6   The Conceptual Triad

Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality

The Question of Knowledge and Its Institutions

What matters is not economics, or politics, or history, but knowledge. Better yet, what matters is history, politics, economics, race, gender, sexuality, but it is above all the knowledge that is intertwined in all these praxical spheres that entangles us to the point of making us believe that it is not knowledge that matters but really history, economy, politics, etc. Ontology is made of epistemology. That is, ontology is an epistemological concept; it is not inscribed in the entities the grammatical nouns name. If we could say today that beyond Western world-sense that privileges entities and beings (ontology; Martin Heidegger's Being), there are world-senses that privilege relations. A world-sense that privileges relations cannot be understood ontologically because relations are not entities (they are relations among entities). To name ontology a world-sense constituted by relations and not by entities (objects) is a Western misnomer equivalent to Hernán Cortés naming "Mosques" the buildings where the Aztec carry out their rituals.

    Western civilization was built on *entities* and *de-notation,* not in *relations* and *fluidity.* The concept of *representation* is subservient to ontology. Decolonially speaking, ontologies are cosmologic/epistemic creations (storytelling about the creation of the world (cosmologies) and principles of knowing within a given cosmology (epistemology): it is through knowledge that entities and relations are conceived, perceived, sensed, and described. In this specific sense there are as many "ontologies" and "relationalogies" as there are cosmologies. Epistemologies are always derived from cosmologies. The Big Bang theory of the creation of the universe*,* for instance, is within Christian cosmology not within Islamic or Chinese cosmologies. *Epistemology*, the very word and concept, is a fragment of Western cosmology grounded on *objects*

in the world and on *ideas* of their transcendence, like in Plato's philosophy or in one single *God*, which was the Christian translation of the idea of the *idea*. Thus, economy and politics are not transcendent entities but constituted through and by knowledge and human relations. It is knowledge weaved around concepts such as politics and economy that is crucial for decolonial thinking, and not politics and economy as transcendental entities.

It follows then that decolonizing knowledge and being (entity) to liberate knowing and becoming what coloniality of knowledge and being prevents to know and become, is at this point the fundamental task of *decoloniality*, while "taking hold" of the state was the fundamental task of *decolonization*. What has to be done is very clear, albeit the means of doing it and what to do after doing it are another matter. But now the questions are: If the fundamental task of decoloniality is to decolonize knowledge and being, how do you do it? You cannot "take" knowledge as the state was "taken" by armies of national liberation during the Cold War. You cannot decolonize knowledge if your do not question the very foundation of Western epistemology. And you cannot decolonize being if you do not question the very foundation of Western ontology. How do you decolonize Western political economy if you do not question and change the epistemic assumptions from which the edifice of political economy has been built since Adam Smith? Etc., etc.

I do not see another praxis than changing the terms (assumptions, regulations) of epistemic, ontological, and economic conversations. How do you decolonize the state and political theory if you do not open up your thinking to forms of governance beyond the nation-state? if you do not question the principles upon which Western political theory built its edifice and maintained it? In other words, the goal of decolonization of "taking hold" of the state did not prove to be sufficient, neither in the Soviet Union nor through decolonization in Asia and Africa during the Cold War. In all these cases decoloniality of knowledge, of knowing and understanding, was not yet seen and therefore decolonization failed.

Let's ask know, what is the *praxis* that leads to decolonizing knowledge and being? I do not see another way of responding to this question than by saying that the praxis has to be theoretical. Furthermore, in order to proceed in that direction, it is necessary to understand what coloniality of knowledge means, for you can hardly decolonize something about which you do not know how it works. The goal of this chapter is to lay down the bases for understanding *coloniality of knowledge and of being* (I return to this in chapter 7) and, therefore, for the doings (praxis) of knowing and understanding.

For what are economy, politics, and history if not the enactments of certain types and spheres of knowledge that frame the praxis of living in which economy is embedded and that is not limited by the technicalities of political economy? Economy, politics, and history (and we could add more to this list) become such only once a discourse that conceives of certain forms of doing and living (manufacturing, cultivating, producing, exchanging, organizing life among people, and telling stories about the creation of the world and the origination of the people, who in turn tell their own stories) gives meaning to a mix of interrelated activities within the praxis of living in conversation around taken-for-granted entities (economy, politics, art, religion, etc). Thus, it is through conversations (discourses and narratives, oral or written) that the amorphous activities of a people are distinguished, narrated, theorized, critiqued, and transformed into economics, politics, history, and so on.

