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Geopolitics of Sensing and Knowing

On (De)Coloniality, Border Thinking, and Epistemic Disobedience

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I

(De)Coloniality[1] is, in the first place, a concept whose point of origination was the Third World. Better yet, it emerged at the very moment in which the three world division was collapsing and the celebration of the end of history and a new world order was emerging. The nature of its impact was similar to the impact produced by the introduction of the concept of "biopolitics," whose point of origination was Europe. Like its European counterpart, "coloniality" moved to the center of international debates in the non-European world as well as in "former Eastern Europe." While "biopolitics" moved to center stage in "former Western Europe" (cfr., the European Union) and the United States, as well as among some intellectual minorities of the non-European followers of ideas that originated in Europe, but who adapt them to local circumstances, "coloniality" offers a needed sense of comfort to mainly people of color in developing countries, migrants and, in general, to a vast quantitative majority whose life

experiences, long and short-term memories, languages and categories of thoughts are alienated to life experience, long and short-term memories, languages and categories of thought that brought about the concept of "biopolitics" to account for mechanisms of control and state regulations.[2]

Modernity, postmodernity and altermodernity have their historical grounding in the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Decoloniality has its historical grounding in the Bandung Conference of 1955, in which 29 countries from Asia and Africa gathered. The main goal of the conference was to find a common ground and vision for the future that was neither capitalism nor communism. That way was "decolonization." It was not "a third way" à la Giddens, but a delinking from the two major Western macro-narratives. The conference of the Non-Aligned countries followed suit in 1961, and took place in Belgrade. On that occasion, several Latin American countries joined forces with Asian and African countries. Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* was also published in 1961. Thus, the political and epistemic foundations of decoloniality had been established in fifty-five years. From then until now and from now to the future, it will be decoloniality all the way down – not as a new universal that presents itself as the right one that supersedes all the previous and existing ones, but as an option. By presenting itself as an option, the decolonial opens up a way of thinking that delinks from the chronologies of new epistemes or new paradigms (modern, postmodern, altermodern, Newtonian science, quantum theory, the theory of relativity, etc.). Epistemes and paradigms are not alien to decolonial thinking. They cannot be, but are no longer the point of reference and of epistemic legitimacy. While the Bandung Conference pronounced itself in the political terrain as neither capitalism nor communism but as decolonization, today, thinking

decolonially is concerned with global equality and economic justice, but it also asserts that Western democracy and socialism are not the only two models to orient our thinking and our doing. Decolonial arguments promote the communal as another option next to capitalism and communism. In the spirit of Bandung, Aymara intellectual, Simon Yampara, makes clear that Aymaras are neither capitalist nor communist. They promote decolonial thinking and communal doing.[3]

Because decoloniality's point of origination was the Third World, in its diversity of local histories and different times and Western imperial countries that first interfered with those local histories – be it in Tawantinsuyu in the sixteenth century, China in the nineteenth century or Iraq from the beginning of the twentieth (France and England) to the beginning of the twenty-first century (the US) – border thinking is the epistemic singularity of any decolonial project. Why? Because border epistemology is the epistemology of the *anthropoi,* who do not want to submit to *humanitas,* but at the same time cannot avoid it. Decoloniality and border thinking/sensing/doing are then strictly interconnected since decoloniality couldn't be Cartesian or Marxian. In other words, decoloniality's point of origination in the Third World connects to "immigrant consciousness" in Western Europe and the US today. "Immigrant consciousness" is located in the routes of dispersion of decolonial and border thinking.

II

Points of origination and routes of dispersion are key concepts to trace geo-politics of knowing/sensing/believing as well as body-politics of knowing/sensing/understanding. When Frantz Fanon

closes his exploration in *Black Skin/White Masks* (1952) with a prayer:

> *Oh my body, make of me always a man who questions!*

He expressed, in a single sentence, the basic categories of border epistemology: the biographical sensing of the Black body in the Third World, anchoring a politics of knowledge that is both ingrained in the body and in local histories. That is, thinking geo- and body-politically. Now if the point of origination of border thinking/sensing and doing is the Third World, and its routes of dispersion traveled through migrants from the Third to the First World,[4] then border thinking created the conditions to link border epistemology with immigrant consciousness and, consequently, delink from territorial and imperial epistemology grounded on theological (Renaissance) and egological (Enlightenment) politics of knowledge. As it is well known, theo- and ego-politics of knowledge were grounded in the suppression of sensing and the body, and of its geo-historical location. It was precisely that suppression that made it possible for both theo- and ego-politics of knowledge to claim universality.

