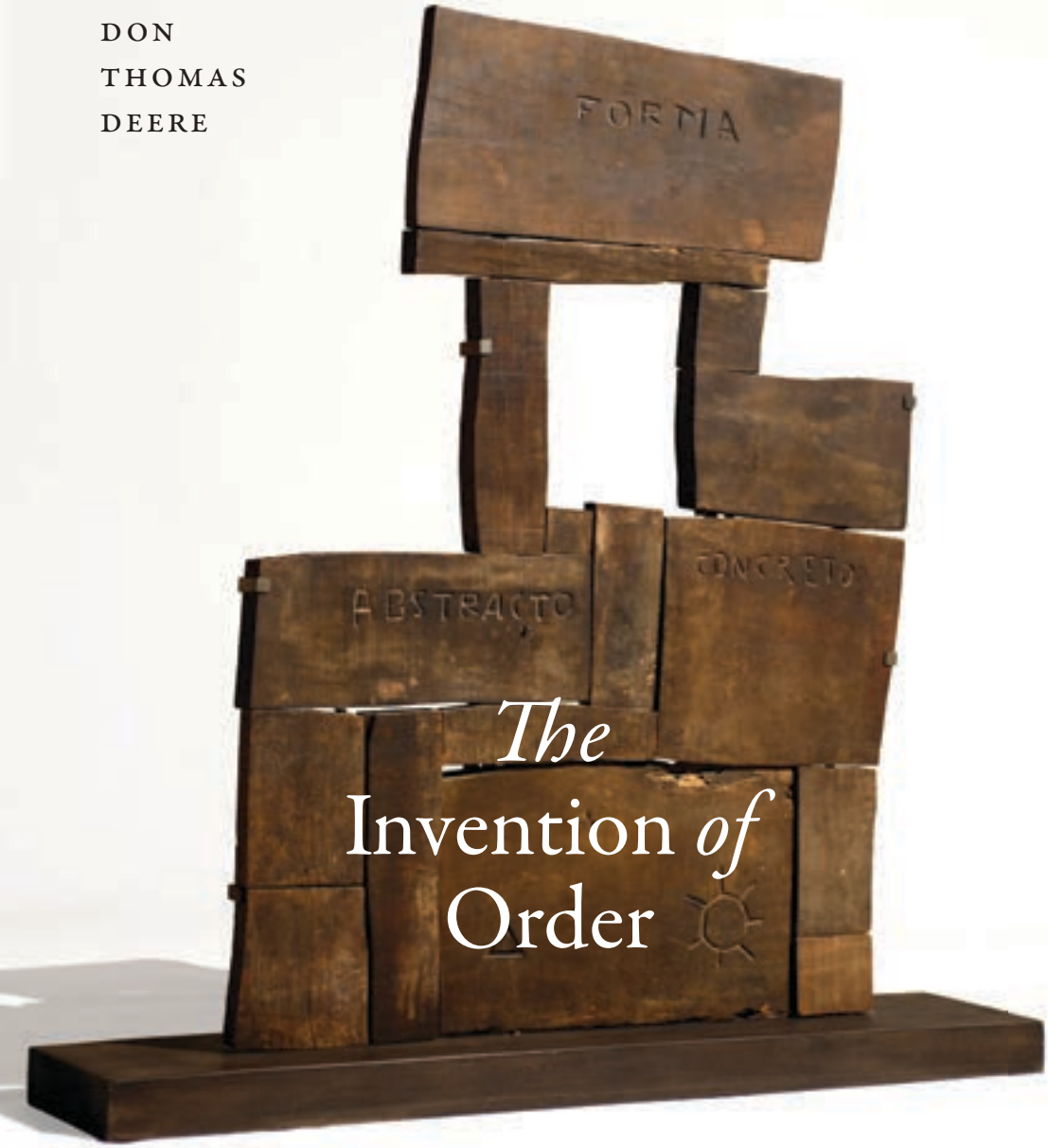
On the Coloniality of Space

DON THOMAS DEERE



The Invention *of* Order

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On the Coloniality of Space | DON THOMAS DEERE

Foreword by Santiago Castro-Gómez

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Contents

Foreword

SANTIAGO CASTRO-GÓMEZ

During the last decades of the twentieth century, one began to speak of the spatial turn. The displacement of the time-centered approach that had dominated the modern social sciences since the eighteenth century turned toward another focus centered on space. The concept of space is viewed, here, not merely as a natural container for the passage of history but rather as an actor capable of redefining the social relations of power. Geography, which had emerged as a science in the nineteenth century, was driven by the development of other areas of study such as urban sociology to begin to understand space as a fundamental variable for comprehending historical processes and inequality between diverse territories.

In the Anglo-American context, particular attention was accorded to the work of the Marxist geographer David Harvey, for whom struggles for control of land and territory are fundamental to the functioning of global capitalism. The tendency toward the incessant accumulation of capital drives a constant reorganization of space, which can be observed in the continuous expansion of cities, the construction of infrastructures, and the creation of new forms of deterritorialized work. His book *The Condition of Postmodernity* shows how capitalism contributes to the creation of a new geography in urban and global peripheries, such as the increase in suburbs and slums occupied by those who are homeless, unemployed, or ethnic minorities. What is interesting about the work of Harvey is that he presents geography not as a descriptive or neutral science but as a weapon to transform existing social relations in an emancipatory sense. Geography, in other words, functions as a counterscience.

In the field of philosophy, one must certainly mention the work of Michel Foucault, according to whom spaces exist as laboratories for generating social behaviors: spaces such as hospitals, prisons, schools, and factories, which not only

physically organize people but also mold their behaviors. With the image of the panopticon, Foucault shows how spaces can internalize and naturalize relations of power. While examining space as a tool of control, however, Foucault was also interested in space as a tool of resistance. He speaks of "heterotopias," which are spaces of alterity and resistance in the face of power, where it is possible to defy the established norms. Critical theories of space in the first world have developed much from this idea, showing how social movements and actions of civil disobedience use space as sites by which to defy and subvert the structures of established power. Space is converted into a site of symbolic and material struggle against structures of power, as in the protests of the Occupy movement. Such is the case of the Indignados in Spain, the yellow vests in France, and Occupy Wall Street in the United States, for whom public space is resignified and utilized for resistance.

