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Beyond the Third World: imperial globality, global coloniality and anti-globalisation social movements

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ABSTRACT *The increasing realisation that there are modern problems for which there are no modern solutions points towards the need to move beyond the paradigm of modernity and, hence, beyond the Third World. Imagining after the Third World takes place against the backdrop of two major processes: first, the rise of a new US-based form of imperial globality, an economic–military–ideological order that subordinates regions, peoples and economies world-wide. Imperial globality has its underside in what could be called, following a group of Latin American researchers, global coloniality, meaning by this the heightened marginalisation and suppression of the knowledge and culture of subaltern groups. The second social process is the emergence of self-organising social movement networks, which operate under a new logic, fostering forms of counter-hegemonic globalisation. It is argued that, to the extent that they engage with the politics of difference, particularly through place-based yet transnationalised political strategies, these movements represent the best hope for reworking imperial globality and global coloniality in ways that make imagining after the Third World, and beyond modernity, a viable project.*

'After the Third World' signals both the end of an era and way of thinking and the birth of new challenges, dreams and real possibilities; both observations, however, can be hotly contested. On the one hand, what has really ended? Assuming that the historical horizon that has finally come to a close is that of anti-colonial nationalist struggles in the Third World, how about the other, perhaps less intractable, aspects of the spirit of Bandung and Third Worldism? For instance, how about the tremendous international solidarity that this spirit elicited among exploited peoples? How about its passionate call for justice, or its eloquent demand for a new international economic order? And is the centrality of the political on which that spirit was based also a thing of the past? Are all of these features ineluctably left behind by the steamroller of modern capitalist history? I believe the articles in this special issue of *Third World Quarterly* demonstrate that they are not, even if they are in dire need of rearticulation. To begin with, many of the conditions that gave rise to Third Worldism have by no means disappeared. Today the world is confronted with a

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capitalist system—a global empire led by the USA—that seems more inhumane than ever; the power of this empire makes the ardent clamouring for justice of the Bandung leaders appear timid to us today. Even more, the inhumanity of the US-led empire continues to be most patently visible in what until recently was called the Third World. So it can be argued that the need for international solidarity is greater than ever before, albeit in new ways. Equally great is the indubitable necessity of resisting a now global market-determined economy that commands, in more irrefutable tone than in the past, the world to be organised for exploitation and that nothing else will do.

On the other hand, if the end the Third World signals something new, there is little agreement about this newness and the theoretical and political needs that it demands. For some an entirely new paradigm is not only needed but already on the rise. Others speak of the need for a new horizon of meaning for political struggle after the ebbing of the dream of national sovereignty through popular revolution. Still others caution that, since most alternative visions of the recent past—from national liberation to socialism—operated within a modernist frame-work, then the paradigms of the future have to steer carefully away from modern concepts. As the saying goes, easier said than done. The fact is that there are many good analyses of, and ideas about, the contemporary impasse, but they do not seem to coalesce or converge into shared proposals or neat formulations, let alone clear courses of political action that might capture the collective imagin-ation. In this regard our Bandung forefathers fared much better—their wide appeal being of course a problem in itself for many, given the questionable practices that sustained it. David Scott put it bluntly, and constructively, by saying that today's global situation ushers in a new problem-space to which neither Third Worldism nor the ensuing (1980s–90s) postcolonial criticism provide good answers. What is needed, he says, is 'a new conceptualisation of postcolonial politics' that is able to imagine 'joining the radical political tradition of Bandung ... to an ethos of agonistic respect for pluralizations of subaltern difference'.[1]

Scott's conclusion finds resonance, to a greater or lesser extent, in a number of recent theoretical–political proposals, such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos' 'oppositional postmodernism',[2] the calls for new anti-capitalist imaginaries by long-time critics of capitalism such as Aníbal Quijano[3] and Samir Amin,[4] and the emphasis on non-Eurocentric perspectives on globality by the Latin Ameri-can modernity/coloniality research group, to be discussed at some length in this paper. The notion of subaltern difference as an important source for new paradigms also resonates constructively with those who call for place-based epistemologies, economies and ecologies,[5] and those who see in anti-globalisation or global justice movements a new theoretical and political logic on the rise. A number of observers, finally, find in the World Social Forum movement, despite the many criticisms, an expression and enactment of this new paradigm, political vision, anti-capitalist imaginary, or what have you, even if their contours are still barely discernible at present.[6]

This article weaves some of these insights into an argument that focuses on the limits of imagining 'after the Third World' within the order of knowledge and politics that gave us the third world notion and its associated social

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formations in the first place. Mark Berger (this issue) is right in saying that the conditions that saw the emergence of anti-colonial nationalisms at the dawn of Third Worldism have been superseded, and that their favoured tropes (romantic views of pre-colonial traditions, Marxist utopianism, and Western notions of modernisation and development) thus have to be discarded. The question then becomes: what languages and visions will be appropriate to today's problem-space of capitalist hegemony and counter-hegemonic struggles? What might be the role, if any, of what used to be called 'traditions' in this regard? Can new forms of utopianism be invented? What should be the contribution of Western modernity to this endeavour? Conversely, at what point should we attempt to move beyond it? I shall attempt to demonstrate that in the languages of subaltern difference, critical utopianism and a re-intrepreted modernity (one in which modernity is not only 'reduced to size' but re-contextualised to allow for other cultural formations to become visible) we might be able to find a novel theoretical framework for imagining 'after the Third World' in ways that at least re-work some of the modernist traps of the past.

The argument to be made in this regard has three parts, developed in subsequent parts of the article.

First, modernity's ability to provide solutions to modern problems has been increasingly compromised. In fact, it can be argued that there are no modern solutions to many of today's problems.[7] This is clearly the case, for instance, with massive displacement and ecological destruction, but also with develop-ment's inability to fulfil its promise of a minimum of well-being for the world's people. At the basis of this modern incapacity lie both a hyper-technification of rationality and a hyper-marketisation of social life—what Santos refers to as the increasing incongruence of the functions of social emancipation and social regulation.[8] The result is an oppressive globality in which manifold forms of violence increasingly take on the function of regulation of peoples and econom-ies. This feature has become central to the neoliberal approach of the American empire (even more so after the March 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq). This modernist attempt at combating the symptoms but not the cause of the social, political and ecological crises of the times results in multiple 'cruel little wars' in which the control of territories, people and resources is at stake.[9] Regimes of selective inclusion and hyper-exclusion—of heightened poverty for the many and skyrocketing wealth for the few—operating through spatial–military logics, create a situation of widespread social fascism. The ever widening territories and peoples subjected to precarious living conditions under social fascism suggest the continued validity of a certain notion of a Third World, although not reducible to strict geographical parameters. In short, the modern crisis is a crisis in models of thought; modern solutions, at least under neoliberal globalisation (NLG), only deepen the problems. Moving beyond or outside modernity thus becomes a *sine qua non* for imagining after the Third World.

Second, if we accept that what is at stake is the recognition that there are no modern solutions to many of today's modern problems, where are we to look for new insights? At this level it becomes crucial to question the widely held idea that modernity is now a universal and inescapable force, that globalisation entails

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the radicalisation of modernity, and that from now on it is modernity all the way down. One fruitful way to think past this commonly held idea is to question the interpretation of modernity as an intra-European phenomenon. This re-interpretation makes visible modernity's underside, that is, those subaltern knowledges and cultural practices world-wide that modernity itself shunned, suppressed made invisible and disqualified. Understood as 'coloniality', this other side has existed side by side with modernity since the conquest of America; it is this same coloniality of being, knowledge and power that today's US-led empire attempts to silence and contain; the same coloniality that asserts itself at the borders of the modern/colonial world system, and from which subaltern groups attempt to reconstitute place-based imaginaries and local worlds. From this perspective, coloniality is constitutive of modernity, and the 'Third World' is part of its classificatory logic. Today, a new global articulation of coloniality is rendering the Third World obsolete, and new classifications are bound to emerge in a world no longer predicated on the existence of three worlds.