Border epistemology goes hand in hand with decoloniality. Why? Because decoloniality focuses on changing the terms of the conversation and not only its content. How does border epistemology work? The most enduring legacy of the Bandung Conference was delinking; delinking from capitalism and communism, that is, from Enlightenment political theory (liberalism and republicanism – Locke, Montesquieu) and political economy (Smith) as well as from its opposition, socialism-communism. Now, once you delink, where do you go? You have to go to the reservoir of the ways of life and modes of thinking that have been disqualified by Christian theology since the Renaissance

and which continue expanding through secular philosophy and the sciences, for you cannot find your way out in the reservoir of modernity (Greece, Rome, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment). If you go there, you remain chained to the illusion that there is no other way of thinking, doing and living. Modern/colonial racism, that is, the logic of racialization that emerged in the sixteenth century, has two dimensions (ontological and epistemic) and one single purpose: to rank as inferior all languages beyond Greek and Latin and the six modern European languages from the domain of sustainable knowledge and to maintain the enunciative privilege of the Renaissance and Enlightenment European institutions, men and categories of thought. Languages that were not apt for rational thinking (either theological or secular) where considered languages that revealed the inferiority of the human beings speaking them. What could a person that was not born speaking one of the privileged languages and that was not educated in privileged institutions do? Either he or she accepts his or her inferiority or makes an effort to demonstrate that he or she was a human being equal to those who placed him or her as second class. That is, two of the choices are to accept the humiliation of being inferior to those who decided that you are inferior or to assimilate. And to assimilate means that you accepted your inferiority and resigned to playing the game that is not yours, but that has been imposed upon you – or the third option is border thinking and border epistemology.

How does it work? Suppose that you belong to the category of the *anthropos* – the *anthropos* stands for the concept of the "other" in most contemporary debates about alterity – the "other," however, doesn't exist ontologically. It is a discursive invention. Who invented "the other" if not *the same* in the process of constructing *the same*? Such an invention is the outcome of an enunciation. The

enunciation doesn't name an existing entity, but invents it. The enunciation needs an enunciator (agent), an institution (not everyone can invent the *anthropos)*, but to impose the *anthropos* as "the other" in the collective imaginary, it is necessary to be in a position of managing the discourse (verbal, visual, audial) by which you name and describe an entity (the *anthropos* or "the other") and succeed in making believe that it exists. Today, the *anthropos* ("the other") impinges on the lives of men and women of color, gays and lesbians, people and languages of the non-European/US world from China to the Middle East and from Bolivia to Ghana. I am not saying that Bolivian, Ghanaian, Middle Eastern or Chinese are ontologically inferior, for there is no way to empirically determine such ranking. I am saying that there is a territorial and imperial epistemology that invented and established such categories and rankings. So once you realize that your inferiority is a fiction created to dominate you, and you do not want to either assimilate or accept in resignation the bad luck of having been born equal to all human beings, but having lost your equality shortly after being born, because of the place you were born, then you delink. Delinking means that you do not accept the options that are available to you. That is the legacy of the Bandung Conference. The participants of the conference opted to delink: neither capitalism nor communism. The option was decolonization. The splendor of the Bandung Conference was precisely in showing that another way is possible. Its limit was to remain within the domain of political and economic delinking. The epistemic question was not raised. However, the conditions for raising the epistemic question were already there. It was raised around 35 years later by Colombian sociologist, Orlando Fals Borda, who has been very much involved in the debates on dependency theory. Dependency theory, in Luso and Hispanic America, as well as in Caribbean reasoning and the quest for decolonization in the Caribbean New