All known organizations of people—civilizations, kingdoms, or cultures—create and transfer knowledge and understanding of their own praxis of living to the next generation. The more sophisticated the self-organization of a people is, the more institutions are needed to nurture and educate the younger generation in all the areas that an organization of the people (communal, societal) needs for its survival. In this process, institutions in one civilization could become the tool to manage and control knowing and understanding in other civilizations, which began to happened around 1500. The Aztecs, for example, had two central institutions: the Calmecac and the Telpochcalli. The first was for educating the children of the nobility (*pipiltzin*), while the second was for the education of people (*macehualtin*). In the Andes, the territory of the Incas, Yachaywasi (house [*wasi*] of wisdom [*yachay*]) was a center similar to the Calmecac. *Madrasa*, in the Islamic world, past and present, is a basic educational institution.[1] Not to mention education in the multimillennium histories of China and India. Western expansion was not only economic and political but fundamentally epistemic.

If we go to the kingdom of Aksum in Northern Ethiopia or the kingdom of Great Zimbabwe (two of the five or seven great kingdoms in Africa, beyond Egypt), we find that the achievement of these sophisticated organizations cannot be understood without an understanding of their own ways of knowing and education embedded in their praxis of living. Even ancient Greece had its own concept of education (*paideia*), and a specific institution where education took place (*gymnasium*). Medieval Christendom created its own institution, the *university*, which was transformed but maintained during the Renaissance. With the colonization of the New World, the *university* was

transplanted (as today U.S. universities are transplanted) in what is today the Dominican Republic, the Viceroyalty of New Spain, the Viceroyalty of Peru, and the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata (National University of Córdoba in Argentina). Harvard was the first such transplant in British America, in 1636.[2] Modernity/coloniaility means, in the sphere of knowledge, that Western institutions and philosophy encroached consistently over the wide and non-Western cultures and civilizations since 1500 whose praxis of living, knowing, and doing were mostly unrelated to Western civilization. And when they were—like Islam—Latin and Christian theology managed through time to impose their disavowal over Arab and Persian Islamic theology.

The Conceptual Triad and the Darker Side of History

Violence is not a privilege of revolutions; it spreads all over to counterrevolutions. Violence is also enacted to prevent revolutions. When Marx chastised philosophers and told them that it is not enough to interpret the world, but it is necessary to transform it, it was a good advice. The problem was that subsequent generations reading Marx did not pay attention to the fact that this was precisely what Christianity and then secular liberalism were doing: they theorize the world in the process of changing it. Praxis is not a privilege of the Left. It is what the Right does too. Political and ideological positions identified since the French Revolution as Left and Right are second-order constructions based on experiences of people's self-organization and their preferences for transformation or preservation of their praxis of living.

Revolution needs vision. The implementation of vision when successful at some point would engender violence because it would introduce a disruption and a crack into the calm waters of "reality": that is, the commonsense created through coloniality of knowledge and of being (e.g., the world populated by object, laws, and living organisms). Nevertheless, before and after violence, there is much that can be accomplished if the vision is pursued with determination, open-mindedness, and resolution, as Frantz Fanon tells us in the conclusion of *The Wretched of the Earth* ([1961] 1968). *Vision* in this case is tantamount to theory, and theory is a fundamental component of revolutionary praxis. There cannot be revolutionary praxis without theory. Praxis without theory is blind; theory without praxis is sequestered. Both join forces in that long-lasting horizon we can call *vision* and, in this case, decolonial visions.

With this provisos in mind, what is the place of decoloniality in a world order at the limit of nuclear catastrophe? To oppose and confront the modern/colonial world order of today,, it is not necessary to be decolonial, Marxist, or an adherent to the theology of liberation. It requires an ethical commitment of the people who are not controlling and managing but are being managed and controlled. The rhetoric of modernity that aims to persuade you through promises of progress, growth, development, and newness of objects, composed of three interrelated domains: first, *a field of representation*, which grounds its power in the very idea that signs represent something existing, and, second, a *set of rhetorical discourse*s aimed at persuading you that the world is as the field of representation tells you it is. The belief that signs represent something existing is based on the presupposition of universal naming. He who has the privilege of naming and implanting His naming is able to manage knowledge, understanding, and subjectivity. Accordingly, and in third place, the system of representation and the rhetoric conveying the promises of modernity support a *set of global designs* whose implementation would secure well-being and happiness for everyone on earth. If you were to translate these words into a diagram, the three domains would fall under the heading of Modernity. The three domains constitute what we might call, following Siba Grovogui, the *Instituted*.[3]

Let's approach the conceptual triad closely. Imagine yourself in front of a blackboard. You write the triad modernity/coloniality/decoloniality. The slash (/) between modernity and coloniality and between coloniality and decoloniality means that the three terms are simultaneously, since the sixteenth century, divided and united. They are indeed entangled: modernity/coloniality/decoloniality. The divisions and connections are constantly crossed by flows and energies that do not allow any one of these terms to be isolated and immutable (as the following section will explain in more detail). If there is no modernity without coloniality, if coloniality is constitutive of modernity, if the "/" at once divides and connects, then decoloniality proposes the undoing of modernity. That is, decoloniality implies demodernity.[4] At the same time, modernity/coloniality engender decoloniality. So there would be no decoloniality—and decoloniality would not be necessary—if modernity/coloniality had not created the need to delink from the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality.