Third, this analysis suggests the need to move from the sociology of absences of subaltern knowledges to a politics of emergence of social movements; this requires examining contemporary social movements from the perspective of colonial difference. At their best, today's movements, particularly anti-globalisation and global justice movements, enact a novel logic of the social, based on self-organising meshworks and largely non-hierarchical structures. They tend to show emergent properties and complex adaptive behaviour that movements of the past, with their penchant for centralisation and hierarchy, were never able to manifest. This logic is partly strengthened by the self-organising dynamics of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs), resulting in what could be called 'subaltern intelligent communities'. Situated on the oppositional side of the modern/colonial border zones, these communities enact practices of social, economic and ecological difference that are useful for thinking about alternative local and regional worlds, and so for imagining after the Third World.

The failures of modernity and the rise of imperial globality

What I am trying to argue is that to imagine beyond the Third World we also need to imagine beyond modernity in some fashion. I will begin by discussing the dominant tendencies in the study of modernity from what we can call 'intra-modern perspectives' before moving on to provide the building blocks of an alternative framework. I am very much aware that the view of modernity presented below is terribly partial and contestable. I present it only in order to highlight the stark difference entailed by the few frameworks that seek to go beyond it. In the last instance, the goal of this brief excursus is political. If, as most intra-modern discussions suggest, globalisation entails the universalisation and radicalisation of modernity, then what are we left with? Does radical alterity become impossible? More generally, what is happening to development and modernity in times of globalisation? Is modernity finally becoming univer-salised, or is it being left behind? The question is the more poignant because it

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can be argued that the present is a moment of transition: between a world defined in terms of modernity and its corollaries, development and modernisation, and the certainty they instilled—a world that has operated largely under European hegemony over the past 200 years if not more; and a new (global) reality which is still difficult to ascertain but which, at opposite ends, can be seen either as a deepening of modernity the world over or, on the contrary, as a deeply negotiated reality that encompasses many heterogeneous cultural formations—and, of course, the many shades in between. This sense of a transition is well captured by the question: is globalisation the last stage of capitalist modernity, or the beginning of something new? As we shall see, intra-European and non-Eurocentric perspectives give a very different answer to this set of questions.

Globalisation as the radicalisation of modernity: an intra-modern view of modernity

The idea of a relatively single globalisation process emanating out of a few dominant centres remains prevalent. The root of this idea lies in a view of modernity as essentially an European phenomenon. From this perspective, modernity is characterised as follows. Historically, modernity has identifiable temporal and spatial origins: 17th century northern Europe, around the processes of Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. These processes crystallised at the end of the 18th century and became consolidated with the Industrial Revolution. Sociologically, modernity is characterised by certain institutions, particularly the nation-state, and by some basic features, such as self-reflexivity, the disembedding of social life from local context, and space/time distantiation, since relations between 'absent others' become more important than face-to-face interaction.[10] Culturally, modernity is characterised in terms of the increasing appropriation of previously taken-for-granted cultural backgrounds by forms of expert knowledge linked to capital and state administrative apparatuses—what Habermas describes as the increasing rationalisation of the life-world.[11] Philosophically, modernity entailed the emergence of the notion of 'Man' as the foundation of all knowledge about the world, separate from the natural and the divine.[12] Modernity is also seen in terms of the triumph of metaphysics, understood as a tendency—extending from Plato and some of the pre-Socratics to Descartes and the modern thinkers, and criticised by Nietzsche and Heidegger among others—that finds in logical truth the foundation for a rational theory of the world as made up of knowable and controllable things and beings. Vattimo emphasises the logic of development—the belief in perpetual betterment and overcoming—as crucial to the philosophical foundations of the modern order.[13]

Is there a logical necessity to believe that the order so sketchily characterised above is the only one capable of becoming global? For most theorists, on all sides of the political spectrum, this is exactly the case. Giddens has made the argument most forcefully: globalisation entails the radicalisation and universalisation of modernity. No longer purely an affair of the West, however, since modernity is everywhere, the triumph of the modern lies precisely in its having become universal. This may be called 'the Giddens effect': *from now on, it is*

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modernity all the way down, everywhere, until the end of time. Not only is radical alterity expelled forever from the realm of possibilities, all world cultures and societies are reduced to being a manifestation of European culture. No matter how variously qualified, a 'global modernity' is here to stay.[14] Recent anthropological investigations of 'modernity at large'[15] have shown modernity to be de-territorialised, hybridised, contested, uneven, heterogeneous, even multiple, or in terms of conversing with, engaging, playing with, or processing modernity. Nevertheless, in the last instance these modernities end up being a reflection of a Eurocentred social order, even if under the assumption that modernity is now everywhere, a ubiquitous and ineluctable social fact.[16] This inability to go beyond modernity is puzzling and needs to be questioned as part of any effort to imagine beyond the Third World.

Beyond modernity: oppositional postmodernism

Boaventura de Sousa Santos has forcefully made the argument that we are moving beyond the paradigm of modernity in two senses: epistemologically, and socio-politically. Epistemologically this move entails a transition from the dominance of modern science to a plural landscape of knowledge forms. Socially, the transition is between global capitalism and emergent forms of which we only have glimpses in today's social movements and in events such as the World Social Forum. The crux of this transition, in Santos' rigorous conceptualisation, is an untenable tension between modernity's core functions of social regulation and social emancipation, in turn related to the growing imbalance between expectations and experience. Intended to guarantee order in society, social regulation is the set of norms, institutions and practices through which expectations are stabilised; it is based on the principles of state, market and community. Social emancipation challenges the order created by regulation in the name of a different ordering; to this end, it has recourse to aesthetic, cognitive–scientific and ethical rationalities. These two tendencies have become increasingly contradictory, resulting in ever more noticeable excesses and deficits, particularly with neoliberal globalisation. The management of these contradictions—chiefly at the hands of science and law—is itself in crisis. The result has been the hyper-scientificisation of emancipation (all claims to a better society have to be filtered through the rationality of science), and the hyper-marketisation of regulation (modern regulation is ceded to the market; to be free is to accept market regulation) and, indeed, a collapse of emancipation into regulation. Hence the need for a paradigmatic transition that enables us to think anew about the problematic of regulation and social emancipation, with the ultimate goal of de-Westernising social emancipation. To this end, a new approach to social theory, 'oppositional postmodernism', is called for:

> The conditions that brought about the crisis of modernity have not yet become the conditions to overcome the crisis beyond modernity. Hence the complexity of our transitional period portrayed by oppositional postmodern theory: we are facing modern problems for which there are no modern solutions. The search for a postmodern solution is what I call oppositional postmodernism ... What is necessary is to start from the disjunction between the modernity of the problems and the

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> postmodernity of the possible solutions, and to turn such disjunction into the urge to ground theories and practices capable of reinventing social emancipation out of the wrecked emancipatory promises of modernity.[17]

Santos thus points at another paradigm, distinct from modernity, even if still not fully visible, that makes imagining beyond modernity plausible. His reading of modernity builds on various readings of capitalism, distinguishing between those that posit an end to capitalism, even if in the very long run,[18] and which thus advocate transformative practices, and those that conceive of the future as so many metamorphoses of capitalism, and which favour adaptive strategies within capitalism.[19] For this latter group one may say that globalisation is the last stage of capitalist modernity; for the former, globalisation is the beginning of something new. As we shall see shortly, the Latin American modernity/coloniality perspective would suggest that transformative practices are taking place now, and need to be socially amplified.

The new face of global empire and the growth of social fascism

One of the main consequences, for Santos, of the collapse of emancipation into regulation is the structural predominance of exclusion over inclusion. Either because of the exclusion of many of those formerly included, or because those who in the past were candidates for inclusion are now prevented from being so, the problematic of exclusion has become terribly accentuated, with ever growing numbers of people thrown into a veritable 'state of nature'. The size of the excluded class varies of course with the centrality of the country in the world system, but it is particularly staggering in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The result is a new type of social fascism as 'a social and civilizational regime'.[20] This regime, paradoxically, coexists with democratic societies, hence its novelty. This fascism may operate in various modes: in terms of spatial exclusion; territories struggled over by armed actors; the fascism of insecurity; and of course the deadly financial fascism, which at times dictates the marginalisation of entire regions and countries that do not fulfil the conditions needed for capital, according to the IMF and its faithful management consultants.[21] To the former Third World correspond the highest levels of social fascism of these kinds. This is, in sum, the world that is being created by globalisation from above, or hegemonic globalisation.