World Thoughts,[5] emerged in the general atmosphere of the Bandung Conference and the invention of the Third World. Here you have a case in point: the Third World was not invented by the people who inhabit the Third World, but by men and institutions, and languages and categories of thoughts in the First World. Dependency Theory was a response to the fact that the myth of development and modernization was a myth to hide the fact that Third World countries cannot develop and modernize under imperial conditions. Similar arguments were advanced in the same period, by a group of Caribbean economists and sociologists, known as the New World studies group. The guiding line of their research was independent thought and Caribbean freedom. Independent thought requires border thinking for the simple reason that it cannot be achieved within the categories of Western thoughts and experiences.

You may object to dependency theorists and the New World studies group having written (the former) in Spanish and Portuguese and (the latter) in English. So how can you delink if you are trapped within the categories of Western modern and imperial languages? You can, for delinking and border thinking occurs wherever the conditions are appropriate and the awareness of coloniality (even if you do not use the word) comes into being. Writing in Spanish, Portuguese and English, dependency theorists and the New World studies group were colonial subjects, that is, subjects dwelling in the local histories and experiences of colonial histories. For Spanish and Portuguese in South America have the same grammar as in Spain or Portugal respectively, but they inhabit different bodies, sensibilities, memories and overall different world-sensing. I use the expression "world-sensing" instead of "world vision," because the latter, restricted and privileged by Western epistemology, blocked the affects and the realms of the senses

beyond the eyes. The bodies that thought independent thoughts and independence from economic dependency, were bodies who wrote in modern/colonial languages. For that reason, they needed to create categories of thought that were not derived from European political theory and economy. They needed to delink and to think within the borders they where inhabiting – not borders of nation-states, but borders of the modern/colonial world, epistemic and ontological borders. The New World group wrote in English, but inhabited the memories of the Middle Passage, of the history of slavery, of runaway slaves and of the plantation economy. That experience was not what nourished Adam Smith's liberal thinking or Marx's socialist thinking – the experience of the plantation and the legacies of slavery nourished border thinking.

We, the *anthropoi*, who dwell and think in the borders with decolonial awareness, are already on the way to delinking, and in order to delink, you need to be epistemically disobedient. You will pay the price, for journals, magazines, disciplines in the social sciences, and humanities as well as the social sciences and professional schools, are territorial. In other words, border thinking is the necessary condition for thinking decolonially. And when we, the *anthropoi,* write in modern, Western imperial languages (Spanish, English, French, German, Portuguese or Italian), we write with our bodies on the border. Our senses have been trained by life to perceive the difference, to sense that we have been made *anthropoi*, that we do not belong or belong partially to the sphere and the eyes that look at us as *anthropoi*, as "others." Border thinking is, in other words, the thinking of us, the *anthropoi,* who do not aspire to become *humanitas,* because it was the enunciation of the *humanitas* that made us *anthropoi*. We delink from the *humanitas*, we become epistemically disobedient, and think and do

decolonially, dwelling and thinking in the borders of local histories confronting global designs.

Examples can be multiplied. The genealogy of border thinking, of thinking and doing decolonially, is being constructed on several fronts.[6] Let's recall here, Frantz Fanon's very well-known legacies and reread some of his insights in the context of my argument. I have already mentioned the last line of *Black Skin/ White Masks,* a book that precedes the Bandung Conference by three years, but a book that was not alien to the global conditions that prompted Bandung. Perhaps the most radical theoretical concept introduced by Fanon is that of "sociogenesis." Sociogenesis embodies all: delinking, border thinking and epistemic disobedience; delinking from the phylogenetic and ontogenetic options, the dichotomy of territorial and modern thinking. Sociogenesis (in the sphere of body politics), like the logic of the Bandung Conference (in the sphere of geopolitics), is not a happy marriage between the two, a hybrid concept of sorts, but the opening up to the grammar of decoloniality.[7] How does that grammar work? Remember, sociogenesis is a concept that is not based on the logic of de-notation (like phylo- and ontogenesis), but on the logic of being classified, on epistemic and ontological racism: you are inferior ontologically and therefore epistemically; you are inferior epistemically and therefore ontologically.[8] Sociogenesis as a concept emerges at the moment of the awareness that you are a "Negro," not because of the color of your skin, but because of the modern racial imaginary of the modern colonial world – you have been made a "Negro" by a discourse, whose rules you cannot control, and there is no room for complaint, like Josef K., in Kafka's *The Process.* Sociogenesis came out of thinking and dwelling in the borders and thinking decolonially, for it came out from *existentia Africana* as Lewis Gordon[9] would have it, but it