Yet all these theories of space leave out a key element for the comprehension of the reconfiguration of space proper to modernity. I am referring to the role of the colonization of the Americas in the sixteenth century, which operated as a prior condition as much for the configuration of capitalism of which Harvey speaks as it does for the disciplinary society of which Foucault speaks. This point has been highlighted since the beginning of the twenty-first century by the decolonial theories of Latin America. Authors such as Aníbal Quijano, Enrique Dussel, María Lugones, and Arturo Escobar have emphasized how racial, ethnic, and gender identities are interwoven with space. Indigenous communities, people of African descent, and mestizas have had to inhabit spaces that not only segregated them physically but also imposed colonial identities on them. The reconfiguration of these spaces, thus, is also a struggle for the identity and cultural autonomy of such populations.

It is precisely here that this book of Don Deere, in your hands, takes on its significance. The concept that gives his book its title, the coloniality of space, not only corrects the Eurocentrism of Harvey and Foucault but amplifies and deepens the notion of the coloniality of power coined by Quijano. The colonial matrix of power produced in the Americas during the sixteenth century includes not only the racial classification of populations vis-à-vis its role in the international division of labor—as Quijano says—but also the organization and hierarchization of physical space. Deere, in other words, goes beyond Quijano in asking after the spatial conditions of social classification. His thesis is that it was possible to control and organize colonial settlements only through the creation of spatial grids, shaping also the hierarchization and classification of racialized populations. These grids operate as a kind of spatial design reflecting the power and administrative necessity of the colonizers. They were constructed by refortifying social

hierarchies and racial segregation, removing Indigenous populations from their own territory and imposing on them new forms of relating to natural resources and to their own traditions.

One of the central objectives of the book is to present a spatial reading of modernity that takes into account its structural connections with coloniality. This goal positions Deere as not only an inheritor of decolonial theory but also a philosopher capable of proposing new interpretations of now canonical authors in the discipline, such as Foucault. His thesis that the American colonies of the sixteenth century functioned as laboratories to experiment with the two modern technologies of power that Foucault referred to as anatomo-politics and biopolitics in *The History of Sexuality*, *Volume 1* is striking. As is well known, Foucault dates the birth of these technologies to the eighteenth century: first anatomo-politics, oriented toward the discipline of bodies, and then biopolitics, oriented toward the governance of populations. Yet all of this, according to Foucault, occurred in Europe. Instead, Deere argues that both technologies of power are products of the asymmetrical interaction between colonizers and the colonized, which occurred outside Europe, in the American colonies of the sixteenth century. It was only after, in the manner of a boomerang effect, that those technologies were applied in the eighteenth century to European bodies and populations. The point is that these technologies (the hospital, the factory, etc.) would not have emerged in the intra-European spaces marked by Foucault if they had not been used beforehand to control and govern Indigenous and Black populations.

Colonial spaces imposed a form of relating to territory that contrasted with the developed urban models in pre-Columbian societies. Coloniality redefined space in terms of its signification and utilization, assuring European domination over conquered territories and imposing over them a new narrative. The imposition of urban grids functioned as mechanisms of surveillance and control, long before the disciplinary societies of which Foucault speaks emerged in Europe. Spatial practices of the colonizers reinforced the narrative that presented the Europeans as civilized and the colonized as barbarians. The new spatial organization justified narratives of European superiority while simultaneously delegitimizing forms of knowledge and life proper to local communities. In this sense, Deere examines how the ordering of space tested in the colonies was then converted into the model of domination implemented within Europe itself. With this move, Deere destabilizes the Eurocentric theories of space advanced by Foucault and Harvey and at the same time complements and strengthens Quijano's theory.

One of the key moments of the book is the discussion that Deere establishes with Carl Schmitt's *The Nomos of the Earth*. The German philosopher is correct to

argue that modernity begins with the surge of the maritime empires of the Atlantic (Spain and Portugal) and that this phenomenon presupposes the creation of a new nomos that globally codifies the sea as much as the earth. This is the modern *ius gentium*, which finds its first great theorist in Francisco de Vitoria. Schmitt does not tire of praising Vitoria for having recognized that the old order of space, the medieval *res publica Christiana*, has ceased to be operative and that now a new order that goes beyond European Christianity is required; a new order in which Christians as much as non-Christians possess equal right to traverse the globe. Deere points out, however, that while this new nomos gives to Europeans the right to liberal commerce and to limitlessly propagate their religious ideas, it takes away the right of autodetermination of Indigenous peoples vis-à-vis their own cultures and territories. If Indigenous peoples opposed free commerce and the purported Christianization offered by the Europeans, they thereby violated international law, thus providing a motive to wage a just war against them and appropriate their lands. The new nomos, Deere affirms, operates thus as an emptying of space and functions as the perfect legitimization of the primitive accumulation of capital identified by Karl Marx.

However, the history of modernity cannot be seen solely as the history of colonial power. Foucault himself already showed that power must be understood as a conjunction of relations that can never be closed, that always leave gaps, cracks, and spaces of resistance. Colonial domination has never been complete. Beyond the modern order—and in the middle of it—there have always lived multiple forms of existence that defy it. On this point, Deere draws above all on the work of Glissant to show that throughout the Americas, but perhaps with greater emphasis on the Caribbean, we can find forms of life that exceed colonial domination and decodify it. Glissant speaks of a world of archipelagos that makes the fiction of identity impossible. This is a world in which identity is rhizomatic and lacks a sole source. It is for this reason that the spatial patterns of modernity were incomplete in the Americas. They are always overwhelmed by other forms of knowledge, by other forms of inhabiting territory. When evaluated by the normative criterion of the European order, the Americas are necessarily seen as disordered and undisciplined spaces. In this same manner, if the Americas were the first laboratories of the modern order, they were also the first laboratories in which this order was openly defied.