Modernity names a set of diverse but coherent narratives, since they belong to the same cosmology. That cosmology is the Western Christian version of humanity, complemented by secular de-Goding narratives of science, economic progress, political democracy, and lately globalization: Reason displaced God.[5] That narrative originated during the European Renaissance,

and manifested itself in two complementary trajectories. One trajectory narrated the re-naissance of Europe, the *colonization of time*, and the invention of Antiquity and the Middle Ages as the two previous periods upon which the rebirth was founded. This trajectory materialized the explicit celebration of the inward history of Europe.

The other trajectory was the invention of the New World and the *colonization of space*. In the first trajectory, the narratives of modernity are regenerated in a nonlinear appropriation of time that today is manifested by the prefix *post-*. Colonization of space and time were not military, financial, or state-politics activities: they were conceptual, that is, epistemic. Immanuel Kant couldn't have theorized space and time as he did without the colonization of time and space during the Renaissance.[6] In the second trajectory, the narratives of modernity are constantly regenerated through the celebrated idea of *newness* (and the keywords associated with it: *revolution*, *innovation*). *Newness* and *post-* are the two pillars with which the mythology of modernity captures the feelings and the imaginary of the population. I call this the *rhetoric of modernity*—rhetoric in the sense of discourse aimed at persuading an audience, as we all learned from Aristotle and Cicero. The rhetoric of modernity invented and regenerated the Instituted, the world as it presumably is.

Coloniality names the (un)intended consequences of the narratives of modernity—Anthony Giddens's missing chapters. It is the darker and hidden side of modernity. Coloniality names the *destitute* and the logic and processes of destitution. It is the task of decoloniality to unveil this logic and these processes. Coloniality is to decoloniality what the unconscious is to psychoanalysis, what surplus value is to Marxist political economy, and what biopolitics is to Foucauldian archaeology. The difference between coloniality and surplus value or biopolitics is that the latter concepts belong to the inward trajectory of European history and culture and originated in Europe. Coloniality, by contrast, originated in the Third World and belongs to the outward history of Europe. Coloniality is sensed in the trajectories of colonial histories, is inscribed in our bodies and sensibilities.

Coloniality is shorthand for *coloniality of power*. The expression suggests that what is imprinted in colonial cultures is the effect of the *imperiality of power*. And the imperiality of power in the modern/colonial world (i.e., not in the Roman Empire or in the Islamic Caliphate) is written not by guns and armies but by the words that justify the use of guns and armies, convincing you that it is for the good, the salvation, and the happiness of humanity. Such is the task of the rhetoric of modernity. What is at stake in the final analysis

is the power of imperiality/coloniality—that is, the logic that underlines the differences, manifestations, and enactments of modern imperial/colonial formations (Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, German, United States) and all its dimensions: knowledge (epistemic), economic, political (military), aesthetic, ethical, subjective (race, sex), spiritual (religious).

There is an implied complexity in the expression modernity/coloniality. On the one hand, this is because it could be written imperiality/coloniality, assuming that modernity is the discourse of Western imperialisms since the sixteenth century. On the other hand, if modernity is a narrative (or, better still, a set of narratives), coloniality is what the narratives hide or disguise, because it cannot be said explicitly. To say it explicitly would be to run against the very promises of modernity. It cannot be said explicitly that slavery is the exploitation of human beings for the benefit of other human beings. It cannot be said explicitly that the war in the Middle East or West Asia is for the control of territory and natural resources and not for the liberation or well-being of people. Slavery was justified via narratives that figured Africans as less than human so they could be treated like animals.

The invasion of Iraq could not have been explained as the need to depose the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, for not following the dictates of the United States (coloniality); therefore it was explained instead as due to Hussain being an undemocratic leader "in possession" of weapons of mass destruction. Once weapons were fabricated to implement wars; the neoliberal inversion of the rhetoric of modernity consists in fabricating wars to implement and sell weapons. This inversion affects the entire sphere of life, from food to medicine (pharmacy and medical instruments). It was instigated by a minority at that time; now it is widespread. It was a global lie that shows the consequences of coloniality disguised by narratives of modernity. But it was done, and more of the same are in the horizon in May 2017 when I am finishing this manuscript. Coloniality names a complex structure of management and control that is explained in what follows.