could have come out of any other similar experiences of racialized individuals. It is unlikely that sociogenesis could have been a concept that originated in and from the European experience, except from the immigrants' today. And in fact, Fanon was already an immigrant from the Third World in France and it was that experience that brought to light the fact that phylogenesis and ontogenesis could not account for the experience of the colonial and racialized subject. That experience could be rendered in "content" (experience as an object) by existing disciplines (sociology, psychology, history, etc.) that could talk "about" the "Negro" and "describe" his experience, but cannot supplant thinking as a "Negro" (experience constitutive of the subject) at the moment you realize that you have been made a "Negro" by the imperial imaginary of the Western world. Certainly, the image of the Black as inferior human being and descendant of Canaan was already imprinted in the Christian imaginary.[10] But I am talking here about the resemantization of that imaginary in the sixteenth century that occurred with the massive slave trade in the Atlantic world. At that moment, Africans and slavery were one and the same. It was not the case before 1500.

Sociogenesis is sustained in and by border epistemology, not in and by the territorial epistemology that undergird the diversity of all existing disciplines. Sociogenesis is a concept that allows us to delink precisely from Western thoughts, even if Fanon writes in imperial/colonial French and not in French Creole. By delinking, Fanon engages in epistemic disobedience. There is no other way of knowing, doing and being decolonially than simultaneously engaging in border thinking, delinking and epistemic disobedience. Bandung showed us the way to delink geopolitically from capitalism and communism; Fanon how to delink body-politically, two ways of delinking from the colonial matrix of power and of

dwelling in border thinking. Why border thinking here? Because sociogenesis presupposes it, and it is understood in relation to and detachment from phylogenesis and ontogenesis. At the same time, if sociogenesis changes terrain, it is no longer responding to the logic, the experience and the needs that prompted the concept of phylogenesis in Darwin and ontogenesis in Freud. Sociogenesis is no longer subsumable in the linear paradigm of Foucault's epistemic breaks.

III

The question that questions the enunciation (when, why, where, what for) leads us to the knowledge of creation and transformations at the very heart of any decolonial inquiries necessary to imagine and build global futures. Why? Because knowledge creation and transformation always responds to actors' desires and needs as well as to institutional demands. Knowledge as such is always anchored in historical, economic and politically-driven projects. What "coloniality" unveiled is the imperial dimension of Western knowledge that has been built, transformed and disseminated over the past 500 years. "Coloniality of knowledge and of being" is hidden behind the celebration of epistemic breaks and paradigmatic changes. Epistemic breaks and paradigmatic changes belong and happen within a conception of knowledge that originated in the European Renaissance (that is, in that space and at that time), and reached the heart of Europe (Germany, England and France) through the Enlightenment.

In contrast to decoloniality, the point of origination of concepts such as "modernity" and "postmodernity," epistemic breaks and paradigmatic changes was Europe and its internal history. These concepts are not universal, not even global. They are regional, and