The message of the book is clear: Modernity cannot be adequately thought without a theory of space that shows the darker side of colonization as much as it shows the local struggles for resisting and reconfiguring the nomos of capitalist globalization. It is not enough to highlight the hollowing out and destruction, as if the encounter between Europeans and non-Europeans could be uniquely

reduced to domination. There were also processes of spatial transculturation (*transculturación espacial*) that permitted the creation of locales that defied colonial norms and in which Indigenous, Black, and European populations coexisted; border spaces that, indeed, could be seen as heterotopias in Foucault's sense. For this reason, the way Deere supplements the notion of heterotopia with that of heterarchy is interesting, implying that there existed—and exist still—spaces completely ungoverned by colonial hierarchies (of race, class, gender) in which it is possible to escape from the modern grids and inhabit territory otherwise. These are spaces that I would like to refer to, perhaps, as transmodern and that constitute the foundation to conceive a truly decolonial political philosophy.

I, thus, welcome the publication of this magnificent book and wish its author the greatest success. Deere's book is an example of the excellent work being done by a new generation of philosophers in the United States who are dedicated to reflecting on the colonial inheritances of modernity and their relation to Latin American thought.

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Introduction

In the early sixteenth century, the Spanish empire made a map of its overseas territories called the Padrón Real. Kept in secret in the Casa de Contratación in Seville, all captains consulted the map prior to departure on transatlantic journeys and carried an official copy with them.[1] Constantly in development, integrating new additions whenever captains returned from voyages with new findings, this large-scale map charts an abstract epistemology of the globe from a patchwork of local experience of its navigators. This abstract knowledge is kept under lock and key, shared only with Spanish navigators and cartographers, a "secret science" that ties a new quest for global knowledge with the quest for global power.[2]

Jorge Luis Borges echoes the project of the Padrón Real in his story of an empire with the will to make a perfect map of its entire territory. The desire for exactitude and precision, the will to know every last microscopic detail of this territory and to grasp it on the abstract plane of the map's grid, consumed the technicians and cartographers of this fantastical empire to the point of absurdity. Borges explains, "The Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province."[3] In time, the cartographers grew dissatisfied with the imperfections and insufficiencies of these maps and decided to make "a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it."[4] The next generation would, however, find this map to be of little use and leave it to deteriorate and decay in the sun and soil, leaving behind nothing more than tattered remnants of a once grandiose cartographic project.

With this story, Borges exposes not only the absurdity of a will to perfect representation but also that of an imperial will to know and to order, marking a desire to grasp every last point of the globe with precision and accuracy. Yet when this project is taken to its logical breaking point, it cannot hold together.

Indeed, it cannot hold the disparate moments and points of the territory together without attempting to replicate the very thing it wishes to grasp. Representation is not enough unless it reproduces the original, revealed in the paradoxical reversion to the materiality of the map; the absurdity of making a map that must materially extend out across the entirety of the territory and match its points of reference one by one. The dream of empire is, in short, the invention of a perfect order that would be not only mapped and known but also shaped and controlled at the material level. Beyond the representation of order, material order must itself be invented, produced.

The total map, the project of creating a perfect mode of representation, cannot find an adequate site to ground its order, as seen in the absurd attempt to match the map to a one-to-one scale. Knowledge requires a site where words and things come into a possible space of relation. As Michel Foucault shows in *The Order of Things*, without this meeting point, there is no order of knowledge or science.[5] For modern knowledge, the abstract grid is the ordered site where the classification of things in the world is made possible. Borges shows the impossibility of that ordered (cartographic) grid, its inability to serve as a solid foundation for knowledge or power. Yet the order of the grid is not just cartographic. It is more generally epistemological (abstract tables of classification of plants, animals, minerals, or human races found in the encyclopedic desire to classify everything) and also political-material, the organization of human bodies in space such that they can be studied and controlled in the urban space of the colonial city, the plantation, the school, factory, hospital, or prison.

The Padrón Real reveals a patchwork approach to the early dimensions of this ordering project, as individual pieces of experience are glued together on the abstract grid. The exploring subjectivity of the navigator's experience is charted out by the abstracting work of the cosmographer and cartographer. The local experience of space and territory brought into the order of the grid, to empty experience of its empirical content and specificity, fitting it onto a flat coordinate plane.

There is a tension that should not be overlooked between this imperial will to know that empties space of its local specificity and the establishment of a new mode of ordering space. The Americas operate as the laboratory for this double project of order: a project that begins as an imperial will to know and a violent will to subject the "other" to fit onto this grid. The project is not only violent and destructive but also productive of new regimes of space and subjectivity, where the violence of emptying is paired with the productive discipline of ordering. The ordering of this projected emptiness is epistemological and political as it shapes subjectivity, knowledge, race, bodies, and daily habitus in the Americas and across the Atlantic triangle. The project of fitting onto the grid has to do

not only with space and geography but also with the ordering of humans, plants, language, and ideas into an organized system of knowledge and power.

Borges further illuminates the absurd limits of ordering projects in his famous account "The Analytical Language of John Wilkins," on the creation of a universal language by the seventeenth-century British philosopher John Wilkins, modeled on a metric system in which "each word defines itself."[6] Wilkins's language parallels the project of the total map in that a perfect system of reference and order might be developed such that nothing would fall outside it. The system of representation establishes its own perfect order, no longer dependent on the original.[7]

The ground of order for Wilkins's project is upended when Borges refers to an apocryphal Chinese encyclopedia that categorizes animals in divisions, such as "a) those that belong to the emperor . . . g) stray dogs . . . h) those that are included in this classification . . . k) those drawn with a very fine camel's-hair brush . . . n) those that at a distance resemble flies."[8] Foucault describes the shattering force of this monstrous classification system in his preface to *The Order of Things*. Borges's encyclopedia inspires Foucault's project as a jolt of lightning that wakes you from a slumber. It provoked "laughter that shattered . . . all the familiar *landmarks* of my thought—*our thought*, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and *our geography*—breaking up all the *ordered surfaces* with which we are accustomed to tame the *wild profusion of existing things*."[9] The apocryphal encyclopedia that broke up the ordered surfaces of his thought contains a system of classification for objects that is absurd, arbitrary, and groundless: a categorization of animals with no other principle of organization than the alphabetic enumeration of a list.