The Colonial Matrix of Power: Domains, Levels, and Flows

Quijano's groundbreaking concept of *coloniality* is shorthand for *coloniality of power*, and both are stand-ins for the *colonial matrix of power*, or the CMP. The use of one term or the other depends on how much detail we want to invoke with the expression.

The colonial matrix of power (the CMP) is a complex structure of management and control composed of domains, levels, and flows. Like *the unconscious* in Sigmund Freud or *surplus value* in Karl Marx, the CMP is a theoretical concept that helps to make visible what is invisible to the naked (or rather the nontheoretical) eye. Unlike Freud's unconscious or Marx's surplus value, though, the CMP is a concept created in the Third World—in the South American Andes, specifically.[7] It is not a concept created in Europe or in the U.S. academy. The concept was born out of theoretical-political struggles in South America, at the intersection between the academic and the public spheres. Driven by local criticism of development, the CMP bears the impulse of liberation theology and emerged out of the limits of dependency theory in the 1970s. These, of course, were also the years of the struggle for decolonization in Asia and Africa.

By highlighting *global coloniality*, I am underscoring that *global modernity* is only half of the story—the visible half of the whole. The other half (hidden) is global coloniality. Hence, again: modernity/coloniality. Surrounding the idea of modernity (in the period 1500 to 2000) is a discourse that promises happiness and salvation through conversion, progress, civilization, modernization, development, and market democracy. This discourse is tied up with the logic of coloniality, which circumscribes the progression of modernity within all the domains used to categorize and classify the modern world: political, economic, religious, epistemic, aesthetic, ethnic/racial, sexual/ gender subjective.

Part of the significance of the CMP as a theoretical construct lies in its uncovering of the domains that the discourse of modernity produces in order to advance its overall project, hiding, destroying, demonizing, and disavowing whatever gets in its way. The advance of civilization is the justification of freedom and well-being for all the manifested goals. The rhetoric of modernity, for example, locates the historical foundation of political theory in ancient Greece, though this foundation was revamped from Machiavelli onward. On the other hand, there is no discourse on economy for the imaginary of modernity to find in Greece. Instead, this discourse emerged at the confluence of European local histories and its American colonies. This much is clear in the long section that Adam Smith devoted to colonialism in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). Thus, decolonial tasks consist of undraping the positivity of political theory and political economy, and showing that the positivity of both is mounted on the negative consequences of their implementation.

But the question then becomes: What holds all the domains of the CMP together? To answer this question, we need to introduce the levels of the CMP. Within each domain are different levels of management and control. The rhetoric of modernity is heavily utilized within these levels, in order to convince the population that such-and-such a decision or public policy is for the betterment (i.e., the happiness and salvation) of everyone. While theological principles and philosophical-scientific truths have historically sustained the domains of the CMP, the mainstream media today plays an equally crucial role in disseminating the rhetoric of modernity and salvation in the face of ever-changing "enemies."

The actors and institutions that create, pronounce, and transform the designs that drive the idea of modernity are the same actors and institutions that (intentionally or not) keep all the domains interrelated and also keep these interrelations invisible. It is within this context that we must understand the creation of the figure of the "expert," who appears often in the mainstream media to explain this or that aspect of a news story and who knows a great deal about one domain but is ignorant of the others and of how all the domains are connected.

Outside the domains and their levels of management and control is a broader level where the domains themselves are defined, their interrelations legislated and authorized. We might call the domains themselves the *content* of the conversation, or that which is *enunciated*. Conversely, the broader level, where the domains are defined and interrelated, relates to the *terms* of the conversation, or "enunciation" proper. It is here that the patriarchy is located.

This broader level is also the level of *knowledge* in the deep sense of the word. It is composed of actors, languages, and institutions. The institutions involved are mainly colleges, universities, museums, research centers (think tanks), institutes, foundations, and religious organizations. At the same time, the enormous visibility of generous donors hides the detail that generosity is a fact of life for billions of people in the world, practiced on a much larger scale than elite/institutionalized philanthropy and its actors.

The actors involved in the CMP's domains are trained and experienced politicians, CEOS of banks and corporations, university presidents, museums directors, and so on. The actors that rule these institutions do not have a homogeneous view of the world and society, as we see today in the United States, in the positions of Democrats and Republics, or in Europe, where Poland

and Hungary are seeing Europe through their own right-wing eyes. What is common, across these differences, is the content of the conversation between the so-called Right (in different degrees) and the so-called Left (in different shades).