as regional, they have their own value as any other regional configuration and transformation of knowledge. The only difference is that the local histories of European concepts became global designs. That means that concepts, such as the aforementioned, were needed to make sense of actors' desires and institutional demands. When postmodernity or paradigmatic changes become traveling concepts that follow the routes of dispersion and reach Argentina or Iran, China or Algeria, they do it as part of the expansion of Western civilization. Actors from the periphery noticed that postmodernity doesn't mean the same in France, Germany or England as in Argentina or China. But if it is possible to say that postmodernity in France and China are different, it is because we assume that there is something that can be identified as "postmodernity," whatever that is. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter what it is, but what the people engaged in the conversation for or against it assume it is. What matters is the enunciation, not so much the enunciated. Once established, a set of complementary concepts saw daylight, such as peripheral, alternative or subaltern modernities, and epistemic breaks and paradigmatic changes applied to local colonial histories. First of all, modernity is not an ontological unfolding of history but the hegemonic narrative of Western civilization. So, there is no need to be modern. Even better, it is urgent to delink from the dream that if you are not modern, you are out of history. Alternative or subaltern modernities claiming their right to exist, reaffirm the imperialism of Western modernity disguised as universal modernity. Secondly, if modernity is to be accepted as a narrative and not as ontology, one answer is to claim "our modernity," as Partha Chatterjee does in recasting the past and the role of India in global history. It is imperative to eliminate the concept of the "pre-modern" that serves imperial modernity so well and that speaks with pride instead of the "non-modern," which implies delinking

and border thinking for the non-modern shall be argued in its legitimacy to think and build just and equitable futures beyond the logic
of coloniality that is constitutive of the rhetoric of modernity.

Such concepts are the materialization of the point of origination and the routes of dispersion that maintain epistemic dependency. The decolonial response has instead simply been: "it is our modernity," as Indian political theorist Partha Chatterjee has forcefully and convincingly argued.[11] Once border sensing/thinking emerged, the decolonial option came into being and by coming into being as an option, it revealed that modernity (peripheral or just modernity, subaltern or just modernity, alternative or just modernity) are just other options and not the "natural" unfolding of time. Modernity and postmodernity are options, not ontological moments of universal history, and so are subaltern, alternative or peripheral modernities. All of them are options that deny and attempt to prevent the unfolding of border thinking and the decolonial option.

Postmodernity did not follow the same path as modernity. There were not, as far as I know, complementary concepts such as peripheral, alternative or subaltern post-modernities. But the void was quickly filled with the materialization of the concept of "post-colonialism." Interestingly enough, the point of origination of postcolonialism was England and the United States, that is, it originated in Euro-America and in the English-speaking world rather than in the Third World. However, the actors who introduced it came from the non-European world. It would have indeed been difficult for a British, German or French intellectual to come up with the concept of "postcolonialism." Not impossible, but of low probability. One of the main reasons is that colonial legacies experienced in the colonies are not part of the life and

death of postmodern and poststructuralist theoreticians. By the same token, postmodernity and poststructuralism are not at the heart of intellectuals in India or Sub-Saharan Africa (the second point of reference of postcolonialism). Ashis Nandy's or Vandana Shiva's work in India are a manifestation of decolonial thinking rather than postcolonial theory. Paulin J. Hountondji and Kwasi Wiredu in Africa are closer to the legacies of decolonization than to postcolonialism. Aymara Patzi Paco in Bolivia or Lewis Gordon, in Jamaica/US argue in decolonial rather than postcolonial terms. Since the point of origination of postcolonialism was mainly England and the US, and the main actors were Third World intellectuals (as Arif Dirlik would put it), it is easier for European intellectuals to endorse postcolonialism (as it is happening in Germany) than decolonial thinking. As I said before, decolonial thinking is more akin to the skin and the geo-historical locations of migrants from the Third World, than to the skin of "native Europeans" in the First World. Nothing prevents a white body in Western Europe from sensing how coloniality works in non-European bodies. That understanding would be rational and intellectual, not experiential. Therefore, for a white European body to think decolonially means to give; to give in a parallel way than a body of color formed in colonial histories has to give if that body wants to inhabit postmodern and poststructuralist theories.

IV

Today we can see three scenarios in which global futures will be unfolding:

•Rewesternization and the unfinished project of Western modernity

•Dewesternization and the limits of Western modernity

•Decoloniality and the emergence of the global political society delinking from rewesternization and dewesternization

Rewesternization and dewesternization are struggles in the spheres of the control of authority and of the economy. The first is the project of President Barack Obama, repairing the damages caused in the US and Western leadership by the government of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Dewesternization is the politics of economically powerful emerging economies (China, Singapore, Indonesia, Brazil and Turkey, now joined by Japan). Decoloniality is the project that defines and motivates the emergence of a global political society delinking from rewesternization and dewesternization. Albeit the complex, ambiguous, mixed and changing things in "reality," it is already possible to distinguish the orientations of the three major projects in which global futures are being built.

