that nourishes and makes capitalism work. The desire for accumulation and possession is stronger than the desire for distribution that was the socialist alternative, although within the logic of capitalism. The colonial difference remained equally valid for an expansive capitalism under the name of liberalism and civilization or socialism and liberation. Socialism, therefore, was not placed in a double bind by capitalism, as African philosophy was by continental philosophy, since socialism emerged as an alternative within an alternative that changes the content of the conversation and maintains the terms of capitalistic production.

If the analogy between philosophy and economy can be maintained, it is necessary to look for economic organizations that have not been cornered by the capitalist expansion and that today can offer alternatives to capitalism. When I say economic organizations, I am not referring to a different logic of economic organization as much as to a different principle and philosophy of economic production and distribution. The problem, therefore, is not so much a technical one generated by the industrial revolution as it is the principle and goals that generated the industrial revolution. Consequently, if changes in the principles and goals are possible, they would have to start from the appropriation and twisting of the uses of technology rather than from its reproduction, which is in the hands of those who will not voluntarily relinquish control. For that, a fundamental reorientation of philosophy is necessary. At this point it is easy to understand the analogy between philosophy and capitalism, as far as we leave open the space between economy and capitalism and are constantly aware of the colonial difference that capitalism erases by establishing equivalence between the two. In reality both capi-

talism and economy presuppose different principles. Originally economy meant administration of scarcity, while capitalism implies accumulation of wealth.

Historical capitalism, as conceived of by Wallerstein and narrated by Arrighi, occludes the colonial difference and, even more, the necessity of looking at capitalism from the other end, that is, from its exteriority.⁶² This is an exteriority that cannot only be narrated from the interiority of the system (as Wallerstein does very well) but that needs its own narrative from its own exteriority. At this point, opening and exporting the social sciences to analyze historical capitalism will no longer do, since such a move will reproduce the occlusion of the colonial difference and, with it, the possibility and necessity of looking at capitalism otherwise. Quijano's notion of coloniality of power offers this opportunity. Yet before focusing on the coloniality of power, I would like to make a few comments about racism and universalism, conceived of by Wallerstein as substantial aspects of historical capitalism. In this argument Wallerstein touches on the epistemic colonial difference. In revealing the links between universalism and racism (and sexism) as justifications for the exploitation of labor, Wallerstein makes an important statement about the social structure. However, the statement falls short in revealing that the complicity between universalism, racism, and sexism also framed the principles of knowledge under which Wallerstein made his critique. If epistemology runs parallel to the history of capitalism, epistemology cannot be detached from or untainted by the complicity between universalism, racism, and sexism. Here the epistemic colonial difference comes into the foreground.

Wallerstein's integration of racism and universalism into the picture of historical capitalism is perhaps the most radical aspect of his conceptualization. Racism, said Wallerstein, "has been the cultural pillar of historical capitalism," and "the belief in universalism has been the keystone of the ideological arch of historical capitalism."⁶³ How are racism and universalism related? The ethnicization of the world in the very constitution of the modern/colonial world-system has had, for Wallerstein, three major consequences. First, the organization and reproduction of the workforce that can be better illustrated by the link, in the modern/colonial world, of blackness with slavery that was absent, of course, in Aristotle, the reading of whom went through a substantial transformation in sixteenth-century theological and legal discussions. Second, Wallerstein considers that ethnicization pro-

vided a built-in training mechanism for the workforce, located within the framework of ethnically defined households and not at the cost of the employers or the state. But what Wallerstein considers crucial is the third consequence of the ethnicization of the workforce. This is institutional racism as the pillar of historical capitalism:

What we mean by racism has little to do with the xenophobia that existed in various prior historical systems. Xenophobia was literally fear of the *stranger*. Racism within historical capitalism had nothing to do with *strangers*. Quite the contrary. Racism was the mode by which various segments of the work-force within the same economic structure were constrained to relate to each other. Racism was the ideological justification for the hierarchization of the work-force and its highly unequal distributions of reward. What we mean by racism is that set of ideological statements combined with that set of continuing practices which have had the consequence of maintaining a high correlation of ethnicity and work-force allocation over time.⁶⁴

Universalism, as the ideological keystone of historical capitalism, is a faith as well as an epistemology, a faith in the real phenomenon of truth and the epistemology that justifies local truth with universal values:

Our collective education has taught us that the search for truth is a disinterested virtue when in fact it is a self-interested rationalization. The search for truth, proclaimed as the cornerstone of progress, and therefore of well-being, has been, at the very least, consonant with the maintenance of a hierarchical, unequal, social structure in a number of specific respects. The process involved in the expansion of the capitalist world-economy . . . involved a number of pressures at the level of culture: Christian proselytization; the imposition of European language; instruction in specific technologies and mores; changes in the legal code. . . . That is that complex processes we sometimes label “westernization,” or even more arrogantly “modernization,” and which was legitimated by the desirability of sharing both the fruits of and faith in the ideology of universalism.⁶⁵

It cannot be said of Wallerstein that he, like Vattimo or Habermas, is blind to colonialism. Unlike continental thought, Wallerstein is not imprisoned in the Greco-Roman–modern European tradition. The politics of location is

a question valid not just for minority epistemology. On the contrary, it is the keystone of universalism in European thought. Cornel West's perception and analysis of the "evasion of American philosophy" speaks to that politics of location that is not a blind voluntarism but a force of westernization.⁶⁶ Although the United States assumed the leadership of Western expansion, the historical ground for thinking was not, and could not have been, European. The "evasion of American philosophy" shows that tension between the will to be like European philosophy and the impossibility of being so.⁶⁷ The logic of the situation analyzed by West is similar to the logic underlined by Bernasconi vis-à-vis African philosophy. The variance is that the evasion of American philosophy was performed by Anglo-Creoles displaced from the classical tradition instead of native Africans who felt the weight of a parallel epistemology.