As for the languages in which the content of the conversation has been established and maintained, these have been and still are the six modern European imperial languages: Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese during the Renaissance; German, English, and French since the Enlightenment. For Russia and China to enter the conversation, the conversation has to be in English, French, or German. The reverse does not hold: leaders of the core European Union (of which Poland and Hungary are not part) can maintain their French, English, or German without needing to learn Russian or Chinese.

We might call the domains themselves the *content* of the conversation, or that which is *enunciated*. The domains are defined and interrelated with the *terms* of the conversation, or enunciation proper. It is at the level of the enunciation that the rhetoric of modernity is enunciated, transformed, legislated, and authorized. Consequently, decoloniality shall focus on changing the terms of the conversation that would change the content. The reverse does not obtain: changing the content of the conversations doesn't call the enunciation (the terms) into question.

For this reason, the essential feature to take notice of within the CMP's domains is the domain of knowledge. Knowledge has a privileged position: it occupies the level of the enunciated, where the content of the conversation is established, and it occupies the level of enunciation, which regulates the terms of the conversation. A pedagogical metaphor would help clarify the point I am making here. Think of a puppeteer: you do not see the puppeteer (the enunciator); you only see the puppets (the enunciated). You are drawn by the puppets, by their movements and dialogues. What you see and hear is the content of the conversation. In order to "see" the terms of the conversation, you would have to disengage from the illusion and focus on the puppeteer behind the scenes, who is regulating the terms of the conversation.

Knowledge in the CMP occupies two positions: knowledge is one of the puppets (one domain, and the domains are the content of the conversation, the enunciated), and knowledge also refers to the designs (the enunciation) that the puppeteer creates to enchant the audience. Coloniality of knowledge is enacted in that zone in which what you see and hear from the puppets that enchant you distracts you from the tricks and designs of the enunciator. Decoloniality of knowledge demands changing the *terms* of the conversations

and making visible the tricks and the designs of the puppeteer: it aims at altering the principles and assumptions of knowledge creation, transformation, and dissemination. Dewesternization, by contrast, disputes the *content* of the conversation. It aims to change the puppets and the content of their conversation, not the terms. It disputes the place of the puppeteer not to replace it but to coexist next to the existing puppeteer.

The apparent paradox is that the domains of the CMP seem to be isolated and independent of one another, and knowledge seems to be separated from politics and economy, for example, while decolonially speaking there cannot be economy and politics without knowledge. The privileged position of knowledge being at the same time content and terms of the conversation explains the needs of *experts* within a given domain. These experts are unknowing not simply about other domains but about the logic (the terms of the conversation) that keeps all the domains interlinked. Experts in one domain are literally ignorant of other domains and, above all, about the interconnections between the domains and between domains and levels. The decolonial analytic of CMP aims precisely to reveal these interconnections that the rhetoric of modernity constantly hides.

Consequently, the CMP is held together by flows that emanate from the enunciation (from the terms of the conversation, the rhetoric of modernity). These flows interconnect all the domains and connect the domains with the actors and institutions, in the major languages of the European idea of modernity. Inevitably, the question of subjectivity and subject formation emerges: the CMP is involved in the creation of particular persons/subjects and institutions, but the CMP also takes on a life of its own, shaping and contorting the subjectivity (the reasoning and emotioning) of the person managing it. Because of coloniality, control of the terms of enunciation (i.e., control of knowledge) is necessary for controlling the domains, and controlling the domains means managing the people whose lives are shaped by the domains.

Decoloniality, Delinking, and Border Thinking

There is no necessity for decoloniality without modernity/coloniality. Modernity/coloniality engendered decoloniality. As far as the promises of modernity legitimize coloniality, that is, oppression, exploitation, and dispossession, decoloniality is the response of and from people who do not want to be oppressed, exploited, and dispossessed. Decoloniality emerges out of the need to

delink from the narratives and promises of modernity—not to resist, but to re-exist. In this sense, decoloniality is both an analytic of modernity/coloniality (its constitution, transformation) and a set of creative processes leading to decolonial narratives legitimizing decolonial ways of doing and living.

Seen as a complex structure of domains and levels, the CMP is spatial. However, Quijano has added the energies that keep the CMP in constant movement: domination/exploitation/conflict. And also temporality: formed in the sixteenth century the CMP is well and alive today. If the rhetoric of modernity (domination) legitimizes coloniality (exploitation), the latter engenders conflict and conflict generates responses. However, Quijano has added the energies that keep the CMP in constant movement: domination/exploitation/conflict. If the rhetoric of modernity (domination) legitimizes coloniality (exploitation), the latter engenders conflict and conflict generates responses. Dewesternization and decoloniality are two types of responses whose enactment and contours are shaped by local histories. The movements and mobility of the CMP through domination/exploitation/conflict put us in front of "history" being moved by the energy of this trialectic rather than by modern and postmodern dialectic. The movement of the conceptual triad is then trialectic rather than dialectic, and this conceptualization is always already decolonial, delinking from the good, the bad, and the ugly of modernity and postmodernity. Dewesternization like decoloniality, is one manifestation of the trialectic. However, as explained above, dewesternization disputes the control and magement of the CMP but doesn't question its very existence.