Before moving on, it is important to complete this rough representation of today's global capitalist modernity by looking at the US-led invasion of Iraq in early 2003. Among other things, this episode has at last made two things particularly clear: first, the willingness to use unprecedented levels of violence to enforce dominance on a global scale; second, the unipolarity of the current empire. In ascension since the Thatcher–Reagan years, this unipolarity reached its climax with the post-11 September regime, based on a new convergence of military, economic, political and religious interests in the USA. In Alain Joxe's compelling vision of imperial globality, what we have been witnessing since the first Gulf war is the rise of an empire that increasingly operates through the management of asymmetrical and spatialised violence, territorial control, sub-

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contracted massacres, and 'cruel little wars', all of which are aimed at imposing the neoliberal capitalist project. At stake is a type of regulation that operates through the creation of a new horizon of global violence. This empire regulates disorder through financial and military means, pushing chaos to the extent possible to the outskirts of empire, creating a 'predatory' peace to the benefit of a global noble caste and leaving untold poverty and suffering in its path. It is an empire that does not take responsibility for the well-being of those over whom it rules. As Joxe puts it:

> The world today is united by a new form of chaos, an imperial chaos, dominated by the *imperium* of the United States, though not controlled by it. We lack the words to describe this new system, while being surrounded by its images ... World leadership through chaos, a doctrine that a rational European school would have difficulty imagining, necessarily leads to weakening states—even in the United States—through the emerging *sovereignty* of corporations and markets.[22]

The new empire thus operates not so much through conquest, but through the imposition of norms (free-markets, US-style democracy and cultural notions of consumption, and so forth). The former Third World is, above all, the theatre of a multiplicity of cruel little wars which, rather than being barbaric throwbacks, are linked to the current global logic. From Colombia and Central America to Algeria, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East these wars take place within states or regions, without threatening empire but fostering conditions favourable to it. For much of the former Third World (and of course for the Third World within the core) is reserved 'the World-chaos', free-market slavery, and selective genocide.[23] In some cases this amounts to a sort of 'paleo-micro-colonialism' within regions,[24] in others to balkanisation, in yet others to brutal internal wars and massive displacement to free up entire regions for transnational capital (particularly in the case of oil, but also diamonds, timber, water, genetic resources, and agricultural lands). Often these cruel little wars are fuelled by mafia networks, and intended for macroeconomic globalisation. It is clear that this new Global Empire ('the New World Order of the American imperial monarchy')[25] articulates the 'peaceful expansion' of the free-market economy with omnipresent violence in a novel regime of economic and military global-ity—in other words, the global economy comes to be supported by a global organisation of violence and vice versa.[26] On the subjective side, what one increasingly finds in the Souths (including the South within the North) are 'diced identities' and the transformation of cultures of solidarity into cultures of destruction.

The Colombian case: modernity, development and the logic of displacement

Colombia exemplifies Joxe's vision, and in this way I believe Colombia prefigures situations that could become more common world-wide. Despite the complexity of the situation, it is possible to make a few general observations: First, this country represents patterns of historical exclusion found in many parts of Latin America but rarely with such depth. Colombia today has the second most skewed income distribution, after Brazil. While this has been aggravated

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over the past 20 years by successive neoliberal regimes, it has a long historical base, particularly in the structure of land tenure. Today, 1.1% of landowners control over 55% of all arable land (and as much as one-third of this may well be linked to drug money). Over 60% of the Colombian population live on incomes below the poverty line; 25% live in absolute poverty, that is, they earn less than one dollar a day. Rural poverty is 80%, and urban poverty has also reached high levels, with at least two consequences of particular relevance here: the creation of vast neighbourhoods of absolute poverty, with very limited or no state presence, which are largely ruled by local laws, including pervasive violence; and the emergence of a new group of people, locally known as *desechables*, or disposable ones, who are often the target of 'social cleansing' by death squads linked to the right. Since the 1980s in particular drug mafias have achieved tremendous presence at all levels of society, encouraged by a very lucrative international business. The armed conflict that presently affects Colombia is well known. It brings together a disparate set of actors—chiefly left-wing guerrillas, the army and right-wing paramilitary groups—into a complex military, territorial and political conflict, which I do not intend to analyse here.[27] Suffice it to say that, from the perspective of imperial globality, these can all be seen as war machines more interested in their own survival and sphere of influence than in peaceful solutions to the conflict. Massacres and human rights abuses are the order of the day, primarily by paramilitaries but also by guerrillas, and the civilian population is most often brought into the conflict as unwilling participants or sacrificial victims. Increasingly, guerrillas have been unwilling to recognise and respect the autonomous needs and strategies of other struggles, such as those of black and indigenous peoples and environmentalists.

The sub-national dynamics of imperial globality is pathetically illustrated by the experience of Colombia's Pacific region. This rainforest area, rich in natural resources, has been home to about one million people, 95% of them Afro-Colombian, with about 50 000 indigenous peoples of various ethnicities. In 1991 a new Constitution granted collective territorial rights to the black communities. Since the mid-1990s, however, guerrillas and paramilitaries have been steadily moving into the region, in order to gain control of territories that are either rich in natural resources or the site of planned large-scale development projects. In many river communities both guerrillas and paramilitaries have pushed people to plant coca or move out. Displacement has reached staggering levels, with several hundred thousand people displaced from this region alone. In the southernmost area this displacement has been caused in large part by paramilitaries paid by rich African oil palm growers, intent on expanding their holdings and increasing their production for world markets. This is being done in the name of development, with resources provided by Plan Colombia.[28]

It is little known that Colombia today has about three million internally displaced people, constituting one of the largest refugee crisis in the world. Over 400 000 people were internally displaced in 2002 alone. A disproportionate percentage of the displaced are Afro-Colombians and indigenous people, which makes patently clear a little discussed aspect of imperial globality, namely, its racial and ethnic dimension. One aspect of this is of course that, as in the case of the Pacific, ethnic minorities often inhabit territories rich in natural resources

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that are now coveted by national and transnational capital. Beyond this more empirical observation, however, lies the fact that imperial globality is also about the defence of white privilege world-wide. By white privilege here I mean, not so much phenotypically white, but a Eurocentric way of life that has historically privileged white people at the expense of non-European and coloured peoples world-wide—and particularly since the 1950s those around the world who abide by this outlook. As we will see, this dimension of imperial globality is better drawn out through the concept of global coloniality.

The case of Colombia and of its Pacific region thus reflects key tendencies of imperial globality and global coloniality. The first tendency is the link between the economy and armed violence, particularly the still prominent role of national and sub-national wars over territory, peoples and resources. These wars contribute to the spread of social fascism, defined as a combination of social and political exclusion whereby increasingly large segments of the population live under terrible material conditions and often under the threat of displacement and even death. In Colombia the government response has been to step up military repression, surveillance and paramilitarisation within a conception of 'democratic security' that mirrors the US global strategy as seen in the Iraqi case: democracy by force, and without the right to dissent—a deterrence against the people. Social fascism and political fascism (networks of paid informers, suppression of rights) are joined in this strategy to maintain a pattern of capital accumulation that benefits an increasingly narrow segment of the world population.