Borges's work brilliantly exposes the breaking point of projects of totalization, as seen in both the preceding stories. He shows the "wild profusion of things" underneath the taming of ordered grids. He illuminates the groundless ground of classification. Borges's project reveals the limits of totalizing classification, in general; however, I consider what this kind of story has to say about the invention of order in the Americas, in particular. How does the history of the Americas after 1492 evidence a certain obsession with ordering space and knowledge?[10]

The heterotopia of Borges's thought, its troubling obsession with the breaking point of order, demonstrates something about the space of the Americas and its relationship with European space.[11] Indeed, if we consider that the commencement of a new project of ordering begins with the European conquest of the Americas, the heterotopia of Borges's writing is not about an orientalist fantasy of Chinese culture but about an interest in the ordering of the Americas, a critique of the colonial project of totalization. Foucault writes (about the East, but

rereading this passage here with reference to the Americas), "There would appear to be, then, at the other extremity of the earth we inhabit, a culture entirely devoted to the ordering of space."[12] In fact, this devotion to the ordering of space is a project born of the colonial struggle of modernity, as Europe works to impose a grid on the Americas and the globe. It is a question not of a completely other culture but of the mirror of Europe itself in its colonial entanglements: the Americas as the very intensive site, the heterotopic space in which the project of order emerges. This ordering project of the Americas will also have a boomerang effect in defining the shape of modernity in Europe.

Borges's obscure encyclopedic references to the history of Western thought often distract his readers from this history of (Latin) American space, the emplacement of his own thought. I situate his atlas of the impossible, instead, as definitive of a radical and critical thought of the Americas. In this sense, Borges takes the tools of Western philosophy and subverts them in a critical gesture, a gesture that is definitive of much Latin American philosophy and, more recently, decolonial thought. As he writes, "To have appropriated their weapon and turned it against them must have afforded him a bellicose pleasure."[13] A critical thinking of global modernity takes stock and engages the cartography of this battlefield subversively.

The Invention of Order

The invention of order refers both to an abstract table of classification in which words and things meet and to the material table in which human subjects and material spaces are ordered and organized across the globe. Invention emerges out of the colonization of the Americas, as the commencement of a global problematic of space. New spatial concepts and practices emerge from the wreckage of old European, Indigenous, and African worldviews. If we can use the phrase *New World*, it is precisely to refer to a new reality, beyond these previously existing separate worlds of Indigenous Abya Yala, Africa, and Europe.[14]

The notion of empty space is at the heart of these spatial transformations. A notion invented by European practices and sensibilities in justifying colonial conquest, empty space is practiced by depriving existing Indigenous, African, and mestizo populations of their spatial distributions and rights to land. The prehistory to this notion is written in the shift from a prior notion of uninhabitable space attributed to the margins and extremes of the unknown world. As Sylvia Wynter shows, prior to Columbus, Cape Bojador on the western coast of Africa is seen by Europeans as the *nec plus ultra*, the limit of all habitable space on earth.[15] Shortly after Columbus travels to America, the transition is made from

seeing this space as monstrously uninhabitable to potentially habitable (empty) and, thus, in need of order.

In this respect, the medieval worldview shifts in the late fifteenth century, which can be seen in the papal bulls of this period and the imperial designs of the Catholic monarchs. As early as 1493, global lines are drawn by these European powers: On one side they see their own space as organized and accounted for; on the other side, empty space, free for exploration, discovery, and appropriation. On May 4, 1493, Pope Alexander VI marks out such a meridian line to "donate" the land beyond for discovery and settlement by the Spanish. In 1494, the Treaty of Tordesillas draws another line, on the meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, to settle claims between Portugal and Spain.[16]

The shift in European worldview from uninhabitable to empty space ready for order marks this initiation of a new global problematic of space. This problematic is not limited, however, to the drawing of abyssal lines that mark out supposedly empty space from organized, civilized spaces.[17] The other side of the line is defined by not only ontological negation and emptiness but also the production of a whole regime of order, connected to disciplinary and racializing practices of shaping Indigenous, African, mestizo, and criollo subjectivity. A regime of order that is also at the heart of the ordering of modern systems of knowledge.

The global problematic of space is a central theme of decolonial thought and critiques of coloniality. For example, Enrique Dussel's work has been key in tracing the geopolitics of knowledge with its global lines that divide between center and periphery, totality and exteriority.[18] In his work, he emphasizes that beyond the line, in the zone of exteriority, is the space of nonbeing. The European center construes itself as the space of being, while it negates the being of the other in the periphery. The history of modernity, for Dussel, is also the history of the ontological nihilation of the periphery that began with 1492. Philosophy of liberation is, what Dussel terms a barbarian philosophy, an affirmation of the periphery and the creativity that surges forth from beyond the domination and determinations of the center. To be clear, then, philosophy of liberation argues for the metaphysical *reality* of the other who is beyond *being*. Justice, creativity, freedom, and the other are all exterior to the determinations of the dominant system of being. I propose, however, to read Dussel's concept of the other in a material sense, as the subject who is materially excluded and silenced by practices of power. In this sense, I look at the materiality of the *production of the other* as subject.[19] Coloniality and its spatial regimes are thus both nihilating and productive regimes of power. There is a tension between these two dimensions that must be traced.

Dussel's writings are foundational for the work that has developed around the concept of coloniality. Coloniality suggests that the structures of power and

knowledge (particularly consolidated around race and gender as they articulate a hierarchy of labor[20]) that emerged with the history of colonialism continue to fundamentally shape the supposedly postcolonial world. Coloniality also shows that modernity was never separate from its colonial history. Thus, the suturing together of modernity/coloniality is a corrective decolonial concept to show that modernity is not free from this vector of coloniality.[21] The modern project to illuminate the world through reason is entangled with a history of colonial violence and ordering. Colonial violence engages in a double movement of emptying space while also producing ordered spaces. To understand modernity/coloniality we must understand the production of this regime of order.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos coined the term "abyssal thinking" to refer to the epistemology that emerges with this ontological nihilation of the periphery and what is beyond the line.[22] Dussel and Santos offer an account of what is beyond the line and the negation of the other, while I argue that a richer understanding of the production of order is needed to understand the dynamic of space on the other side of the line. The local production of colonial subjects and spaces will also be crucial to understand modes of resistance and creativity that escape or counter coloniality. While the Spanish conquistadors often construed "beyond the line" in terms of ontological negation, the production of coloniality, in fact, also involved a complex engagement and ordering of these spaces. Undoubtedly, these two dimensions of coloniality are entangled, as the nihilation and emptying of the periphery will serve as a condition of possibility for the ordering and production of space.[23]

In this sense, I offer a productive and not simply nihilating reading of coloniality. This approach also allows for what Santiago Castro-Gómez has termed a "heterarchic" reading of coloniality. He argues that the theory of coloniality as a global theory has placed its analysis primarily at the macro level.[24] Aníbal Quijano, Dussel, and Immanuel Wallerstein develop this global account of power relations.[25] Under this model, coloniality is thought of as a global system of power that is inextricable from capitalism. Furthermore, the analysis of coloniality remains at the level of a macro narrative of the emergence of this new global structure. Castro-Gómez points instead to a *heterarchic* conception of power (in the sense that there is not one but multiple foundations, or archai, as opposed to a top-down *hierarchical* model[26]), which includes the global level of coloniality but also accounts for local and regional practices of power. No one level of power is strictly determinative, but each is influential for the global level and vice versa while not being reducible to the other.[27] The hierarchic conception of power, in contrast, would be from the top down, and the macro level would determine all other micro and meso levels. The heterarchic, instead, sees the production

of power relations to be an open-ended process in which different levels may intersect at different moments in different ways. Throughout this book, I work between these local, regional, and global levels, employing a heterarchic method to understand the coloniality of space and the invention of order as a practice of power, knowledge, subjectivity, and racial formation. The heterarchic reading also opens the possibility of thinking resistance to coloniality at the local and regional levels. On this point, I develop on María Lugones's understanding of resistance in terms of practices that do not operate as a pure outside to power but rather as immanent to everyday practices within oppressive regimes of power and coloniality. Lugones opens the possibility of constructing other resistant worlds within and to the side of these oppressive regimes.[28]

Accounting for Modernity and Space

This book argues for a spatial reading of modernity, thus, highlighting the colonial and global dimensions of modernity. I argue that modern thought is forged through global emptying and ordering of space. Modernity takes place in a global battlefield of space that seeks to neutralize and eliminate other modes of spatialization while imposing and producing a single unitopic model of space.[29] The grid neutralizes, empties, and controls other spaces. It is the heterotopia that ultimately aims to create the globe as unitopia.

Space is the framing problematic of this book. My reading of space is fundamentally influenced by Immanuel Kant's aesthetic in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, where he argues that the conditions of possibility of all experience are grounded within space and time.[30] No experience can take place unless inside these spatiotemporal conditions. Modern thought and philosophical accounts of modernity, however, have prioritized time over space. Theories of the subject turn to questions of time, memory, and consciousness in a Cartesian void of space. Theories of modernity rely on notions of progress and emancipation from the past of tradition without asking where these temporal transformations took place, assuming that they emerged in complete isolation from the space of the globe (or moved in a linear fashion from Greece to Rome to Germany and France). The philosophy of modernity wishes not to be tied down to a space of conflict, to take place in a neutral container that happens to coincide with and only with the space of Europe. As Kant argues in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, the powers of reason pretend not to be conditioned by their aesthetic conditions of possibility. He draws an analogy to a dove in free flight that wishes to escape the resistance of gravity, as if space could be airless, empty, and frictionless.[31] Philosophers of modernity have followed this dove in search of an airless space without resistance, a space

so smooth and frictionless that it no longer conditions thought at all. Instead, my argument is that modernity is constituted *within* and *as* a space of struggle. Unitopic space seeks totalization, but the story does not end there: Space has a history of resistance, formation, production, and transformation.

My account intervenes against the standard accounts of modernity represented most prominently by thinkers such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Max Weber, and Jürgen Habermas.[32] These thinkers either forget the spatial nature of modern concepts or seek to defrictionalize space into an empty container. Even Hegel, the great dialectician, reduces space to the unitopia of the Mediterranean: All history condenses around and flows toward one center. Space is either empty and without friction or else it is hierarchized by a unidirectional movement of history, with all progress flowing from East to West toward the Mediterranean. In this Eurocentric spatial account, Europe is supposed to be the unique and neutral site where universality emerges and with that all global entanglements with colonialism magically disappear.

Thus, these traditional accounts fail to think the map of modernity, the cartography from which it emerged. Their cartography is Eurocentric while also pretending that space is neutral and empty, just a container. Modernity is, in this sense, inscribed as a temporal concept by its very name: To be modern is to come after, to have followed a line of exclusively (or ultimately) European development and progress. By the eighteenth century, the spatial dimensions of modernity will be embedded in temporal terms of progress: maturity versus immaturity or modern versus primitive. This is a temporalization that forgets the spatial battlefield that constitutes the site of such a division. It both forgets the role of the periphery in the constitution of Europe as center and temporalizes the periphery as traditional, backward, in the past, savage, or not yet modern. Space is hierarchized and subordinated to time. Space is temporalized as in the present cutting edge of progress or in the past of tradition and immaturity.[33]

To understand the practice and organization of modernity, we need to analyze the production and ordering of space.[34] The importance of thinking space, modernity, and coloniality together has been highlighted by decolonial thinkers from Dussel to Lugones, to Mignolo, and Wynter.[35] Critical readings of space (generally with little attention to coloniality and the globe) have also been key dimensions of European critiques of modernity from Foucault to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, to Theodor Adorno and Henri Lefebvre. Foucault, for example, points out that space is the forgotten field of analysis of modernity, while time is always privileged in its stead. The richness of subjectivity and its temporality, especially in the phenomenological tradition, has been analyzed with great depth, while space is thought of as an empty and immobile container. "Space,"

Foucault writes, "was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic."[36] My analysis aims to avoid the retreat into the frictionless, undialectical, and immobile space: a space that is additionally temporalized. Modernity has been prone to a specific mode of forgetting: the forgetting of space, its dynamics, its methods of production and ordering, and its role in the constitution of the human subject and the ordering of knowledge and power, a history of production and ordering that is additionally colonial and global at its core.

While Kant's aesthetic suggests that space must not be forgotten in the constitution of human experience, he still ultimately sees space in this fixed, undialectical mode. Foucault's reworking of Kant shows us that the conditions of possibility of experience of time and space are not transhistorically fixed but are shaped in relation to different epistemes and regimes of power. His work offers resources to think about the production and ordering of space in the construction of new epistemes and new modes of power relations. Yet Foucault neglects to account for the global and colonial practices that are so central to modern spatial orders.[37] This book brings the resources of Continental European thinkers of space like Foucault into dialogue with thinkers of space in the Americas such as Enrique Dussel, María Lugones, Sylvia Wynter, Santiago Castro-Gómez, and Édouard Glissant. On one hand, critical readings of spatial modernity from European thinkers offer rich resources, but they are made to address a new set of problems when they travel beyond the shores of Europe. On the other hand, these accounts are supplemented and critiqued by the methods and insights of decolonial thought in the Americas, from the United States to Latin America and the Caribbean. Decolonial accounts have situated space as a central problematic of colonial modernity, yet a more detailed account of the interplay between the emptying and ordering of space in the modern period is needed, what I describe as the coloniality of space.

The notion of the coloniality of space is also tied to a tradition of Latin American thinkers who began developing an understanding of the relationship between space, colonization, and modernity starting in the middle of the last century with the Mexican historian Edmundo O'Gorman's 1958 book *The Invention of America*. The importance of O'Gorman's work is perhaps rivaled only by the 1984 book of Ángel Rama, *The Lettered City*, which rethinks the relationship between space, writing, and power in the Latin American city from the colonial era through the twentieth century.[38] While O'Gorman is perhaps the first to explore this epochal historical shift in ontological (the colonization of being) and spatial terms (America as the *invention* of a new understanding of being), Rama offers an account of the spatial-ordering principles of Latin American colonial

cities and how they relate to the organization of an episteme of knowledge in Foucault's sense via writing. I draw on this notion especially in chapter 1, centered on the question of order.

Chapter Descriptions

This book is divided into two parts, each consisting of two chapters. Part I, "Genealogies of Colonial Space," develops a historico-genealogical account of the ordering of space in the Americas from the long sixteenth century through the nineteenth-century nation-building period.[39] Chapter 1, "Orders of the Grid," explores the heterotopic implantation of the grid in the Americas through the ordering of urban colonial space. Sixteenth-century Spanish colonial cities are one of the first models in the newly global world of an extended project of gridded and plotted urban space. I argue that the grid develops a new role in shaping human space and takes on a protodisciplinary and racializing role to make colonized bodies productive and docile while increasing the extraction of resources from the Americas. This grid space is constructed as a heterotopia, an other space outside the given spaces existing in Europe. In this way, Europe invents a new mode of order, previously unthought in Europe, in the Americas. I consider also how this gridding impetus to order space extends beyond the colonial city to the whole countryside during the nation-building projects of the nineteenth century. Here I develop on the racial ordering of space next to the racial anxieties of disordered and mixed space that lies beyond the control of the grid.

Chapter 2, "Orders of Movement: The Traveler and the Settler," analyzes how the Americas were conceptualized and produced as an empty space free for the appropriation and ordering of European projects. I show how this conception of emptiness is coupled with a codification of certain spaces as free for the movement and settlement of certain subjects: the racialization of space. The traveling subject with the right to move about is given expression in Francisco de Vitoria's 1532 text, "De Indis." Yet I ask whether such a notion of mobility would be reciprocally applied to the Amerindian traveling to the shores of Europe. I show that the Janus face of the traveling colonial subject is the settler subject, who seeks to plant roots and distribute a new order of space. Turning to John Locke's theory of property and its notorious connections to North American Puritan settler colonialism, I show how other modes of distributing and inhabiting space are excluded, particularly Indigenous ones, in this settler model. Thus, motion and settlement are not opposed concepts but instead racially codified around certain modes of subjectivity of who can move and who can settle, and what counts as legitimate movement and legitimate settlement. The Indigenous notion of refusal to

state-based recognition projects can be read in this light as a response to Vitoria. I turn to María Lugones's radical understanding of space, in conclusion, to open questions of resistance to the coloniality of space in everyday local practices.

Part II, "Transmodern Cartographies," draws on contemporary reflections about spaces of resistance in the past and future of modernity in Latin American and Caribbean thought. Chapter 3, "Transmodernity and the Battlefield of Coloniality," develops a spatial reading of Enrique Dussel's history of modernity alongside his theory of transmodernity. The material invention, production, and silencing of the other, the non-European, is a struggle that is at the roots of European claims to universality in modernity. Dussel finds that this problematic is embodied in the figure of the *ego conquiro* (I conquer) emblematized by the conquering subjectivity of Hernán Cortés and the 1519 conquest of Mexico. The I-conquer figure forms the prehistory of Descartes's *ego cogito* (I think), in which Descartes's epistemology is built on the spaceless and frictionless ground of the zero point; a spaceless ground predicated on the forgotten history of a dominating subjectivity.

Chapter 3 traces the suggestion that embracing a truly global conception of modernity requires a pluriversal notion of reason that would overcome the violent excesses of the Eurocentric modernity, what Dussel refers to as transmodernity. I analyze Dussel's notion of the global silencing of the periphery in the birth of modern European reason in parallel to Foucault's account of the silencing and spatial exclusion of the mad and the poor across Europe in the latter's account of the birth of modern reason. I conclude the chapter with the question of how to break open the universalizing position of knowledge production to the pluriversality and plurality of epistemological spaces of exclusion and subjugated knowledges of modernity without forgetting or reifying the violence of the battlefield of modernity.