Decoloniality is first and foremost liberation of knowledge (for what I said above on the double location of knowledge, in the enunciation and the enunciated), of understanding and affirming subjectivities that have been devalued by narratives of modernity that are constitutive of the CMP. Its main goal is the transformation of colonial subjects and subjectivities into decolonial subjects and subjectivities. The expectation is not to convert the actors running the IMF, the World Bank, and the United Nations, nor expect them to run those institutions decolonially, which would in turn push every single state existing on the planet today to govern decolonially; nor is the expectation that the presidents and CEOs of all the global banks and corporations will run their finances and corporate designs decolonially.

The aim is to create rather than to be dependent on the creativity of the actors and institutions that produce and maintain the narratives of modernity. Re-existing means using the imaginary of modernity rather than being used by it. Being used by modernity means that coloniality operates upon

you, controls you, forms your emotions, your subjectivity, your desires. Delinking entails a shift toward using instead of being used. It proposes to delink from the decolonial entanglement with modernity/coloniality.

The decolonial—in contradistinction to Christianity, liberalism, Marxism, and neoliberalism—is not another option for *global design* led by States, economic, financial, technological, and military institutions, but it is an option to delink from all global designs promoting local resurgences and re-emergences confronting and rejecting, unmasking their fundamentalism and pretense of "chosen" people to arrogate themselves the right to run the world. Decoloniality names the vision and energy of delinking (disconnect) to re-link (re-connect) with praxis of living, thinking, doing that we, decolonially speaking, want to preserve. Thus, re-existence, reemergence and reconstitution, resurgence are already populating the vocabulary of numerous and diverse decolonial projects. Decoloniality as conceived here therefore consists of two movements: one, its affirmation as an option among options (diverse and heterogeneous but grounded as any co-existing options, from Christianity, to neoliberalism to Marxism, Islamism); and two, the conception and enactment of the decolonial option, as an option among options in conflict or collaboration. The argument for decoloniality must at the same time work to wrestle decoloniality from the temptations of totalitarian totality. Decoloniality promotes pluriversality as a universal option—which means that what "should be" universal is in fact pluriversal, and not a single totality.

If we were to understand the configuration of the ancient Chinese or Aztec civilizations, as they mapped themselves and as they mapped the rest of the world in their own imaginary, we might not (or rather, we wouldn't) end up identifying the same domains specified here, or the same levels, or the same flows between domains and between levels. Today, however, we tend to look at ancient China and ancient Mesoamerica and ask questions about their knowledge, their being, their politics and their economy, their art and their religion, and their perception of ethnic groups and sexual distinction based on our *own* categories of knowledge and being, because asking such questions and providing such answers is a consequence of being embedded and living in a Western imaginary enveloped in the process of becoming itself.

The narratives sustaining the imaginary of modernity make us believe that ontology is *represented* by epistemology:[8] we know what simply *is and exists*. Decolonially speaking, it is the other way around: it is epistemology that institutes ontology, that prescribes the ontology of the world. To say that non-Western civilizations have different ontologies means to project Western

categories to non-Western thinking. Most of culture and civilizations on the planet *see relations while in the West we are taught to see entities, things. Relations* could not be called ontological. If the vocabulary wants to be preserved then one needs to talk about *relationalogy* (discourses on/about relationality of the living universe). What *there is* depends on how we have been programmed to name what we know. Hence, the coloniality of knowledge implies the coloniality of being; they move in two simultaneous directions. The coloniality of being is instituted by racism and sexism. However, if ontology is instituted by an epistemology that devalues certain human beings in terms of race and sexuality, there must be some force that sanctions the devaluation, since the devaluation is not itself ontological. The sanctioning comes from human beings who place themselves above those human beings who are devalued and dehumanized.

Coloniality of being therefore entangles both the enunciator and the enunciated.[9] Decoloniality of knowledge and of being, therefore, aims at the liberation of both, for if there is no enunciation instituting racial and sexual hierarchies (racism and sexism), then there is no racism and sexism. The battlefield for overcoming racism and sexism is, then, at the level of the enunciation, diverting the flows that hold together and sustain the four domains of the enunciated. Liberation is through thinking and being otherwise. Liberation is not something to be attained; it is a process of letting something go, namely, the flows of energy that keep you attached to the colonial matrix of power, whether you are in the camp of those who sanction or the camp of those sanctioned.