The social sciences do have a home in the United States as well as in Europe, which is not the case for philosophy. But the social sciences do not necessarily have a home in the Third World. Therefore, while opening the social sciences is an important claim to make within the sphere of their gestation and growth, it is more problematic when the colonial difference comes into the picture. To open the social sciences is certainly an important reform, but the colonial difference also requires decolonization. To open the social sciences is certainly an important step but is not yet sufficient, since opening is not the same as decolonizing, as Fals-Borda claimed in the 1970s. In this sense Quijano's and Dussel's concepts of coloniality of power and transmodernity are contributing to decolonizing the social sciences (Quijano) and philosophy (Dussel) by forging an epistemic space from the colonial difference. Decolonizing the social sciences and philosophy means to produce, transform, and disseminate knowledge that is not dependent on the epistemology of North Atlantic modernity—the norms of the disciplines and the problems of the North Atlantic—but that, on the contrary, responds to the need of the colonial differences. Colonial expansion was also the colonial expansion of forms of knowledge, even when such knowledges were critical to colonialism from within colonialism itself (like Bartolome de las Casas) or to modernity from modernity itself (like Nietzsche). A critique of Christianity by an Islamic philosopher would be a project significantly different from Nietzsche's critique of Christianity.

Coloniality of Power, Dependency, and Eurocentrism

Wallerstein, Quijano, and Dussel have in common their debt to dependency theory. They are apart (although not enemies) because of the epistemic colonial difference. Quijano's concepts of coloniality of power and historic-structural dependency emphasize this complicity, similar to Dussel's arguments with and against Vattimo.⁶⁸

To understand Quijano's coloniality of power, it is first necessary to accept coloniality as constitutive of modernity and not just as a derivative of modernity—that is, first comes modernity and then coloniality. The emergence of the commercial Atlantic circuit in the sixteenth century was the crucial moment in which modernity, coloniality, and capitalism, as we know them today, came together. However, the Atlantic commercial circuit did not immediately become the location of Western hegemonic power. It was just one more commercial circuit among those existing in Asia, Africa, and Anahuac and Tawantinsuyu in what would later become America.⁶⁹ Modernity/coloniality is the moment of Western history linked to the Atlantic commercial circuit and the transformation of capitalism (if we accept from Wallerstein and Arrighi that the seed of capitalism can be located in fifteenth-century Italy)⁷⁰ and the foundation of the modern/colonial world-system.

In the preceding paragraph I purposely mixed two macronarratives. One I will call the Western civilization macronarrative and the other the modern/colonial world-system narrative. The first emerged in the Renaissance and was consolidated during the Enlightenment and by German philosophy in the early nineteenth century. As such, this macronarrative is tied to historiography (the Renaissance) and philosophy (the Enlightenment). The second macronarrative emerged during the Cold War as it is linked to the consolidation of the social sciences. The first macronarrative has its origin in Greece; the second in the origin of the Atlantic commercial circuit. Both macronarratives are founded in the same principles of Western epistemology, and both have their own double personality complex (double side). For instance, the narrative of Western civilization is at the same time celebratory of its virtues and critical of its failings. In the same vein modernity is often celebrated as hiding coloniality and yet is critiqued because of coloniality, its other side. Both macronarratives can also be criticized from the inside (Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, Wallerstein, Gunder Frank, etc.) and

from the exteriority of the colonial difference.⁷¹ Both coloniality of power and historico-structural dependency are key concepts in Quijano's critique of the above macronarratives from the exteriority of the colonial difference.

Quijano singles out Latin America and the Caribbean as places where a double movement constitutes their history: a constant and necessary process of "re-originalization" that goes with the process of their repression. The double process indicated by Quijano is the inscription of the colonial difference and the consequence of the coloniality of power. Coloniality of power should be distinguished from colonialism, which is sometimes termed the colonial period. Colonialism is a concept that inscribes coloniality as a derivative of modernity. In this conception modernity is first, with colonialism following it. On the other hand, the colonial period implies that, in the Americas, colonialism ended toward the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Instead coloniality assumes first that coloniality constitutes modernity. As a consequence we are still living under the same regime. Today coloniality could be seen as the hidden side of postmodernity and, in this respect, postcoloniality would designate the transformation of coloniality into global coloniality in the same way that postmodernity designates the transformation of modernity into new forms of globalization. Or it could designate a critical position of modernity from the perspective of coloniality and the colonial difference, similar to postmodernity understood as a critique of modernity from inside modernity itself. In brief, colonialism could be removed from the picture after the first (United States, Haiti, and Latin American countries) and second (India, Algeria, Nigeria, etc.) waves of decolonization, whereas coloniality is alive and well in the current structure of globalization. Thus Quijano observes,

En el momento actual ocurren fenómenos equivalentes [a aquellos ocurridos desde el siglo XVI]. Desde la crisis mundial de los 70s se ha hecho visible un proceso que afecta a todos y a cada uno de los aspectos de la existencia social de las gentes de todos los países. El mundo que se formó hace 500 años está culminando con la formación de una estructura productiva, financiera y comercial que tiende a ser más integrada que antes. Con una drástica reconcentración del control de poder político y de recursos.

[Today we are witnessing similar phenomena (to those that took place in the sixteenth century). Since the world crisis of the 1970s, a process

has been becoming visible that affects everyone, as well as every aspect of the social existence of the people of every country. The social world that began to be structured five hundred years ago is arriving at its closure through an economic, financial, and commercial organization much more integrated than in the past. And that means a far-reaching reconcentration of political power and of economic resources.]⁷²

Changes did not encroach equally on diverse societies and local histories. Modernity/coloniality and capitalism went through different phases in their common history. However, coloniality of power is the common thread that links modernity/coloniality in the sixteenth century with its current version at the end of the twentieth century. For Quijano coloniality of power is a principle and strategy of control and domination that can be conceived of as a configuration of several features.

The idea of race or purity of blood, as it was expressed in the sixteenth century, became the basic principle for classifying and ranking people all over the planet, redefining their identities, and justifying slavery and labor. In this manner a matrix of power constituted several areas:

1. the existence and reproduction of geohistorical identities, of which Kant's ethno-racial tetragon (Africans are black, Americans are red [Kant was thinking of the United States], Asians are yellow, and Europeans are white)⁷³ was the eighteenth-century version of early Spanish classifications of Moors, Jews, American Indians, black Africans, and the Chinese;
2. the hierarchy established between European and non-European identities, as Kant's example so eloquently illustrates;
3. the need to transform and design institutions that would maintain the coloniality of power structured and implemented in the sixteenth century, which became an internal aspect of modernity and capitalism, and that internal aspect was precisely the coloniality of power.

Consequently, modernity/coloniality or, if you wish, the constitution and history of the modern/colonial world-system, is at the same time a structure in which the historico-structural dependency, as a structure of domination, is the visible face of the coloniality of power. Not only is such a historico-structural dependency economic or political; above all, it is epistemic. Quijano adds,

En el contexto de la colonialidad del poder, las poblaciones dominadas y todas las nuevas identidades, fueron también sometidas a la hegemonía del eurocentrismo como manera de conocer, sobre todo en la medida que algunos de sus sectores pudieron aprender la letra de los dominadores. Así, con el tiempo largo de la colonialidad, que aún no termina, esas poblaciones fueron atrapadas entre el patrón epistemológico aborigen y el patrón eurocéntrico que, además, se fue encauzando como racionalidad instrumental o tecnocrática, en particular respecto de las relaciones sociales de poder y en las relaciones con el mundo en torno.

[Coloniality of power means that all dominated populations and all the newly created identities were subjected to the hegemony of Eurocentrism understood as a way of conceiving of and organizing knowledge, above all, when some sectors of the dominated population had the opportunity and the chance to learn the writing system (la letra) of the colonizer. . . .]⁷⁴

Coloniality of power worked at all levels of the two macronarratives, Western civilization and modern world-system, that I mentioned earlier. The colonized areas of the world were targets of Christianization and the civilizing mission as the project of the narrative of Western civilization, and they became the target of development, modernization, and the new marketplace as the project of the modern world-system. The internal critique of both macronarratives tended to present itself as valid for the totality, in the sense that it is configured by the program of Western civilization and the modern world-system. The insertion of the word *colonial*, as in *modern/colonial world-system*, makes visible what both macronarratives previously obscured: that the production of knowledge and the critique of modernity/coloniality from the colonial difference is a necessary move of decolonization. Otherwise, opening the social sciences could be seen as a well-intentioned reproduction of colonialism from the left. Similarly, a critique of Western metaphysics and logocentrism from the Arabic world may not take into account the critical epistemic legacy and the memory of epistemic violence inscribed in Arabic language and knowledge. Historico-structural dependency, in the narrative of the modern/colonial world-system, presupposes the colonial difference. It is, indeed, the dependency defined and enacted by the coloniality of power. Barbarians, primitives, underdeveloped people, and people of color are all categories that established epistemic dependencies under dif-

ferent global designs (Christianization, civilizing mission, modernization and development, consumerism). Such epistemic dependency is for Quijano the very essence of coloniality of power.⁷⁵

Both Quijano and Dussel have been proposing and claiming that the starting point of knowledge and thinking must be the colonial difference, not the narrative of Western civilization or the narrative of the modern world-system. Thus transmodernity and coloniality of power highlight the epistemic colonial difference, essentially the fact that it is urgently necessary to think and produce knowledge from the colonial difference. Paradoxically, the erasure of the colonial difference implies that one recognize it and think from such an epistemic location—to think, that is, from the borders of the two macronarratives, philosophy (Western civilization) and the social sciences (modern world-system). The epistemic colonial difference cannot be erased by its recognition from the perspective of modern epistemology. On the contrary, it requires, as Bernasconi clearly saw in the case of African philosophy, that epistemic horizons open beyond Bacon's authoritarian assertion that "there can be no others." The consequences of this are gigantic not only for epistemology but also for ethics and politics. I would like to conclude by highlighting some of them in view of future discussions.

Eurocentrism and the Geopolitics of Knowledge

I have mentioned that Wallerstein, Quijano, and Dussel have dependency theory as a common reference, and my previous argument suggested that while Wallerstein brought dependency theory to the social sciences as a discipline, Quijano and Dussel follow the political and dialectical scope of dependency theory. The epistemic colonial difference divides one from the other. Of course, this does not place one against the other but underlines the colonial difference as the limit of the assumed totality of Western epistemology. That is why to open the social sciences is a welcome move, but an insufficient one. It is possible to think, as Quijano and Dussel (among others) have, beyond and against philosophy and the social sciences as the incarnation of Western epistemology. It is necessary to do so in order to avoid reproducing the totality shared by their promoters and their critics. In other words, the critiques of modernity, Western logocentrism, capitalism, Eurocentrism, and the like performed in Western Europe and the United States cannot be valid for persons who think and live in Asia, Africa, or Latin

America. Those who are not white or Christian or who have been marginal to the foundation, expansion, and transformation of philosophy and social and natural sciences cannot be satisfied with their identification and solidarity with the European or American left. Nietzsche's (as a Christian) criticism of Christianity cannot satisfy Khatibi's (as a Muslim and Maghrebian) criticism of Christianity and colonization. It is crucial for the ethics, politics, and epistemology of the future to recognize that the totality of Western epistemology, from either the right or the left, is no longer valid for the entire planet. The colonial difference is becoming unavoidable. Greece can no longer be the point of reference for new utopias and new points of arrival, as Slavoj Žižek still believes, or at least sustains.⁷⁶

If Wallerstein, Quijano, and Dussel have dependency theory as a common reference, they also share a critique of Eurocentrism.⁷⁷ However, their motivation is different. Quijano's and Dussel's critiques of Eurocentrism respond to the overwhelming celebration of the discovery of America, which both scholars read not only as a Spanish question but also as the beginning of modernity and European hegemony. Both concur that Latin America and the Caribbean today are a consequence of the North Atlantic (not just Spanish and European) hegemony. Wallerstein's critique of Eurocentrism is a critique of the social sciences: "Social sciences has been Eurocentrism throughout its institutional history, which means since there have been departments teaching social science within a university system."⁷⁸ Thus Wallerstein's critique of Eurocentrism is one of epistemology through the social sciences. Quijano's and Dussel's critiques come to Western epistemology through coloniality of power from the colonial difference.

Clearly dissatisfied with recent criticism of Eurocentrism, Žižek made a plea for Eurocentrism from the left. I do not think that Žižek had Wallerstein, Quijano, and Dussel in mind. Wallerstein is a social scientist, and Žižek seems more concerned with poststructuralist (philosophical and psychoanalytic) debates. Quijano and Dussel are thinkers from Latin America who write primarily in Spanish, and Žižek has not given any signs of being interested in or even familiar with them. In fact, he seems more concerned with the United States and identity politics, which for him is the negation of politics proper. Consequently he asks, "Is it possible to imagine a leftist appropriation of the European political legacy?"⁷⁹ I will not discuss here whether identity politics is the end of politics or whether there are arguments that can justify a plea from the left for identity politics par-

allel to the plea for Eurocentrism performed by Žižek. I hope to discuss the issue elsewhere. For the time being, I prefer to concentrate on his argument about universalism and globalization to justify his leftist appropriation of the European political legacy and to invent new forms of repoliticization after the crisis of the left and of identity politics filled the gap. “The political (the space of litigation in which the excluded can protest the wrong or injustice done to them) foreclosed from the Symbolic then returns in the Real in the guise of new forms of racism.”⁸⁰ Racism, however, is not returning, as it has been the foundation of the modern-colonial world, to which the modern-postmodern political has been blind, which is obvious in the arguments developed by Wallerstein and Balibar.⁸¹ In this respect Franz Fanon’s famous example can help us understand what is at stake here. For a “Negro who works on a sugar plantation”—said Fanon—“there is only one solution: to fight. He will embark on this struggle, and will pursue it, not as the result of a Marxist or idealistic analysis but quite simply because he cannot conceive of life otherwise than in the form of a table against exploitation, misery and hunger.”⁸² Of course this is simply because he or she is a “Negro.” We know that the equation “Negro = Slave” is a feature of the modern/colonial world and that this equation was part of a larger frame in which the ethno-racial foundation of modernity was established. The basic events were Christianity’s victory over the Moors and the Jews, the colonization of the American Indians, and the establishment of slavery in the New World. One could argue that “postmodern racism emerges as the ultimate consequence of the postpolitical suspension of the political, of the reduction of the state to a mere police agent servicing the (consensually established) needs of market forces and multiculturalist, tolerant humanitarianism.”⁸³ Or one could argue that the postcolonial, after the 1970s, reinstalled the political in terms of ethnic-antiracial struggles, in the United States as well as Europe.

However, this is not the point I want to stress, although it was necessary to make it in order to get to the main thread of my argument. Since Žižek sees in multiculturalism and racism the end of the political, he looks for an argument that would point out the path for a return to the political. His argument cannot avoid globalization, and he makes a move to distinguish globalization from universality. This is precisely where the leftist appropriation of the European legacy takes place. Žižek alerts us to avoid two interconnected traps brought about by the process of globalization. First, “the commonplace according to which today’s main antagonism is between global

liberal capitalism and different forms of ethnic/religious fundamentalism”; second, “the hasty identification of globalization (the contemporary transnational functioning of capital) with universalization.” Žižek insists that the true opposition today is “rather between globalization (the emerging global market, new world order) and universalism (the properly political domain of universalizing one’s particular fate as representative of global injustice).” He adds that “this difference between globalization and universalism becomes more and more palpable today, when capital, in the name of penetrating new markets, quickly renounces requests for democracy in order not to lose access to new trade partners.”⁸⁴ One must agree with Žižek on this point. The problem lies in the projects that we embark on to resist and to propose alternatives to capitalist universalism. Žižek has one particular proposal, which is preceded by a lengthy analogy between the United States today and the Roman Empire. Allow me to summarize this analogy, since it is a crucial part of Žižek’s argument.

Žižek describes the opposition between universalism and globalization, focusing on the historical reversal of France and the United States in the modern/colonial world-system (although of course, Žižek does not refer to world-system theory). French republican ideology, Žižek states, is the “epitome of modernist universalism: of democracy based on a universal notion of citizenship. In clear contrast to it, the United States is a global society, a society in which the global market and legal system serve as the container (rather than the proverbial melting pot) for the endless proliferation of group identities.” Žižek points out the historical paradox in the role reversal of the two countries. While France is being perceived as an increasingly particular phenomenon threatened by the process of globalization, the United States increasingly emerges as the universal model. At this point Žižek compares the United States with the Roman Empire and Christianity: “The first centuries of our era saw the opposition of the global ‘multicultural’ Roman empire and Christianity, which posed such a threat to the empire precisely on account of its universal appeal.” There is another perspective from the past that could be taken: France, an imperial European country, and the United States, a decolonized country that takes a leading role in a new process of colonization. This perspective emphasizes the spatial order of the modern/colonial world-system instead of the linear narrative that Žižek invokes by going back to the Roman Empire and locating it in “the first century of our era.” To whose era is he referring? This is not an era that can be

claimed without hesitation by Wallerstein, Quijano, or Dussel, for example, not to mention American Indian and African American intellectuals. However, what matters here is that in Žižek's argument, what is really being threatened by globalization is "universality itself, in its eminently political dimension." The consequences, manifested in several contradictory arguments and actions, are countered by Žižek with a strong claim for sustaining the political (struggle) in place of the depoliticization that is the challenge globalization poses to universality. Here is Žižek's triumphal claim of *the* "true European legacy": "Against this end-of-ideology politics, one should insist on the potential of democratic politicization as the true European legacy from ancient Greece onwards. Will we be able to invent a new mode of repoliticization questioning the undisputed reign of global capital? Only such a repoliticization of OUR predicament can break the vicious cycle of liberal globalization destined to engender the most regressive forms of fundamentalist hatred."⁸⁵ Žižek here identifies the "true European legacy," and a few pages earlier he refers to "the fundamental European legacy." However, at the end of the paragraph just quoted, he alludes to "forms of fundamentalist hatred" as if the "fundamental European legacy" were excused and excluded from any form of "fundamentalism." Žižek's plea totally ignores the colonial difference and blindly reproduces the belief that whatever happened in Greece belongs to a European legacy that was built during and after the Renaissance—that is, at the inception of the Atlantic commercial circuit and the modern/colonial world. In fact, all the examples Žižek quotes in his arguments are consequences of the emergence, transformation, and consolidation of the modern/colonial world (the formation and transformation of capitalism and occidentalism as the modern/colonial world imaginary).⁸⁶ However, Žižek reproduces the macronarrative of Western civilization (from ancient Greece to the current North Atlantic) and casts out the macronarrative of the modern/colonial world in which the conflict between globalization and universality emerged. Since he does not see beyond the linear narrative of Western civilization, he also cannot see that "diversality" rather than universality is the future alternative to globalization.

Let me explain. I see two problematic issues in Žižek's proposal. One is that Greece is only a European legacy, not a planetary one. If we agree that solutions for contemporary dilemmas could be found in Greek moral and political philosophy, we cannot naturally assume that "from Greece onwards" is linked only to the European legacy. The first issue here would be

to de-link the Greek contribution to human civilization from the modern (from the Renaissance on, from the inception of the modern/colonial world) contribution. Thus the Greek legacy could be reappropriated by the Arabic/Islamic world, which introduced Greece to Europe, and also by other legacies—Chinese, Indian, sub-Saharan African, or American Indian and Creole in Latin America and the Caribbean—that do not exist as a European legacy but as a discontinuity of the classical tradition.⁸⁷ One of the consequences of this perspective would be “diversality,” that is, diversity as a universal project, rather than the reinscription of a “new abstract universal project” such as Žižek proposes. I no longer feel like enrolling (or requesting membership) in a new abstract universal project that claims a fundamental European legacy. I assume that there are several good alternatives to the increasing threat of globalization, and of course the fundamental European legacy is one of them. I am not talking about relativism, of course. I am talking about diversality, a project that is an alternative to universality and offers the possibilities of a network of planetary confrontations with globalization in the name of justice, equity, human rights, and epistemic diversality. The geopolitics of knowledge shows us the limits of any abstract universal, even from the left, be it the planetarization of the social sciences or a new planetarization of a European fundamental legacy in the name of democracy and repoliticization.

Concluding Remarks

The main thrust of my argument has been to highlight the colonial difference, first as a consequence of the coloniality of power (in the making of it) and second as an epistemic location beyond right and left as articulated in the second modernity (i.e., liberal, neoliberal; socialism, neosocialism). The world became unthinkable beyond European (and, later, North Atlantic) epistemology. The colonial difference marked the limits of thinking and theorizing, unless modern epistemology (philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences) was exported/imported to those places where thinking was impossible (because it was folklore, magic, wisdom, and the like). I argued that Quijano’s “coloniality of power” and Dussel’s “transmodernity” (and the critique of Eurocentrism from this perspective) at the same time imprint the possibilities of thinking from the colonial difference and of opening new perspectives from and to the left. Quijano and Dussel move beyond the

planetaryization of the social sciences (Wallerstein) or the reinscription of a new abstract universality (Žižek) and contribute to the making of diversity of a universal project. As such, they join forces with South Asian subaltern studies,⁸⁸ with “negative critique” as proposed by African philosophers,⁸⁹ and with Khatibi’s “double critique,”⁹⁰ that is, of Islamic and Western fundamentalism at the same time. The *tertium datur* that Žižek is seeking can be found not by Khatibi “in reference to the fundamental European legacy” but in an other thinking, an other logic that cannot avoid the planetaryization of European legacy but that cannot rely only on it.⁹¹ An other logic (or border thinking from the perspective of subalternity) goes with a geopolitics of knowledge that regionalizes the fundamental European legacy, locating thinking in the colonial difference and creating the conditions for diversity as a universal project.

Notes

- 1 Enrique Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad: Diálogos con la filosofía de Gianni Vattimo* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana Plantel Golfo Centro, 1999), 39.
- 2 Enrique Dussel, *Historia de la Filosofía Latinoamericana y Filosofía de la Liberación* (Bogotá: Nueva América, 1994).
- 3 Immanuel Wallerstein, “World-Systems Analysis,” in *Social Theory Today*, ed. A. Giddens and J. H. Turner (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 309–24.
- 4 Enrique Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity: Apel, Ricoeur, Rorty, Taylor, and the Philosophy of Liberation* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996); Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad*; Karl-Otto Apel, “‘Discourse Ethics’ before the Challenge of ‘Liberation Philosophy,’” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 22.2 (1996): 1–25.
- 5 Immanuel Wallerstein et al., *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Wallerstein, *The End of the World As We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 137–56, 220–52.
- 6 Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization* (London: Verso, 1983).
- 7 Enrique Dussel, “Eurocentrism and Modernity (Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures),” in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. J. Beverley, J. Oviedo, and M. Aronna (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 65–76; Dussel, “Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity,” in *The Cultures of Globalization*, ed. F. Jameson and M. Miyoshi (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 3–31; Immanuel Wallerstein, “Eurocentrism and Its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science,” *New Left Review*, no. 226 (1997): 93–159; Anibal Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder, cultura y conocimiento en América Latina,” *Anuario Mariateguiano* 9 (1997): 113–22; Anibal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America” *Nepantla: Views from South*

- 1 (2000): 533–80; Slavoj Žižek, “A Leftist Plea for ‘Eurocentrism,’” *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1998): 988–1007.
- 8 Wallerstein, “World-Systems Analysis”; Wallerstein, “Eurocentrism and Its Avatars.”
- 9 Fernand Braudel, *The Perspective of the World*, vol. 3 of *Civilization and Capitalism, Fifteenth-Eighteenth Century*, trans. Sian Reynolds (1979; reprint, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization*; Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 1994).
- 10 Francis Bacon, *Novum organum* (1620), vol. 4 of *Complete Works*, ed. I. Spedding, R. Ellis, and D. D. Heath (London: Lawrence Chapman, 1875), 292–93.
- 11 Orlando Fals-Borda, *Ciencia propia y colonialismo intelectual: Los nuevos rumbos* (Bogotá: C. Valencia Editores, 1971); Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Unintended Consequences of Cold War Area Studies,” in *The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years*, ed. D. Montgomery (New York: New Press, 1997), 195–232; Richard D. Lambert, “Blurring Disciplinary Boundaries: Area Studies in the United States,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 33.6 (1990): 712–32; Vicente Rafael, “The Cultures of Area Studies in the United States,” *Social Text* 12.4 (1994): 91–111.
- 12 Steven Seidman and David G. Wagner, eds., *Postmodernism and Social Theory* (New York: Blackwell, 1992).
- 13 Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Sian Reynolds, 2 vols. (1949; reprint, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974); Braudel, *Perspective of the World*; Arrighi, *Long Twentieth Century*.
- 14 Anibal Quijano and Immanuel Wallerstein, “Americanness As a Concept; or, The Americas in the Modern World-System,” *ISSA: International Social Sciences Association* 134 (1992): 549; Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 15 Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *De la mano de Alicia: Lo Social y lo Político en la Postmodernidad. Traducción del portugués al castellano de Consuelo Bernal y Mauricio G. Villegas* (Bogotá: Ediciones Uniandes, 1998), 161–92, 369–454; Franco Cassano, *Il pensiero meridiano* (Bari: Sagittari Laterza, 1995). The Black Legend refers to the denigrating stories told in France and England, particularly in the eighteenth century, against the colonial violence practiced by Spaniards in the colonization of the Indias Occidentales (today’s Latin America). Curiously enough, British and French intellectuals grounded their arguments against the Spaniards in Bartolomé de Las Casa’s relentless internal critique of Spanish colonialism. The Black Legend, in other words, was the northern imperial legitimization against the empires of the south (mainly Spain, but also Portugal). The Reformation and the Counter-Reformation as well as the new center of mercantile capitalism (Amsterdam and London) were good enough reasons to enact demeaning narratives against the competition.
- 16 Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*; Mignolo, “Rethinking the Colonial Model,” in *Rethinking Literary History*, ed. L. Hutcheon and M. Valdes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 78–142.
- 17 Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: New Left Books, 1975).

- 18 Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*.
- 19 J. MacNeill, P. Winsemius, and T. Yakushiji, *Beyond Interdependence: The Meshing of the World's Economy and the Earth's Ecology*, a Trilateral Commission book with a foreword by David Rockefeller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
- 20 Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder."
- 21 Fernando Enrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1969); Cardoso, "Les Etats-Unis et la théorie de la dépendance," *Revue tiers monde* 17 (1976): 805–25.
- 22 Enrique Dussel, "Marx's Economic Manuscripts of 1861–63 and the 'Concept of Dependency,'" *Latin American Perspective* 17.1 (1990): 62–101; Ramón Grosfoguel, "A TimeSpace Perspective on Development: Recasting Latin American Debates," *Review XX* 3–4 (1997): 465–540; Grosfoguel, "Developmentalism, Modernity, and Dependency Theory in Latin America," *Nepantla: Views from South* 1.2 (2000): 347–74.
- 23 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Pantheon, 1996), 270–360; Wallerstein et al., *Open the Social Sciences*.
- 24 Carl E. Pletsch, "The Three Worlds, or the Division of Social Scientific Labor, circa 1950–1975," *Comparative Study of Society and History* (1981): 565–90. I have been referring mainly to Dussel and Quijano because of the very structure of the workshop I am referring to. I could easily mention other similar examples, chiefly among them Franz Fanon. See Lewis R. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 1995), and Sekyi-Out, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).
- 25 Santos, *De la mano de Alicia*.
- 26 Enrique Dussel, comp., *Debate en torno a la ética del discurso de Apel: Diálogo filosófico Norte-Sur desde América Latina* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1994); Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity*.
- 27 Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad*.
- 28 Edgardo Lander, comp., *La colonialidad del saber: Eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (Buenos Aires: Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales [CLACSO] and UNESCO), 2000.
- 29 Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad*.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Toward a New Common Sense: Law, Science, and Politics in the Paradigmatic Transition* (London: Verso, 1995), 506.
- 33 Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, ed. Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).
- 34 David Harvey has made an important contribution in this direction in his reading of the geographical dimension of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's *Communist Manifesto*, an important contribution that, however, falls short of the colonial difference. Harvey's geographical reading of capitalism remains within the geopolitical structure of the power of capitalism and the conditions it created for the hegemony of modern epistemology. See Harvey, "The Geography of the Manifesto," in *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 21–40.

- 35 Rolena Adorno, *Guaman Poma de Ayala: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Perú* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).
- 36 Vine Deloria Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* (1972; reprint, Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1994), 63.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 62.
- 38 Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Invention of TimeSpace Realities: Towards an Understanding of Our Historical Systems," in *Unthinking Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 66–94.
- 39 Wallerstein, "The Unintended Consequences."
- 40 Deloria, *God Is Red*, 63.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 71.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 65.
- 43 See, for instance, Javier Medina, *Repensar Bolivia: Cicatrices de un viaje hacia sí mismo* (La Paz: hisbol, 1992), 41–61; Thérèse Bouysse-Cassagne and Olivia Harris, "Pacha: En torno al pensamiento Aymara," in *Tres reflexiones sobre el pensamiento Andino*, ed. T. Bouysse-Cassagne, O. Harris, and V. Cereceda (La Paz: hisbol, 1987), 11–60; Deloria, *God Is Red*; Walter D. Mignolo, "Coloniality at Large: Time and the Colonial Difference," in *Time in the Making and Possible Futures*, coordinated by Cándido Mendes, ed. Enrique Rodríguez Larreta (Rio de Janeiro: UNESCO and Instituto de Pluralismo Cultural, 2000).
- 44 Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism," 57.
- 45 Robert Bernasconi, "African Philosophy's Challenge to Continental Philosophy," in *Post-colonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (London: Blackwell, 1997), 188.
- 46 I have been asked on several occasions whether this is a privilege of African philosophy or of a similar epistemic geopolitical structure established and inherited by the coloniality of power in the formation of the modern/colonial world. Rather than a privilege I would say that it is a potential, the potential of "double consciousness" translated into epistemic geopolitics of knowledge.
- 47 Lucius Outlaw, "African 'Philosophy': Deconstructive and Reconstructive Challenges," in *African Philosophy*, vol. 5 of *Contemporary Philosophy: A New Survey* (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1987), 9–44.
- 48 Bernasconi, "African Philosophy's Challenge to Continental Philosophy," 187.
- 49 Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*.
- 50 Bernasconi, "African Philosophy's Challenge to Continental Philosophy," 191.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 192.
- 52 Dussel, *Debate en torno a la ética del discurso de Apel*.
- 53 Outlaw, "African 'Philosophy.'"
- 54 Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism," 39; Bernasconi, "African Philosophy's Challenge to Continental Philosophy," 191.
- 55 Akinsola Akiwowo, "Indigenous Sociologies: Extending the Scope of the Argument," *International Sociology* 14.2 (1999): 115–38; "Indigenous Sociology," special issue of *International Sociology, Journal of the International Sociological Association* 14.2 (1999).
- 56 Wallerstein et al., *Open the Social Sciences*.

- 57 Dussel, *Historia de la Filosofía Latinoamericana* (1987; reprint, Bogotá: Editorial Nueva América, 1994); Mario Saénz, *The Identity of Liberation in Latin American Thought: Latin American Historicism and the Philosophy of Leopoldo Zea* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999), 213–48; Mignolo, “Rethinking the Colonial Model,” 110–30.
- 58 Enrique Dussel, *Liberación Latinoamericana y Emmanuel Levinas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Bonum, 1975).
- 59 Arrighi, *Long Twentieth Century*; Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization*, chap. 2.
- 60 Fals-Borda, *Ciencia propia y colonialismo intelectual*; Santos, *Toward a New Common Sense*; Santos, *De la mano de Alicia*.
- 61 Anibal Quijano, “Estado-Nación, Ciudadanía y Democracia: Cuestiones Abiertas,” in *Democracia: Un modelo para armar* (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 1998).
- 62 Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization*; Arrighi, *Long Twentieth Century*.
- 63 Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization*, 80, 81.
- 64 *Ibid.*, 78; emphasis mine.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 82.
- 66 Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).
- 67 Cornel West, *Race Matters* (Boston: Beacon, 1993).
- 68 Dussel, *Posmodernidad y transmodernidad*.
- 69 Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, A.D. 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*.
- 70 Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism and Capitalist Civilization*; Arrighi, *Long Twentieth Century*.
- 71 Dussel, “Eurocentrism and Modernity”; Dussel, “Beyond Eurocentrism”; Anibal Quijano, “Colonialidad y modernidad-Racionalidad,” in *Los Conquistados: 1492 y la Población Indígena de las Américas*, comp. Heraclio Bonilla (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1992), 437–47; Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder.”
- 72 Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder,” 113
- 73 Immanuel Kant, “Determining the Concept of Human Race” (1792) in Fritz Schultze, *Kant und Darwin: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Entwicklungslehre* (Jena: Verlag von Hermann Dufft, 1875).
- 74 Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder,” 117.
- 75 Quijano, “Coloniality of Power.”
- 76 Slavoj Žižek, “A Leftist Plea for ‘Eurocentrism,’” *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1998): 988–1007.
- 77 Wallerstein, “Eurocentrism and Its Avatars”; Dussel, “Eurocentrism and Modernity”; Dussel, “Beyond Eurocentrism”; Quijano, “Colonialidad y modernidad-Racionalidad”; Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder.”
- 78 Wallerstein, “Eurocentrism and Its Avatars,” 93.
- 79 Žižek, “A Leftist Plea,” 988; Slavoj Žižek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Center of Political Ontology* (London: Verso, 1999), 171–244.

- 80 Žižek, *Ticklish Subject*, 97.
- 81 Etienne Balibar, *La crainte des masses: Politique et philosophie avant et après Marx* (Paris: Galilée, 1997).
- 82 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (1952; reprint, New York: Grove Press, 1967), 224.
- 83 Žižek, *Ticklish Subject*, 97.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 1007.
- 85 *Ibid.*, 1009.
- 86 Mignolo, *Local Histories*, chap. 1.
- 87 Walter D. Mignolo, "On the Colonization of Amerindian Languages and Memories: Renaissance Theories of Writings and the Discontinuity of the Classical Tradition," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34.2 (1992): 301–30.
- 88 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Provincializing Europe: Postcoloniality and the Critique of History," *Cultural Studies* 6.3 (1992): 337–57.
- 89 Chukwudi Emmanuel Eze, "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology," in *Postcolonial African Philosophy*, ed. Chukwudi Eze (New York: Blackwell, 1997), 103–40; Bernasconi, "African Philosophy's Challenge to Continental Philosophy."
- 90 Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*.
- 91 During the final revision of this article I had the opportunity to read Slavoj Žižek's *The Fragile Absolute; or, Why Is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London: Verso, 2000), which cannot be discussed here. However, it is worth mentioning in relation to my argument the fact that Žižek opens the book with an interesting and intriguing meditation on the "Balkan Ghost" and devotes the last forty or so pages of the argument to justifying the subtitle, *Why Is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* Indirectly, the Christian legacy reinforces his previous argument about the Greek legacy. Between both, one has the image that a veil is floating over the Balkans. The veil is fixed to a pole that is grounded in Slovenia and has two satellite dishes on top, one pointing toward Greece and Rome and the other toward Paris.