Border thinking is the necessary condition for the existence of dewesternizing and decolonial projects. However, the aims of both projects differ quite radically. It is the necessary condition, because to affirm dewesternization implies to think and argue from the exteriority of modern Westernization itself. Exteriority is not an outside of capitalism and of Western civilization, but the outside created in the processes of creating the inside. The inside of Western modernity has been built since the Renaissance upon the double, simultaneous and continuous colonization of space and time. Haitian anthropologist, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, puts it this way:

> "If modernization has to do with the creation of place – as a relation within a definite space – modernity has to do

> with the projection of that place – the local – against a spatial background that is theoretically unlimited. Modernity has to do with both the relationship between place and space, and the relation between place and time. In order to prefigure the theoretically unlimited space – as opposed to the space within which management occurs – one needs to relate place to time or to address a unique temporality, the position of the subject located in that place. Modernity has to do with those aspects and moments in the development of world capitalism that require the projection of the individual or collective subject against both space and time. It has to do with historicity."[12]

Not only have people fallen out of history (in exteriority) in general, but also out of non-modern forms of government and of economic organization. "Non-modern" consists of the Incas in Tawantinsuyu, China in the Ming Dynasty and the Mao Revolution, Africa in general, Russia and Japan, just to name a few. Non-modern states and economies (like China and Brazil) are not only growing economically, but also confronting the directives they received in the past from Western institutions. To do so, Marxism doesn't provide the tools to think in exteriority. Marxism is a modern European invention that emerged to confront, in Europe itself, both Christian theology and liberal economy (that is, capitalism). Marxism in the colonies and in the non-modern world in general is limited, for it remains within the colonial matrix of power that creates exteriorities in space and time (barbarians, primitives and the underdeveloped). For the same reason, Marxism is of limited help to migrants in Europe and the US from the non-European world. To think in exteriority demands border epistemology. Now, border epistemology serves both the purposes

of dewesternization and decoloniality – but dewesternization stops short of decoloniality.

Border thinking leading to the decolonial option is becoming a way of being, thinking and doing of the global political society. The global political society defines itself in its processes of thinking and doing decolonially. Its actors and institutions connect the political society in the non-European/US world with migrants from the non-European/US world to "former Western Europe" (e.g., the European Union) and the US. The global political society transforms the organization and regulations established by political authorities (Western monarchies and secular bourgeois states), economic practices and political economy (e.g., capitalism) and the civil society necessary for the existence of the state and the economy.

The worldwide emerging political society, including the struggles of migrants who reject assimilation and promote decolonization, [13] carries on the legacies of the Bandung Conference. If during the Cold War, decolonization was neither communist nor capitalist, at the beginning of the twenty-first century it is neither rewesternization nor dewesternization, but decoloniality. Decoloniality requires epistemic disobedience, for border thinking is by definition thinking in exteriority, in the spaces and time that the self-narrative of modernity invented as its outside to legitimize its own logic of coloniality.

Now, decoloniality is not a project that aims at imposing itself as a new abstract universal replacing and "improving" rewesternization and dewesternization. It is a third force that delinks from both projects on the one hand, and claims its existence in building futures that cannot be left alone in the hands of rewesternizing or dewesternizing designs on the other hand. I do not know at this

point whether dewesternization aspires to be a new abstract universal that replaces rewesternization or aspires to be a co-existing force that rejects being managed by rewesternization. I do know that rewesternization aspires to maintain the fictions of the North Atlantic universal, which means, maintaining modernization and modernity. For those who do not want to assimilate to either rewesternization or dewesternization, border thinking and decoloniality is the road toward advancing the claims and growing influence of the global political society. It is too early to say what comes next. What has to be done beforehand is being defined by the confrontations between rewesternization and dewesternization.

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[1] I am writing a follow up here of my presentation at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna on October 5th 2010 in the workshop, "Decolonial Aesthetics," organized by Marina Gržinić and Therese Kaufmann, with the participation of Madina Tlostanova, from the Department of Comparative Philosophy at The Friendship University of Russia. I am thankful to Therese Kaufmann for the opportunity to publish a written version in eipcp, the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies. Therese Kaufmann's recent article, "Art and Knowledge: Towards a Decolonial Perspective" (March 2011) is a brilliant example of how to think and do decolonially in Europe; see http://eipcp.net/transversal/0311/kaufmann/en.

[2] For a critique of the shortcomings of Giorgio Agamben's argument seen from the experiences, memories and sensibilities of colonial histories and decolonial reasoning, see: Alejandro de Oto

and Marta María Quintana, "Biopolítica y colonialidad," in *Tabula Rasa*, 12, 2010, pp. 47–72.

[3] On the decolonial option, as described by Simon Yampara and endorsed by many Aymara and Quechua intellectuals and activists, see Jaime E. Flores Pinto, "Sociologia del Ayllu," http://rcci.net/globalizacion/2009/fg919.htm. See also my article: "The Communal and the Decolonial," http://turbulence.org.uk/turbulence-5/decolonial/.

[4] Les Indigènes de la République, in France, is an outstanding case of border thinking and immigrant consciousness. See: ¨The Decolonizing Struggle in France. An Interview with Houria Bouteldja," *Monthly Review*, 2 Nov 2009, http://www.indigenes-republique.fr/article.php3?id_article=763.

[5] Brian Meeks & Norman Girvan (Eds.), *The Thought of the New World: The Quest for Decolonization*, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishing, 2010.

[6] It is not just a question of the Native Americans, as I often hear after my lectures. Around the world, critical intellectuals are aware of the limits of Western archives, from the left and from the right. In the case of China, see Wang Hui's four volumes, *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought*. For an analysis of it, see Zhang Yongle, "The Future of the Past: On Wang Hui*'s Rise of Modern Chinese Thought*," *New Left Review* 62, 2010, March/April, pp. 47–83. For the Muslim world, see Mohammed al-Jabri, *Introduction a la Critique de la Raison Arabe*. Paris: Edition La Découverte, 1995. In similar spirit, I wrote my *The Darker Side of the Renaissance. Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995. See also the work being done at and by the *Caribbean Philosophical Association*, http://

www.caribbeanphilosophicalassociation.org/. There is no intention here to become post-post and be attentive to the last missive of the European left, but to also move South of the North Atlantic.

[7] See: Walter Mignolo, *Desobediencia epistémica. Retórica de la modernidad, lógica de la colonialidad y gramática de la descolonialidad.* Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Signo 2010. See the German translation by Jens Kastner and Tom Waibel, entitled *Epistemischer Ungehorsam. Rhetorik der Moderne, Logik der Kolonialität und Grammatik der Dekolonialität,* Vienna: Turia und Kant, 2011.

[8] Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "The Coloniality of Being," *Cultural Studies*, 21:2, 2007, pp. 240–270.

[9] Lewis R. Gordon, *Existentia Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought*, New York: Routledge, 2000.

[10] As it is well-known and discussed, Noah cursed the youngest son of Ham, Canaan, for an act of disrespect that Ham committed toward his father. As Canaan was supposedly the ancestor of the African people, the curse provided the justification for the enslavement of them by Western Christians and in the ecclesiastical tradition (http://www.romancatholicism.org/popes-slavery.htm).

[11] Partha Chatterjee, "Modernity in Two Languages," in: *A Possible India: Essays in Political Criticism*, Oxford University Press: Delhi, 1997, pp. 185–205. See my "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom," in: *Theory, Culture and Society*, 26/7–8, 2009, pp. 159–181.

[12] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “North Atlantic Universals: Analytical Fictions, 1492–1945” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 101, 4, 2002, p. 849.

[13] “Les Indigènes de la République,” see note 4.