One outside evaluator of this manuscript wondered at this point, based on note 9, why María Lugones and Nelson Maldonado-Torres are mentioned, and not, for example, Enrique Dussel and Santiago Castro-Gómez. The reader thought it of interest to explain or account for different positionalities within the project. I have done this already in another publication.[10] The same reader also conjectured noting that Lugones, Maldonado-Torres, and Anzaldúa were rather Latinx than Latin American. This introduction is about concepts and arguments, not about people.

We could have added to the reader's list of Native American decolonial thinkers Canadian peoples and said more about Mayan, Aymaras, Quechuas, Quichuas, Mapuches, and so forth. We could have also extended our analysis to Australia and New Zealand, which I bring to the conversation in the conclusion. But, as we (Catherine and I) say in the introduction, we have not written an ethnography of who does decoloniality where and how, but a conceptual and political introduction derived from Quijano's concept of *coloniality*. Consequently it is not about "Latin American (de)coloniality" or

"(decoloniality) in Latin America." It is just about—if aboutness is necessary to be explicit—modernity/coloniality/decoloniality in the praxis of living of the two of us who wrote the book: Catherine born and educated with English being her language of upbringing, Spanish a learned language; and Walter, who is the reverse, born and educated in Spanish, English being a learned language.

At this point I have arrived at a key juncture of the argument for understanding the relevance of the two levels (the level of the enunciated and the level of the enunciation) and the flows, on the one hand, between the domains and, on the other hand, between levels and domains: while the level of the instituted (the domains) consists of conceptual abstractions that posit an ontology in which there is no emotion, the level of the enunciation is where emotioning and reasoning take place and flow to the domains of the enunciated/ instituted. The domains do not have their own emotions. Emotions lie within the actors of the enunciation who shape the enunciated: its domination, exploitation, conflicts. And it is the enunciation of these actors that makes the conflict appear. Conflict is not a given: for it to be visible, someone has to *speak* (with words or deeds) to mobilize the enunciation, be it by submitting, adapting, or confronting. Decoloniality is one type of confrontation, or *speaking to*, that delinks from the dictates of imperial enunciations.

Uncovering the level of the enunciation within the colonial matrix of power is always already a decolonial task and a contribution to the decoloniality of knowledge and of being. The analytic of the enunciation is not in itself a decolonial concept; it was first brought to light by French linguist Émile Benveniste.[11] But disclosing the level of the enunciation within the colonial matrix, hidden from the imaginary of modernity, is indeed a decolonial move.[12] The semiotic apparatus of enunciation (of any enunciation) has three components: actors, languages, and institutions. The question is, at what point has enunciation become the engine of modernity/coloniality? Or, better still, to what extent is modernity/coloniality the consequence of the formal apparatus of the enunciation becoming modern/colonial?[13]

It is not enough to change the content of the conversation (the domains, the enunciated); on the contrary, it is of the essence to change the *terms* (regulations, assumptions, principles managed at the level of the enunciation) of the conversation. Changing the terms of the conversation implies overcoming both disciplinary and interdisciplinary (which depends on maintaining the disciplines) regulations and conflicts of interpretations. It implies setting up regulations of and for decolonial knowledge that implies border thinking; not "between" disciplines but past the disciplines. As long as controversies and

interpretations remain within the same rules of the game (the same terms of the conversation), the control of knowledge itself is never called into question. And in order to call the modern/colonial foundation of the control of knowledge into question, it is necessary to focus on the knower rather than on the known. This means going to the very assumptions that sustain our enunciations.

Concluding Remarks

To sum up: the domains of the colonial matrix of power support one another. For instance, the flows that run from the domain of political authority (e.g., the state) to the economy (capitalism) enforce racial and sexual classifications and rankings. But those classifications and rankings are not inscribed in the domains ontologically. The domains do not exist independently, with tags saying "I am knowledge," "I am nature," "I am Black," "I am heterosexual," "I am gay," "I am politics," "I am finances," and so forth. All these domains have been invented by the rhetoric (the narratives) of modernity. They have come into existence through the various flows of the enunciation (scientific and media discourses, education and pedagogy from kindergarten to the university, etc.).