Second, Colombia also shows that, despite what could be seen as excellent conditions for a peaceful society and capitalist democracy (eg very rich natural endowments and a large and highly trained professional class), what has happened is the opposite. This has been so in part because the local war is, at least partially, a surrogate for global (especially US) interests, in part because of a particularly rapacious national elite that refuses to entertain a more significant democracy, and in part also because of war orientations (including drug mafias) that have taken on a self-perpetuating dynamic. Finally, and more importantly for our argument, the Colombian case makes patently clear the exhaustion of modern models. Development and modernity, to be sure, were always inherently displacement-creating processes. Yet what has become evident with the excesses of imperial globality is that the gap between modernity's displacement-producing tendencies and displacement-averting mechanisms is not only growing but becoming untenable—that is, unmanageable within a modern framework.[29] In short, while there are socioeconomic and political features that could still make talking about a third world legitimate (poverty, exclusion, oppression, uneven development, of course imperialism, and so forth), they have to be rearticulated in ways that make not talking about a third world, but imagining after the Third World, more appropriate. This articulation must preserve those social conditions that made talk of the Third World necessary in an earlier period. But they have to be brought up to date through concepts that are more attuned to the problem-space of today. So far we have discussed some of these concepts, particularly imperial globality and social fascism. We also started the discussion of what thinking beyond modernity might mean. It is time to develop this idea

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more fully by introducing the Latin American modernity/coloniality research programme.

Beyond modernity: subalternity and the problematic of coloniality

The seeming triumph of Eurocentred modernity can be seen as the imposition of a global design by a particular local history, in such a way that it has subalternised other local histories and designs. If this is the case, could one posit the hypothesis that radical alternatives to modernity are not a historically foreclosed possibility? If so, how can we articulate a project around this notion? Could it be that it is possible to think about, and to think differently from, an 'exteriority' to the modern world system? That one may envision alternatives to the totality imputed to modernity, and adumbrate not a different totality leading to different global designs, but networks of local/global histories constructed from the perspective of a politically enriched alterity? This is precisely the possibility that may be gleaned from the work of a group of Latin American theorists who, in refracting modernity through the lens of coloniality, engage in a questioning of the character of modernity, thus unfreezing the potential for thinking from difference and towards the constitution of alternative worlds. In what follows, I present succinctly some of the main arguments of these works.[30]

The conceptualisation of modernity/coloniality is grounded in a series of operations that distinguish it from established theories. These include: 1) locating the origins of modernity with the conquest of America and the control of the Atlantic after 1492, rather than in the most commonly accepted landmarks such as the Enlightenment or the end of the 18th century; 2) attention to colonialism, postcolonialism and imperialism as constitutive of modernity; 3) the adoption of a world perspective in the explanation of modernity, in lieu of a view of modernity as an intra-European phenomenon; 4) the identification of the domination of others outside the European core as a necessary dimension of modernity; 5) a conception of eurocentrism as the knowledge form of modernity/coloniality—a hegemonic representation and mode of knowing that claims universality for itself, 'derived from Europe's position as center'.[31] In sum, there is a re-reading of the 'myth of modernity' in terms of modernity's 'underside' and a new denunciation of the assumption that Europe's development must be followed unilaterally by every other culture, by force if necessary—what Dussel terms 'the developmentalist fallacy'.[32] The main conclusions are, first, that the proper analytical unit of analysis is modernity/coloniality—in sum, there is no modernity without coloniality, with the latter being constitutive of the former. Second, the fact that 'the colonial difference' is a privileged epistemological and political space. In other words, what emerges from this alternative framework is the need to take seriously the epistemic force of local histories and to think theory through the political praxis of subaltern groups.

Some of the key notions that make up the conceptual corpus of this research programme include:

* the modern colonial world system as a structurally heterogeneous ensemble of

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processes and social formations that encompass modern colonialism and colonial modernities;
- coloniality of power (Quijano), a global hegemonic model of power in place since the conquest that articulates race and labour, space and peoples, according to the needs of capital and to the benefit of white European peoples;
- colonial difference and global coloniality (Mignolo) which refer to the knowledge and cultural dimensions of the subalternisation processes effected by the coloniality of power: the colonial difference brings to the fore persistent cultural differences, which today exist within global power structures;
- coloniality of being (more recently suggested by Nelson Maldonado-Torres[33]) as the ontological dimension of colonialty, on both sides of the encounter; it points to the 'ontological excess' that occurs when particular beings impose on others and also critically addresses the effectiveness of the discourses with which the other responds to the suppression as a result of the encounter.
- Eurocentrism, as the knowledge model of the European historical experience which has become globally hegemonic since the 17th century (Dussel, Quijano), hence the possibility of non-Eurocentric thinking and epistemologies.

Here is a further, and enlightening, characterisation of coloniality by Walter Mignolo:

> Since modernity is a project, the triumphal project of the Christian and secular west, coloniality is—on the one hand—what the project of modernity needs to rule out and roll over, in order to implant itself as modernity and—on the other hand—the site of enunciation where the blindness of the modern project is revealed, and concomitantly also the site where new projects begin to unfold. In other words, coloniality is the site of enunciation that reveals and denounces the blindness of the narrative of modernity from the perspective of modernity itself, and it is at the same time the platform of pluri-versality, of diverse projects coming from the experience of local histories touched by western expansion (as the Word Social Forum demonstrates); thus coloniality is not a new abstract universal (Marxism is imbedded in modernity, good but shortsighted), but the place where diversality as a universal project can be thought out; where the question of languages and knoweldges becomes crucial (Arabic, Chinese, Aymara, Bengali, etc) as the site of the pluriversal—that is, the 'traditional' that the 'modern' is rolling over and ruling out.[34]

The question of whether there is an 'exteriority' to the modern/colonial world system is somewhat peculiar to this group, and easily misunderstood. It was originally proposed by Dussel in his classic work on liberation philosophy,[35] and reworked in recent years. In no way should this exteriority be thought about as a pure outside, untouched by the modern; it refers to an outside that is precisely constituted as difference by hegemonic discourse. By appealing from the exteriority in which s/he is located, the Other becomes the original source of an ethical discourse *vis à vis* a hegemonic totality. This interpellation of the Other comes from beyond the system's institutional and normative frame, as an ethical challenge. This is precisely what most European and Euro-American theorists

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seem unwilling to consider; both Mignolo and Dussel see here a strict limit to deconstruction and to the various Eurocentered critiques of Eurocentrism.

Dussel's notion of 'transmodernity' signals this possibility of a non-Eurocentric dialogue with alterity, one that fully enables 'the negation of the negation' to which the subaltern others have been subjected. Mignolo's notions of 'border thinking' and 'pluritopic hermeneutics' are important in this regard. They point to the need 'for a kind of thinking that moves along the diversity of historical processes',[36] and which 'engages the colonialism of Western episte-mology (from the left and from the right) from the perspective of epistemic forces that have been turned into subaltern (traditional, folkloric, religious, emotional, etc) forms of knowledge'.[37] While Mignolo acknowledges the contin-ued importance of the monotopic critique of modernity by Western critical discourse (critique from a single, unified space), he suggests that this has to be placed in a dialogue with critique(s) arising from the colonial difference. The result is a 'pluritopic hermeneutics', a possibility of thinking from different spaces which finally breaks away from Eurocentrism as sole epistemological perspective.[38] Let it be clear, however, that border thinking entails both 'dis-placement and departure',[39] double critique (critique of both the West and other traditions from which the critique is launched), and the positive affirmation of an alternative ordering of the real.

The corollary is the need to build narratives from the perspective of modernity/coloniality 'geared towards the search for a different logic'.[40] This project has to do with the rearticulation of global designs from local histories; with the articulation between subaltern and hegemonic knowledge from the perspective of the subaltern; and with the remapping of colonial difference towards a worldly culture—such as in the Zapatista project, that remaps Marxism, Third Worldism and indigenism, without being either of them, in an excellent example of border thinking. Thus, it becomes possible to think of 'other local histories producing either alternative totalities or an alternative to totality'.[41] These alternatives would not play on the 'globalisation/civilisation' couplet inherent to modernity/coloniality; they would rather build on a '*mundi-alización*/culture' (MC) relation centred on the local histories in which colonial global designs are necessarily transformed. The diversity of *mundialización* is contrasted with the homogeneity of globalisation, aiming at multiple and diverse social orders—in sum, pluriversality. One may say, with Mignolo, that this approach 'is certainly a theory *from/of* the Third World, *but not only for the Third World* ... Third World theorizing is also *for* the First World in the sense that critical theory is subsumed and incorporated in a new geocultural and epistemological location.'[42]

Some partial conclusions: coloniality incorporates colonialism and imperial-ism but goes beyond them; this is why coloniality did not end with the end of colonialism (formal independence of nation states), but was rearticulated in terms of the post-World War II imaginary of three worlds (which in turn replaced the previous articulations in terms of Occidentalism and Orientalism). Similarly, the 'end of the Third World' entails a rearticulation of the coloniality of power and knowledge. As we have seen, this rearticulation takes the form of both imperial globality (new global link between economic and military power)

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and global coloniality (the emergent classificatory orders and forms of alterisa-
tion that are replacing the cold war order). The new coloniality regime is still
difficult to discern. Race, class and ethnicity will continue to be important, but
new, or newly prominent, areas of articulation come into existence, such as
religion (and gender linked to it, especially in the case of Islamic societies, as
we saw in the war on Afghanistan). However, the single most prominent vehicle
of coloniality today seems to be the ambiguously drawn figure of the 'terrorist'.
Linked most forcefully to the Middle East, and thus to the immediate US oil and
strategic interests in the region (*vis à vis* the European Union and Russia, on the
one hand, and China and India in particular on the other, as the most formidable
potential challengers), the imaginary of the terrorist can have a wide field of
application (it has already been applied to Basque militants and Colombian
guerrillas, for instance). Indeed, after 11 September, we are all potential
terrorists, unless we are American, white, conservative Christian, and Republi-
can—in actuality or epistemically (that is, in mindset).

   This means that, in seeking to overcome the myth of modernity, it is necessary
to abandon the notion of the Third World as a particular articulation of that
myth. Similarly, the problematic of social emancipation needs to be refracted
through the lens of coloniality. Emancipation, as mentioned, needs to be
de-Westernised (as does the economy). If social fascism has become a perma-
nent condition of imperial globality, emancipation has to deal with global
coloniality. This means conceiving it from the perspective of the colonial
difference. What does emancipation—or liberation, the preferred language of
some of the MC authors—mean when seen through the lens of coloniality, that
is, beyond exclusion defined in social, economic and political terms? Finally, if
not the Third World, what? 'Worlds and knowledges otherwise', based on the
politics of difference from the perspective of the coloniality of power, as we
shall see in the final section.[43]

Other worlds are possible: social movements, place-based politics, and global coloniality

'World and knowledges otherwise' brings to the fore the double aspect of the
effort at stake: to build on the politics of the colonial difference, particularly at
the level of knowledge and culture, and to imagine and construct actual different
worlds. As the slogan of the Porto Alegre World Social Forum puts it, 'another
world is possible'. At stake in thinking beyond the Third World is the ability to
imagine both 'other worlds' and 'worlds otherwise'—that is, worlds that are
more just and sustainable and, at the same time, worlds that are defined through
principles other than those of Eurocentric modernity. To do this, at least two
considerations are crucial: what are the sites where ideas for these alternative
and dissenting imaginations will come from? Second, how are the dissenting
imaginations to be set into motion? I suggest that one possible, and perhaps
privileged, way in which these two questions can be answered is by focusing on
the politics of difference enacted by many contemporary social movements,
particularly those that more directly and simultaneously engage with imperial
globality and global colonialty.

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The reasons for this belief are relatively simple. First, as understood here, 'difference' is not an essentialist trait of cultures not yet conquered by modernity, but rather the very articulation of global forms of power with place-based worlds. In other words, there are practices of difference that remain in the exteriority (again, not outside) of the modern/colonial world system, incompletely conquered and transformed, if you wish, and also produced partly through long-standing place-based logics that are irreducible to capital and imperial globality. I suggest that we think of this difference in terms of practices of cultural, economic and ecological difference, corresponding to the process of cultural, economic and ecological conquest by imperial globality (as we saw for the case of the Colombian Pacific). Second, many of today's social movements not only build on these practices of difference, they also enact a different logic of politics and collective mobilisation. This logic has two related dimensions; first, these movements often entail the production of self-organising, non-hierarchical networks. Second, in many cases they enact a politics of place that contrasts with the grandiose politics of 'the Revolution' and with conceptions of anti-imperial politics that require that empire be confronted in its totality.[44] In other words, I would like to think that these movements suggest novelty at two levels: at the level of the organising logic itself (self-organisation and complexity); and at the level of the social basis of mobilisation (place-based yet engaging with transnational networks). Let me explain briefly these two dimensions before making some concluding remarks about the concept of the Third World.

The novel logic of anti-globalisation social movements

When confronted with new social phenomena, such as these recent movements, social theorists do well to ask themselves whether we have the appropriate tools for analysing them. In the case of anti-globalisation movements (AGMs), it has become increasingly clear that existing theories of social movements are at pains to explain the global mobilisations of recent years.[45] The search for new theories and metaphors, however, has begun in earnest. In beginning the arduous task of understanding today's AGMs, I have found particularly useful theories of complexity in the natural sciences (and, to a lesser extent, theories of cyberspace). I will introduce here only the bare minimum elements necessary to make the point about why these movements—provisionally interpreted through the theoretical lens of self-organisation—offer perhaps our best hope of imagining 'worlds and knowledges otherwise'. In examining the recent wave of global protest in terms of Polanyi's double movement of economic transformation and social protection, McMichael suggests that, because they oppose both the modernist project and its market epistemology, they also go beyond the Polanyian classical counter-movement. In other words, 'a protective movement is emerging', but not one that would simply regulate markets: instead it is 'one that questions the epistemology of the market in the name of alternatives deriving from within and beyond the market system'.[46] For this reason, these movements can be properly called 'anti-globalisation'; that is, they entail the negation of the globalisation project in terms of the universalisation of capitalist

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modernity—at least in its neoliberal form (even if of course other labels also make sense).

At the metaphorical level at least, I believe it is possible to find inspiration for interpreting the logic of these movements in two domains: cyberspatial practices and theories of complexity in the biological and physical sciences. Over the past few hundred years modernity and capitalism have organised economic and social life largely around the logic of order, centralisation and hierarchy building (this also applies to really existing socialisms for the most part). In recent decades cyberspace (as the universe of digital networks, interactions and interfaces) and the sciences of complexity have made visible a different model for the organisation of social life.[47] In terms of complexity in particular, ants, swarming moulds, cities, certain markets, for instance, exhibit what scientists call 'complex adaptive behaviour'. (Thousands of invisible single-celled mould units occasionally coalesce into a swarm and create a visible large mould. Ant colonies have developed over a long timespan with no central pacemaker. Medieval markets linked efficiently myriad producers and consumers with prices setting themselves in a way that was understood locally.) In this type of situation, simple beginnings lead to complex entities, without the existence of a master plan or central intelligence planning it. They are bottom-up processes, where agents working at one (local) scale produce behaviour and forms at higher scales (eg the great anti-globalisation demonstrations of the last few years). Simple rules at one level give rise to sophistication and complexity at another level through what is called emergence: the fact that the actions of multiple agents interacting dynamically and following local rules rather than top-down commands result in visible macro-behaviour or structures. Sometimes these systems are 'adaptive'; they learn over time, responding more effectively to the changing needs of their environment.

A useful distinction between different types of network structures is that between hierarchies and meshworks.[48] Hierarchies entail a high degree of centralised control, ranks, overt planning, homogenisation and goals and rules of behaviour conducive to those goals. Meshworks, on the contrary, are based on decentralised decision making, non-hierarchical structures, self-organisation, and heterogeneity and diversity—two very different life philosophies. It should be made clear, however, that these two principles are found mixed in operation in most real life examples, and may give rise to one another. The logic of hierarchy and control, however, has tended to predominate in capitalism and militarism as a whole. The model of self-organisation, non-hierarchy (or heterarchy) and complex adaptive behaviour is closer in spirit to philosophical anarchism and anarcho-socialism and may provide general guidelines for internationalist networking. It could be said, again provisionally, that this model also confronts the left with a novel politics of emergence that should be taken into account.[49]

Politics of place as a novel logic of the political

The goal of many (not all) of the anti-globalisation struggles can be seen as the defence of particular, place-based historical conceptions of the world and practices of world-making—more precisely, as a defence of particular construc-

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tions of place, including the reorganisations of place that might be deemed necessary according to the power struggles within place. These struggles are place-based, yet transnationalised.[50] The politics of place is an emergent form of politics, a novel political imaginary in that it asserts a logic of difference and possibility that builds on the multiplicity of actors and actions operating at the level of everyday life. In this view, places are the site of live cultures, economies and environments rather than nodes in a global and all-embracing capitalist system. In Gibson-Graham's conceptualisation, this politics of place—often favoured by women, environmentalist and those struggling for alternative forms of livelihood—is a lucid response to the type of 'politics of empire' which is also common on the Left and which requires that empire be confronted at the same level of totality, thereby devaluing all forms of localised action, reducing it to accommodation or reformism. As Gibson-Graham does not cease to remind us, 'places always fail to be fully capitalist, and herein lie their potential to become something other'.[51] Or, in the language of the MC project, there is an exteriority to imperial globality—a result of both global coloniality and place-based cultural dynamics, which are irreducible to the terms of capitalist modernity.

As I have analysed elsewhere,[52] the struggle of the social movements of black communities of the Colombian Pacific illustrates the politics of place in the context of imperial globality. This movement, which emerged in the early 1990s as a result of the deepening of the neoliberal model and in the wake of the new 1991 Constitution that granted cultural and territorial rights to ethnic minorities such as the black communities of the Pacific, was from the very outset conceived as a struggle for the defence of cultural difference and of territories. The movement has since emphasised four rights: to their identity (hence, the right to be different), to their territory (as the space for exercising identity), to a measure of local autonomy, and to their own vision of development. In the encounter with state agents, experts, NGOs, international biodiversity networks, etc, the movement has developed a unique political-ecology framework that articulates the life project of the river communities—embedded in place-based notions of territory, production systems, and the environment—with the political vision of the social movement, incarnated in a view of the Pacific as a 'region–territory of ethnic groups'. In this way the movement can legitimately be interpreted in terms of the defence of practices of cultural, economic and ecological difference. Emerging from the exteriority of the modern/colonial world system—within which blacks of marginal regions have always been among the most excluded and 'forgot-ten'—this group of activists can also be seen as practising a kind of border thinking from which they engage with both their communities, on the one hand, and the agents of modernity, on the other. In connecting with other continental or global movements (eg Afro-Latin American and anti-globalisation move-ments), they also become part of the transnational movement meshworks analysed in this section.

Two more aspects of movement meshworks before ending: first, when confronting neoliberal globalisation and imperial globality, local, national and transnational movements—often making up networks and meshworks—may be seen as constituting a form of counter-hegemonic globalisation.[53] They not only challenge the rationality of NLG at many levels, they propose new horizons of

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meaning (clearly, in cases such as the Zapatista, with their emphasis on humanity, dignity and respect for difference) and alternative conceptions of the economy, nature, development, and the like (as in the case of the social movement of black communities of the Colombian Pacific and many others). Counter-hegemonic globalisation is a tremendously diverse movement, and this is not the place to analyse it. Suffice it to say that counter-hegemonic movements often seek to advance the goals of equality (and social justice in general) and difference at the same time. This struggle for difference-in-equality and equality-in-difference is a feature of many contemporary movements, in contradistinction to those of the most recent past.

But this also means that there is a dire need for what Santos has called a theory of translation—one that propitiates mutual understanding and intelligibility among movements brought together into networks but with worldviews, life worlds and conceptions that are often different and at odds with each other, if not plainly incommensurable.[54] How can mutual learning and transformation among subaltern practices be promoted? This is increasingly recognised as an important element for advancing counter-hegemonic globalisation (for instance, by the world network of social movements that emerged from the World Social Forum process). If it is true that many of the subaltern movements of today are movements of knowledges that have been marginalised and excluded, does this not amount in some fashion to a situation of 'transnational third worlds of peoples and knowledges',[55] whose articulation might usher in new types of counter-hegemonic agency? No longer conceived as a classificatory feature within the modern epistemic order, these 'third worlds of peoples and knowledges' could function as the basis for a theory of translation that, while respecting the diversity and multiplicity of movements (albeit questioning their particular identities), would enable increasing intelligibility of experiences among existing worlds and knowleges, thus making possible a higher level of articulation of 'worlds and knowledges otherwise'. As Santos put it:

> such a process includes articulating struggles and resistances, as well as promoting ever more comprehensive and consistent alternatives ... an enormous effort of mutual recognition, dialogue, and debate will be required to carry out the task ... Such a task entails a wide exercise in translation to enlarge reciprocal intelligibility without destroying the identity of what is translated. The point is to create, in every movement or NGO, in every practice or strategy, in every discourse or knowledge, a contact zone that may render it porous and hence permeable to other NGOs, practices, strategies, discourses and knowledges. The exercise of translation aims to identify and potentiate what is common in the diversity of the counter-hegemonic drive.[56]

Conclusion: beyond the Third World

Imagining beyond the Third World has many contexts and meanings. I have highlighted some of them, such as the following:

1. In terms of context, the need to move beyond the paradigm of modernity within which the Third World has functioned as a key element in the

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classificatory hierarchy of the modern/colonial world system. If we accept either the need for moving beyond modernity, or the argument that we are indeed in a period of paradigmatic transition, this means that the concept of the Third World is already something of a bygone past. Let it rest in peace, and with more sadness than glory, Third Worldism notwithstanding. At this level we need to be puzzled by what seems to be a tremendous inability on the part of Eurocentric thinkers to imagine a world without and beyond modernity, and they need to be made aware of that. Modernity can no longer be treated as the Great Singularity, the giant attractor towards which all tendencies ineluctably gravitate, the path to be trodden by all trajectories leading to an inevitable steady state. Rather, 'modernity and its exteriorities', if one wishes, should be treated as a true multiplicity, where trajectories are multiple and can lead to multiple states.

2. It is important to start thinking in earnest about the new mechanisms introduced by the new round of coloniality of power and knowledge. So far, this rearticulation of globality and coloniality is chiefly effected through discourses and practices of terrorism. These are not completely new, of course; in some ways, they build (still!) on the regime of classification that took place at the dawn of modernity, when Spain expelled Moors and Jews from the peninsula and established the distinction between Christians in Europe and Moors in North Africa and elsewhere. 'After the Third World' thus implies that new classifications are emerging, which are not based on a division of the world into three. Imagining beyond the Third World may contribute to this process from a critical position.

3. The analysis above also suggests that the politics of place should be an important ingredient of imaging after the Third World (fears of 'localisms' notwithstanding, but of course taking all the risks into account). Politics of place is a discourse of desire and possibility that builds on subaltern practices of difference for the (re)construction of alternative socio-natural worlds. Politics of place is an apt imaginary for thinking about the 'problem-space' defined by imperial globality and global coloniality. Politics of place may also articulate with those social movement meshworks and networks that confront NLG. In this articulation lies one of the best hopes of re-imagining and re-making local and regional worlds—in short, of 'worlds and knowledges otherwise'. Politics of place could also give new meaning to concepts of counter-hegemonic globalisation, alternative globalisations, transmodernity, or what have you.

4. A number of persistent social conditions continues to suggest that a concept of a third world could still be useful. The concept of social fascism is a useful notion for thinking about this issue. In this case it would be necessary to speak of 'third worlds', which would be made up of vast archipelagos of zones reduced to precarious living conditions, often (not always) marked by violence, and so forth. If this scenario is correct, it will be crucial to find really unprecedented ways of thinking about these 'third worlds' and the people inhabiting them that go beyond the prevailing pathologised idioms (underclass, ghettos, warlords, potential criminals and terrorists, *desechables*, the absolute poor, etc, all of which are almost always thoroughly racialised). They could well be the majority

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of the world, and thus will have to be central to any attempt at making the world a better place. What kinds of logics are coming out of such worlds? These need to be understood in their own terms, not as they are constructed by modernity.[57]

There are of course many important aspects of imagining 'after the Third World' that have been left out, from the role of the state to national economic and development policy. I believe, however, that the framework presented above has implications for how we think about these as well. I would like, in ending, to suggest a few measures that would make sense in this regard, for instance:

1. At the level of imperial globality, novel types of coalitions, either regionally based (eg the Andean countries, West Africa) or networked according to other criteria (eg size, existence of a large technocratic elite and economic and technological basis. For instance, a coalition of some of the larger countries in the former Third World, even at the level of reformist elites *vis à vis* the excesses of imperial globality.) By novel, I mean complicating the nation-state and regional economies, for instance. Is it unthinkable to imagine, say, a pan-Andean confederation of autonomous regions drawn on cultural–ecological considerations, rather than traditional geopolitical concerns? This would be a confederation without nation-states, of course. Given the current role of many states within imperial globality, it is not unthinkable that the former Third World might be better off in a world without states, with the proviso that both local/regional and meta-national forms of structuring and governance be created to avoid the most dreadful traps of the nation-state while creating new forms of protection and negotiation.

2. It is clear by now that the Argentinean crisis was caused not by insufficient integration into the global economy but rather because of an excess of it. Even dutifully following the neoliberal advice of the IMF or home-grown economists did not save this important country from a profound crisis. Why can't we dare to imagine the unimaginable, that Argentina could have a better chance by stepping somewhat outside and beyond imperial globality, rather than staying fully within it? Can partial delinking—selective delinking and selective re-engagement—offer an alternative path, perhaps at the level of world regions (eg Southern Cone), or network of world regions? This means that it would be possible to rethink the proposal of de-linking introduced by Samir Amin in the 1970s to fit the new conditions.[58] Needless to say, everything seems to militate against this possibility. The proposal for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (ALCA, as it is known in Latin America and FTAA as it is known in North America) is being pushed with considerable force by the USA and most Latin American leaders. And, of course, any country or region that dares to attempt a path of autonomy is bound to incur the ire of empire, risking military action. This is why opposition to ALCA is today indelibly linked to opposition to militarism by most activist organisations.

These are just two examples of the kind of 'macro' thinking that, while not radical, could create better conditions for the struggle against imperial globality and global coloniality. If approached from this vantage point, they are likely to contribute to advance the idea that other worlds are possible. The social

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movements of the past decade are, in effect, a sign that this struggle is already under way. Imagining 'after the Third World' could become a more integral part of the imaginary of these movements. This would involve, as we saw, imagining beyond modernity and beyond the regimes of economy, war, coloniality, the exploitation of people and nature, and social fascism that it has brought about in its imperial global incarnation.

Notes

1   D Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism After Postcoloniality*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.
2   B de S Santos, 'The World Social Forum: toward a counter-hegemonic globalization', paper presented to the XXIV International Congress, Latin American Studies Association (LASA), Dallas, TX, March 2003. Also available at http://www.ces.fe.uc.pt/bss/fsm.php.
3   A Quijano, *El Nuevo Imaginario Anti-capitalista*, at http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/dinamic/es/tbib_Anibal_Quijano.asp.
4   S Amin, 'For struggles, global and national', *Frontline*, 20 (2), pp 1–10. Also available at http://www.flonnet.com/fl2002/stories/20030131008201200.htm.
5   W Harcourt & A Escobar, 'Women and the politics of place', *Development*, 45 (1), pp 7–14; JK Gibson-Graham, 'Politics of empire, politics of place', unpublished manuscript, Department of Geography, University of Massachusetss, and Department of Geography, Australian National University, 2003; and P McMichael, 'Can we interpret anti-globalisation movements in Polanyian terms?', unpublished manuscript, Cornell University, 2001. See also Patel & McMichael in this issue.
6   Santos, 'The World Social Forum'; J Sen, 'The World Social Forum as logo', unpublished manuscript, Delhi, 2003; W Fischer & T Ponniah (eds), *Another World Is Possible: Popular Alternatives to Globalization at the World Social Forum*, London: Zed Books, 2003; and A Anand, J Sen, P Waterman & A Escobar, *Are Other Worlds Possible? The Past, Present, and Possible Futures of the World Social Forum*, Delhi: Viveka, in press.
7   B de S Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*, London: Butterworth, 2002; E Leff, *Saber Ambiental*, Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1998; and A Escobar, 'Other worlds are (already) possible: cyber-internationalism and post-capitalist cultures', paper presented to the Cyberspace Panel, Life After Capitalism Programme, World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, January 2003. Also available at http://www.zmag.org/lac.htm.
8   Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*.
9   A Joxe, *Empire of Disorder*, New York: Semiotext(e), 2002.
10 A Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990.
11 J Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973; and Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.
12 M Foucault, *The Order of Things*, New York: Vintage Books, 1973; and M Heidegger, 'The age of the world picture', in Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, New York: Harper and Row, 1977, pp 115–154.
13 G Vattimo, *The End of Modernity*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. See Escobar, 'Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: the Latin American modernity/coloniality Research Program', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, in press, for further discussion.
14 Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*.
15 A Appadurai, *Modernity At Large*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
16 I believe a Eurocentred view of modernity is present in most conceptualisations of modernity and globalisation in most fields and on all sides of the political spectrum, including in those works that contribute novel elements for rethinking modernity. See M Hardt & A Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000. In this latter case, Eurocentrism surfaces in the authors' identification of the potential sources for radical action, and in their belief that there is no outside to modernity (again, *à la* Giddens). In other cases Eurocentric notions of modernity are implicit in otherwise enlightening views of globalisation. See I Wallerstein, 'Globalization, or the Age of Transition? A long-term view of the trajectory of the world system', *International Sociology*, 15 (2), 2000, pp 249–265.
17 Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*, pp 1–20. Santos distinguishes his position from those who

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think that there are modern solutions to modern problems (Habermas, Giddens) and from those 'celebratory postmoderns' (Baudrillard, Lyotard, Derrida), for whom the lack of modern solutions to modern problems is not itself a problem, but rather a solution of sorts.

18 See Wallerstein's analysis of Kondratieff cycles, in Wallerstein, 'Globalization, or the Age of Transition?'.

19 See M Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996; and Santos, *Towards A New Legal Common Sense*, pp 165–193.

20 Santos, *Towards A New Legal Common Sense*, p 453.

21 *Ibid*, pp 447–458.

22 A Joxe, *Empire of Disorder*, pp 78, 213.

23 *Ibid*, p 107.

24 *Ibid*, p 157.

25 *Ibid*, p 171.

26 *Ibid*, p 200.

27 For recent treatments of the current situation in Colombia, see JL Garay (ed), *Colombia: Entre la Exclusión y el Desarrollo*, Bogotá: Contraloría General de la República, 2002; C Ahumada *et al*, *¿Qué Está Pasando en Colombia?*, Bogotá: El Ancora Editores, 2000; F Leal, (ed), *Los Laberintos de la Guerra: Utopías e Incertidumbres sobre la Paz*, Bogotá: Tercer Mundo, 1999; and the special issue of *Revista Foro* on 'Colombia's New Right', 46, January 2003.

28 Plan Colombia is a US-based multibillion dollar strategy intended to control both drug production and trafficking and guerrilla activity. Spearheaded by the Colombian and US governments, Plan Colombia actually constitutes a strategy of militarisation and control of the Andean region as a whole (including the Amazon region linked to the Andean countries). Its first installment of $1.3 billion (2000–02) was largely spent on military aid. Even the small percentage of the funds allocated to social development was largely captured by NGOs set up by capitalist groups to extend their control over valuable territories and resources, as in the case of the palm growers in the Southern Pacific region. Among the aspects most criticised of Plan Colombia by Colombian and international organisations are the indiscriminate programme of fumigation, the increased militarisation it has fostered, and the overall escalation of the armed conflict it has brought about, particularly in Colombia. It is a centrepiece of the Uribe administration (2002–06).

29 Local social movements in the Pacific seem to be clear about this. For them, displacement is part of a concerted counter-attack on the territorial gains of ethnic communities throughout the continent, from the Zapatista to the Mapuche. This happens because the socioeconomic projects of the armed actors do not coincide with those of the ethnic communities. This is why local social movements emphasise a principle of return as a general policy for the displaced groups of the Pacific, and the declaration of the region as a territory of peace, happiness and freedom, free of all forms of armed violence. See A Escobar, 'Displacement and development in the Colombian Pacific', *International Social Science Journal*, 175, pp 157–167 for an extended discussion of these issues.

30 This is a very sketchy presentation of this group's ideas in the best of cases. See Escobar in press for an extended discussion, including its genealogy, tendencies, relation to other theoretical movements, and current tensions. This group is associated with the work a few central figures, chiefly the Argentinean/ Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel, the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano, and the Argentinean/US semiotician and cultural theorist Walter Mignolo. There is, however, a growing number of scholars associated with the group, particularly in the Andean countries and the USA. In recent years the group has gathered around several projects and places in Quito, Bogotá, México City, and in Chapel Hill/Durham and Berkeley in the USA. For the main ideas presented here, see E Dussel, 'Europe, modernity, and Eurocentrism', *Nepantla*, 1 (3), 2000, pp 465–478; Dussel, *The Underside of Modernity*, Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996; Dussel, 'Eurocentrism and modernity', in J Beverly & J Oviedo (eds), *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, Durham, SC: Duke University Press, 1993, pp 65–76; Dussel, *1492. El Encubrimiento del Otro*, Bogotá: Antropos, 1992; Dussel, *Introducción a la Filosofía de la Liberación*, Bogotá: Editorial Nueva América, 1983; Dussel, *Filosofía de la Liberación*, Mexico: Editorial Edicol, 1976; A Quijano, 'Coloniality of power, ethnocentrism, and Latin America', *Nepantla*, 1 (3), 2000, pp 533–580; Quijano, 'Modernity, identity, and utopia in Latin America', in Beverly & Oviedo, *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, pp 140–155; W Mignolo, 'Local histories and global designs: an interview with Walter Mignolo', *Discourse*, 22 (3), 2001, pp 7–33; Mignolo, *Local Histories/ Global Designs*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000; Mignolo (ed), *Capitalismo y Geopolítica del Conocimiento*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones del Signo, 2001; E Lander (ed), *La Colonialidad del Saber: Eurocentrismo y Ciencias Sociales*, Buenos Aires: CLASCO, 2000; S Castro-Gómez, *Crítica de la Razón Latinoamericana*, Barcelona: Puvill Libros, 1996; S Castro-Gómez (ed), *La Reestructuración de las Ciencias Sociales en América Latina*, Bogotá: Universidad Javeriana, 2000; S Castro-Gómez & E Mendieta (eds), *Teorías sin Disciplina, Latinoamericanismo, Poscolonialidad y Globalización en Debate*, Mexico, DF: Miguel Angel Porrúa–University of San Francisco, 1998; and C Walsh, F Schiwy & S Castro-Gómez (eds), *Interdisciplinar las Ciencias Sociales*, Quito: Universidad Andina-Abya Yala, 2002. Little of these debates has been translated into English. See Beverly & Oviedo (eds), *The Postmodernism Debate in*

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Latin America, for some of these authors' works in English. A volume in this language has been recently devoted to Dussel's work. See L Alcoff & E Mendieta (eds), *Thinking from the Underside of History. Enrique Dussel's Philosophy of Liberation*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. The journal *Nepantla. Views from South* has featured the works of this group. See especially Vol 1, No 3, 2000. Another volume in English, by Grosfogel and Saldívar, is in preparation. A feminist critique of Dussel is found in E Vuola, 'Thinking *other*wise: Dussel, liberation theology, and feminism', in Alcoff & Mendieta (eds), *Thinking from the Underside of History*, pp 149–180.

[31] Dussel, 'Europe, modernity, and Eurocentrism'; and Quijano, 'Coloniality of power, ethnocentrism, and Latin America'.

[32] See Dussel, 'Europe, modernity, and Eurocentrism; and Dussel, 'Eurocentrism and modernity'.

[33] N Maldonado-Torres, 'Imperio y colonialidad del ser', paper presented to the XXIV International Congress, LASA, Dallas, TX, March 2003.

[34] Email correspondence, 31 May 2003.

[35] Dussel, *Filosofía de la Liberación*.

[36] Mignolo, 'Local histories and global designs', p 9.

[37] *Ibid*, p 11.

[38] On the application of the notion of diatopic hermeneutics to incommensurable cultural traditions, see also Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*, pp 268–274.

[39] Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs*, p 308.

[40] *Ibid*, p 22.

[41] *Ibid*, p 329.

[42] *Ibid*, p 309 [original emphasis].

[43] 'Worlds and knowledges otherwise' is the new subtitle of the journal *Nepantla*, published at Duke University. I am highly indebted to Walter Mignolo for the points in these concluding paragraphs (email correspondence, May 2003).

[44] Gibson-Graham, 'Politics of empire, politics of place'.

[45] M Osterweil, '"Non ci capiamo questo movimento!" Towards theoretical and methodological approaches based in an ethnographic epistemology', unpublished MA thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, 2003; and Escobar, 'Notes on networks and anti-globalization social movements', Presented at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, November 2000. Available from: www.unc.edu/~aescobar/.

[46] McMichael, 'Can we interpret anti-globalisation movements in Polanyian terms?', p 3.

[47] See Escobar, *Notes on Networks and Anti-Globalization Social Movements*; and Escobar, 'Other worlds are (already) possible' for further explanation of this model and additional references. See L Peltonen, 'Fluids without a cause? Tracing the emergence of a local green movement', in Y Haila & C Dyke (eds), *How Does Nature Speak? The Dynamics of the Human Ecological Condition*, unpublished book manuscript, University of Helsinki, 2003 for an application of complexity to a particular social movement in Finland.

[48] M de Landa, 'Meshworks, hierarchies and interfaces', at http://www.t0.or.at/delanda/; and de Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, New York: Zone Books, 1997.

[49] A caveat should be kept in mind: often ethnic minorities, women and the poor are the most marginalised from some of these trends, especially at the level of ICTs. Nevertheless, these same agents are often at the forefront of struggles over ICTs. See, for instance, Maria Suárez's work with the FIRE radio and internet network in Costa Rica, 2003; and W Harcourt (ed), *Women@Internet. Creating New Cultures in Cyberspace*, London: Zed Books, 1999 for empowering uses of ICTs by women's groups. See also GL Ribeiro, 'Cybercultual politics: political activism at a distance in a transnational world', in SE Alvarez, E Dagnino & A Escobar (eds), *Cultures of Politics/Politics of Culture: Revisioning Latin American Social Movements*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998, pp 325–352; and P Waterman, 'Some propositions on cyberspace after capitalism', paper presented to the Cyberspace Panel, Life after Capitalism Programme, World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, January, 2003. Also available at http://www.zmag.org/lacsite.htm.

[50] Harcourt & Escobar 'Women and the politics of place'; and Escobar, 'Culture sits in places: reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization', *Political Geography* 20, 2001, pp 139–174.

[51] Gibson-Graham, 'Politics of empire, politics of place', p 15.

[52] See Escobar, *Culture Sits in Places*.

[53] Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*, p 459ff.

[54] Santos, 'The World Social Forum'.

[55] Santos, *Towards a New Legal Common Sense*, p 234.

[56] Santos, 'The World Social Forum', p 25.

[57] Charles Price is attempting a hopeful reconceptualisation of the concept of 'lumpenproletariat' to explain the so-called 'garrisons' in the outskirts of Kingston; these are neighborhoods ruled by local bosses through a political, armed regime that combines particularistic provision of welfare, regulated forms of violence, and little or no state presence. Garrisons become, in this way, relatively self-ruling, self-organising urban enclaves. C Price, 'What the Zeeks Rebellion reveals: issues of development, moral economy, and the

lumpenproletariat in Jamaica', paper presented at the Department of Anthropology Colloquium, Chapel Hill, NC, 21 October 2002.

[58] The idea of rethinking Professor Amin's original proposal in terms of 'selective de-linking and selective re-engagement' emerged in a conversation with Ahmad Samattar and Amparo Menéndez-Carrión at Macalaster College in Minnesota, April 2002.

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