Chapter 4, "Archipelagoes of Resistance: Limits of the Map," develops on these transmodern questions by bringing a resistant understanding of the Caribbean archipelago into dialogue with coloniality of space in the Americas more generally. Through Édouard Glissant's account of a novel Caribbean geopoetics built on the history of destruction and uprooting, I consider practices of resistance and an aesthetic imaginary of resistance to the modern global project of order. This final chapter develops the turn from an account of spatial forms of domination in the Americas to possibilities of creative resistance and alternative modernities that are not simply condemned by violent histories. Glissant's archipelagic spatial model of the Caribbean is a network of relations offering an alternative vision of modernity, against the totalizing colonial rootstock that imposes one topos of space. Returning to Lugones's account of resistance alongside

Glissant, and the Zapatista Indigenous movement, I argue that the coloniality of space is never complete in its impulse to empty and order. There is an excessive, open, and irruptive landscape that these movements draw from.

In bringing Afro-Caribbean thought in dialogue with Indigenous, Latin American, and Latinx thought more generally, we find the tense meeting point between these histories and geographies to consider how the Afro-Caribbean and Latin America share entangled histories in the coloniality of space while also demonstrating unique forms of spatial domination and irreducibility between the Caribbean plantation and the urban ordering of Spanish American space. I turn to Glissant's notion of the irruptive and open landscape of the Caribbean islands with his invented term *irrué*. This notion serves as a hinge to think about what is excessive and not captured by the ordering impulse in the landscape of the Caribbean and the Americas.

Glissant's aesthetic, relational, and site-specific understanding of creation and thought furthers my global account of transmodernity, to draw on not only a pluriversal notion of reason but also creative practice more generally. I bring Glissant into dialogue with Dussel to further develop a spatially situated account of modernity articulated across a network of relations and locations. Dussel's account of transmodernity, affirming the reason of the other, is helpfully supplemented by Glissant's aesthetic view of reason and relation. Relation thought in terms of the affective, aesthetic, and imaginary, which does not exclusively privilege the rational, opens onto a richly decolonial vision of transmodernity. I turn also to the Zapatista Indigenous rebellion in Chiapas as an example of transmodern movement whose word has echoed across languages and soils and formed horizontal relations that point to another kind of spatial distribution of the world that fits many worlds, beyond the invention of order.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. See Portuondo, *Secret Science*.

2. See Portuondo, *Secret Science*, on sixteenth-century Spanish imperial science as "secret science."

3. Borges, "Exactitude," 325.

4. Borges, "Exactitude," 325.

5. Foucault, *Order of Things*.

6. Borges, "Analytical Language," 230. *A* means animal; *ab*, mammalian; *abo*, carnivorous; *aboj*, feline; *aboje*, cat; *abi*, herbivorous; *abiv*, equine; etc.

7. Borges is undoubtedly inspired by the project of a pan-language created by his friend and contemporary Xul Solar.

8. Borges, "Analytical Language," 231.

9. Foucault, *Order of Things*, xv; my emphasis.

10. Foucault does not read Borges's story in terms of the relationship between Europe and the Americas but instead takes up the relationship between the West and the East, and an "exotic" system of thought that is completely inaccessible to European thought. He refers to "our thought" and "our geography," which is broken up by this monstrous classificatory schema of the East.

11. This reading of Borges is one of the only places where Foucault uses the notion of heterotopias in his published writings. The more famous work on heterotopias and questions of spatiality, translated to English as "Of Other Spaces," was originally delivered as a lecture in 1967 and published without review by the author in 1984, shortly before his death. See Foucault, *Order of Things*, xviii. The link between the epistemological space of the heterotopia and the material space of power is one that I explore further in chapter 1. Here I would like to emphasize that this concept emerges in Foucault's thought in relation to Borges, a spatial Latin American thinker.

12. Foucault, *Order of Things*, xix.

13. Borges, "History of Eternity,"131. See also Bosteels, "Borges as Antiphilosopher."

14. For another description of this sense of the New World, see Castro, *Another Face of Empire*, 1–15.

15. See Wynter, "1492." See also Wynter, "How We Mistook the Map for the Territory."

16. See Davenport, "Bull *Inter Caetera*"; and Davenport, "Treaty Between Spain and Portugal."

17. On the notion of abyssal lines, see Santos, "Beyond Abyssal Thinking."

18. See Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, 1–22; and Dussel, *Invention of the Americas*, 12. In the latter text, Dussel describes the "invention" of the Americas as a "covering over" of the other rather than a simple ontological negation.

19. Castro-Gómez offers another reading of Dussel's invention of the other as material practice in "Social Sciences, Epistemic Violence."

20. In his seminal argument in "Coloniality of Power," Aníbal Quijano emphasizes that the emergence of global capitalism (and the coloniality of the modern world-system) was predicated on new practices of labor linked with hierarchical racial classification that were shaped in the colonial encounter with the Americas. On the coloniality of gender and the shaping of gendered spaces in coloniality, see Lugones, "Heterosexualism." For another account of the colonial history of gender, see Marcos, *Taken from the Lips*.

21. Walter Mignolo often claims that developing awareness of the linkage between modernity and coloniality is already a decolonial move. As he writes, "Modernity/coloniality is an imperial package that, of necessity, generates decolonial thinking and action." I take this to mean that one of the first steps of decolonial thought is to highlight the colonial history that is inseparable from modernity. The next step is the "affirmation of the periphery" and the historically excluded—giving voice to subaltern knowledges and modes of existence that have been destroyed or covered over by coloniality. See Mignolo, "Preamble," 17.

22. Santos, "Beyond Abyssal Thinking."

23. On this notion of empty space functioning as the condition of possibility to produce a new spatial infrastructure in the Americas, see also Nemser, *Infrastructures of Race*, 32.

24. Castro-Gómez, *El tonto y los canallas*, 17–42.

25. Wallerstein is himself not a theorist of coloniality but a major influence on Quijano and others with his world-systems theory. See Wallerstein, *Modern World-System I*. Both Dussel and Quijano were major proponents of the Marxist account of global power relations known as dependency theory in Latin America prior to their developments on coloniality. Quijano's major innovation from his earlier work on dependency was to add a robust account of race to account for the colonial nature of labor relations. My argument is not a fundamental departure from Quijano (or Dussel) but more a supplement: to say that we need to look at the local production of power relations and spatial ordering in order to account for global racial classification. Race is produced through local practices and its relay effects with global networks.

26. Castro-Gómez points to the meaning of "hierarchy" as sacralization of power, because it refers to a "sacred authority." His heterarchic account aims to work against sacralizing the power of coloniality by showing that it is not univocal. See Castro-Gómez, "Michel Foucault y la colonialidad," 171. For an English translation, see Castro-Gómez, "Foucault and Coloniality."

27. See Castro-Gómez, *El tonto y los canallas*, 17–48.

28. Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes*, 1–40, 53–64, 77–102, 207–37. See also Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*, for an account of strategies and tactics of space (abstracted space versus embodied spaces of lived experience), which Lugones complicates with her notion of tactical strategies.

29. See Rivera, *Andean Aesthetics*, 145–60; and Lugones's account of spatiality and resistance in *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes*, especially chap. 10, "Tactical-Strategies of the Streetwalker."

30. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A19/B33–A30/B46.

31. "Captivated by such a proof of the power of reason, the drive for expansion sees no bounds. The light dove, in free flight cutting through the air the resistance of which it feels, could get the idea that it could do even better in airless space." Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A5/B8.

32. In all these thinkers, modernity amounts to a concatenation of events that all take place in Europe. According to this view, modernity is the creation of liberal, individualistic, and industrious subjectivity, along with the capitalist and democratic forms of governance and society, and the triumph of reason over superstition. The crucial events cited by these thinkers are the Protestant Reformation, the scientific revolution, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and the Enlightenment. Colonialism and the constitution of the first world-system do not play a role in these accounts.

33. See Castro-Gómez, *La hybris del punto cero*, 21–65, for a spatial reading of Kant's "What Is Enlightenment?" and the question of "immaturity." See also Castro-Gómez, *Zero-Point Hubris*.

34. Lefebvre's 1974 book, *The Production of Space*, is a foundational text that puts the organization and production of space at the center of social theory and capitalist relations. His work influences many critical geographers to follow, most notably the Marxist geographer David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity*. See also Elden, *Birth of Territory*, for a genealogical approach to the history of the concept of territory drawing inspiration from the Foucauldian end of the spatial turn.

35. See Mignolo, *Darker Side of the Renaissance*, for an account of the relationship between the colonial shift in cartography and the Renaissance and early Spanish modernity. See Wynter, "1492," on the shift between habitable and uninhabitable space with Columbus's notion of *propter nos* (via *totum navigabile*) that will lead to the emergence of the first modern Rational state-centered image of the human as Man1. See Dussel, *Invention of the Americas*, on the emergence of Europe as global center in response to its conquest of the periphery as the "other" who is covered over.

36. Foucault, "Questions on Geography," 70.

37. In "Foucault and Coloniality," Castro-Gómez argues that we can find an articulation of the relationship between the global, regional, and local levels of power in Foucault's lecture courses from the late 1970s. In this sense, the notion of heterarchy is a concept already in Foucault that Castro-Gómez renders explicit in order to reframe the question of coloniality.

38. O'Gorman, *Invención de América*; Rama, *Lettered City*. There is also a robust tradition of critical cartography and geography within Latin American studies that is important for understanding the coloniality of space. In addition to Portuondo, *Secret Science*,

see Padrón, *Spacious Word*; Padrón, "Mapping Plus Ultra"; Craib, *Cartographic Mexico*; Mundy, *Mapping of New Spain*; Pinet, "Literature and Cartography in Early Modern Spain"; Fraser, *Architecture of Conquest*; Subirats, *El Continente vacío*; Safier, *Measuring the New World*; and Rojas-Mix, *La Plaza mayor*. For the cartographic turn more generally, see Harley, *New Nature of Maps*; Conley, "Early Modern Literature and Cartography"; and Woodward, "Rationalization of Geographic Space."

39. The *long sixteenth century* refers to the second half of the fifteenth century, roughly 1450, to the beginning of the seventeenth century, around 1640. See Wallerstein, *Modern World-System*, vol. 1. This time period captures what Enrique Dussel refers to as the first variant of modernity, prior to the Enlightenment and prior to Descartes. See Dussel, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity." Wallerstein's long-term periodization is inspired by Fernand Braudel's *longue durée* conception of spatial histories (geohistories). See Braudel, *La Mediterranée et le monde mediterranéen à l'epoque de Philippe II*.

1. ORDERS OF THE GRID

A portion of chapter 1, which has now been expanded and significantly revised, appeared as "Coloniality and Disciplinary Power: On Spatial Techniques of Ordering," in *Inter-American Journal of Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2019): 25–42.

Epigraph: Sarmiento, *Facundo o Civilización y barbarie*, 23; my translation.

1. Quoted in Kagan, "World Without Walls," 136. See also Tejeira-Davis, "Pedrarías Davila."

2. Defensive architecture did not disappear from all new towns built in the Americas. It would be especially present in the cities of the Caribbean such as San Juan or Havana where defense against corsairs, pirates, and attacks from competing empires made these places especially vulnerable. However, these cases are holdovers and exceptions to the overall process of emergence of a new technique of ordering space.

3. Kagan, "World Without Walls."

4. Foucault refers to these as heterotopias of compensation in one of his few explicit references to colonialism. "Of Other Spaces," 27.

5. Castro-Gómez, "Michel Foucault y la colonialidad."

6. In later chapters, I take up the spatialization of Blackness in early Spanish and Caribbean America through the plantation, the shoal, and the boat.

7. Nemser, *Infrastructures of Race*, 1–23. See also Mills, *Racial Contract*, "Details," 41–90, on the spatialization of race and the racialization of space, especially with respect to the construction of white supremacy as the predominant modern political technique of power.

8. For a review of geographic literature on the grid through the lens of genealogical history, see Rose-Redwood, "Genealogies of the Grid."

9. There are various arguments about the influences and origins of the grid-pattern town and, especially, its extensive deployment in the Americas. Dan Stanislawski, in "Origin and Spread," famously argues that the grid was born in the ancient town of Mohenjo Daro in the ancient Indus civilization and diffused throughout history from there. Others emphasize the Roman Empire and Vitruvius's writings on architecture as