All domains are therefore interconnected by the logic of coloniality (the practical activations of state politics, economic organization, subjective social expectations, aesthetic regulated taste, and religious belief) while remaining hidden or disguised from and by the rhetoric of modernity (the imaginary discourse from institutions regulating social organization). You cannot grasp racial and sexual issues without grasping the underlying logic that activates the economy (e.g., slavery is a case in point yesterday and today) or the state politics, whose actors and managers institute economic values and orient behavior via particular racial and sexual classifications and hierarchies. And, in all such cases, everything goes back to knowledge, for it is through knowledge that the domains are instituted as *worlds* (ontologies) while the enunciation institutes itself as the *renderings* (description, explanation, representation, interpretation) of existing *worlds* and by so doing hides the fact that the worlds that the enunciation renders are not representations of existing worlds but instituted in and by the "doing" of the enunciation. The enunciation is a praxis that institutes the domains, without distinguishing the levels and hiding the flows. Modern/colonial apparatus of enunciation confound description and explanations of *worlds* with the worlds described

and explained. For that reason, *representation* is a crucial concept of the rhetoric of modernity: makes us believe that there is a world out there that can be described independently of the enunciation that describes it. Removing the mask of the modern/colonial enunciation (the heart of the CMP) is a fundamental and basic task of delinking and decolonial thinking. That is, removing the mask can only be done by thinking, arguing, doing in communal *conversations* wherever and whenever we can engage and help to create what the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality prevent us from doing. Instituting management, which most of the time doesn't "feel" like we are managed, takes place at the very moment of enunciating the configuration of the domains—and of *deinstituting* whatever doesn't fit the model and the expectation of people's feeling, doing, and thinking. Dissenting within the CMP is one thing (e.g., Eurocentric critique of Eurocentrism) but what decoloniality means is to delink from both Eurocentric regulations and dissent within Eurocentrism. The rhetoric of modernity builds fields of representation to legitimize the instituted and justify the global designs that bulldoze (by diplomacy, debt, or war) whatever impedes their march, which is the march of coloniality. Domination presupposes exploitation, and both generate conflicts. The three spheres of influence operate in two dimensions: within European imperial states and in the European colonies. Therefore, the tasks of undoing and departing from Eurocentrism cannot be reduced to Eurocentric critic of Eurocentrism (e.g., demodernity), which is necessary but highly insufficient. What is essential at this point is the non-Eurocentric critic of Eurocentrism; which is decoloniality in its planetary diversity of local histories that have been disrupted by North Atlantic global expansions.

I will return to these issues in chapter 9. The next chapter is devoted to the Eurocentered image of the world resulting from the constitution, transformation, and management of the CMP.

Notes

1 See the recent detailed Ebrahim Moosa study and autobiographical narrative, *What Is a Madrasa?* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

2 For a panoramic vista of this history, see my "Globalization and the Geopolitics of Knowledge: The Role of the Humanities in the Corporate University," in *The American Style University at Large*, 3–41 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2011).

3   Siba Grovogui, *Otherwise Human: The Institutes and Institutions of Rights*, accessed May 30, 2016, http://sibagrovogui.com/current-projects/otherwise-human-the-institutes-and-institutions-of-rights.

4   Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder y subjetividad en América Latina," in *Decolonialidad y Psicoanálisis*, ed. María Amelia Castañola and Mauricio González, 11–34 (Mexico City: Ediciones Navarra and Colección Borde Sur, 2017).

5   Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man—An Argument," *New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337.

6   See "(De) Coloniality at Large: Time and the Colonial Difference," in Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, 118–48 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); "The Moveable Center," in *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, [1995], 2003), chap. 5; Daniel Astorga Poblete, "La colonización del Tlacauhtli y la invención del espacio en el México colonial," PhD dissertation, Duke University, 2015, http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/10448; "Modernity and Decoloniality," *Oxford Bibliography Online,* 2011, accessed May 27, 2016, http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0017.xml.

7   For an update on the social struggles in the Andes that called for "coloniality," see Catherine Walsh's part I of this volume.

8   Postmodern critiques of *representation* have been eloquently advanced by Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les chose* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) and by Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982). For a decolonial critique of *representation*, see Rolando Vázquez, "Colonialidad y relacionalidad," in *Los desafíos decoloniales de nuestros días: Pensar colectivo*, ed. María Eugenia Borsani and Pablo Quintero, 173–97 (Neuquén, Argentina: Universidad del Comahue, 2014).

9   Research, analysis, and reflections on coloniality of being and of subjectivity (racism and sexism) are due to forward-thinking María Lugones and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. From Lugones, see "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," *Hypatia* 22, no. 1 (2007): 186–209, and "Toward a Decolonial Feminism," *Hypatia* 25 (2010): 742–59; from Maldonado-Torres, see "On the Coloniality of Being," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 240–70.

10   "Modernity and Decoloniality" *Oxford Bibliography Online,* 2011, accessed May 27, 2016, http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0017.xml.

11   For a detailed account of Émile Benveniste's displacement from the signified/signifier to the enunciation, see my "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thoughts and Decolonial Freedom," in *Theory, Culture and Society* 26, nos. 7/8 (2009): 1–23.

12   Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience."

13   Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience."