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Supervision: Dr. Olivier T. Kramsch

Second Reader: Kolar Aparna

MODERNITY/COLONIALITY AND THE CITY:

Representations of Time and Space

DUSTIN GORDON

Masters Thesis Urban Geography

Radboud University Nijmegen

d.gordon@student.ru.nl

s4211979

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1. Introduction

1.1 – GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TOPIC AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Modernity is a time based concept. Its central assumption is that time is linear. The adjective 'modern' is a temporal comparison. While originating from a particular place (Europe), modernity and its temporal imaginary have become the ruling global framework through which history, geography and identity are *conceived*. Globalization thus also entails the 'deterritorialization' of modernity's linear notion of time. This understanding of "human history" and 'development', however, can also be *perceived* in space, like in the sensing of visual, aesthetic change, in the sensation of novelty. Design, architecture and technology are prominent examples of how 'progress' can be senses in space. The *senses* thus play a fundamental role in how time and history are experienced and understood. In other words, there seems to be an intimate relationship not only between the modern concepts of time and space but also in how they are conceived and perceived. It is, however, particularly the notion of 'development' and the *tempo-spatial divide* it creates that point to the intersecting of 'geography' and 'history' and thereby the geopolitical significance of modernity, time and space. In short, to speak of a 'developed' and a "developing world" is to make a temporal difference on a global scale in space. Traditionally these boundaries have been drawn around the axis of North/South, West/East, and First and Third World countries. However, the current "rise of cities" (e.g. Crouch & Le Galès, 2012; Scott, 2008, 2001) and the latest observations and discussions surrounding global or "planetary urbanization" (e.g. UN, 2014; UN-Habitat, 2012; Pacione, 2009) and urban society (Hutchison, 2010, 449; Zukin, 1996, 44) suggest that these boundaries are increasingly redrawn around "the city". This, however, is only the most recent indication that the city, as a spatial phenomenon, simultaneously enjoys a special temporal quality under modernity. This thesis will thus address the city as a representation of modernity and its notions of time and space.

We can also approach the question of time in relation to the city the other way around and ask: why is it that a banal geographic distinction of city and non-city simultaneously bears such a strong temporal connotation? How come 'we' tend to equate the adjectives modern and urban, vice versa rural and traditional? Why do 'we' typically think of the province, the countryside, the desert, the mountains and forests as less attractive, boring, lacking culture and 'history', or as the past, outdated, or even inhumane in contrast to the city? Does the city in fact impose an inferiority complex on all that is not urban, and consequently not modern? How can we explain this undoubtable spatio-temporal dualism in

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common modern thought? How did it emerge and become globally hegemonic? What drives and reproduces these gaping realities today? What does it imply for 'our' future con-/perception of the city if we acknowledge that "'time' is a fundamental concept in building the imaginary of the modern/colonial world and an instrument for both controlling knowledge and advancing a vision of society based on progress and development" (Mignolo, 2011, 161)?

These 'specific' questions concerning the city in relation to space and time will lead us to the general question and geopolitical relevance of knowledge production under modernity. Through universality and its decolonial critique we will come to see how both, space and time, are not just contested subjects within the Eurocentric realm of knowledge production, but constitutional concepts in the construction of modernity and thus representative of the way 'we' conceive 'knowledge' altogether. By critically examining both concepts' modern genealogies, we will build our argument on the "spatial turn" and the decolonial critique and reveal how they continue to structure 'reality' today. The current attributed global status and un/certainty surrounding the city thus can be thought of as the entry point to the larger task of revealing the "elephant in the room", namely the geopolitical relevance of how to conceive modernity and knowledge at large. The imminent project thus follows the research question of how the decolonial critique of time enables us to rethink the spatial turn in the discursive example of "the city".

1.2 – PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH RELEVANCE AND CURRENT ASPECTS

There is a problem with globalization that receives little attention: the loss of human diversity. While a variety of global issues like the economy, fiscal discipline, migration or the wars on terror and crime are subjects of daily policy debates, the loss of human diversity receives hardly any attention. It is most noticeable in the disappearing of languages (Sachs, 2010, 111). 99 percent of the roughly 5,100 languages still spoken around the globe today are at home in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. European languages make up for the remaining one percent. "Many indicators suggest that, within a generation or two, not many more than 100 of these languages will survive. [In short] [l]anguages are dying out every bit as quickly as species" (ibid., 111). The extinction of linguistic diversity however signals only the tip of the disappearance of entire cultures, and thereby diverse knowledges and conceptions of *what it means to be human* (ibid., 111, emphasis added). Thus, with the vanishing of human cultural diversity also diverse ways of living, of sensing, of thinking, of relating to one another, the environment and the world are being lost. In other words, the loss of human diversity is, sarcastically speaking, not just to the disadvantage of the anthropologist, or humanistically speaking, not only a matter of those cultures facing extinction. In turn, the loss of human diversity, while unrepresented, appears as the current most urgent and existential issue facing all of humanity, because it simultaneously entails the loss of *any alterity to modernity that could hold it accountable!* The active or passive erasure of cultural differences – homogenization – is thus not merely a self-serving issue, à la "diversity for diversity", but concerns the fading platform for inter-cultural dialogue and historical accountability. Simply put, (fundamental) disagreement requires (epistemological) difference. Difference, however, must be specified and in this regard does not just concern epistemic disobedience, but *epistemic alterity*, that is "forms of understanding that do not belong to the genealogy of modern forms of representation (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 5). At large, the conventional understanding of modernity as social evolution, progress, development and the integration of humanity into a unified and enlightened world, attains a radically different meaning once we connect it with the erasure of homogenization. In short, homogenization can be read as the flipside of modernity, and as effectively both, a means and an end in the circumvention of resistance. Furthermore, if, as Arturo Escobar puts it, "globalization entails the universalization and radicalization of modernity, then what are we left with? How can we think of social change? Does radical alterity become impossible? … Is globalization the last stage of capitalist modernity, or the beginning of something new (2007, 181)?

The accelerating homogenization of the world might be nowhere more *visible* than in the global landscape of cities, particularly in so called global cities. A helpful notion in approaching homogeneity might be that of *non-places*. Coined by Michel de Certau and Marc Augé, the notion denotes the replacing of previously culturally and historically embedded, "authentic places", with abstract, professional, universal, "synthetic spaces", and describes the increasing influence of global mobile forces in shaping local, particularly urban, realities. Hubbard (2006) describes non-places with reference to Augé and Shields as "environments dominated by a devotion to mobility to the exclusion of any sense of fixity, place or local identity (Augé, 1995). [T]hey are governed by explicitly 'extra-architectural' and non-local rules of play or economic interaction (Shields, 1997) and are *serially produced commodities"* (168, emphasis added). Moreover, places are thereby reordered within the realm of *representation* (Fuller in Hutchison, 2010, 568). Simply put, the term non-places responds to the loss of human diversity in an explicitly spatial sense, that is with reference to the *conception*, design and construction of modern environments and global mobility. While routinely applied to particular placeless spaces like call centers, malls, airports and the like (ibid., 569), there seem to be plenty of reasons to start applying the term to "the city" at large. Let's therefore begin with two initial reflections on the city with regard to homogeneity. Let's begin by inverting homogeneity and in a rather playful manner first try to imagine how diverse the global urban landscape really is or *could be*. Let's do so under the aspects of culture, gender, class and authority.

Who can think of an example of a city that immediately represents a different world, a different cosmos, including economy, science, aesthetics and so forth; a city that is globally recognized as *coeval* but nonetheless governed by an entirely different philosophy, set of rules and principles, surrounded by world a whole lot more diverse than itself, of which it is only the 'visible pinnacle'. Or vice versa, is there anywhere a city to be found that undoubtably represents human diversity, and not the homogeneity of white, modern-colonial, industrial capitalist social relations contained by nation states? Same for gender: who can come up with an example of a matriarchal city? Are there any historical traces or signs of a contemporary city following a feminine logic, or the wisdom and leadership of women? Or, if we wish to not reinforce the dualism of gender; where can we find an example of a city clearly not embodying any specific gender, or gender oppression? How is it, finally, for class and authority? Can anyone think of a city not embodying social stratification, apartheid, power, coercion and subjugation? Who knows of a city that is the product of, or that is at least inhabited and controlled by, a population with no recognizable differences in privilege and power?

Finally, one might want to ponder whether the assumed power asymmetry between urban and rural is truly predetermined and universal.

A reflection like this might help to reveal a homogeneity not in space, but first in how we typically conceive of cities – in the "mental space" (Lefebvre, 1991). That is how 'we' generally have no other way to imagine cities than through the categories we just inverted above: as white, modern, masculine, classist and authoritarian. The *absence of any immediately available alternative ways of imagining cities* thus illustrates how homogeneity/homogenization is not just a spatial but just as much a cognitive, epistemological issue. In short, homogenization cannot be reduced to global economic or political processes but must be equally thought of in terms of knowledge and subjectivity. For these and other reasons to follow, we will predominantly focus our attention in this thesis on the conceived level and the geopolitics of knowledge, that is the relationship between the modern/colonial production of knowledge production and its representation.

To now provoke a second reflection, let's consider a few visual examples to approach how homogenization appears in space. In search for commonalities and to take some distance from the otherwise, for 'most of us', all too familiar visual presence of the urban, a selection of nightly global city air images was compiled. All images are computer wallpapers, obtained through a simple online search. The decision to opt for night photographs arose for several reasons. First of all, it is at night when '"he city" unfolds its *true glamour.* Its luminance undoubtably marks it as *man-made* and 'developed' in contrast to the 'darkness' beyond its borders. This is probably no-where more reflected than in the famous NASA satellite image, visible below. The city's gleam then is generally also a sign that it 'never sleeps', pointing either to work and capital, or consumption and excess. In other words, the city's sleeplessness suggests its emancipation from the rhythms of nature. Further, one could even say that the city literally resists the darkness. A city shrouded in darkness is an image of its malfunctioning – an 'apocalyptic' image and dawn of a post-industrial age. The city's names will not be mentioned in order to illustrate the difficulty of identifying the respective cities. Cities with distinctive landmarks, like the Empire State building or the Eiffel Tower, thus have also not been included. All images have further been converted to black-and-white, on the one hand because in a printed version of this thesis they are likely to be colorless anyway, and on the other hand, in order to denormalize the spectacle of illumination and to better emphasize the commonalities in design and architecture.

fig 1: NASA Earth Observatory – City Lights 2012

fig 2: Compilation – modern metropoles at night

Now, what does this constellation suggest with regard to homogenization and modernity? Are these images, simply put, representations of places or non-places? Do they embody diversity or the contrary? Do they imply local, that is cultural and historical, embeddedness? The initial question is thus how the illustrated global delocalization comes about. If we assume that in a "post-colonial world" the (spatial) practices giving rise to homogeneity in question are not the result of imperial authority and domination, then how can they be explained? Are they rather a matter of hegemony, that is of *knowledge* and *subjectivity*?

The constellation of downtown images displayed above allows us to observe, to sense a striking similarity and in fact homogeneity at a level of macro appearances. All images display the homogeneity of downtown 'prestige' rather than the 'diversity' that might actually characterize each city. Thus, not only do all images resemble each other in terms of their content but moreover in the respective decisions made about what to accentuate and represent. Furthermore, each city could be *anywhere* and host *anyone*. While their uniformity suggest a common place of origin, it is especially the 'mobility' of the aesthetics they display that, metaphorically speaking, makes them rather appear as space-stations

rather than "indigenous cities". In fact they seem to resemble a universal, future-oriented model of a particular "ideal city" rather than particular local histories (Mignolo, 2011). We furthermore did not see beyond, or better beneath, the illuminated towers and streets. As representations, these images thus also allow us to think of what they hide, namely common people and everyday local life. The concealment of diversity and the display of uniformity lets us recognize not only a striking similarity in the conceived normativity of cities on a global scale, but a violence, injustice and politics of visibility and representation; a/n in/visibility that reinforces the urgent need to disentangle the intricacies between the perception, conception and production of "alfa-environments" like these, and what role they play for modernity's reproduction. Yet, the cities' concealing and reductive representation however greatly lends itself to analysis.

That is, if we treat the images above as representations and if we agree that they represent space rather than place, then *what does space actually represent*? If space is a representation of 'development' and 'globalization', of modernity, *is it then not equally also a representation of (linear) time*? In other words, if space represents the global and thus modernity's claim to universality, then does not space simultaneously rest on and represent modernity's linear notion of time? Isn't, in short 'space' (as a notion) saturated by 'time'? How does our modern understanding of 'space' change once we read it through the decolonial critique of 'time' and ultimately that of universality? Can we not account for the representation and *production of space* (homogenization) through a concern with "the city" as both, a representation of space *and* of time? What does a study of the intersecting of the modern notions of space and time reveal about the nature of modernity at large? Can the modern notion of abstract universal space even hold without its sibling of linear time? Are they not co-constitutive in the erection of modernity's discourse of universality? Is not, more specifically, the *disembeddedness of modernity* predicated on space with regard to universal knowledge on the one hand, and on time with regard to superiority and naturalization, on the other? Does the disembeddedness of modernity in fact "cause what Paul Virilio (1999, in Escobar, 2007) calls global de-localization, including the *marginalization of place* (the here and now of social action) in the definition of social life" (182, emphasis added)? Is not the *marginalization of place* (ibid., 182), the extermination of human diversity and thus of radical alterity to modernity, attributable to the universalization of modernity, which primarily entails the concerted cognitive and spatial universalization of modernity's concepts of space and time? If so, doesn't all this suggest that we have to think of "the city" as not only modernity's primary spatial representation, but as its main (spatial and discursive) resource for its reproduction and

universalization?

To address these questions, we first of all have to admit that there are larger forces at play than strictly economic, political, that is merely material or 'structural' ones. Forces, that require us to move "beyond [the city's] material dimension" (Baudrillard, 1988 in Vázquez, 2010, 5) towards its semiotic and cultural magnitude. In order to do so we will concern ourselves in this thesis with "the city" as an idea and an image, rather than a particular place. That means, that instead of looking for the diversity overlaid by homogeneity, we will scrutinize the production of space, of homogeneity. The imminent enterprise could therefore be referred to as a decolonial urbanism that departs from the assumption that "[w]e live in a *visual world of commodities* as much as we live in a material one" (ibid., 4, emphasis added). The central hypothesis for this thesis is that subjectivity gives rise to practice and that subjectivity is a matter of knowledge production and its representation. Subjectivity allows us to think together conception and perception and of individuals as historical beings (Lugones, 2014, 10) of whom particularly the most privileged and influential ones on this earth are subject to an institutionalized monoculture of knowledge (Santos, 2006) of European origin and with universal pretensions. The naturalization and internalization of not only of the content of that epistemology but the very conception of it as evolution and universal allows us to see not only ideological traits but how knowledge has been and continues to be an elementary component of modernity's hegemony. In short, we are thinking about "the cognitive needs of capitalism" (Lugones, 2014, 6). The analytical point of departure is thus the homogeneity in the *production of space* and the underlying homogeneity in the conception and rationality it suggests. Henri Lefebvre addresses both, the production of space and its conception, and will provide us with a detailed account and critique of the modern notion of space and a new theory of spatiality and space that moreover entails a strong emphasis on representation. The decolonial critique of time will then allow us to move to the question and the limits of Eurocentrism in independently holding accountable modern rationality. Through the decolonial critique of time we will then come to see how the modern notions of space and time are both predicated on and entangled through universality, and have historically conditioned the modern conception, production and representation of knowledge, and consequently of "the real". In other words, connecting homogenization to human diversity allows us to confront universality with cognitive justice (Santos, 2006) and reveal modernity's *Deutungshoheit* (interpretational sovereignty), that is its monopoly over enunciation and representation. Universality however only becomes a truth without parenthesis once there is no one left or present to say otherwise. Thinking of the geopolitical relevance of the

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discursivity of universality and representation through a critique of the intersecting of space and time in the image of the city, is thus a deeply political project with the emancipatory aspiration to demystify modernity and effectively decolonize the production of knowledge.

1.3 – SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

This section will provide an overview of what constitutes the decolonial option more specifically as well as the spatial turn in order to establish the foundation for the more in-depth theory chapters. We will begin with a general introduction to decolonial thinking as the "theoretical base" for this thesis. After that, we will have a preliminary look into the politics of time by thinking together development and chronology. Here also the limits of Eurocentrism, of intra-modern critiques, will be brought to the surface and the consequent need for epistemic alterity. In other words, we will not only introduce the decolonial as such, but illustrate why we cannot answer the questions of space, time, representation and modern rationality without it, that is in solitude with Eurocentrism. In the second segment, we will then provide an overview of the intra-modern critique of space, the discourse of the spatial turn, and the many ways in which it resonates with the our concerns with the city, modernity, knowledge and representation, and how it might even be considered an 'approximation' to the decolonial critique.

1.3.1 – The Decolonial

The modern/colonial research program, the decolonial option, decolonial thinking or in short: decoloniality, is an intellectual collective and movement born in the Latin America. As an adjective, however, it is also a way to describe social movements and beings, that might not share the same terminology or analysis but that in practice do not subscribe to or delink from the modern/colonial world imaginary and its Eurocentric categories of thought. In sum, there are four words to mention to describe the decolonial option: coloniality, race, the option of the third and 'exteriority'. Decoloniality understands modernity to be a self-referential discourse with universal pretensions and a global system of power predicated on the global classification of differences and division of labor through the invention of 'race' as a scientific category. It therefore speaks of the coloniality of power to denote the continuity of colonialism in terms of power, knowledge and discourse. Maria Lugones (2014) puts it this way: "The invention of 'race' is a pivotal turn as it replaces the relations of superiority and inferiority established through domination, it re-conceives humanity and human relations fictionally, in biological terms. A conception of humanity was consolidated according to which the world's population was differentiated in two groups: superior and inferior, rational and irrational, primitive and civilized, traditional and modern" (3-4). This is why for the decolonial there is no modernity without coloniality. "The modern/colonial world (and the colonial matrix of power) originates in the sixteenth century, and

the discovery/invention of America is the colonial component of modernity whose visible face is the European Renaissance. … Modernity is the name for the historical process in which Europe began its progress toward world hegemony. It carries a darker side, coloniality" (Mignolo, 2005, xiii). Decoloniality is furthermore anchored in the 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia (Mignolo, 2012a, 4), the first inter-national event from and for people of color from the colonies. Like the decolonial the event affirmed two things: the faculty to make sense of the world independently of Eurocentric categories of thought, and the consequent possibility (and necessity) to conceive and imagine alternative futures beyond these categories' confinements. The decolonial significance of the Bandung conference thus not only lay in *who* it consisted of, but that it affirmed the existence of knowledges and alternatives beyond the dichotomies (rational vs irrational, modern vs traditional, capitalism vs socialism) and the totality suggested by modernity/coloniality (the market and nation state) – the rhetoric of modernity and the coloniality of knowledge. The decolonial can thus be understood as an umbrella terms to describe *the option of the Third,* as one of three rough currents of political orientation shaping the world ever since the end of World War II. During the Cold War the other two currents have been capitalism and socialism, and today they are *rewesternization* under Obama and *dewesternization* as a consequence of the disintegration of Western imperial hegemony (Mignolo, 2012a, 3-4).

> Parallel to dewesternization and rewesternization (which refers to the US's and EU's efforts to maintain the leadership they had for 500 years) is a third trajectory which is being expressed through the *uprisings* in Tunisia, Egypt, Greece, Spain, London and, before that, in Bolivia and Ecuador (see previously, "Juicio Etico"). [Walter Mignolo] view[s] these *insurgencies as the emergence of a global political society* and the growing trajectory of a *global decoloniality*. Now, we cannot expect that of these three trajectories one will end up victorious and ruling over the others. They will co-exist in conflictive relations for a good number of years. … [However] the 80% of the planet left out of the State and the Market [are] becoming more and more aware of what coloniality means. And coloniality is no longer a Western issue; it is also behind Chinese and East Asian capitalism, Islam and capitalism and Pan-Africanism and capitalism (Mignolo, 2012b, 6-7, emphasis added).

This emerging global political society is interpreted as decolonial predominantly because it rejects, *unlearns* and *delinks* in theory and practice from the modern catalogue of certainty, and thus enacts a growing epistemic dissent and autonomy. The decolonial is thus not only a reconceptualization of modernity as modernity/coloniality (Escobar, 2007, 184) and the confronting of "the West" with its own history, but a *reversing of historical perspective* (Mignolo, 1995, 312). "[I]nstead of looking at marginal societies from the perspective of academic centers, it proposes to look at cultural and political centers from the academic margins" (ibid.). The Decolonial is not "a new theory" that travels and must be translated and taught, but seeks to give voice to the historical experiences and perspectives of all the

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'Others' that has been denied enunciation, by decolonizing the theories and ideologies that have normalized the modern/colonial status-quo. If it requires translation, then from 'subaltern' to hegemonic languages, as the decolonial does with Spanish to English. The decolonial's fundamental conviction is thus that all the Others have, had and continue to produce forms of understanding that are not only equally legitimate, but that can teach 'us', the imperial subjects and particularly academics, those things about ourselves that we otherwise will never 'discover' or be willing to acknowledge. For instance, with regard to the European map making of the Americas under Spanish administration, Mignolo refers to Amerindian "communities for whom, even today, the Americas does not have the same meaning it had for our hypothetical European observer", teaching us that maps and territory are not the same. (Mignolo, 1995, 311). The decolonial's basic principle is thus the very affirmation of human dignity and all forms of life, inseparable from cognitive as well as political autonomy – 'dignity in autonomy' (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 1). With regard to discourse and representation, and the question of inclusion/exclusion and in/visibility we can now address the often misunderstood but essential issue of 'exteriority'. "The notion of exteriority does not entail an ontological outside; it refers to an outside that is precisely constituted as difference by a hegemonic discourse. The notion of exteriority arises chiefly by thinking about the Other from the ethical and epistemological perspective of a liberation philosophy framework. The Other as oppressed, as as woman, as racially marked, as excluded, as poor, as nature" (Escobar, 2007, 186). "What remains invisible, the untranslatable, are all those forms of understanding and relating to the world that constitute the exteriority of modernity. What is erased belongs to *the temporalities and the spatialities of other social realities*" (Vázquez, 2011, 37, emphasis added). What is referred to by speaking of exteriority is thus the exteriority created from the interior, that is the self-referentiality with which modernity manufactures its discursive totality of the real. This exteriority, of which the decolonial is only one representation, is the "cognitive human diversity", if you want, the alterity in ontology and cosmology to modernity, that 'we' urgently need to recognize and embrace in order to "learn how to unlearn" and think decolonially (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012). The decolonial option is thus "an epistemic, political and ethical project" (Mignolo, 2012a, 4), one that does not aspire to replace one hegemonic universalism with another, but to globally establish a notion cognitive justice (Santos, 2006), and thereby open up the possibility to imagine pluriversality – a world in which no single culture or civilization can take the authority to name, classify, rank and abuse everything around it; a world of intercultural dialogue and respect, in which 'difference' is no longer defined as undesirable but as a self-evident and enriching part of life. Pluriversality is thus also a matter of

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representation, of bringing the actual diversity of "the real" and its representation as close together as possible. The current modern/colonial regime of representation, in its display of homogeneity or spectacle, does precisely the opposite. At large, undoing the colonial difference entails to revoke modernity's claim to universality and to unsilence all those voices who have been denied enunciation by decolonizing Eurocentered knowledge and by democratizing the means of representation.

Now, what does the decolonial, more specifically, offer with regard to the research question and how to approach it methodologically? To repeat, our concern lies with 'the city', the production of space and how to reread it through the critique of time. The question is whether or not the decolonial critique of time can provide a different understanding of 'the city' and its dynamics, and thus also of 'space'. For its external look upon modernity, and its visualization of coloniality, the decolonial option provides, academically speaking, the 'theoretical' and 'methodological' orientation we lack in solitude with Eurocentrism. As a project whose main emphases lie in the domains of *epistemic hegemony* (modernity), *epistemic struggle* (coloniality), and the possibility of *epistemic shift* (decoloniality), it greatly accommodates our endeavor with the geopolitics of knowledge, here in bringing together the production of space and the critique of time. Furthermore, for its intervening in the very discursivity of modern sciences, it engages itself in epistemic struggle. That means it raises and represents issues and paradoxes that would otherwise remain absent. In short, it problematizes the production and instrumentality of knowledge by following the conviction that there is no global social justice without global *cognitive justice* (Santos, 2006, 14). The triangle of modernity/coloniality/decoloniality, consists of three moments of critique and intervention.

> The first, the moment of modernity, strives *to understand the mechanisms of affirmation* of modernity and expose their genealogies. It asks for the production and representation of what appears in modernity as 'the real'. It contextualizes and denaturalizes the universal validity claims of modernity, its semblance of totality. This moment of the decolonial critique builds on the longstanding internal tradition of the critique of modernity (Romanticism, Frankfurt School, Post-structuralism etc) (Bermœdez, 2011)(Vázquez, 2012, 2, emphasis added).

The first moment deals with what is represented and therefore present, visible and perceived as normal. In other words, it is an engagement with the canon of modern thought, as it is featured in curriculums across the world. In short, the moment of modernity is the moment of *hegemony*, be it epistemic, cultural, political or economic. This means, it examines the genealogy of modern European thought and its nexus with imperialism, that is how it became omnipresent and globally hegemonic. At the same time it takes into consideration a wide range of counter-hegemonic European critical theories

of modernity as well. It can thus be thought of as a double-move of geo-historical contextualization, on the one hand, and of inspiration and dialog, on the other hand. Accordingly, with Henri Lefebvre and his production of space, the theoretical point of departure for this thesis will also be a modern one.

> The second moment, the moment of coloniality, directs its efforts to expose the mechanisms of exploitation, disdain, disavowal and exclusion. *It asks for what is being lost* under the hegemony of modernity. It reveals the underside of modernity. From its perspective modernity's total validity claims and more generally, it's hegemony over reality appear as *machineries of negation, of silencing*. This moment shows how the condition of possibility of modernity's rule over reality is the negation of alterity *and the concealment of this negation* (ibid. 3, emphasis added).

The second moment can be thought of as the inversion of the first, as it concerns what is not represented, and therefore invisible, silent and deemed as non-existent, from the modern perspective. Particularly with regard to representation the moment of coloniality essentially denotes 1) the continuity of colonial discursivity, 2) the mechanisms that negate that continuity, and 3) the concealment of this negation. In short, through the control over representation, modernity negates everything that would otherwise reveal its coloniality. Instead, it frames and naturalizes any issue in accordance with its rhetoric of progress and development. The logic of coloniality, is thus, the logic and practice of concealment, of negation and silencing, hidden beneath the rhetoric of modernity. At large, the moment of coloniality is the moment of *struggle* for visibility, recognition, dignity and self-determination. To visualize coloniality is to reveals the discourse of development as global apartheid. An apartheid that is constitutive of the global order, rooted in the infinite demand for 'human and natural resources' as the material foundation of the modern global economy. The moment of coloniality unveils the rhetoric of development and integration as the logic of commodification and of the dispensability of human and natural life (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012, 240). At large, coloniality reveals global social and cognitive struggle not as tragic but as constitutive. The control over representation, that is the *muting* of coloniality, thus serves as the chief mechanism in guarding the status quo by shielding modernity from any existentially threatening critique and resistance. The negation of the past – the instrumentality of oblivion – is equally essential in this regard as we will see in the second theory chapter on the politics of time.

> The third moment, the decolonial moment steps on the other two moments. It reaches out to those who have been disdained, made invisible, or dispensable and *listens to the alternatives from the outside of modernity*. Its struggle is orientated under the sign of remembrance, a remembrance that wrests the voices out of the silence and oblivion of coloniality. *A remembrance that provides an ethical orientation*, as it engages in the task of understanding the suffering of the oppressed. It is the moment of delinking from the logic of modernity and recognizing the alternatives and the hope that are alive in the outside of modernity (Vázquez, 2012, 3, emphasis added).

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The third moment is the moment one becomes conscious of, and moves beyond the hegemonic partiality and limitations of modern/colonial master representations. It is the moment *one turns*, of turning ones attention from the center to the margins of enunciation and representation; of listening to the silences rather than the global megaphone. It is the moment of reversal, of reversing the historical perspective and finding orientation not in abstraction and institutional frameworks but local histories and embodied knowledge (e.g. Tichindeleanu, 2014, 78). It is thus also the moment of epistemic shift and transformation; the moment one becomes aware of ones location within the colonial matrix of power. It is the moment of understanding the other two moments and their inseparability to such a degree that one begins to disengage from modern epistemology, and starts thinking decolonially. In other words, it is the moment modern/colonial categories of thought cease to control subjectivity. This disengagement is what is referred to as delinking, as unlearning, emphasizing it being an option as well as a process. It is particularly for the modern subject, for whom modern epistemology until now was a totality, the moment when s/he comes to realize the extent to which her/his ontology is not as individual and self-determined as previously assumed. In short, the decolonial moment is the moment one is able to contextualize one's identity geo-historically, and enters into global solidarity that transcends modern/colonial categories of fragmentation and division (Lugones, 1994). At large, the third moment is the moment of humbling modernity, of depriving it of its claim to superiority and universality, and of entering into an intercultural dialog of mutual respect and cooperation, and a project of community and coalition building. It is the moment the impossible becomes possible and thought and action are no longer representations of institutionalized power.

The decolonial moment will be particularly present in the analysis chapter, when we analyze the city from a decolonial point of view. However, the in the second theory chapter presented decolonial critique of time, will obviously be the substantial decolonial argument of this thesis, in connection with a decolonial reading of the eurocentric notion of space in the first theory chapter. Accordingly, the three moments of critique inform the research methodology in such a way that they suggest to first look at how the notions of space and time are affirmed within modernity, what they negate in the moment of coloniality, and how to think of them decolonially in the future.

1.3.2 – The Politics of Time

First of all, the decolonial critique of time reminds us that time is not an "existing entity, but a human concept [...][and thus] a category belonging to culture [and] not to nature" (Mignolo, 2011, 151). It has not existence of its own and only comes into exists through human conception. In doing so it reopens the question of the alleged universality of 'history' and hence the questions of knowledge and power. Departing from the question of universality the decolonial critique of time demystifies the logic and narrative that "history has a unique and well-known meaning and direction; a meaning and direction [that] have been formulated in different ways for the last two hundred years: progress, modernization, development" – also referred to as the monoculture of linear time (Santos, 2006, 16). At large, modern linear time is regarded as a foundational concept of the modern/colonial world imaginary (Mignolo, 2011, 152). More specifically, *chronological narratives* that channel all local histories into a global and imperial design under a unified total history, lie at the heart of the modern/colonial system of oppression (Vàzquez, 2009, 1). With regard to the spatio-temporal divide, time's foundational intersection with space primarily concerns how by "the eighteenth century, when 'time' came into the picture and the colonial difference was redefined, 'barbarians' were translated into 'primitives' and *located in time rather than in space*" (Mignolo, 2011, 153, emphasis added). This moment lay the foundation for the normalization of the global social relations, particularly with regard to race, gender and the distribution of labor.

1.3.2.1 – Chronology and Universality

To distinguish between a 'developed' and a 'developing' world is to make temporal difference, that is to locate different geographies within different moments in time – *temporalities*. Development suggests that not everyone living at present is also located within the present, that is 'contemporary'. Some are ahead, others are behind, in time. In the following we will briefly introduce the logic beneath this distinction, and locate it in time and space.

What is identified and referred to as chronology is the modern concept of time. It has its origin in the 19th century with its chief representative being Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (Mignolo, 2011, 151). It is an all encompassing, that is *universal history* that speaks of *human history* at large, meaning that all cultures' local histories are absorbed into a total history, commonly known as 'world history'. We refer to linear time as chronology for its essential assumption of an accumulative history and that

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each and every place will eventually reach and undergo the same experiences, stages or levels, as in a computer game – the next level is prewritten, waiting only to be unlocked. Enlightenment, secularization, industrialization and democratization are the most prominent of such levels. It goes without saying that these levels simultaneously represent the history of modern Europe and the West, and thus the canon of modernity. Before anything else, chronology regards any society in 'stagnation' to be outside history. History necessarily entails change and 'progress' – first and foremost the 'emancipation' from nature to culture. It is thereby not only Eurocentric but *anthropocentric* at its core. It further regards societies and cultures to be bordered and 'sovereign', that is to develop largely independently from one another. In sum, chronology is inherently comparative, self-evidently manifesting itself in the 'successes' of those with "knowledge, liberty, prosperity and power". All these are thought of as universal categories and natural signs of human evolution, of development. Chronology attains a mystical character through the assumption that the determinant for any type of change is not the respective society or culture, but history itself. All histories eventually converge on this royal road toward the future, allowing for comparison, conclusion and judgment. In short, power and agency are absent while destiny reigns.

As we can see, chronology b/orders and detaches locations from one another, as if local histories where self-contained and occurred in a vacuum. As a Eurocentric enunciation this is particularly revealing since it thereby hides the fact that specifically Europe's history has been one of continental and transatlantic imperial intervention and expansion. As a consequence, the 'successes' of one location and the 'misery' of another, are, under chronology, never put in relation. The fragmentation and individualization of geo-histories, that is the denial of imperial and colonial interrelation, thus debunks chronology as deeply ahistorical, apologetic and apolitical. An historicization of chronology thus illuminates the governing present discourse of development as one of historical denial at the service of European or Western supremacy. Chronology is, in other words, the European, that is local, formulation of a total history, to its own advantage by presenting itself as the center of the world (Dussel, 2013, 23-24). It is thereby a self-referential, self-congratulating narrative of historical denial and thus fundamentally solipsistic. In turn, this means that until today and in spite of modernity's humanistic rhetoric, there has in fact not been a, in Foucault's terms, historical and civilizational *rupture* and cessation of Western hegemony. In short, the vitality of chronology in the present discourse of development clearly marks the past three to 500 years of European history as a continuos succession, and thus chronology as inherently hegemonic.

As already noted, chronology, as a local enunciation, lives precisely of the pretension to universality. The first implication is thus the overruling, the disavowal of any other local perceptions of time. For the imposition of a single universal definition of time we therefore speak of chronology as chrono-politics, the politics of time or the coloniality of time.

> The Western notion of time supports 'history' and 'science' to acquire a hegemonic force and to develop a comparative point of view that allows for the erasure or devaluation of other forms of knowledge. This is a common procedure and strategy in the making of the modern/colonial world as well as in creating colonial/imperial notions of difference (Mignolo, 2011, 172).

The categorical subordination of other peoples and their knowledges thereby did not only serve as the justification for their extermination and colonization, but simultaneously as the means of inventing the colonizers own identity. Modernity, as a time bases concept thus served in constructing a global hierarchy of differences with those who formulated it naturally being at the top. The construction of linear time is thus indissolubly coupled with the invention of race and the practices they were sought to justify. In short, without linear time there is no modernity, vice versa no coloniality. In other words, "time was conceived and naturalized as both the measure of human history (modernity) and the time-scale of human beings (primitives) in their distance with modernity" (ibid., 153). To be sure, coloniality denotes the continuity of the knowledge, imaginary, rhetoric and practice founded under and for colonization.

Moreover, if chronology is not denaturalized and challenged, the immediate political implication is that there are no other options to opt for, or directions to head toward, but to subscribe to 'history', its laws of 'evolution' and to step with good faith into the foot steps of those with 'more experience'. In short, chronology suggests linearity as alternativeness. Accordingly, neoliberal governance and the consumer society and are, in spite of their obvious violence and catastrophic impacts on natural and human life, thought of as a self-evident sign of 'social evolution' and thereby as the future horizon for 'the poor' and 'underdeveloped'. The famous 'end of history' proclaimed by Francis Fukuyama at the end of the Cold War, stems precisely from this linear philosophy of history, which regards global capitalism to be the self-fulfilling prophecy, salvation and arrival in the unification of all peoples on earth. The result is the attempted mechanic imitation of industrial, 'developed countries'. The worst case scenario would be if chronology, at least on a level of public perception, rendered the political all together as redundant in light of good faith in the autopilot. At last, chronology is a matter of privilege and power, and its conservation.

[Nitsche and Marx] could not be depended on to preserve privilege; nor to affirm once and for all – and God knows it is needed in the distress of today – that history, at least, is living and continuous, that it is, for the subject in question, a place of rest, certainty, reconciliation, a place of tranquillized sleep (Foucault, 1972, 16).

Undoing the colonial difference as was built in the concept of time will involve, among many things, removing 'time' from the privileged position it acquires in complicity with science, capitalism, and the mono-culturalism (e.g. uni-versalism) of Western civilization (Mignolo, 2011, 175).

In sum, both 'space' and 'time' as 'we' know them, have their philosophical foundation in modern Europe in the 17th and 18th century, and are intimately interlinked with colonialism. The spatio-temporal division we still see today with development, in other words, dates back to when geography was translated into chronology (Mignolo, 2011, 152). At last, chronology looses its claim to universal validity as soon as it is identified as a local representation of history.

In the appropriation of history as the referent and source of legitimacy for the ruling systems of signification, history is transformed into an object produced primarily from concrete data. The age-old narrative history as a form of remembrance kept by storytellers and poets has been at odds with most 'professional historians'. Through remembrance, history becomes life experience, every time it is recalled it comes into dialogue with our daily life. The evocation of the story- teller, his call for remembrance, is altogether different from the scientific compilation of the historian (Vázquez, 2006, 50).

1.3.2.2. – Development and Knowledge

The metaphor of development gave global hegemony to a purely Western genealogy of history, robbing peoples of different cultures of the opportunity to define the forms of their social life. … Scientific laws took the place of God in the enveloping function, defining the programme … The word always implies a favorable change, a step from the simple to the complex, from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better. The word indicates that one is doing well because one is advancing in the sense of a necessary, ineluctable, universal law and towards a desirable goal, … evolution as an antidote for revolution. … But for two-thirds of the people on earth, this positive meaning of the word 'development' – profoundly rooted after two centuries of its social construction – is a reminder of what they are not. It is a reminder of an undesirable, undignified condition. To escape from it, they need to be enslaved to others' experiences and dreams (Esteva, in Sachs 2010, 5-6).

In the 1970s, two decades after the era of development was officially opened by president Truman, the United Nations proposed a radically different and until today unique approach – endogenous development. "Emerging from a rigorous critique of the hypothesis of development 'in stages' (Rostow), the thesis of endogenous development rejected the *necessity or possibility – let alone suitability – of mechanically imitating industrial societies* (ibid., 12, emphasis added). It was the first

and only time the UN, here represented through Unesco, acknowledged the ideological and utopian character of its till date approaches. Instead, this time, development was proposed to arise from the differences between and the diversity within societies. Instead of imposing a general topdown framework, it was now the intention to *allow* societies to define development in their own terms.

However, not much later the initiative was replaced again by the conventional approach, that of equating development with economic growth and the imposition of a uniform strategy from the top – today that of sustainable development. The first 30 years of the development doctrine, its modifications and planning practices have been summarized as the following:

> From the emphasis on growth and national planning in the 1950s, to the Green Revolution and sectoral and regional planning in the 1960s and 1970s, including 'Basic Needs' and local-level planning in the 1970s and 1980s, to environmental planning for 'sustainable development' and planning to 'incorporate' woman, or the grassroots, into development in the 1980s, the scope and vaulting ambitions of planning have not ceased to grow. (Escobar, in Sachs, 2010, 151).

However, what distinguishes the experience with 'endogenous development' to the conventional development doctrine is that the very institution drafting the policies felt compelled to acknowledge and respond to, that is 'incorporate', the lasting and increasing criticism to its theory and practice. Second, that that criticism involved not only the justified critique of the assumed feasibility of formulating a uniform, *universal* policy, but moreover, the even more important critique of the underlying universal conception of historical development. In other words, that the policies assumed to fertilize a "social evolution" that would nonetheless still follow the 'arrow of time'. In short, the dispute over a particular philosophy of history as a universal truth – the politics of time – penetrated 'the center' of enunciation. However, and this is the question of 'rationality', even though *a* critique of development as chronology had finally 'arrived' and officially been quoted, it was soon ignored and replaced again.

While the critique of development never fully faded but continued to grow, broadened its scope and analysis while searched for new avenues and *coalitions* (Lugones, 2014), the question still remains if the defeat of the critique of development was merely an issue of special interest or maybe of conception. Many critiques of development, while paying detailed attention to all sorts of historical and structural 'root causes', still ended up reaffirming 'underdevelopment' as something real, concrete, quantifiable and identifiable (Esteva, in Sachs, 2010, 8). Similar to the discussions on the self-defeatist critique of post-modernism, these voices, from South and North alike, reinforced and thereby sustained the *perception* that the so called Third World existed as such and was indeed underdeveloped. Thereby

the assumption was maintained that 1) the Third World was a homogenous unit, due to its common, 'miserable', 'backward' condition, and 2) that development was the only way to escape this 'undignified condition'. Critical here is perception, since "for someone to conceive the possibility of escaping from a particular condition, it is necessary first to feel that one has fallen into that particular condition" (ibid., 3). What is conditioning and sustaining these observations and analyses in the first place, is the system of knowledge underlying them. It is the assumed *neutrality* and *objectivity* of the *frameworks* that those critiqued and those critiquing have in common, that they work and dialog with, but generally do not scrutinize, let alone regard as politically charged. The question of the *foundation*, of the *geopolitics of knowledge*, thus did not 'cross their minds', which even today still entails a certain novelty, unfortunately. In the absence of an *epistemic diversity*, consequently also the question of *epistemic homogeneity* is absent.

'Development' is moreover deeply rooted by now in global popular, and not just in intellectual, perception (ibid., 6). As a term coming from the natural sciences, extended to the social life, as in the developmental psychology etc., it is naturalized to such a degree that, at first glance, it seems as if there was no reason for suspicion. While 'development' in itself might lack any precise meaning and appears it to be innocent and neutral, it in turn, however, lives precisely of its self-evident presence, and self-referential meaning in the vernacular. Accordingly, development policies attain their *legitimacy* specifically from the assumption that they are humanitarian interventions, benevolent in nature and the result of "discrete, rational acts and not the process of coming to terms with conflicting interests, a process in which choices are made, exclusions effected and world-views imposed" (Escobar, in Sachs, 2010, 154).

> Planning relies upon, and proceeds through, various practices regarded as rational and objective, but which are in fact highly ideological and political…. All of these rhetorical devices that reflect the 'normal' perception of the planner contribute to obscure the fact that it is precisely the peasants' increasing integration into the modern economy that is at the root of many of their problems (Escobar, 2010, 153-4).

'Development' is thus, first and foremost, an historical social construction and comparative adjective that "inevitably calls for absorbing the differences in the world into *an ahistorical and delocalized universalism of European origin*" (Sachs, 2010, 114, emphasis added). At large, "the philosophy underlying the UN Declaration makes little sense without the view of history as a royal road to progress upon which all peoples converge" (ibid.). To be sure, development denotes the project and process of *modernization* through the *integration* of societies into the world economy, their

subjugation to its logic, and in essence, of the conversion of 'the poor' into producers and consumers.

The scientificity of development and economics furthermore obscures the politics surrounding it, and demands discursive integration, and again epistemic homogeneity, prior to any form of dispute or dissent. In short, one can only challenge science with science. The scientification of development, thus denotes a modality of authority and vice versa of subordination, or of discursive monopolization and hence exclusion. Further, with regard to *representation*, that is the way the discourse of development frames and represents the majority of people on earth, roughly two-thirds of the world population are subject to an imposed image of themselves, reduced, homogenized and misrepresented through a global regime of representation (Vazquez, 2010, 11). Development, in short, imposes an inferiority complex in relation to the comparative 'achievements' of the West, resulting in a myriad of psychological, cultural, intellectual, and political implications. Above all, it is the silencing, the erasure of the diverse majority of people on earth through the modes of appropriation and representation, that lies at the heart of the continuously reproduced injustice of development – of the politics of time.

It is thus first and foremost the question of knowledge and its assumed objectivity and universality that is at stake here. That is the reduction and homogenization essential the *rationalization*, which again allows for the standardization, implementation and maintenance of the resulting practices and dynamics. These practices then again reaffirm the assumed conceptual universality. This way the question between conception and practice becomes a chicken-and-the-egg question, a vicious circle, in which *the empirical and the conceptual* are routinely entangled and confused. We will come across this problem again in the upcoming segment on the spatial turn.

1.3.2.3 – Redevelopment and The City

Numerous voices have declared that 'development' exhausted its utopian energies and that the era of development is over once and for all (Sachs, 2010, 124). But is this really the case? Today, there are especially three phenomena suggesting the contrary: rapid urbanization, the rise of non western global cities, and gentrification.

To begin with urbanization and some numbers of the recently published UN 2014 World Urbanization Prospects Report. Since 2007, more than half of the world population, today an estimated 54%, live in urban areas, with a forecasted 66% by 2050. "Africa and Asia are urbanizing faster than

the other regions and are projected to become 56 and 64 per cent urban, respectively, by 2050, [while both are still] home to nearly 90 per cent of the world's rural population. India has the largest rural population (857 million), followed by China (635 million)". Speaking of mega cities the report states:

> … that in 1990 there were just 10 megacities, defined as urban agglomerations with more than 10 million inhabitants. Today, up from 10, there are 28 such megacities worldwide, representing 12% of the world's urban population. 16 of today's megacities are located in Asia, 16 out of 28, with four in Latin America, three each in Africa and Europe, and two in North America. Tokyo remains the world's largest city with an agglomeration of 38 million inhabitants. By 2030, the world is projected to have 41 megacities each with more than 10 million inhabitants. A large majority of these will be in developing countries (1).

However, the fastest rates of urbanization, according to the report are taking place in medium-sized cities and cities of less than 1 million inhabitants.

> Between 2000 and 2014 the world's cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants grew at an average annual rate of 2.4 per cent. However, 43 of these cities grew more than twice as fast, with average growth rates in excess of 6 per cent per year. Of these, 4 are located in Africa, 38 in Asia (18 in China alone), and 1 in Northern America. By way of comparison, Suzhou, in China's Jiangsu Province, is the only city with more than 5 million inhabitants to have experienced such rapid growth. In general, most of the world's fastest growing urban agglomerations are smaller cities: agglomerations with 500,000 to 1 million inhabitants in 2014 account for 26 of the 43 fastest-growing cities, while another 16 are medium-sized cities with between 1 million and 5 million inhabitants (15).

The growth of cities in number and size is thought of as synonymous with economic growth, nationally and that of the world economy. The proposed policy implication of the UN is, obviously, that "the benefits of urban growth are shared equitably and sustainably" (ibid., 17). Aside from presenting these statistics, the report, however, does not answer, let alone, ask any underlying questions, as of what actually drives urbanization, what the social and environmental 'costs' and implications are, or what, taken together, these developments might say about the global policy strategies of the past 70 years and the neoliberal 'structural readjustment programs' since the 1970s. In short, it makes no connection whatsoever between urbanization and the dynamics and demands of modern/colonial industrial global capitalism.

Percentage urban and location of urban agglomerations with at least 500,000 inhabitants, 2014
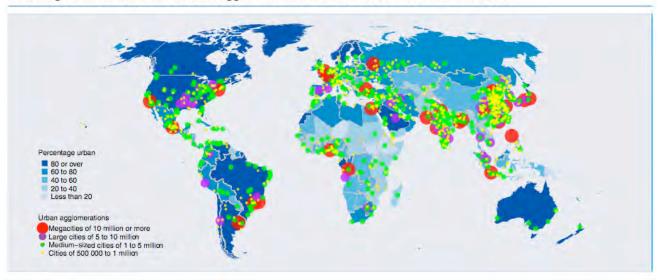
fig. 1: (ibid., 9)

Additionally, gentrification is not mentioned at all either. While not exclusive to the North, gentrification refers mainly to the redevelopment of former industrial city centers. In essence, it is the process of increasing the economic value of inner city private and public space, either as the result of, or in order to attract global investment. The processes of rationalization, commodification, privatization and homogenization are characteristic of gentrification, as are displacement, and wide-spread resistance to it (e.g. Hetzler, Medina & Overfelt, 2006; Smith, 2002, 442). The growth in urban conflicts, be it directly in response to gentrification or more generally in how social movements across the earth that are attaining visibility in and trough the city in response to the economization of life, and that mark the city as inherently political arenas, thus did also not find its way into the UN report.

With regard to the question of the 'death of development', the reported growing significance of cities clearly signals the contrary, that is the apparent sustainability of the concept of development. The new "Smart Cities" initiative of the European Commission underscores this as well. The project involves the measurement of and competition between European cities along a 'new' set of criteria for the sake of their digital modernization and overall global competitiveness. At large, and this is will lead us to the research question, development – or better modernity – and the city foster a deeply intimate relationship. The introduction to the report underlines this once more by saying that:

> Cities are important drivers of development and poverty reduction in both urban and rural areas, as they concentrate much of the national economic activity, government, commerce and transportation, and provide crucial links with rural areas, between cities, and across international borders. Urban

living is often associated with higher levels of literacy and education, better health, greater access to social services, and enhanced opportunities for cultural and political participation (UN, 2014, 3).

Accordingly, cities are today more than ever said to be the engines and hubs of the global economy, following the logic 'development will sprawl through the sprawl of cities'. In short, the city is thought of as the springboard of progress and development. In sum, the UN 2014 World Urbanization Prospects Report illustrates that 'development' is thought of as inevitable, even desirable and as the product of the *positive capacities of cities*, and vice versa. In the absence of analysis and critique the report affirms both development and the city as the driving engines of 'history', leaving only limited space for active human intervention (redistribution). Next to the displayed continuity of the discourse of development, in spite of its re-articulations, it is the discourse and symbol of the city and its all too enthusiastic, one-sided celebration that calls for in depth scrutiny. Just as development inhabits a self-evident place within intellectual and popular imagination, so does the city and its centrality in the modern 'history of civilization'. Again, chronology, universality, development, and now the city reveal themselves as parts and parcels of a powerful semantic and semiotic network in the rhetoric of modernity, lying at the heart of hegemonic enunciations like that of the UN report. At large, it is not so much the report itself that matters, but what it represents. The report exemplifies the assumed natural presence of cities in general, and the universality of the urban in relation to development in particular.

The tempo-spatial division of the world we see with development is equally noticeable with regard to the city. The temporal yardstick and dualism of the notion development-underdevelopment that is applied to countries, regions and entire continents, equally applies to the dualism of urban-rural. In other words, the urban-rural dualism appears as a rearticulation of the temporal classification of the world on a different scale. The way the adjectives modern and urban, traditional and rural, come to be regarded as synonymous, further illustrates this tempo-spatial dichotomy. While surely inter-urban differences are inexpressible, cities by now generally share specifically the association with modernity, and the promises it entails (work, money, entertainment, status, globality, etc). That is not to say that "all cities are the same" nor that every city's future will be. However, if we assume that modernity is the ruling global 'ideology', then within that system of signification the city occupies a central and normative position, evidenced for instance in the frequency of its media representation, aside from the less cultural factors that drive people towards the city. This "magical quality" is what seems to reinforce the discourse and ideology of development, and modernity/coloniality at large. In short, the city appears as the chief resource for the universalization of the political current of rewesternization.

Thus, the longer we omit to address the question of universality and the politics of knowledge, the more painful it will be acknowledge and account for it in the future.

1.3.3 – The Spatial Turn

The spatial turn is an intra-modern discourse and critique of the a-sociality of the traditional conception of space under modernity as well as of the marginal position attributed to space and spatiality in comparison to Historicality and Sociality (Soja, 1996, 71). Its essence thus consist of the affirmation, the reassertion of space and spatiality, which is mainly attributed to the works of Lefebvre and the new balanced trialectics (of being) he theorized. The spatial turn also concerns the reaffirmation of the relevance of geography for making sense of the world at large and interdisciplinary work, particularly with regard to cultural studies. Mitchell (2002) for instance insists that "geographical analysis – especially critical and radical geographical analysis – has become central to the project of social theory as a whole. The so-called spatial turn in the humanities and social science has put geographical questions on the intellectual agenda as they never have been before (2). Shields (1999) locates the spatial turn in Lefebvre's "second moment", the moment he turns from questions of 'urbanity' and social struggle to the Production of Space, initiated by his earlier book "The Urban Question". According to Shields it was already through the translated version of this earlier book that English-speaking readers became aware of his/the spatial turn (145). However, the "Production of Space forms the keystone of the all-important 'second moment' of Lefebvre's analysis of the urban" (ibid)(see 2.1). Lefebvre's writings on space, everyday life and difference however also influenced the linguistic turn (Kipfer, 2008, 120) and frequently appear in analyses on the cultural turn in global capitalism, like for instance Sharon Zukin's symbolic economy (1995; 1996). She writes: "culture is also a powerful means of controlling cities. As a source of *images and memories*, it symbolizes "who belongs" in specific places. […] As cultural consumers, we are drawn into the interrelated production of symbols and space" (134, emphasis added). She thereby raises the question of "who can occupy public space, and so define an image of the city" (135). The spatial-turn is thus not just a marxist rereading of space but a deep critique of the philosophical and discursive foundations of modernity and how both space and time, in their hegemonic conceptualizations, continue to be "central to the construction of a particular form of power/knowledge" (ibid., 69). Through representation we can furthermore recognize how "modern projects of urban renewal have tended to aestheticize the social problems they displace"

(1996, 44). However, the relevance of thinking through the spatial turn and representation becomes ever more apparent, particularly if we consider how under such notions like place-making and city branding "[visual] representation became a means of financially re-presenting the city" (Zukin, 1996, 45). However, as we know the question of representation is not just a matter of legibility, 'identity' and global competitiveness. "Legibility also speaks to the greed and exclusion that underlie perennial plans to rid a downtown of 'dirty' manufacturing, low-rent tenants, and all infrastructure connected to the poor, workers, and ethnic and racial minorities outside of tourist zones. Nearly all cities use spatial strategies to separate, segregate and isolate the Other, inscribing the legible practices of modernism in urban form (Sennet, 1990; Wilson, 1991; Davis, 1990, in Zukin, 1996, 49). A more recent offspring of the spatial turn can be seen in how Grodach (2009) investigates "how cities are depicted on the Internet but also on how the contemporary climate of inter-urban competition shapes representations of the city at large" (193). Doreen Massay's work "For Space" (2005) is another central work in the canon of the spatial turn, and equally affirms the challenges and potential of thinking about space, and of space in relation to time. The biggest significance of her work for our project and in relation to chronology probably lies in how she talks about the "taming of spatiality"; the taming of the multiplicity of spatiality that disrupts the single historical narrative in which spatial differences are convened into a temporal sequence (68); the modern logic in which essentially "time conquers space" (ibid., 71).

> The challenge of space is addressed by an imagination of time. In these discourses of modernity there was one story, which the 'advanced' countries/people/cultures were leading. There was only one history. The real import of spatiality, the possibility of multiple narratives, was lost. The regulation of the world into a single trajectory, via the temporal convening of space, was, and still often is, a way of refusing to address the essential multiplicity of the spatial. It is the imposition of a single universal (ibid., 71).

She counters this continuity by arguing that "the very concept of multiplicity entails spatiality" (ibid., 91). Time cannot conquer space because both are mutually implicated –"as long as there is multiplicity there will be space" (ibid., 91). She argues a similar point through distance and the "arrival of the margins", that is the practical "impossibility of maintaining the [linear] story in the face of the breakdown of the geography it purported to describe" (ibid., 92), and emphasizes the relational aspects of spatiality (93) in reaction to how the "modern, territorial, conceptualization of space understands geographical difference as being constituted primarily through isolation and separation" (68).

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Strategically, we will now addressed the research question in two basic steps. That is we will first deal with space and time in themselves and then demonstrate our critique in a selected example of how the modern conceptions of time and space co-constitute each other in the discourse of universality. Accordingly, the first theory chapter will concern the modern genealogy of 'space' and Lefebvre's production of space. In the second theory chapter then, we will do the same with time, and look into its modern genealogy and arrive at the *politics of time*. In the analysis chapter we will then bring both together and try to make sense of 'the city' as a symbolic and rhetorical device in the representation and reproduction of modernity. Throughout, our chief tools will therefore be representation and discourse. In between, we will consider as an example the UN State of the World's Cities 2012/1013 Report for how it "speaks from space" and captures and represents both "the city" and the recent urban uprisings through chronological frameworks of interpretation.

2 – Theory

2.1 – Henri Lefebvre and Space

This first theoretical chapter will revolve around the concept of space, and how Henri Lefebvre re-conceptualized it. The chapter will consists of an introduction to his work more generally, his critique of the governing conception of space and the epistemology hosting it, and accordingly, how he rethought space in relation to the social and thus to global capitalism. Central here will be his spatial triad and how it enables us to think together of power, knowledge, representation, perception and everyday practice. Particular emphasis will be how he distinguishes representations of space from representational space. This distinction will enable us not only to distinguish between a hegemonic and a counter-hegemonic (physical) space, and conception thereof, but to then insert the critique of time. The final steps will be to move from the production of space to its politics and emancipatory relevance, as well as to briefly look at how Lefebvre's work might relate to the decolonial thinking.

Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) was a French intellectual whose work unfortunately only gained significant recognition outside France after his death. He is known for his unparalleled commitment to space and the influence he had in initializing the so called Spacial Turn, which includes his pioneering critique of everyday life, the right to the city, and the production of (social) space. He has been described as an urban marxist, social theorist, sociologist, and (eco-) philosopher (Aronowitz, 2007, 133). He published more than 60 books and 500 articles, took great inspiration in Louis Althusser and Hegelian thought, and has long, until the spatial turn, been ignored by Anglo-american academia (ibid.). Contrary to most of his contemporaries, he viewed everyday life and the practices of everyday people as the 'base' for capitalism's reproduction, and thus as the point of departure for many of his analyses. For his overarching concern with capitalism he was not interested in specialization, but searched for a, what he called, 'unitary theory' that could help account for what constituted, conditioned and reproduced social relations, processes and dynamics at large.

After his death, it was particularly in human geography and through David Harvey that his work was rediscovered. Today, especially The Production of Space (1974, 1991) is considered one of the "signature works in the canon of urban studies [as it] stands at a pinnacle of contemporary social and political thought" (Aronowitz., 134). He is celebrated for being the first to examine the complexities of the modern world explicitly through space, that is specifically through the (social) production of (social) spatiality (Soja, 1996, 57). His grand project was "to discern the consequences of modernity in

its late capitalist incarnation for the multiplicity of forms of social life and for (social) being itself" (Aronowith, 134), which lead him to "reassert the equally existential spatiality of life in a balanced trialectic that ranges from ontology through to a consciousness and praxis that are also simultaneously and presuppositionally social, historical, and spatial" (Soja, 1996, 73). In short, "no one has so forcefully and successfully activated Spatiality and rebalanced the trialectics as Lefebvre" (Soja, 1996, 71-72). The spirit and form of his writing have been described as 'nomadic meta-marxism' (Soja, 1996, 57) that distinguishes itself from conventional modes of writing in so far as it does not proceed in a preconceived, linear, but a reflective and circular fashion. The fact that there is still, according to Soja, a "bewildering confusion" (1996, 61) particularly surrounding Lefebvre's spatial triad, might in part be attributable to this unfortunately still conventional way of writing.

What is, further, fundamental to Lefebvre' work and reflected in the difficulty of ascribing it to a specific discipline, is his criticism of disciplinary confinements for their fragmenting and 'specializing' tendency, particularly under capitalism. In the introduction to the Production of Space he writes that "[u]nder this mode of production, intellectual labour, like material labour, is subject to endless division, […][with the tendency] that neither common projects nor theoretical continuity are possible" (Lefebvre, 1991, 8-12). A critical point of departure for his work is thus the immanence of a culture of divisionism, so to speak, within the modern sciences that is not only reflected in the division of disciplines but equally, as we will see, in practice. It is what he describes as the "dominant trend towards fragmentation, separation and disintegration, a trend subordinated to a centre or to a centralized power and advanced by a knowledge which works as power's proxy" (ibid., 9). In other words, he inverts this trend by thinking together how, on the one hand, the "knowledge [we have] of the material world [is] based on concepts defined in terms of the broadest generality and the greatest scientific (i.e. having a content) abstraction" (ibid., 12), and on the other hand, how the "ruling class seeks to maintain its hegemony by all available means, and knowledge is one such means" (ibid. 10). Accordingly, Lefebvre is deeply concerned with capitalism as a type of, what Gramsci coined, hegemony, and how this hegemony is not reducible to repressive violence, but must equally be thought of in terms of 'culture', and thus inevitably in terms of knowledge. Another reason why he sought the everyday life, stems from his critique of 'epistemologico-philosophical thinking' for being embedded in abstraction, and thus for being reductive and alienating. As will also become apparent in the following, he noted a profound abyss between what he termed the *mental space,* the theoretical space of epistemology and the *social space,* the 'real', physical space of ontology (ibid, 6-7). He says that in "an

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inevitably circular manner, this mental space then becomes the locus of a 'theoretical practice' which is separated from social practice and which sets itself up as the axis, pivot or central reference point of Knowledge" (ibid., 6).

As it becomes apparent, Lefebvre considerably expanded the applicability of the notion of space and thought of it not only in strictly spatial, so physical, but equally in social and cognitive terms. His conceptual interventions at the level of knowledge production, that is within mental space, must thus also be understood as a political intervention. Particularly the orthodoxy of binary thinking and reductionism obstructed for him not only a (social) science of space, but his proposal to think in triads constitutes an *epistemic move,* which is "intended to be a fully politicized conceptual move involving, in the first and last instance, the fact that his own work is composed of a fully armed triad: analysis-critique-politics" (Zatz, 2007, 128). This is moreover echoed in how especially anti-gentrification movements have adopted his phrase 'Right to the City'. However, his analytical contributions to social struggle far exceed the issue of gentrification, and equally reinforce movements concerned with migration, housing, work, and self-determination, to name but a few, with renewed confidence, as they serve as an antidote to the typical postmodern self-defeating conception of capitalism as an insurmountable totality. Thus, other than most of his 'postmodern' colleagues he affirmed the possibility of change, particularly by formulating a theoretical basis for a reconstitution of agency in what he called spatial practice.

2.1.1 – FROM SPACE TO SOCIAL SPACE

Lefebvre's point of departure in the examination of 'space' is how the notion 'originally', that is within 'Western civilization', was coined by and divided between philosophy and mathematics. For instance, in the former it either served to proof the existence of the senses and to establish the validity of the empirical (Aristotle), to establish a counter discourse to Christian theology with space as the absolute containing everything within it (Descartes), or was conceived as an ungraspable a priori realm of consciousness (Kant), while the latter began to invent an infinity of spaces, topologies, attributing to space a strictly geometrical meaning (Lefebvre, 1991, 1-2). The "idea it evoked was simply that of an empty area. In scholarly use it was generally accompanied by some such epithet as 'Euclidean', 'isotropic', or 'infinite', and the general feeling was that the concept of space was ultimately a mathematical one (ibid., 1). Both sought to discover, from the largest to the smallest possible scale, the

ontological status, universal nature, the essence of space. Particularly Descartes conceptualization remained, as it was regarded as the "decisive point in the working-out of the concept of space, and the key to its mature form" (ibid., 1), the *moment* he also lay the foundation for the modern sciences as the birth of modernity. The history of philosophy and the modern sciences thus plays a decisive role until today in how space is generally and specifically conceived and treated. Lefebvre's reconceptualization of space is therefore first and foremost grounded in the observation, analysis and critique of how space has been dealt with up until now.

However, this foundation also set in motion a dominant practice within modern science, that equally reveals itself in the question of space, in a twofold manner. First, to treat things in isolation, as things in themselves, here space as space, and to detach the 'object' of both, its (spatial, social and historical) context and of the subject who is looking at it. Furthermore, and as it was already mentioned with regard to specialization and the infinite subdivision of disciplines, a practice was established that prioritized the description, naming, classification, and endless dissection of 'things' over analysis and understanding. In short, "knowledge of spaces wavers between description and dissection" (ibid., 91). What appears as the urge to bring 'order to the chaos', is the tendency of what Lefebvre notes as the 'mental pigeonholing of things', "setting up mental barriers and practico-social frontiers" (ibid., 89), which in many ways corresponds to our critique of Eurocentrism. More specifically, Lefebvre considers in response to the governing conception of science, and the science of space, as being independent of the social, or in response to the absence of any suspicion of that assumed separation, these theoretical practices to take place within the also already mentioned *mental space*. In doing so, he bring attention to the immense gap within Western scientific literature concerned with space as a 'mental thing', that is, how "knowledge is also the space in which the subject may take up a position and speak of the object with which he deal in his discourse" (1991, 3-4). Simply put, while all sorts of spaces, whether physical or metaphysical have been categorized and listed, the space in which all these operations take place has never critically been scrutinized or theorized. Even Foucault, who, similarly to Lefebvre, was concerned with knowledge, power and 'pigeonholing', did not engage with the question of how "the gap between the theoretical (epistemological) realm and the practical one, between mental and social [space], between the space of the philosophers and the space of people who deal with material things" (ibid., 4) comes about, is bridged and essentially, how the two relate to and condition one-another.

The ideologically dominant tendency, exemplified in the 'traditional' epistemology of space

Lefebvre begins with, is thus one that is a) only concerned with space as space, for which it only regards space as b) a passive receptacle, and one that c) "divides space up into parts and parcels in accordance with the social division of labour" (ibid., 90), while "[c]onsidered in isolation, such spaces are mere abstractions" (ibid., 86).

> Thus, instead of uncovering the social relationships (including class relationships) that are latent in spaces, instead of concentrating our attention on the production of space and the social relationships inherent to it — relationships which introduce specific contradictions into production, so echoing the contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the social character of the productive forces — we fall into the trap of treating space as space 'in itself, as space as such (ibid., 90).

Accordingly, Lefebvre also approached the problem of how 'science' affirms itself as universal through the denial of place/ of being implicated, here exemplified in the case of a "specialized area of study whose own self-affirmation depends on [the] isolation from [and denial of] its context" (ibid., 86). Today, the legacy of this conception of science and space, that could be referred to as the habit of getting lost in the *traveling of scales* (no scale/place to return to)*,* is probably no where more visible than in astronomy to the one extreme, and in nanotechnology to the other. In sum:

> Epistemologico-philosophical thinking has failed to furnish the basis for a science which has been struggling to emerge for a very long time, […] a science of space. To date, work in this area has produced either mere descriptions which never achieve analytical, much less theoretical, status, or else fragments and cross-sections of space. […] *Any attempt to use such codes as a means of deciphering social space must surely reduce that space itself to the status of a message, and the inhabiting of it to the status of a reading. This is to evade both history and practice* (ibid., 7, emphasis added).

> The ideologies which have to be destroyed for our immediate purposes are those which promote *(abstract) spatiality and segmented representations of space*. Naturally, such ideologies do not present themselves for what they are; instead, they pass themselves off as established knowledge. The difficulty and complexity of our critical task derives from the fact that it applies at once to the (mental) forms and practical (social) contents of space (ibid., 89-90, emphasis added).

Now, what we can conclude until here is that Lefebvre discovers that neither a notion of mental-, nor of social space exists within the canon of 'mental spaces' engaged with space, and consequently sets out to fill this gap. In essence, he records 1) the supremacy of mental space, how it is caught up in abstraction, dwelling in 'virtuality', and self-referential or solipsistic; 2) the sole concern with space as space – 'spatial space', so to speak, and its infinite subdivision; and 3) the absence of any notion of social space, including the absence of any suspicion of that absence or attempts to theorize it. His first response is thus, in essence, to bring space to life, and to distinguish, but not isolate, physical from

mental and social space. Lefebvre thus attempts to construct a 'unitary theory' from from the "mere bits and pieces of knowledge", the fragments into which spatial knowledge has historically been broken (Lefevbre, 1991, 11 in Soja, 1996, 62). This fragmentation involves next to the descriptive dissection also the marginal position Spatiality has been given in comparison to Historicality and Sociality. It is a point of critique that points to the privileging particularly of history, in which the social can arguably be included, as the overarching container and authority through which and from which every thing else follows. Spatiality "tends to be peripheralized into the background as reflection, container, state, environment, or external constraint upon human behavior and social action" (Soja, 1996, 71). The question of time or of historical materialism, and the need for its critique, thus did not escape Lefebvre's perception, but in turn plays a significant if not constitutional role in how he develops his arguments and theory. Accordingly, he develops the first triad by breaking the hierarchy between Historicality, Sociality and Spatiality into a horizontal triangle. It enables a thinking of the three in relation, not in isolation, or reductive deterministic terms and thus considerably adds to the complexity of things.

> "Lefebvre proceeds to fuse (objective) physical and (subjective) mental space into social space through a critique of what he calls a 'double illusion'. This powerful attack on reductionism in spatial thinking is a vital part of the thirding process, working to break down the rigid object-subject binarism that has defined and confined the spatial imagination for centuries, while simultaneously maintaining the useful knowledges of space derived from both these binary 'fields'" (Soja, 1996, 62)

These two fields are what Soja refers to as Firstspace and Secondspace epistemologies. For Lefebvre they constitute the so called *double illusion*, and represent two distinct but not mutually exclusive traditions of Western scientific thought and practice. The first tends to privilege objectivity and materiality, the empirical and *perception*; a "social physics" (Soja, 1996, 75) that is rather formal and apolitical in its scientificity. It is the positivist tradition, to which Lefebvre refers to as the illusion of transparency, in which space appears as luminous, intelligible and innocent (Lefebvre, 1991, 27-28); a tradition he dates back to classical philosophy and that has "dominated the accumulation of spatial knowledge for centuries […]; the 'analytical deciphering' of what Lefebvre called Spatial Practice or perceived space" (Soja, 1996, 74).

> What these techniques provide are more sophisticated and accurate ways to do what most geographers, spatial analysts, and, for that matter, the colonial adventurers and cartographers in the Age of Exploration, had been doing all along: accumulating and mapping what was presumed to be increasingly accurate 'factual' knowledge about places and the relations between places over the surface of the earth. The key difference brought about by this so-called quantitive 'revolution' in geography was the presumption that these increasingly accurate empirical descriptions of

geographical 'reality' also contained the intrinsic sources of spatial *theory* (ibid., 76).

Secondspace epistemologies, on the other hand, privilege theory, subjectivity and the imaginary, but also the social construction, *conception* and representation of things. They hey could be said to be more qualitative and political, and clearly emphasize Sociality over Spatiality. While rather informal, this "imagined geography [however] tends to become the 'real' geography with the image or representation coming to define and order reality. Actual material forms recede into the distance" (ibid., 79). Space it here not perceived but conceived through representations. It thereby equally belongs to the realm of grand narratives and discourses, that is how things are framed and enunciated to 'the masses'. Secondspace epistemologies thus also contain the more pronounced nexus with power as in the grand narratives of Kant and Hegel, and the way they imagined and framed the world, or how the ideological oppositions between capitalism and socialism have been framed and represented during the Cold War. Firstspace and Secondspace epistemologies can thus not only methodologically 'oscillate' with each other but can also collapse into each other in the second, that is, once again, how data can be gathered and interpreted in various ways for various purposes, how knowledge and power converge. For this reason Lefebvre considered the conceived level as the hegemonic one and why he, consequently, particularly targeted Secondspace epistemologies. Soja

> simplified Lefebvre's critique of the double illusion into one of myopia (nearsightedness, seeing only what is right before of your eyes and no further) and hypermetropia (farsightedness, seeing so far into the distance that what is immediately before you disappears); and used this double illusion to the epistemological dualism of objectivist-materialist and subjectivist-idealist approaches that has dominated the modern discipline of Geography since its origin (Soja, 1996, 62-63) […] Lefebvre helps us to break open this dualism to a third alternative and, to other ways of making practical sense of the spatiality of social life" (Soja, 1996, 73-74).

This alternative is to add to the perceived, and the conceived the third, the *lived.* Here each term contains the other two but remains distinguishable and open to be studied in isolation. None is given an a priori or ontological privilege, "but there is a strategic privileging of the third term, in [Soja words] Thidspace, as a means of combating the longstanding tendency to confine spatial knowledge to Firstspace and Secondspace epistemologies and their associated theorizations, empirical analysis, and social practices" (ibid., 74). It is a profound critique of the idealization of epistemology or of modern epistemology (ibid., 80) altogether and a radical skepticism towards all established epistemologies, that eventually calls for a fundamental shift to ontology.

> Reductionism […] infiltrates science under the flag of science itself. Reduced models are constructed — models of society, of the city, of institutions, of the family, and so forth - and things

are left at that. This is how social space comes to be reduced to mental space by means of a 'scientific' procedure whose scientific status is really nothing but a veil for ideology. Reductionists are unstinting in their praise for basic scientific method, but they transform this method first into a mere posture and then, in the name of the 'science of science' (epistemology), into a supposed absolute knowledge (Lefebvre, 1991, 106)

2.1.2 THE SPATIAL TRIAD

The final synthesis of the aforementioned is now a threefold distinction of spatial practices that are predominantly thought of through the lens of representation, Marx's habitus and the commodity fetish. These are *representations of space* (conceived), *representational space* (lived), and *spatial practice* (perceived). They are neither mutually exclusive, nor are the relations between them ever stable and they always "exhibit historically defined qualities, attributes and interconnections" (Merrifield, 1993, 524). In and of itself, as a mere abstract model, the spatial triad does not reveal anything about capitalist spatiality but must be applied to concrete situations and places (ibid., 524-525), that is how all space-relations "take on [their] meaning through, and are permeated by, historically defined social relations (and vice versa)" (ibid., 525). In relation to the commodity fetish, these three spaces do not refer to objects but *processes*, and the way objects, once they have entered into daily routine – the habitus, tend to conceal the underlying social processes and relations sustaining the object (Marx, 1967, 71-83, in Merrifield, 1993, 519-520). In short:

> spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and according to the historical period (Lefebvre, 1991, 46).

The first, *representations of space*, receives its name because it represents the traditional notion and epistemology of space; the space that is produced in accordance with the dominant conception of space as rationally ordered, formal and homogenous; the *abstract* and *conceived* space that "subsumes ideology and knowledge within its practice", with its ties "to the relations of production and the 'order' which those relations impose (Merrifield, 1993, 523) – the space of appropriation and accumulation. As the "repressive economic and political space of capital" (ibid., 524) it is equally the space of the 'scientific bent', of "professionals and technocrats such as planners, engineers, developers, architects, urbanists, [and] geographers" (ibid.), "all of whom identify what is lived and perceived with what is conceived" (Soja, 1996, 67). Representations of space consequently also contain the "various arcane signs, jargon, codifications, [and] objectified representations used and produced by these agents"

(Merrifield, 1993, 523). It is the planned, controlled, ordered space of "frontal relations" that finds its "'objective expression' in the monuments, *towers*, factories and in the 'bureaucratic and political authoritarianism immanent to a repressive space'" (Lefebvre, 1991, 49, in ibid., emphasis added). Conceived, abstract space is the global "downtown space" of and for the forces of rationalization, privatization, commodification and homogenization, which in order to operate and expand presupposes, desires and produces homogeneity. Representations of space are thus inherently antagonistic to all uncontrolled differences (and diversity), "such as those which originate in the body", which it constantly seeks to absorb and erase (ibid., 524). In short, it is the rational, synthetic, white, male, hetero-normative, bourgeois space; the realm of the "homogenizing forces of money, commodities, capital and the phallus" (ibid., 524). Accordingly, most often but not always public space "originates as a representation of space, as for instance a court-house square, a monumental plaza, a public square, or a pedestrian shopping district (Harvey, 1993; Hershkovitz, 1993 in Mitchell, 1995, 115). At large,

> the problem under capitalism is, according to Lefebvre, that primacy is given to the conceived; all which renders insignificant the 'unconscious' level of lived experience (34). *What is lived and perceived is subsumed under what is conceived* (Lefebvre, 1991, in Merrifield, 1993, 524, emphasis added).

The strength of thinking in terms of representations of space lies particularly in how it identifies a specific and yet generalizable space – the space we are concerned with in this thesis. But what is crucial is moreover the fact that it simultaneously identifies this space in its epistemology, its conception, and genealogy. In other words, representations of space presents a grounded demystification of space and the processes of homogenization. The space described is the invasive space that glosses place and sells itself as development and modernization. That means that we now have a tangible concept to grasp the homogeneity in the hegemonic idea, image, discourse and representation of 'the city'; one that is moreover synonymous with power, the global and universal, the abstract and synthetic, and I would add, utility or instrumentality, erasure and thus coloniality. To be clear, representation of space point to the underlying conceived level that drives the production and expansion of a particular, place-less, physical space; vice versa it is that physical space that references, represents its conception. To speak of representations of space thus entails a critical awareness of this conception; one that prevent us from being lured into the otherwise naturalizing rhetoric of representations of space.

At large, Lefebvre's representations of space, or conceived space, does not only affirm our

concern with 'the city' and its global spatial and symbolic politics, but moreover affirms the geopolitics, the coloniality of knowledge. For the strong emphasis on conception and representation, representations of space also immediately invite us to think about time and how the coloniality of time, as we will see in the second theory chapter, might not only be comprehended in quite a similar way, but might actually co-constitute representations of space. For now, however, conceived space essentially addresses the forces of homogenization in a strictly spatial sense. Nevertheless, it provides a powerful tool for how to read, denormalize and contextualize space in theory and everyday life alike. From a decolonial perspective representations of space could be read as an intra-european approximation to the coloniality of space.

Superficially, *representational space* is thus the inversion of the previous and stands first and foremost for the *lived* and *dominated* space. This conceptualization of lived space, and the importance Lefebvre thereby attributes to daily life and "the partial unknowability, the mystery and secretiveness, the non-verbal subliminality of spaces of representation" is said to be one of the most distinguishing and embodying aspects of his work. Merrifield captures it as the space that is "directly lived space, the space of everyday life. It is space experienced through the complex symbols and images of its 'inhabitants' and 'users'" (1993, 523). Lefebvre describes it in various ways: as directional, situational, relational, elusive and fluid, dynamic and essentially qualitative: "It embraces the loci of passion of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies *time*" (1991, 42). In short, one could say representational space, in the first most ontological sense and contrast to space, refers to place. "Place is synonymous with what is lived in the sense that daily life practices are embedded in particular places" (Merrifield, 1993, 525). Place is, however, too easily reduced to location, whereby we loose out of sight the fact that place (land) is not only disputed and fought over, but is also the locus of life. It illustrates the great risk of reduction and presents the crux of thinking in triads. In short, why we require the third, spatial practice. What further politicizes the conception of representations of space is the emphasis on representation. Soja, slightly modified the name to *spaces of representation* (Soja, 1996, 67), to highlight that "these lived spaces of representation are … the terrain for … spaces of resistance to the dominant order arising precisely from their subordinate, peripheral, or marginalized positioning" (Soja, 1996, 68). In other words, the concept of representational space explicitly refers to the central importance of in/visibility, and to what degree the 'political' is defined by what is represented and has the power to represent itself. Representational space is thus also the space of re-appropriation and the one to 'occupy'.

Representational space therefore enables us look at public space in a different and encouraging way and helps us to understand the strategic importance of space for social struggle. It addresses the injustice in and control over representation and thereby the need for visibility. The city as the visible, the host of the means of representation, and the seat of power, is thus targeted and not just symbolically, but physically and spatially confronted. Something that we have been increasingly observing in recent years in the series of long-term urban occupations (Occupy movement, Gezi Park, etc) revolts (Arab Spring) and urban manifestation around the earth.

Now, *spatial practice* is in a sense the synthesis of the first two as it is considered with the "process of producing the material form of social spatiality" and "both medium and outcome of human activity, behavior and experience" (Soja, 1996, 66). Spatial practice is essentially the use of space (16) "which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance" (Lefebvre, 1991, 33). It is, however, also the space with the closest affinity to *perception*. Spatial practices "result from a perceived space [and] structure daily life and a broader urban reality"; or in other words, "people's perceptions condition their daily reality with respect to the usage of space: for example, their routes, networks, patterns of interaction that link places set aside for work, play and leisure" (Merrifield, 1993, 524). While spatial practices 'secrete' society's space, they are revealed through the 'deciphering' of space (Lefebvre, 1991, 38). Lefebvre extends this by putting great emphasis on the body in understanding how the three moments conceived-lived-perceived interrelate, given that the "relationship to space of a 'subject' who is a member of a group or society implies a certain relationship to their body and vice versa (ibid., 40).

Lefebvre's emphasis on perception in theorizing spatial practice allows us to see that neither spatial practice nor perception are predetermined or given, but once again the outcome and sum of representations and discourses that structure and give meaning to life. In other words, they are the co-constitutive sum of visual, sensual and epistemic 'contents' that inform and give meaning to human action and thought. Lefebvre summarizes it this way: "spatial practice consists in a projection onto a (spatial) field of all aspects, elements and moments of social practice" (Lefebvre, 1991, 8). Spatial practices thus ultimately ask for what is predominantly perceived and enables us to think of the conditioning of especially popular thought and action, and how we can only effectively think of social

space by not excluding the 'subject'. In short, "spatial practices are fundamental in ensuring continuity and cohesion in terms of overall capitalist social space through the way space is perceived" (Merrifield, 1993, 525), or vice versa, (global) capital accumulation requires a specific compliant (local) spatial practice. The concept of spatial practices thus, essentially, points to two possible options for how to act in space: either in compliance with the hegemonic order, or in resistance to it. "The battle becomes the moment of struggle between conceiving space through representation and living place through actual sensual experience and representational meaning" (Merrifield, 1993, 525). Labour and consumption practices thus clearly belong to the first, while community building and organizing, for instance, belong to the second. In short, spatial practice is an option in itself and an inherently open question that invites us to rethink of social spatiality in terms of consciousness and agency. The significance of thinking in terms of spatial practice therefore becomes especially apparent with regard to emancipatory politics and how they are entangled in the dialectics of the local and global (ibid., 526). It further also allows us to make a distinction between spatial and social practice, and how a particular (global) spatial practice has the power to destroy (local) social practices.

> For Lefebvre, any emancipatory politics presupposes a dialectics of space, a particular set of theoretically informed spatial practices aimed at overcoming separation and dissociation between the global 'whole' and the 'local' everyday. Apprehending that the maintenance of *the conceived global whole is dependent on the local lived level* is somehow integral for informing subversive spatial practices (Merrifield, 1993, 526, emphasis).

In sum, we can say that the production of space and the spatial triad do not only help us understand the traditional notion and epistemology of space and its limitations, and to thereby develop a much more socially and historically sensitive conception, or at least approach to a new science of space, but it greatly corresponds with our concern with "the city", homogenization and the critique of Eurocentrism and the dominant *representation of time*. More specifically, it allows us, with representations of space, to give a name to and pinpoint the space we are concerned with: the, decolonially speaking, modern/colonial space produced and required by the coloniality of power. In and of itself, it nuances the spatial politics around space and place, the global and the local, the abstract and universal versus the lived and particular, in great detail and thereby makes explicit the current and future political significance of spatiality.

> Our re-evaluation of subdivisions and representations, along with their materials and matériel, need not be confined to the specialized disciplines we have been discussing. On the contrary, it should extend to *philosophy*, which after all *does propose representations of space and time*. Nor should a critique of philosophical ideologies be assumed to release us from the need to examine political

ideologies in so far as they relate to space. And in point of fact such ideologies relate to space in a most significant way, because they intervene in space in the form of strategias. Their effectiveness in this role - and especially a new development, the fact that worldwide strategies are now seeking to generate a global space, their own space, and to set it up as an absolute - is another reason, and by no means an insignificant one, for developing a new concept of space. (Lefebvre, 1991, 105)

[S]pace is always set to a particular conceived representation because it is the dominant conception - an ideal type of homogenized global capitalist space - that is tied to the hegemonic relations of production and sexuality. It is the realm of dispassionate 'objects' rationally 'ordered in space'; a deracinated space where representation is simply the representation of the ruling groups, just as the ruling ideas were for Marx. Here, knowledge and power attempt to reign supreme and impose what they know onto lived sensual and sexual experience. Correspondingly, everyday life becomes a practical and sensual activity acted out in place (Merrifield, 1996, 525).

2.2 Decoloniality and Time

This chapter will revolve around "time" and its decolonial critique. To refresh our memory: our concern lies with "the city" as a temporal representation – as *the* logo of modernity in space. Our curiosity lies with the relevance of this temporal imaginary, embodied by "the city", for decolonization, democratization and emancipation. The chapter will consist of two parts. The first will be based on Walter Mignolo's work on modernity/coloniality as a time based concept. Here we will focus on the emergence of the modern idea of time in relation to geopolitics of knowledge and the making of the imperial/colonial difference. In the second part we will then turn to Rolando Vázquez's work on representation and the ongoing force of modern temporality in the present. Through an emphasis on chronological explanations and representations of historical events and social struggle, we will demonstrate the immanence of modern temporality our own academic frameworks and the limits of understanding it entails. At large, the chapter hopefully provides the necessary theoretical foundation in order to afterward more directly apply the decolonial critique of in dialogue with Henri Lefebvre time to the city.

Let us begin with a general introduction to the critique of time and the role it plays for the modernity/coloniality collective. Even though this chapter will largely be based on the contributions made by two members of the collective, the initial idea is to show that the critique of time is not reducible or attributable to an individual author, but that it presents a unifying point of critique and departure in the very formation of the decolonial collective, that is the disputing modernity's monopoly over enunciation and representation. In other words, the through the critique of time they since it first

and foremost contests the ways in which they themselves have been classified as always behind in time; how their geography has been defined by "someone else" in terms of temporality. The basic decolonial premise is thus the need for a new understanding of modernity (Escobar, 2007, 180); that is a

> a re-reading of the 'myth of modernity', […] of modernity's underside, namely the imputation of the superiority of European civilization, coupled with the assumption that Europe's development must be followed unilaterally by every other culture, by force if necessary – what Dussel terms 'the developmentalist fallacy' (e.g., 1993, 2000). […] 'There is no question', writes Mignolo (2000, 59), 'that Quijano, Dussel and I are *reacting not only to the force of a historical imaginary but also to the actuality of this imaginary today* (ibid., 184-188, emphasis added).

Accordingly, Anibal Quijano sees in "the idea of history of human civilization as a trajectory that departed from a state of nature and culminated in Europe" (Quijano, 2000, 542) one of the two principal founding myths of Eurocentrism. "From this myth originated the specifically Eurocentric evolutionist perspective of linear and unidirectional movement and changes in human history" (ibid., 551). The second myth is the accompanying assumption of the "differences between Europe and non-Europe as natural (racial) differences and not consequences of a history of power" (ibid. 542). The result is that "we" still today tend to equate the adjective "non-European" with that of "pre-European" (ibid., 556); a naturalization of "racial" differences that Walter Mignolo, as we will see in the following pages, refers to as making of *the imperial and colonial difference*.

For the decolonial collective, the Eurocentric master narrative of a total history in its nexus with imperialism is particularly reflected in the discourse of so called "discovery" of the Americas. Generally speaking, it embodies the global inequality in the faculty to frame and represent one's own local historical experiences. More specifically however, the notion of "discovery" stands in brutal contradiction to the Latin American historical experiences, and thereby represents a different locus of enunciation, namely that of Europe/ the West. Simply put, it was obviously not those who were mass murdered and colonized, who then felt it was appropriate to refer to their enslavement as a discovery. The notion "discovery" thus obviously belongs to the vocabulary invented by the colonizer to obscure and legitimize his practices. Only the "superior", who records "world history", "finds" (and names) the "inferior", and not vice versa. Those are some of the arguments why for the decolonial collective the ""discovery" of America and the genocide of Indians and African slaves are the very foundations of "'modernity' more so than the French and Industrial Revolutions" (Vázquez, 2009, 3). The actuality, continuity or vitality, if you want, of the discourse of the discovery, next to of its "obvious"

geographical and "racial" bias, underlines the degree to which Eurocentrism has been consolidated and naturalized globally. The apparent lack of widespread public resistance to this particular example in "world history", further underlines this and the role knowledge, appropriation and representation play in these processes.

This is how Quijano debunks the master narrative of chronology in the example of the discovery as a-historical and ideological in relation to capital and slavery.

> From the Eurocentric point of view reciprocity, slavery, serfdom, and independent commodity production are all perceived as a historical sequence prior to commodification of the labour force. They are precapital. And they are considered not only different, but radically incompatible with capital. The fact is however, that in America they did not emerge in a linear historical sequence; none of them was a mere extension of the old precapitalist form, nor were they incompatible with capital. Slavery in America, was deliberately established and organized as a commodity in order to produce good for the world market and to serve the purpose and needs of capitalism (Quijano, 2000, 550).

Quijano makes explicit that "history can […] also be something that can be *produced* by the action of people, by their calculations, their intention, their decision, and therefore as something that can be designed, and consequently, can have meaning (Quijano, 1988a in ibid., 547, emphasis added). He also points us to the fact that only "with America could capital consolidate and obtain global predominance, becoming precisely the axis around which all forms of labor were articulated" (ibid., 551). Thinking rhetoric and logic together, he reveals that "the model of power based on coloniality also involved a *cognitive model*, a new perspective of knowledge within non-Europe was the past, and because of that inferior, if not always primitive" (ibid., 552, emphasis added). This can further be seen in the ways in which colonialism, from the perspective of Eurocentrism, has been analyzed only "in terms of economic and political control of territory and population, as if the knowledge being generated was outside Western imperial/colonial history" (Mignolo, 2001, 205).

> Without considering the entire experience of colonialism and coloniality, this intellectual trademark, as well as the long-lasting global hegemony of Eurocentrism, would hardly be explicable. The necessities of capital as such alone do not exhaust, could not exhaust, the explanation of the character and trajectory of this perspective of knowledge (Quijano, 2000, 556)

The decolonial critique (of time) therefore notifies and alerts us of the critical importance to recognize the intimate relationship between "the imaginary dimension, social action and forms of production of knowledge" (Quijano, 2002, 77), or simply put: between power, knowledge and subjectivity. In doing so, it responds to and contests modernity's monopoly over enunciation and

representation and Eurocentrism's epistemological imperiality (Mignolo, 2011, 202). More specifically, it addresses the very conditions of possibility that allowed for the consolidation and naturalization of the assumption of Europe's historical and geographical centrality; how Europe "had been chosen by Destiny as the final meaning of universal history" (Dussel, 2002, 222). In other words, how it was possible for Europeans to convince themselves "that in some way they had autoproduced themselves as civilization" and that they were "naturally (i.e. racially) superior to the rest of the world" (Quijano, 2000, 552). What unites the modernity/coloniality project or decolonial collective is thus the visualization of the "[c]onfrontation between *historical experience* and the Eurocentric perspective on knowledge", including its logic of "time" and master narrative of history (ibid., 552, emphasis added). In short, how "knowledge itself is an integral part of imperial processes of appropriation" (Mignolo, 2011, 205). Simply put, the modernity/coloniality collective identifies in chronology with regard to time what Edward Said identified with regard to difference and termed Orientalism: the imperial construction and naturalization of colonial identities and histories, that is the control of subjectivity through the monopoly over knowledge production and (its) representation. Walter Mignolo describes this strategy, in the case of the coloniality of time, as chrono-politics. He says it is a

> specific aspect of theo- and ego-politics of knowledge; it is a civilizational principle that serves to ostracize all who do not conform to the modern conventions of time, that devalues "subalterns" for being slow and not racing toward death, which in the rhetoric of modernity is translated as "progress and development:' Chrono-politics, in the last analysis, shows how the coloniality of knowledge and being is managed by the Eurocentered system of ideas built around the colonization of time (Mignolo, 2011, 178).

> We cannot see the ideas of progress, modernization, universality, and the like, without thinking of exploitation, violence, and segregation. The scholars of the modernity/ coloniality research program have made large efforts to re-write the history of modernity so that modernity is only seen in and through its relation with coloniality (Vázquez, 2009, 3).

The remaining chapter will now be divided into two sections. In the first we will listen to Walter Mignolo and look at the construction and genealogy of the coloniality of time, based on the chapter (De)Coloniality at Large – Time and the Colonial Difference, from his book The Darker Side of Western Modernity – Global Futures, Decolonial Options. Here, we will pay attention to the discursive transformations, and their geopolitical circumstances, occurring in Europe particularly during the 16th and 18th century. We will focus particularly on the creation of imperial and colonial difference and *how geography was translated into chronology,* and finally, how the coloniality of time appears today under neoliberalism. In the second section we will then turn to a variety of articles written by Rolando

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Vázquez and how he connects the coloniality of time with social struggle. This will involve a concern with the effects of "time" on historicism and the limits it poses to understanding historical events like rebellions through established academic frameworks, the significance of chronology with regard to absence and presence (representation), and how to delink from such academic practices and read events and struggles decolonially as epistemic struggles.

2.2.1 THE COLONIALITY OF TIME

Mignolo (2011) makes clear from the start that "time" "is not an existing entity but a human concept" (150), belonging to the realm of culture and not to nature (151). This also means that time has no ontological existence of its own, but merely a fictional one (176). The same is true for "tradition", "anthropos" or "space", to name but a few. The fact however remains that nonetheless all these, and other similar notions, are generally taken for granted as universal truths – as truths without parenthesis. Yet, all these were "inventions of Western imperial modernity, inventions that contribute to consolidate Western modernity" (176-7). In order to comprehend how all this came about we need to connect the question of time to Europe's 16th century image of the Other and how it was transformed in the processes of colonization and secularization.

> Up to 1500, Christian cartography left the unknown and the monsters inhabiting its margins. *The monsters and the unknown were located in space*. […] The emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuits [then] rapidly transformed this imaginary, [and] the monsters were translated into *barbarians* and cannibals and were no longer located in the unknown space of the planet, but in the New World or Las Indias Occidentales (155, emphasis added).

The "discovery", or conquest, thus re-located the already know unknown, the "barbarians", across the Atlantic, and essentially applied an old category of Othering to a 'new' location. In short, the Other was attributed a specific place in space, but not yet in time. "Barbarians were different and lesser humans, *but not traditional or primitive back in time*. Nor were they conceived as remnants of the past" (155, emphasis added). The term however already homogenized and dehumanized an entire continent of diverse peoples and cultures. It was the first modern/colonial category to express the newly born modern/colonial imaginary; the moment Europe extended its gaze to the global; the birth of modernity and of the imperial and colonial difference. However, with the Enlightenment and the transition from sacred to secular history, "barbarians" were soon replaced by "primitives".

"[B]arbarians" became an image of modernity to classify certain people who, subsequently, had no

choice but to deal with the fact that they had been classified as "barbarians". Coloniality of knowledge works here as an *epistemic strategy* to create the colonial difference. At the inception of the colonial matrix of power, "barbarians" were located in space. By the eighteenth century, when "time" came into the picture and the colonial difference was redefined, *"barbarians" were translated into primitives located in time rather than in space*. "Primitives" were in the lower scale of a chronological order driving toward "civilization"" (153, emphasis added).

Time, in other words, soon assumed the role natural law did during the 16th and 17th century (177). What before was determined by God and to be observed in nature, formulated in the "chain of beings", "a model that ranked the entities of the world from rocks to human beings" (155), was now going the be determined by science and history. More specifically, "time was conceived and naturalized as both the measure of human history (modernity) and the time-scale of human beings (primitives) in their distance with modernity" (153). The 18th century secularization, referred to here as the second phase of modernity, thus "redefined the logic of coloniality, and "time" became a central rhetorical figure in the self-definition and self-fashioning of modernity: modernity is a "time" based concept" (163). Instrumental in the process, was how "time" allowed for the rearticulation of the imperial/colonial difference through "the distinction between nature and culture, and the distinction between modernity and tradition" (151).

By the eighteenth century, the translation of barbarians into primitives supplanted the "chain of beings" model with a new one. The new model had two main features. First, primitives were closer to nature and civilized people were at the peak of culture. Second, primitives were traditional, and civilized people were modern" (155-6).

Any observed cultural differences were now "classified according to their proximity to modernity or to tradition" (160), making "time" the "essential 'connector' of colonial and imperial differences throughout the globe" (168). The new modern temporal dualisms of nature-culture and tradition-modernity thus attained a comparative force on a global scale and "tradition began to gain ground as the image of a "still" human past" (174). "Tradition" plays a particularly interesting role because the "idea of modernity needed its own tradition in order to be distinguished as modernity" (160) – the Middle Ages (152). In essence, "history as "time" entered into the picture to place societies in an imaginary chronological line going from nature to culture, from barbarism to civilization following a progressive destination toward some point of arrival (151). Consequently, also the Enlightenment, and the challenges it posed to the previous established Christian order, could be integrated under chronology whereby Europe not only conserved the assumption of its racial superiority, but furthermore translated it into a universal scientific formula "for infinity". In other

words and with regard to human diversity and epistemic disdain, "[s]ecular history and science just transformed Christian strategies that, during the sixteenth century, devalued Inca, Aztec, and Maya epistemologies" (172). Thus, at large and with regard to universality and the geopolitics of knowledge, the Western notion of "time" on the one hand united "encyclopedic knowledge with mercantilism and merchant demands" (166) and on the other hand, it until today "supports "history" and "science" to acquire a hegemonic force and to develop a comparative point of view that allows for the erasure or devaluation of other forms of knowledge" (172). The central decolonial argument, however, might be that "there is no modernity and tradition beyond the rhetoric of the same modernity that invented itself, by inventing its own tradition and making believe that the concept of tradition is universal" (Mignolo, 2011, 164).

> Modernity, progress, and development cannot be conceived without a linear concept of time defining a point of arrival. To understand what tradition and underdevelopment means, it was necessary to have, first, the concept of *modernity and progress/development*, since they (tradition and development) *are non-existing entities outside the discourse of modernity and development*. Coloniality is the hidden, logical connection between modernity and tradition (164, emphasis added). […][Moreover] the distinction between modernity/ tradition is part of the larger strategy of the denial of coevalness, the creation and reproduction of colonial and imperial differences, and, more generally, of building and maintaining the colonial matrix of power (174).

Two unavoidable key figures in this regard that also add to the geography of the enunciation are Immanuel Kant (18th century) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (19th century). "Kant imagined that human societies could be organized following the model provided by the law of nature" (151), and in coupling race with territories "gave the colonial and imperial differences in space its final format […] a universal perspective on history based on a racial distribution of the planet (163). In "Anthropology" Kant argued that

> civilization can only be *defined, implemented, and guided* by the white man who is in Europe at the present moment of a linear, historical time. Modernity and tradition, progress and stagnation, *city and country*, speed and slow motion, and so on were *distinctive temporal features* of the second stage of the modern/colonial world (163, emphasis added).

However, writing in the 18th century, Kant was more concerned with mapping the, for him, qualitative differences of race in space when formulating his universal geography. In the 19th century then it was Hegel who translated Kant's geography into chronology (153). In his lecture series on the *Philosophy of History (1970, vol. 12)* he divided "history" into four periods, spaces of time – the Oriental, the Greek, the Roman and the Germanic world (Dussel, 2013, 24), and locked himself into an entirely Eurocentric, and even Germano-centric reflection (ibid., 27) – the south of Europe is already

negated (ibid., 25). Moving from the philosophy of history to the History of Philosophy (Hegel, 1970, vol. 18-20), Hegel eventually formulates a universal history with "the Spirit's" movement from East to West. Essentially, the "Spirit" begins its journey with Oriental philosophy from China and India, then moves on to Greek philosophy and arrives with the Arabic and "scholarly" philosophy in Europe with the philosophies of the Middle Ages. Little surprising, his final stage is the new modern philosophy (26), as an exclusively European phenomenon.

> Hegel, as it is know, organized Kant's cosmo-polis on a *temporal scale* that relocated the spatial distribution of continents in a chronological order that followed a certain *directionality* of history, from East to West. The planet was all of a sudden living in *different temporalities*, with Europe in the present and the rest in the past (Mignolo, 2011, 151, emphasis added).

Ever since Hegel refined the colonial difference by translating geography into chronology, ""time" is a central concept in the imaginary of the modern/colonial world system" (152) and deeply anchored in modern subjectivity. It is moreover constitutional of modernity and modern identity at large. In other words, ""[t]ime," cyclical or linear, of nature or of human history, as we know it today, is a result and a consequence of the colonial matrix of power imaginary" (171). Hegel thereby also lay the philosophical foundation for the political justification of the "Scramble for Africa" in the 19th century and the 20th century ideologies of progress and under-/development (ibid., 152). Accordingly, also the current emphasis on "Western values" is integral to the discourse of modernity and linear time, and thus rests on and reinforces notions of imperial and colonial difference. However, in historicizing the modern idea of time we can recognize its force in the present and how "colonialism" and "post-colonialism" are equally two notions internal to the very same modern rhetoric of time and its chronological representation of history. Speaking of coloniality at large, thus disrupts modernity's chronological chain of history in which colonialism is entirely relegated to the distant past. Coloniality therefore allows us to see continuity, to see the presence of the past, or in other words, how, contrary to popular conception, there have been no fundamental ruptures in the history of Western civilization since at least the 16th century, particularly with regard to philosophy and knowledge production. The decolonial critique of time thus enables us to historicize and demystify modernity's claim to universality as well as to visualize the continuity of "time" as coloniality in the undoubtable force it has in the present. In other words, how "[c]oloniality is not a derivative or an unintended side effect of modernity, [but] coeval and thus constitutive of modernity" (Vázquez, 2009, 3).

> Whether in its capitalist or socialist guise, then, history and temporality reign supreme in the euro-western episteme. […] The western intellectual tradition is firmly rooted in the priority of temporal

metaphors and thought processes, while [for instance] American Indians inherently *think spatially* (George E. Tinker, in Mignolo, 2011, 149, emphasis added).

The very essence of Western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion; further it assumes that at a particular point in the unraveling of this sequence, the peoples of Western Europe became the guardians of the world. The same ideology that sparked the Crusades, the Age of Exploration, the Age of Imperialism, and the recent crusade against Communism all involve the affirmation that time is peculiarly related to the destiny of the people of Western Europe. And later, of course, of the United States. (Deloria, in Mignolo, 2011, 159)

Accordingly, also under "neoliberal globalization", "time" in general and linear time in particular reveal themselves in dominant discourses, practices and global dynamics. For instance, a significant component of globalization as the age of information is said to be the so-called time-space compression, or acceleration of time. Mignolo, refers to it as the Survival of the Fastest to describe the ways in which our lives are increasingly subjected to the global laws of the market and how it makes of time an essential resource. That is being first, faster, and more efficient are believed to be the common ground for global competition, whether institutionally or personally. The new authority setting the parameters for everyday life is "time", something that is moreover thought of as an indisputable fact and immutable "sign of the times".

But how many of the 6.8 billion people on the planet dwell in the acceleration of time and in the survival of the faster? One could say that at least half, the half of the population that live in mega-cities. However, it is not necessarily the entire population of a mega-city who will be trapped in the acceleration of time, which is a feature primarily of *the lifestyle of bankers, builders, media figures, politicians, and all of those who strive to make more, to succeed, to get "there" first*. The *middle class*, too, who live to consume (instead of consuming to live), will be trapped in the acceleration of time, in the realm of consumerism: to make more, to buy more, and to buy the newest and, the best, to be not only fast, but also first (179).

While Mignolo reminds us that belief systems and cultures across the earth continue to differ and that the acceleration of time is not true for everyone. This is even more specified in how he allocates the acceleration of time not to the West, the North or a specific group of countries, but primarily to the urban. In other words, cities today, particularly the mega and global cities, appear as the predominant geography of the modern episteme; the locus of modern spatial practices that obey "time" as we know it. The city is also different from the state, that under neoliberalism is considered slow and inefficient (177). On the contrary, mega and global cities much more than states bundle and participate in global flows, reflecting how today "chrono-politics takes place mainly in the spheres of the market, finances, and media" (177). In Mignolo's words: "corporate ideology makes of time an essential component of efficiency and the incremental pace of production; it disregards the possibility

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of overproduction; it denies that "wasting time" could benefit the many, whose labor is being sold instead of being used for the benefit of the community (178). By linking "corporate ideology" with "time" and the urban Mignolo allows us to recognize how the imperial/colonial difference is currently re-articulated around the geographical, cultural and epistemic boundaries of "the city". In other words, how the temporal map of "development" or better "civilization" is redrawn along the lines of the urban. Before we now move on to the second segment and how, more specifically, chronology obstructs and limits our capacity to understand social struggles and historical events, we can summarize and conclude until here that:

> We have to acknowledge that the awareness of history has never been as prominent as it has been in modernity. It is only in modern times that history acquires the rank of 'science'. History became a reference point of identity and difference in every aspect of human life. […] The elaboration of history as a rationally consistent discourse that [also Hanna] Arendt traces in Kant and Hegel is a widespread notion in modernity. It entertains a chronological conception of time that is seldom questioned. This seemingly innocent awareness of the past is itself historically constructed. […] The 'historicality' of historical consciousness gives a critical outlook that deprives the modern conception of history of its 'already given' legitimacy. Historical consciousness is thus revealed as a social construction that is permeated by power interests and biased perspectives. It is a notion of history which backs the 'objectivity' and 'irrevocability' of the structures of oppression and their social chimeras such as the promise of progress. In historicizing historical 'truths' we can unveil, if not their ideological content, at least the limits they pose to understanding (Vázquez, 2006, 49-50).

2.2.2 THE POLITICS OF TIME

This last segment will be divided into three sections, following the logic of modernity, coloniality, decoloniality. We will begin with the modern conception and representation of "time" and "history", and how "time" and chronology appear in the work of the historian and our academic frameworks more generally. Here the emphases will be on the universality of a total history, the negation of the past and objectivity of the present. This will lead us to the second section and the coloniality of time, now in relation to the imposition of time coupled with the negation of the past and active destruction of the links with the past as a strategy of colonizing subjectivity. In the final step we will then dedicate ourselves to social struggle, and how to read social movements, uprisings and historical events decolonially. Here we will pay special attention to the importance of in/visibility, representation and accordingly also the role of the city.

Let us begin by connecting history and representation. The decolonial thinker with Mexican

roots and sociology professor at the University College Roosevelt in the Netherlands, Rolando Vázquez, invites us in a series of articles to question the relationship between the modern representation of "history", historical consciousness and the perception of what is 'real'. He demonstrates the relevance of the decolonial critique of time by applying it to the work of the historian and historicism more broadly. In thinking about the connotation of past, present and future under modernity, he lets us see that "history" – the past – is "represented on the basis of the present, it is fixated as *an object of presence*" (2006, 47, emphasis added). That is, how the truth value of the facts rationally represented by the historian is "asserted in the evidence of present data; their certitude is fully contained within *the traces found in presence*" (ibid., 45, emphasis added). Nevertheless, "the facts rationally represented by historicism belong to the past; they are already absent" (ibid., 45). More specifically, "[m]odern representations of history reify the past, depriving it of its latent force" (ibid. 49). What, in other words, is questioned here is "the confusion of elevating historical traces to the rank of the actual content of history" (ibid., 52), of reducing the intangible past in its infinite complexity to a rationally ordered object. Vázquez says "[t]he activity of finding historical causes is far from understanding the ongoing influence of the past in the present. The present cannot be reduced to the logical result of a series of past facts, as if it were the materialization of previously established consequences" (ibid. 49). What is *present*ed and perceived as 'real' is thus exclusively constituted by and contained within the immediate 'present'. The past is discriminated as absent, as no longer present. Simply put, Vázquez talks about the affirmation of the present through the negation of the past; how the present is explained and defended through the consistent chronological representations of "what was". This way the past merely becomes the answer to the question of the present, and not a question itself (ibid., 47). However, not only is the past reduced to match the present, but also the present is reduced to appearances. Everything beyond appearance, beyond representation, is considered non-existent. This way the past, as invisibility, can never enter into the present. Vázquez does not suggest that 'reason' and the academic frameworks of the historian and social scientist more generally are useless, but that our capability for understanding both, the past and the present, is severely limited "once we try to address that which is beyond the realm of appearances, beyond the visibility of the actual, beyond representation" (ibid., 47).

> Modernity's establishment of the real is such that we live under the assumption that there is no other way of knowing and being outside the realm of representation. By establishing the real as visibility, as representation, all that is not visible (presented or re-presented) is discredited as unreal (2010, 7).

The claim to universality based on modernity's representation of a total history thus not only establishes a certain perception of what is 'real' but enunciates a knowledge that is "continually being called into question by a history based on difference, where *the present is constantly interspersed by the past*. 'The silences and absences of history are speaking their presence'" (Mignolo, 2005, 157, in 2009, 6, emphasis added). The sociology of absences thus also apply to the time, that is the absencing of the past from the present for the challenge and danger it poses to the narrative of chronology as an open and unpredictable diversity. Within the self-referential discourse of modernity, however, "history", as a "*space of experience* has been neglected in favour of history as an archive where one can gather data for the sequential interpretations of *the real as presence*" (2006, 51, emphasis added). Though the emphasis on presence Vázquez allows us to see the perception of the real through presence and presence as visibility, as representation.

> In the relation between absence and presence the 'traditional' time differentiation between past, present and future is blurred. The modern conception of time is embedded in the metaphysical interpretation of the world, in the thinking of presence. By questioning the relation between what appears in presence and what remains in absence, the structure of time, the past–present–future divide falls apart. A critique of time has to venture into the thinking of the invisible, of absence (54).

Vázquez allows us to see how time and visibility coincide in presence, and how presence is reduced to the present at the expense of the 'present past'. The invisible is of course the invisibility of the past, of coloniality, its absence from the modern rhetoric and perception that bears the "imposition of a time that dismisses the past, turns the future into the teleology of progress and holds the present to be the only site of the real" (2009, 2). More generally, all this brings us back to the geopolitics of knowledge and how the modern/colonial system of power was "also implemented through an epistemic apparatus and an accompanying *regime of representation*" (2010, 10, emphasis added). More specifically however, we learn from Vázquez that the "equation between presence and the real is fundamental to understanding the hegemonic power that the modern strategies of representation in their *visuality and spatialization* hold (2010, 7, emphasis added). He thereby also allows us to close the gap between time and space through representation and how modern spatial practices can also be understood as practices of display and spectacle.

> Our argument is that the modern/colonial practices of display and spectacle endowed with the certainty of the senses the basic mental constructions needed for the functioning of the modern colonial system of power. The expansion and persistence of the modern/colonial system of power needed a 'material' regime of appropriation but also a regime of representation that would *legitimize and naturalize the social relations of domination*. Through the control of representation, the idea of race but also the notion of temporal discrimination were given legitimacy and credibility

in the metropolis as well as in the colonies [...]The focus on *practices of display and spectacle* brings to light some of the mechanisms through which large proportions of the world's population are being excluded from the realm of visibility of the modern consumer society. *The modern/colonial regime of representation is a machinery of silencing, of forgetting, or more precisely of invisibilizing 'the other', common people.* The other is either produced as non-existing (Santos, 2006), or as spectacle, *'the other' is made dispensable.* Most importantly, common people, the marginalized are expelled from *the visibility of the political* (2010, 11-14, emphasis added).

Vázquez enables us to see how through the practices of display and spectacle and the regime of representation modernity hides its underside coloniality. Furthermore, we can recognize through representation how modernity's epistemic and spatial practices coincide in simulating "the real". The reduction of "the real" to appearance (visual), to presence (space) and thus the present (time) thereby corresponds to the privilege modernity gives to the visual senses, to empiricism. In other words, Vázquez, quite similarly to Lefebvre, recognizes an intimate relationship between perception representation and conception in the context of a modern/colonial "political economy", conquest or monopoly of the senses. The main difference is that Vázquez sees it to be "grounded on the modern notion of time [which] constitutes under this perspective the politics of time of the modernity/ coloniality compound" (2009, 3).

The phantasmagoria of modernity is precisely a *mechanism of transforming seeing into believing and of fabricating realities out of simulation.* It is a mechanism through which modernity constitutes itself as a regime of visibility and more generally, of representation; thus asserting itself as reality (2009, 6, emphasis added).

The reduction of presence to the present is thus also an act of silencing, of censorship and exclusion. In short, what is not 'present/ed' does not exist or is forgotten. This way the Other, alterity, contradiction, resistance and so forth are all made absent, either as non-existence or as belonging to the past. Absence is however not only a side effect of modernity/coloniality's hegemonic regime of representation. Absence is actively produced through several colonial strategies of erasure aimed at annihilating local cultures, identities, knowledges, memories and thereby any seeds of resistance. By *erasing* the social *memory* also the ties to the past – and to the land – are cut. In other words, the erasure of the "mental space" is an elementary component of colonizing the mind and of colonization more generally. In other words, These practices that constitute the politics of time, have been "oriented to sever the past from the realm of experience, strategies of erasure. Enormous resources and political capital have been invested in the destruction of the links with the past" (2006, 5). Thus, as a strategy of domination, the politics of time not only contains the negation of the past but also the concerted imposition of modern temporality and the targeted assault on the knowledge and memory of the

oppressed. This is what "distinguishes these acts of destruction of the past from pre-modern acts of cultural destruction" and reveals "an economy of destruction that is not reducible to be a side effect or a necessity of economic exploitation" (2009, 6). Thus, through the politics of time we are able to see modernity/coloniality's epistemic violence and how it is "grounded on the possibility of discriminating other knowledges as being non-existent, backward (that is belonging to the absence of the past) or mythical (not pertaining to objectivity) and thus *denying their role as legitimate sources of experience*" (2010, 7, emphasis added). In other words, "[m]odern systems of domination are not just about material exploitation; they are also about a politics of time that produces the other by rendering it invisible, relegating the other to oblivion. There is an intimate connection between oblivion and invisibility (Vázquez, 2009, 2). At large, we can conclude until here that from the decolonial perspective

> the modernity/ coloniality tandem is seen as the institution of a politics of time that is not only geared towards the control of historical narratives (Chakrabarty, Fanon, Mignolo), but also towards the production of specific economic and political practices oriented to sever the oppressed from their past, their memory. It is a politics that promotes modern temporality as a strategy of domination. It imposes the universal claim that the present is the only site of the real, while dismissing the past as archaic. The past is represented as a fixed entity with only documentary value. […] [T]he imposition of modern time is coeval to the widespread injustice and violence of modernity/ coloniality. The question of time is used to address the open question of the mediation between *the illusion of modernity and the oblivion of coloniality* (2009, 2, emphasis added).

For the remaining chapter we will now turn to the relevance of the decolonial critique of time for understanding historical, political events like uprisings and rebellions beyond the limits of chronological representations. The first two basic arguments will be on the one hand how chronology cannot comprehend rebellions in their eventfulness as breaks and foundations, and on the other hand, that chronology is part of "the same rationality that underlies the processes that they are breaking with" (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 9). We will thus consider the rise of global social movements as visualizations not only of marginalization and 'opposition' but as break with and alternatives to the governing global system of governance, appropriation and signification – modernity/coloniality, and try to "bridge the gap between academic narratives on social struggle and the very epistemic questions that these struggles present" (ibid., 6).

Let's begin with how chronology is at odds with the event as foundation. First of all, "an event is never wholly explicable" (ibid., 14). In and of itself it is thereby already a problem for modern rationality. The event is unpredictable and always a surprise. The "unexpected nature of the political event [thus] makes it a radical question to the given order of things" (ibid., 14). In its entirety, that is

the innumerable present forces it is born by, the event is also beyond representation, beyond appearance, and beyond reason. In reading Hanna Arendt, Vázquez (2006), brings into dialogue the decolonial critique of time with Arendt's own intra-modern critique of the conception and representation of history, and the way she conceived the political. For Vázquez, Arendt's

> awareness of the limits of the apparent, of the visible, opens the possibility of recognizing the reality of the invisible, of absence. Her understanding is not a plea for relativism, nor for transcendence, but simply for acknowledging the limits of our rational forms of explanation. Arendt's thinking speaks of the need for a thought that is, as it were, substantially more humble, freed from all pretensions to universality. […] In Arendt's striving to think the event away from teleological chains of explanation, we find a stepping stone for a critique of modern chronology (47-49).

Looking beyond representation, Hannah Arendt "asserts that the moment of foundation is a moment that endures and which cannot be relegated to the depths of the past" (ibid., 49). She allows us to see the event as "a beginning that remains present in the daily breath of the social body that it precedes" (ibid., 49). Arendt thereby confronts "history" with "the problem of beginning and permanence" (ibid., 48), as of rupture and discontinuity. Together, Arendt and Vázquez shows us that chronological or teleological representations of history "cannot account for the enduring strength and ongoing presence of the moment of foundation" (ibid., 49), nor "grasp a beginning as a foundation that breaks the continuum of history and that gives birth to previously unknown political configurations (ibid., 53). Instead, chronology represent events "as outcomes of particular structural processes and their contexts. They are not thought as events that are in excess of their context" (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 8). Thus, also "social resistance becomes the logical and often dialectical consequence of historical processes and its contexts […][,] the logical consequence of the processes of global capitalism or global governmentality" (ibid., 7-14). Any rebellion, interpreted through the categories characteristic of Eurocentrism, "as the outcome of capitalism, industrialisation, a failed social revolution and incomplete democratization" (ibid., 10), thus already implies its own answer. More specifically, "the literature hides the uniqueness of the event under the likeness of the processes of domination that precede it. It silences what we see as their radical questioning (ibid., 11). Chronology this way deprives events and social struggles in their eventfulness of the possibility to challenge the academic frameworks through which they are generally represented (ibid., 2).

> More often than not, these events are described in what they negate and not in what they positively create. In other words, they are primarily represented as reactions to the structures of oppression, and only secondarily as leading to alternative political practices and experiences. (ibid., 23)

By demonstrating how in chronology the modern notion of time and control over representation

coincide, Icaza and Vázquez reveal not only Eurocentrism' blindness to the geopolitics of knowledge but the degree to which we as researchers and academics are implicated and involved in reproducing the modern/colonial world imaginary. Moreover, they give with the decolonial critique of time applied to chronology a powerful example for how the rationality applied to make sense of social injustice is the same rationality characteristic of the processes of appropriation and homogenization, that more often than not produces injustice. In doing so, they however also show the need and possibility for changing the terms of conversation and deprive science of its claim to universality and humble modernity by thinking of the 'impunity' of western academia, epistemic struggle and cognitive justice (Santos, 2006).

Let's now turn to what the decolonial perspective proposes in how to deal with the hegemonic presence of modern temporality, and how to read uprisings and social struggle decolonially. This is what Mignolo suggests.

> Undoing the colonial difference as was built in the concept of time will involve, among other things, removing "time" from the privileged position it acquires in complicity with science, capitalism, and the mono-culturalism (e.g., uni-versalism) of Western civilization. […] [D]ecolonial thinking shall build arguments for the revival of "the de-acceleration of time;' revaluing what modernity devalued. […] There is significant room for maneuver beyond the illusion that if you are not fast, you do not deserve to be in this world. One way to decolonize modernity is to move toward *undoing the pair "modernity and tradition"* (2011, 177-180).

What Mignolo implies is that in order for all this to happen we must first revoke modernity's claim to universality and move towards pluriversality. For Mignolo, the three main currents today shaping the future are rewesternization, dewesternization and decolonization. Three currents that describe how "the mono-centric world order from 1500 to 2000 […] is being transformed into a polycentric one (Mignolo, 2007, 49). While the third is concerned with decolonizing universality, the first precisely rests on the claim to universality, whereas the second is not concerned predominantly with the geopolitics of knowledge, but authority. Mignolo allows us to interpret modern conflicts, not through the lens of material power, but the claim to truth. Once we write "truth" and acknowledge the 'right' to epistemic diversity/ cognitive justice, not only the dichotomy science-religion is closed, but also the one of tradition-modernity, opening up a whole different future horizon of intercultural dialogue and solidarity, autonomy and dignity.

> [D]ecolonial options are options, not missions of conversion to a universal truth or truth without parenthesis. […] Conflict does not necessarily lead to war. War obtains when truth and objectivity without parenthesis reign. Conflicts obtain and are solved without war where and when truth and

objectivity in parenthesis reign and there is no enemy to be destroyed and universal truth to be defended and imposed (2011, 175).

The first thing the decolonial option thus proposes with regard to social movements and uprisings, is to consider them as epistemic struggles for visibility. Icaza and Vázquez see in the cases of Chiapas (1994) and Seattle (1999) examples of struggle that "bring to visibility forms of understanding that do not belong to the genealogy of the modern forms of representation (Chiapas) or that disobey the dominant common sense ("There is no Alternative – TINA") (Seattle)(2013, 5). Both cannot be understood nor distinguished through the terms 'traditional' and 'progressive', and visualize not only the existence of epistemic diversity and disobedience but how the epistemic dimension of struggle is generally not represented. In their uprising they thus confront the control over representation by bringing to visibility all that what was hidden; "[t]he public emergence of the oppressed breaks the power of silencing, of absencing, of depoliticization and oblivion, in brief, the coloniality in which they have been traditionally immersed" (ibid., 21). This already makes it "an open question to this dominant way of thinking and ordering of the real […][and] challenge the epistemic hegemony of modernity" (ibid, 9). Icaza and Vázquez thus argue to "allow for the possibility of approaching social struggle not as outcomes but as beginnings, not as modern reaction but as decolonial recreations (ibid., 23), and "radical breaks with the seemingly irresistible processes of economic and political domination (ibid., 13), that "pave the way towards a different exercise of politics both at the local and at the transborder level" (ibid., 22).

> We contend that contrary to current analyses of social unrest in Egypt, Tunisia, Spain, the USA that interpret them as oppositional forces to the system(s) of domination, the struggles of Chiapas and Seattle (or the demonstrations in Tahir square, Plaza del Sol, Wall Street, Mexico City, Santiago and so on) bear political beginnings that cannot be fully determined by their opposition to the systems of domination and the order that they confront (e.g. Gills and Gray 2012, Rocamora 2012, Wallerstein 2011, in ibid., 5).

Thus, instead of treating individual movements as objects of study and investigating their ideological formations and political agendas – science posing the questions to its object – Icaza and Vázquez argue to consider these movements in their communality as open questions to the frameworks we use to interpret them. In other words, to recognize "social movements as producers of knowledge (ibid., 3) and "not the result of the automatic processes and the rationality that characterize global capitalism but [as] a radical break, a departure from such processes (2013, 14). By looking at what they positively create, by going beyond representation, we can look see what they create, reveal, practice, and represent (Lugones, 2008, in ibid, 23).

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The approaches to 'politics' as conjunctions of instrumental actions render invisible the political delinking that the words and deeds of the rebellions are enacting. While acknowledging the scientific relevance of detecting, describing and measuring the impact of the networks and coalitions that preceded these events, we argue that it is necessary to allow for the possibility of approaching social struggle not as outcomes but as beginnings, not as modern reaction but as decolonial recreations. In our view these struggles are not primarily oppositions to the institutions of modernity but *alternatives to the market and the state*. […] The problem is *what remains unseen* when the political event is measured against the backdrop of the processes of neoliberal globalization, or rather, when these processes are used as the main reference framework to evaluate political events. These approaches obviate the importance of the event in itself as a political enactment and have the effect of normalizing struggles within the hegemonic chronologies (ibid., 23, emphasis added).

For speaking predominantly to an academic community here, the first implication to take away is thus to seriously reconsider our own epistemic and academic practices for they way they produce absences. Humbling ourselves in an awareness of the Historicality and limitedness of our scope of perception and interpretation we can arrive at new questions through the simple of listening – a point we will return to again in the analysis chapter.

Through the decolonial critique of time applied to chronology and social struggle, rebellions and uprisings were able to appear as events that bring to visibility what otherwise is left in the shadow. Modernity/coloniality's regime of representation of time and history, of space, of the political, of the real, and so forth, is challenged and suspended during the moment of the event. It is the moment in which the day to day invisibilization and depoliticization of the marginalized transforms into a dignification and politicization through visibilization. Together with "Hannah Arendt's conception of the political (Arendt 1989), we can say that the political is a practice of visibility[,][...][the] visibility that arises in the in-between, in the coming together to speak and act, in a time and space of togetherness, of shared struggle and shared memories" (2010, 14-15). In short, "[t]heir resistance opens the space of the public, where they can speak and act, be heard and be seen in plurality, in dignity among others (2013, 9). Vice versa, we learn "to what extent the modern hegemony over visibility, and more generally its regime of representation means the loss of the political as in-between, as togetherness" (ibid., 15).

At large we can say that the "hegemony of modernity over visibility and more generally, over representation, is essential to understand the pervasiveness and scope of modernity's claims to truth" (2010, 6). In other words, the "phantasmagoria of modernity and the concurrent regime of representation are central to understanding how modernity claimed for itself the monopoly of the real and constituted itself as reality (2010, 6). Once we reveal the connection between modernity and

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coloniality, we can "brings to light all those who live in modernity's spaces of exclusion, no longer with an indigenous language, name or identity, those who live in the lost 'cities of modernity' and which remain largely unseen by the literature that presents modernity/coloniality as an unmediated dichotomy" (2009, 6-7).

3 – Methodology

The methodological question, that is what lens to opt for, cannot pretend to be detached from what has been so far, that is with regard to the geopolitics of knowledge. That is, in our academic practices we cannot pretend to not be implicated. To repeat, we came to see how European global hegemony manifests itself first and foremost in the globality of its knowledge, and in how it is perceived as neutral and universal. We uncovered how, while generally knowledge and science are conceived as being part of the solution, Eurocentric knowledge is a fundamental part of the problem. In doing so, we identified what is referred to as global integration as the homogenization of practices following the homogenization of subjectivities. To pretend as if we could come to a radically different understanding of 'the city', time and space, through Eurocentric categories of thought would therefore be naïve, contradictory and incoherent. In short, we cannot account for Eurocentrism with Eurocentrism. We will thus use the opportunity of this method chapter to clarify as much as possible to ethical implications of the decolonial critique for scientific methodologies more generally, and for our "choice of method" in particular. We will do so in a few steps and first look at Eurocentrism in itself and how it constructs its rhetoric of universality through the production of absences, through affirmation and denial. Then we will turn to the relevance of appropriation and representation to sharpen our understanding of the geopolitical relevance predominantly of representation and enunciation and finally turn to the critique of the hubris of the zero point, as another way of critiquing the disembeddedness of modern ontology, particularly with regard to comparative analysis. They will provide the necessary critical and ethical orientation in addition to the insights gained from the theory chapters, to subsequently illustrate the relevance of our critique of time (chronology) and space (universality) in the empirical example of the UN State of the World's Cities 2012/2013 Report, as a master representation. However, before we get started let's quickly clarify how to interpret the decolonial within our epistemological context of chronological thinking and whether the decolonial constitutes a new, progressive paradigm or rather something else.

3.1 – The Decolonial Option and Novelty

Decolonial critical thought is not a culmination of western modernity, or another modernity, but an experience with and critique of modernity anchored in marginalized traditions of thought older than that of modernity, and that still exist parallel to it. In short, it speaks *from* the knowledges silenced by

modernity/coloniality, as well as from the knowledge produced by that oppression. Further, once we identify the rhetoric of modernity as the narrative of a particular local history, then the decolonial is the enunciation of marginalized local histories, that respond to how modernity imposed itself as a *global design* (Mignolo, 2011, ix). By focusing on knowledge and subjectivity, it aspires to come to a decolonial understanding that enables for a different conception, perception, future horizon and engagement.

It should therefore not be read as 'progression', as an advancement or extension of modernity and western traditions of thought. That would mean to uphold chronology and universality as the overarching containers of history and knowledge. It is equally not a 'romantic fetish' of everything 'pre'-modern. To try to grasp the decolonial through Eurocentric, chronological terms like progressive or conservative, pre- or post- would be misleading, to say the least. In turn, what is at stake is the visualization of epistemic struggles, on the one hand, and the possibility of epistemic shift, on the other hand. It is therefore not a paradigmatic novelty, but an analytical liberatory effort that uses hegemonic means (e.g. English, paradigms) for counter-hegemonic purposes.

> As Walter Mignolo puts it, MC [modernity/coloniality] should not be seen as *un paradigma otro.* Rather than a new paradigm 'from Latin America' (as it could have been the case with dependency), *the MC project does not fit into a linear history of paradigms or epistemes*; to do so would mean to integrate it into the history of modern thought. On the contrary, the MC program should be seen as an other way of thinking that runs counter to the great modernist narratives (Christianity, liberalism, and Marxism); *it locates its own inquiry in the very borders of systems of thought and reaches towards the possibility of non-eurocentric modes of thinking* (Escobar, 2007, 180, emphases added).

For the moment at least, Western academia is thus a decisive domain for visibility and intercultural dialog. It thereby also "seeks to make a decisive intervention into the very discursivity of the modern sciences in order to craft another space for the production of knowledge [and suggests] that an other thought, an other knowledge (and another world, in spirit of Porto Alegre's World Social Forum), are indeed possible" (ibid., 179). The decolonial is thus not hostile or ignorant to Eurocentric traditions of thought, but it is, and this is the decolonial point, also not depending on them.

> The modernity/coloniality group certainly finds inspiration in a number of sources, from European to North American critical theories of modernity and postmodernity to South Asian subaltern studies, Chicana feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and African philosophy; many of its members operate within a modified world systems perspective. Its main driving force, however, is a continued reflection on Latin American cultural and political reality, including the subaltern knowledge of exploited and oppressed social groups (Escobar, 2007, 180).

For the decolonial it is therefore not a matter of philosophically reopening and reforming

modernity, but to complement it with coloniality. Discussions concerning a 'democratization' or 'redistribution' of modernity, that think of multiple, even non-linear modernities, are therefore not in line with decolonial thinking. Again, the task is to 'complete' and clarify, that is to contextualize geo-historically the rhetoric of modernity with the logic of coloniality by listening to the voices it silenced and knowledges is marginalized. To focus on modernity and prioritize its conservation would mean to once again neglect those silenced, for whom it is not a question of how to interpret modernity, but to bring to the surface the inexpressible violence and destruction it justified. In short, 'we' are not dependent on modernity in oder to live. Therefore, instead of democratizing modernity, the decolonial seeks to democratize representation and disable global designs altogether. Its future universalism is one of *pluriversalism*, of truth and objectivity in parentheses to "insure true inter-epistemic conversations and cooperation in building a non-imperial world order" (Mignolo, 2011, 70).

3.2 – Affirmation and Denial

There are two basic co-constitutive modes of how Eurocentrism constructs its rhetoric of universality: *affirmation and denial*. In short, modernity affirms itself as more advanced and superior through the denial of all that it terms backward and inferior. Modernity thus re/produces itself through the re/production of absences in a self-referential discourse. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006) analyzes this strategy of producing absences as consisting of five logics, with the *monoculture and rigor of knowledge* as…

> the most powerful mode of production of non-existence. It consists in turning modern science and high culture into the sole criteria for truth and aesthetic quality, respectively. The complicity that unites the 'two cultures' (the scientific and the humanistic culture) resides in the fact that both claim to be, each in their own field, exclusive canons of production of knowledge and artistic creation. *All that is not recognized or legitimized by this canon is declared non-existent* (16, emphasis added).

The discourse and representation of modern science and high culture, however, operates as only one element in the *discursive formation* (Foucault, 1969, 130) of modernity, that Santos maps. Another crucial one, concerning *scale*, is the *monoculture of the universal and of the global*.

> According to this logic, the *scale* adopted as primordial determines the irrelevance of all other possible scales. In Western modernity, the dominant scale appears under two different forms: the universal and the global. *Universalism is the scale of the entities or realities that prevail regardless of specific context*. For that reason, they take precedence over all other realities that depend on context and are therefore considered particular or vernacular. Globalization is the scale that in the last twenty years has acquired unprecedented relevance in various social fields. It is the scale that

privileges entities or realities that widen their scope to the whole globe, thus earning the prerogative to designate rival entities as local. According to this logic, non-existence is produced under the form of the particular and the local. The entities and realities defined as particular and local are captured in scales that render them *incapable of being credible alternatives to what exists globally and universally* (Santos, 2006, 17, emphases added).

Those two modes of producing absences already make explicit the duality of affirmation and denial and how *epistemic disdain* lies at the heart of Eurocentrism. The implications of this revelation are several and profound. Eurocentrism/modernity produces its pretense to superiority and universality through the denial, disavowal, exclusion, silencing and erasure of any other form of knowledge, in short through the denial of epistemic diversity. It homogenizes and represents any alterity as non-credible and irrelevant by ascribing it to the past as traditional, non-secular, or non-scientific knowledge. In other words, modernity only affirms epistemic diversity in combination with chronology as spectacle, and again only in order to distinguish and validate itself. To identify the duality of affirmation and denial as rhetorical is to deprive modernity of its universality claim, and to delink from its reductive representation of the Other. In turn, epistemic diversity arises as the source and inspiration for a historical contextualization and analysis of modern rationality and its imperial instrumentality. *Listening* to those for whom epistemic disdain and erasure is not a relic of the past but denounce it as a daily expression of coloniality, is thus the decisive, imperative step towards a denormalization, and ultimately a decolonization of Eurocentric thought. In short, centuries of colonial oppression have not only discredited and destroyed local knowledges but also produced a knowledge of colonial oppression itself. Foucault seems to have anticipated the need for a recognition of epistemic diversity, when he says that:

> … these notions of human nature, of justice, of the realisation of the essence of human beings, are all notions and concepts which have been formed within our civilisation, within our type of knowledge and our form of philosophy, and that as a result form part of our class system; and one can't, however regrettable it may be, put forward these notions to describe or justify a fight which should – and shall in principle – overthrow the very fundaments of our society. This is an extrapolation for which I can't find the historical justification. That's the point (Chomsky-Foucault-debate, 1971).

The pretense of superiority at the expense of any alterity is why from the *decolonial perspective* "modernity cannot be thought of without its underside coloniality" (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2000, in Vázquez, 2012, 2). It therefore uses modernity/coloniality as a coeval concept. Accordingly, "modernity designates the affirmation of 'the real', ranging from the material to the symbolic, whereas coloniality designates the denial and disavowal of all that belongs to the outside of that 'reality'" (ibid.,

2). By uncovering the territoriality of Eurocentrism we have visualized the limits of subjectivity, that is the *borders* of modern epistemology. In short, there exists a world of worlds beyond the perception of Eurocentrism and modern/colonial representation. To be clear, this inside/outside distinction, is first thought of as an epistemic, and then as a geographical one. However, in any given geography one might want to look for epistemic diversity and autonomy, in contrast to epistemic homogeneity and hegemony. At large, we came to see see how Eurocentrism validates itself and moreover that the knowledge 'we' have of globalization, development, the city and of our own epistemology and identity, is less global than globalization itself (Santos, 2006, 13-14). What follows is, not just in a methodological sense, but philosophical, historical, political and moreover ethical sense, *the task of listening* to the outside of modernity. Rolando Vázquez (2012) summarizes:

> As Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006) would say *there cannot be modern solution to modern problems*. It is in and from the outside of modernity that the alternatives, the beyond modernity/coloniality is being created. In line with the Theology of Liberation, it seems to us that *the task of listening* to the outside of modernity is one that recognizes the common people, the impoverished, in short all those that have been disdained, as the very source of decolonial critique. It is all those that modernity has materially exploited, categorized as 'other' along racial, economic and gender hierarchies, all those that have been made dispensable vis-à-vis the project of modernity, who are the source and foundation of a critique, of a contestation and of thought able to *delink* from the modern/colonial rule (7, emphasis added).

Accordingly, we will particularly scrutinize the UN report in question for the absences it produces in how it affirms and represents "the real". That is, we will listen to the silences it reproduces by applying our critique of chronology to the discursivity of the report. Discourse analysis (e.g. Foucault in Hook, 2001) can thus furthermore be thought of as an integral and critical component of our analysis.

3.3 – Representation and the Hubris of the Zero Point

The strategies of affirmation and denial become even more apparent if we think them through appropriation and representation. In a nutshell they can be thought of as the two basic characteristics that describe modernity/coloniality and the mechanisms through which it relates to the world. Rolando Vázquez summarizes:

> We see modernity/coloniality as exercising their hegemony, their control over the world mainly through two overarching movements, *two modes of relating to the world*: appropriation and representation. Each mode of relating to the world manifests itself in a wide variety of fields, discourses, mechanisms and practices. For example, the mode of appropriation is enacted in the

privatization of land, the exploitation of workers, the extraction and patenting of knowledge, the plundering and manipulation of nature for the sake of profit, in the everyday shopping practices of the consumer among other processes and practices. In turn, the mode of representation finds its expression, for example, in the discourses of science or aesthetics that determine their own fields of validity and visibility. The mode of representation can also be seen operating in the selfreferential system of meaning of the commodity (Baudrillard, 1968) or in the control of enunciation of the mass media. We suggest that together, these two modes of relating to the world as *presence* (appropriation and representation) enable modernity's rule over 'the real'. In short, we can say that the modern/colonial rule over 'the real', operates through *the control of the production of that reality* and over its *visibility* and *intelligibility* (Vázquez, 2012, 2, emphasis added).

What the last sentence suggests is that modernity produces a certain perception of the world, one that is the product of, and requirement for the continuity of the modern/colonial world order. At the same time, representation can be seen as the envelope through which to conceive the sum of discourses, mechanisms and practices that give rise the perception of that manufactured sense of 'reality'. Again, the modern side of representation is what it shows, whereas the colonial side is what it hides. Furthermore, by speaking of presence, Vázquez refers to what is present/ed in cognitive, spatial, and temporal terms, and thus the prominence of the present in determining 'reality'. For our concern with the city as a representations of modernity, appropriation is of fewer methodological concern. However, while maybe not analytically pivotal, the logic of appropriation is still of fundamental contextual importance, as we have seen with development and the neoliberal city.

Another critical intervention with regard to modern epistemology and ontology, the locus of enunciation and moreover the conception knowledge and space, is the critique of the *hubris of the zero point*:

Once we are *in the borders* where imperial Western epistemology meets with its global differences, we face the need for what Raymundo Pannikar described as "imparative method:'" And once we start thinking decolonially, it is not possible to stand in the borders comparing both sides, because comparative methodology epitomizes the *hubris of the zero point*. "Comparative methodology;' put in place in the nineteenth century, was precisely that: a method to ensure that the observer remained uncontaminated, and guarantee that Western epistemology remained on top, controlling all other forms of knowledge. Imparative method, Pannikar stated, is "the effort at learning from the other and the attitude of allowing our own convictions to be fecundated by insight of the other:' In Contradistinction to the comparative method, which privileges dialectics and argumentative reasoning (system and architectonic), the imparative method (for Pannikar, diatopical hermeneutics) focuses on dialogue, praxis, and existential encounters - that is, *reasoning from the senses* and, in my argument, *from the locations of the bodies in the colonial matrix of power*. Decolonial thinking, then, is one type of imparative practice that aims to delink from coloniality of knowledge and being (that is, from imperial/colonial subjections of subjectivities through knowledge) and to engage in *border decolonial thinking* (Mignolo, 2011, 208, emphasis added).

The hubris of the zero point allows us recognize how knowledge, place, space and time, are

intimately interwoven in a rhetoric of 'post-local' superiority. It is one of the most crucial characteristics of Eurocentrism, as it pretends *to speak from nowhere,* or from space if you wish. In doing so, *Eurocentrism denies i*ts *own locus of enunciation* and further suggests that *knowledge is independent of place and cosmology*. It thereby inverts what cannot be inverted, suggesting that places are lacking the knowledge in order to 'progress' and thus depend on universal knowledge through enlightenment and schooling. The hubris of the zero point is thus a fundamental component in the coloniality of knowledge and in defending its imposition.

Accordingly, through the denial of the locus of enunciation, particularly comparative methodology acquires its colonial nature at the service of universality. The comparative method, as we know it and have seen with development, denies the ways in which it is *implicated* – geographically, historically and politically. This way the observer, the anthropologist, the cartographer, the development worker and so on remain untouched for the assumption of their knowledge as being '*pure*', them merely being the secretaries, the minute-takers (Protokollanten) of facts – the middlemen, the messengers between place and space. They obtain – appropriate – knowledge for it to be taken home and represented. Home, however, is not a place but the universal space of the library, laboratory, archive, museum etcetera. Biopiracy and the digitalization are telling example of *the movement from place to space* – from the physical to the virtual. Speaking from nowhere thus translates into speaking as no-one, anonymously with no local identity and *responsibility*. Comparative method thus operates from above, and not from within.

The question of the border is thus a decisive one, ranging from the geographical border, the disciplinary border, to the epistemic border. Parallel to how the coloniality of knowledge has b/ordered the world and informs our spatial and temporal imaginaries, the question arises of how to conceive borders at large and where to position ourselves. Do we want to think of them as hidden spaces of impossibility, as emblems of containment and alienation with marginal significance or as intermediate spaces of possibility, as e.g. in terms of dialog and representation. From a decolonial perspective, walking the border holds the promise of unlearning orthodoxies by entering into human encounters of mutual recognition, that are to a much lesser degree mediated by institutional demands. Border walking thus entails the task of listening and self-examination. Our current engagement with the decolonial is precisely that, an encounter at the borders of thought.

The last two things mentioned in Mignolo's quote, the reasoning from the senses (AestheSis) and

from the location of the body, are equally important as they point, on the one hand, towards a critique of the universality of aesthetics, and on the other hand, towards a delinking of the hubris of the zero point by becoming aware of and thinking and speaking from one's location within the colonial matrix of power, and the inequalities in privilege it entails.

In my own case, this means that I am a child of the imperial difference, a privileged white man with a German and US American passport, who was born into the modern city and consumer society shortly before the End of the Cold War in Western Germany. Accordingly, I am writing this thesis in Western academia, from the inside of modernity, while I am myself in the process of unlearning "the normal" through my exposure to the decolonial critique. To develop a critique of the hegemonic representation of the city, time and space thus means that I am speaking from my location within the colonial matrix of power, and about "the self" and not about "the Other". In other words, instead of capitalizing on my privilege I see it as my historical and ethical responsibility to hold "the center" accountable and humble modernity.

4 – Empiricism

4.1 – THE UN STATE OF WORLD CITIES 2012/2013 – PROSPERITY OF CITIES REPORT

In the following chapter we will now apply the theory, especially the decolonial critique of time, to a selected example. Since our focus lies predominantly with knowledge and representation, we will not select and 'visit' a particular 'physical' city and location, but remain at the level of conception, representation and hence the "meta-physical city". That is, we will look at how the *discursive unit* of "the city" is conceived and represented in the United Nations "State of Cities 2012/2013 – Prosperity of Cities" report, and apply our decolonial critique of Eurocentrism, and the representations of space and time, to this report. Scrutinizing discourse and representation will allow us to focus not only on the attributed commonalities and special characteristics of cities and thereby the homogenization implicit to their classification, but to apply specifically the critique of chronology, as mental framework and a means of representation, to how the UN conceives "the city" and the most recent urban uprisings. A classic case study would mean to move in the 'opposite' direction and investigate a number of cities' dialectics of the local and the global, the particular and the universal. To reduce the scope this way would mean to work under on the question of generalizability and remain within conventional academic frameworks, leaving the coloniality of knowledge and the relevance of thinking through representation and the decolonial critique of time out of question. In short, case studies and comparative methodology, for being predicated on the hubris of the zero point, are part and parcel of the critique of Eurocentrism, universality and the coloniality of knowledge (Mignolo, 2011,).

However, the decision to base the empirical observation for this thesis on the respective report arose for several additional reasons. Most of all, because the report does two things: it frames and represents a certain notion of the city within a certain contemporary global context, *and* it makes explicit reference to the 2011/2012 urban uprisings in Egypt, Spain, the United States and Europe. The report thus also somehow frames and represents these events. A third motivation is its locus of enunciation, that is how as a super-national, global institutions the UN does not speak from a particular place but virtually from *space* (sociology of absences). Here we will bring into dialogue Lefebvre's emphasis on the conceived level with the decolonial emphasis on representation in simulating the 'real'. Finally, the report also responds to the critique of linear time and proposes through 'prosperity' a 'new', non-linear notion of sustainable human development – a rearticulation we will hence also include in our discussion. The report will thus also allow us to move from the city, the critique of time and

chronology to the larger level of universality and the geopolitics of knowledge. We will begin with chronology and how the report represents the urban uprisings as oppositions in a context of "ill-balanced growth" and "democratic deficit", and thereby arrive at the second part and how the report represents "the city" at large. We will close the chapter by challenging its overall ontology in how it claims validity and legitimacy through universality, and accordingly represents "the real". The idea is to exemplify how modernity/coloniality appropriates 'the real' and the resistance to it through representation.

4.1 – URBAN UPRISINGS & CHRONOLOGY

The United Nations "State of Cities 2012/2013 – Prosperity of Cities" report places itself within a present context characterized as a "time of crises" and by "a lopsided focus on purely financial prosperity" (iv). "Never before had humankind as a whole faced cascading crises of all types as have affected it since 2008" (10). It argues for a "fresh approach to prosperity, one that is holistic and integrated and which is essential for the promotion of a collective well-being and fulfilment of all" (iv), and attributes to the city an elementary role not only in generating prosperity but also with regard to its re/distribution. It this way places great emphasis on the public good and speaks of a global systemic crisis that expresses itself not only in financial, but also in economic, environmental, social and political terms (iv). In this regard it makes several times explicit reference (10, 11, 72, 74, 151) to the 2011 uprisings in Egypt, Spain, England and the US, as representations of how the city is not only the "privileged locus of prosperity" (v) but also "the locus where the right to shared prosperity is claimed and fought for" (10).

Superficially, the urban uprisings serve as the opener to the first chapter "Conceptualizing Urban prosperity" and to contextualize the city historically. The key argument is that the uprisings illustrate how "[t]hroughout history, cities as seats of power have served as stages for protests" (10), and that the proposed "prosperous city" is therefore one that "safeguards the city's role as a public forum where plans and policies can be discussed and challenged for the sake of a more prosperous society" (10). Let us listen to how the events are introduced and described:

> As people in the latter part of 2011 gathered in Cairo's Tahrir Square or Madrid's Puerta del Sol, in front of London's St Paul's cathedral or in New York's Zuccotti Park, they were not only *demanding* more *equality* and *inclusion*; they were also expressing solidarity with fellow citizens that belong with the "99 per cent" (the vast majority) as *opposed* to the "one per cent" (those with

vastly disproportionate shares of wealth and decision-making capacity). These movements highlighted the inherent risks of *ill-balanced growth* or development policies, and their failure to safeguard *prosperity for all* (10).

As we can see, the report frames and represents the uprisings and social movements as essentially *responding* to and *demanding* two things: the lack off and need for greater political participation and shared prosperity. Likewise, the movements are represented merely as *oppositional* forces to the "1%" who have 'occupied' the state and economy to their advantage, demanding nothing else but for the system to work as it should. Chronology appears in how the events are reduced to a (historical) context of 'inclusion' and 'equality', and in how they hence imply causality, binarity, as well as their own answer. Let's see if these elements of context, causality and opposition reappear in a second quote and what else we can observe.

> The recent *crisis* is more than just an economic one. More fundamentally, it has *exposed a number of risks* to social justice, fairness, participation and, ultimately, democracy. Systematic decision-making in favour of those better-off is, in itself, a form of *democratic deficit*, and *one that has led to* popular movements like New York's Occupy Wall Street. The movement "*calls* for a society organized around the needs, desires, dreams, of the 99 per cent, not the one percent." The other major uprisings of 2011 – the Arab Spring in North Africa and the Middle East, and Spain's own Indignados – were also *motivated by similar demands for better and deeper democracy as essential for overall prosperity. These protests highlighted the fact that economic growth* was a necessary *condition for prosperity*, *though insufficient on its own*: *social and political inclusion is vital for prosperity* (11, emphasis added).

Also in this loaded paragraph we can make numerous observations with regard to chronology. The sentence "[the crisis] has *exposed* a number of [socio-political] *risks*", for instance. It suggests, on the one hand, that until the moment of the crisis there was no awareness let alone critique of the violence, injustice and inherent contradictions of global capitalism; that the crisis finally taught 'us' something 'we' did not know before. The "crisis" itself is thus represented as another chapter of humanities chronological history, as a dot on the universal learning curve of human progress and development. On the other hand, the use of the word 'risks' is equally significant and revealing with regard to chronology. What is essentially suggested by speaking of *risks* is that the system has not been *perfected* yet and still contains some *weak points*. The initial context of crises in its "all encompassing extent" is this way inverted to merely involve the uncertainty of some certain "security leaks". Apart from that the notion, more often than not, rather appears in economic jargon than to describe the state of a civilization. To reduce the "systematic crisis" to the vocabulary of risk, is thus to obscure and re-mystify what actually lies beneath the crust of the discourse of "crisis". It is an abstraction that however still implies the need and prospects for improvement and progress. In a similar way the notion of

deficit, again a word we rather associate with finance, represents the political crisis not as crisis of normativity but merely as a reminder of incomplete democratization (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 10). However, also here causality and binarity are conveyed in how the democratic deficit is said to have "lead to popular movements like New York's Occupy Wall Street".

Icaza and Vázquez's decolonial critique of modern temporality and chronology applied to how various academic literatures interpret and represent the rebellions of Chiapas (1994) and Seattle (1996), thus also applies here. As we can see, the uprisings are integrated under chronology as the "return of the same", the familiar, as "already known", hiding "the uniqueness of the events under the likeliness of the processes of domination that precede them" (ibid., 11). They are not conceived or represented to 'contain' more than their context suggests; they are "not thought as events that are in in excess of their context" (Icaza & Vázquez, 2013, 8), and to involve more than 'our' frameworks of thought can grasp. Accordingly, the ways in which these uprisings have been radically different from previous large assemblies in terms of ideology, organization, autonomy, spatiality, or spatial practice, mutual solidarity, their geographical distribution and temporal proximity, and especially in their collective, 'horizontal' remaking of the political altogether, is not represented, addressed or questioned in the report and thus remains in the shadow. The uprisings are only "described in what they negate and not in what they positively create" (ibid., 23); they are not conceived as open questions, let alone breaks or ruptures that could challenge our ways of thinking, but on the contrary, as *affirmations* of 'our' canon of thought. In other words, the uprisings appear in the first place to 'evidence' the 'demand' and need for a new approach to prosperity and to affirm the immanent qualities of cities on the road towards 'prosperity'.

To be clear, the point here is not to provide evidence for what the individual uprisings de facto contained, but to illustrate how chronological representations as in the respective report deny and close them as radical open questions with transformative potential. "The problem is what remains unseen when the political event is measured against the backdrop of the processes of neoliberal globalization, or rather, when these processes are used as the main reference framework to evaluate political events" (ibid., 23). The determinism inherent to chronology thus prevents us from perceiving the events as political recreations and beginnings, as breaks with modernity/coloniality's 'logical' continuity. If we remember, Icaza and Vázquez made also explicit reference in this regard to the same uprisings.

> We contend that contrary to current analyses of social unrest in Egypt, Tunisia, Spain, the USA that interpret them as *oppositional forces* to the system(s) of domination, […] [the recent uprisings] (or the demonstrations in Tahir square, Plaza del Sol, Wall Street, Mexico City, Santiago and so on)

bear *political beginnings* that cannot be fully determined by their opposition to the systems of domination and the order that they confront (e.g. Gills and Gray 2012, Rocamora 2012, Wallerstein 2011, in ibid., 5, emphasis added).

Simply put, the uprisings but also the challenges the crises represent are integrated under chronology instead of them being allowed to challenge chronology, and modern rationality more broadly. The UN report's chronological representation of the uprisings denies the uprisings the possibility to challenge modernity's 'totality' (state, market, universality). This is probably most pronounced in the last sentence of the second quote concerning social and political inclusion and "economic growth as a necessary condition for prosperity". Whereas, from a decolonial perspective, "these struggles are not primarily oppositions to the institutions of modernity but *alternatives to the market and the state"* (ibid., 23, emphasis added), that is how they in practice delinked and acted in autonomy from them, here the market and the state's necessity, legitimacy and 'totality' are upheld and defended. In other words, the state and the market, but also the city – united under development – are *reaffirmed* through the *denial* of there being an outside to the solipsistic and hegemonic discourse of modernity that the report represents.

The decolonial critique thus allows us to think of these modern metal practices not only in what they display but also in what they hide; how they hide and render everything *else* that would otherwise break the simulation of totality non-existent. Through an awareness of the politics of time and the territoriality of modern epistemology, one can begin to see the uprisings in their unprecedented diversity as doing exactly that: breaking the totality by appearing. Their elusiveness brings to visibility the existence of a world beneath the modern system of classification that does not correspond to its representation. Moreover were the uprisings explicitly and practically refuting hegemonic representation, particularly in their use of social media next to their spatial practices. They thereby brought to visibility the existence not only of widespread resistance but also the existence of a great diversity, solidarity and intersubjectivity within that resistance, particularly with regard to knowledge and skills. The appearance or those resisting thus also brought to visibility the need to recognize them as producers of knowledge (Casas Cortes et. al. 2008, Escobar 2010, Zibechi 2005, in ibid., 3). They however also brought to visibility the existence of an epistemic disobedience and delinking immanent and essential to their resistance.

The eventful character of these social struggles illuminates the margins and the outside of the systems of domination. As political events, they break with the chronology of the processes of domination and bring to light the exteriority of modernity. […] They bring to visibility forms of

understanding that do not belong to the genealogy of the modern forms of representation (Chiapas) or that disobey the dominant common sense ("There is no Alternative – TINA") (Seattle)(ibid., 5).

Reading reports like these through the decolonial critique of time thus allows us to see the blindness to the coloniality of knowledge intrinsic to the enunciation and how that blindness in tandem with modernity's claim to totality and universality is reproduced through representation. Representations like these, that rest on and reinforce modern/colonial rationality, thus also "render invisible the political delinking that the words and deeds of the rebellions are enacting" with "the effect of normalizing struggles within the hegemonic chronologies" (ibid., 23). Chronological representations "obviate the importance of the event in itself as a political enactment" and deny "the possibility of approaching social struggle not as outcomes but as beginnings, not as modern reaction but as decolonial recreations" (ibid., 23). At large, the quotes illustrate the report itself as a representation of the coloniality of knowledge and modernity's regime of representation more specifically, that is how it simultaneously appropriates (objectifies and homogenizes) and silences the events (in their alterity, dissent and delinking) through representation.

On a side note we might want to further mention that the notion of *crisis* is itself a temporal notion. As a 'temporary' state, we can think of the hegemonic discourse of "crisis" as an enunciation of, and discourse internal to the imperial difference. The imperial difference's default mode is not one of crisis but stability, a stability at the expense of the colonial difference, that, in contradistinction, does not by itself enunciate a constantly recurring discourse of crisis or crises. In turn, the conventional notion and discourse of "humanitarian crisis" for instance is, more often than not, applied to contexts and geographies that reinforce the imperial/colonial difference.

4.2 – URBAN PROSPERITY AND THE DISCOURSE OF THE CITY

We already got a few clues of how the report represents the city in the previous segment. There, the emphasis has mainly been on the city´s immanent qualities with regard to accountability and democracy. Let´s now see what else the report has to say about the general and essential characteristics of cities and what role they are supposed to play within the current context of "crises". To be clear, the idea is not to give an extensive description or summary of the entire report, but to showcase those instances where the report makes general remarks about "the city" as the foundation on which it basis its policy proposals. In short, the question is how the report justifies the central role it attributes to cities

in taming global turmoil. In other words, we will investigate how the UN report draws on modernity's discourse and fetish of the city as locus of progress and human evolution, and thereby on the coloniality of time. In addition, we will look at how the report tries to unite its "non-linear" proposal for the 'prosperous city' with the standardization implicit to the proposal as well as the universality it attributes to the city. This will lead eventually lead us to the ontology of the report and to the question of the *a priori*, of conception, universality and modernity/coloniality's production of 'the real'.

Throughout the report we can find generalizations about cities. For instance, with regard to law, institutions and the public interest, in the info box 3.2.4 it is said that "[h]istorically, in China as in Europe, the city has served as the privileged locus of the emergence of the *state* and the *public interest* as we know them today (119, emphasis added). In a similar way, the chapter Innovating to Support the Transition to the City of the 21st Century begins with the words: "[c]ities have played a major role in *creativity* and *innovation* throughout history. *Creative people* and systems, *innovative milieus*, *knowledge creation mechanisms*, and new technological developments have all primarily happened in cities and all contributed to societal development and prosperity" (103, emphasis added).

These few sentences already include a variety of instances where we can observe chronology. For example, in how the state is mentioned in combination with the public interest. Not only are both, the nation state and the public, notions internal to the vocabulary and rhetoric of modernity, but to conceive particularly the state by default as a sign of social evolution is to think canonologically and in fact evade history. Similar can be said for the public. It is equally presented as a universal notion, naturalized to such a degree that it becomes synonymous with terms like population or common people. However, again the public and the public good are abstractions of community and relationality on such a scale that they, decolonially speaking, first and foremost imply alienation. In short, both, the state and the public are taken for granted in their undoubtable normativity as universals.

One of the most revealing statement however can probably be found in the introduction to the report.

> As the world moves into the *urban age*, the dynamism and intense *vitality of cities* become even more prominent. A fresh future is taking shape, with urban areas around the world becoming not just the dominant form of habitat for humankind, but also the *engine-rooms of human development* as a whole. This ongoing *evolution* can be seen as yet another *assertion*, albeit on a larger scale, of *the time-honoured role of cities* as centres of prosperity. In the 21st as in much earlier centuries, people congregate in cities to realize aspirations and dreams, fulfil needs and turn ideas into realities (v, emphasis added).

Also here, we can reveal chronology several times. Next to the emphasis on the vitality of cities in an urban age, the most conspicuous sentence is probably the one with regard to urban migration in how it self-evidently interprets the shift in global population to an urban majority, in spite of the "environmental crisis" for instance, as an ongoing evolution. It presents the rural-urban migration as an affirmation of the city, not just as the more 'desirable' form of habit, but as the *destined, predetermined* one. The physical arrival of the migrant in the city is made synonymous with the historical arrival of humanity in its predestined, proper 'place'. In short, the city is represented as the spatial final destination on humanities evolutionary trajectory. In contradistinction, the rural-urban migration is not thought of in relation to massive displacement as a consequence of global capitalism's insatiable demand for land and resources. In turn, it is simply suggested that everyone on the planet shares the same fascination for the city and thus migrates there by choice.

We can also reveal the discourse of the city by thinking migration and the city in relation to the neoliberal mantras of talent, creativity, innovation and investment in order to make visible the coloniality of knowledge.

> *Attracting* and *cultivating talents* has become *common practice* for cities in the pursuit of prosperity (101, emphasis added). […] A critical mass of people, ideas, infrastructure and resources acts as a magnet of development, *attracting migrants*, private firms, *investors* and developers. All of this enhances the prospects for more employment opportunities, wealth creation, innovation and knowledge, which are all major factors of prosperity (31). […] Cities that *succeed* in *educating*, *attracting* and retaining *creative individuals* are more likely to prosper, as they not only generate new ideas and products but, in turn, also attract *high-value added firms*, such as knowledge- based industries (44, emphasis added).

Here, at the latest, the report reveals its true nature in how all aspects of human life, whether it is migration or creativity, new ideas or knowledge, are subsumed under the logic of the market for the exclusive purpose to capitalize on them, and not to envision and create concrete political and economic alternatives. In other words, the 'terms and conditions' for local life must be thought of in terms of global competitiveness, leaving societies and local authorities at the crossroads of either obeying and complying with the global demands of the market or to run the risk of being "left behind" – space imposing itself on place. In the blunt reduction of creativity and knowledge etcetera to the realism of global competitiveness, we again see the production of absences and modernity/coloniality's monopoly over the production, the simulation of "the real". In the report, however, all of these notions are brought to the foreground to arrive at the conclusion that as "the privileged locus of prosperity, the city remains best placed to deal pragmatically with some of the new, post-crisis challenges" (v). "A business-

conducive environment is needed for a vibrant private sector, attracting and retaining investment (including foreign direct), creating jobs and improving productivity – all of which are important for the promotion of growth and for e*xpanded opportunities for the poor*" (97, emphasis added).

At large, whereas the report initially attacks the systems of domination, and acknowledges the immanent and increasing asymmetries in power and influence, we can observe how it, in a spirit of realism that addresses several audiences, has no possibility of conceiving the world other than to reaffirm the systems of domination, particularly the state and the market. In short, the report is confined within the narrow one-way street of modern epistemology and its conditioned scope of perception to only focus its critique and proposal on what is 'given', namely the state of the market. One can speculate if the UN is unaware or unwilling to acknowledge the geopolitics of knowledge, but what matters is that through the decolonial critique of time and knowledge we can pinpoint how master representations like these are agents in the re/production of modernity's 'totality' and vice versa of absences.

Let's consider a last quote with regard to development and linearity.

Report advocates a shift in attention around the world in favour of a more robust notion of development – one that looks beyond the narrow domain of economic growth that has dominated ill-balanced policy agendas over the last decades (v). […] *UN-Habitat views development as a non-linear, non-sequential and complex process and recognizes that development paths are differentiated and unique* (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, B. and P.G. Sampath (2010, in ibid., 16). […] [T]he city appears as a flexible, operational, creative platform for the development of collaborative agendas and strategies for local responses to the global crisis. (v) […] *[E]very city will inevitably find itself on its own specific and unique historic course* (v).

As we can see, the report not only makes explicit reference to the uprisings and builds on the modern discourse of the city, but the UN also takes an explicit stand on the critique of linearity. "This goes to show that far from some new 'model' or 'utopia' or branding/marketing technique, UN-Habitat's 'wheel of prosperity' symbolises the well-balanced development of the five dimensions [productivity, infrastructure, quality of life, equity and social inclusion, environmental sustainability], the current condition of which is graphically represented in the City Prosperity Index" (15). What does this rhetoric of post-linearity now mean for our critique of chronology, universality and the coloniality of knowledge? Has our effort been in vain? Does a statement like this mean that the monoculture of knowledge as been decolonized, and moreover that the means of representation have been democratized? Clearly not. On the contrary, the coloniality of knowledge remains untouched and on top, visible in how the UN conserves its universal, post-local ontology and legitimacy by its suggestion

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of progress in how it 'reforms' its own conceptions through the acknowledging and incorporation of the critique of linearity. In short, both the hubris of the zero point and modernity's regime over representation are preserved (Mignolo, 2011, 208).

We can thus finally bring together the coloniality of knowledge and Lefebvre's own critique of space and epistemology. First of all, in how the UN's locus of enunciation is no locus at all, but enunciates *from space*. It thereby reinforces the modern conception of knowledge as post-local, as not place-bound, or culturally embedded but as universal and abstract, concealing how this system of knowledge is historically and geographically constituted. Vice versa it 'offers' places, cities, the knowledge they 'lack'. The report also represents the privileged position of the conceived level over the perceived and the lived, as it advocates and promotes the city as a representation of space. Both, Lefebvre and the decolonial affirm how what is perceived as reality is to a large degree conditioned by representation. Even more so, both concur that the "logic of modernity features categories, dichotomies, and logical oppositions of the A and not A sort" (Lugones, 2014, 1), and that master representations are thus essentially a matter of the so called a priori, that is modern rationality – the coloniality of knowledge. In other words, through the coloniality of time the report represents the city, space and homogenization as destiny and evolution. Together with Lefebvre and the decolonial critique of the coloniality of knowledge we were thus able to bring to visibility the intimate relationship between the modern/colonial notions and representations of space and time, and how through representation, and appropriation by extension, modernity/coloniality resists alterity and diversity to maintain its prerogative of interpretation (Deutungshoheit), that is its monopoly over enunciation in the production of 'the real'.

> The cognitive needs of capitalism and the naturalizing of the identities and relations of coloniality and of the geocultural distribution of world capitalist power have guided the production of this way of knowing. The cognitive needs of capitalism include "measurement, quantification, externalization (or objectification) of what is knowable with respect to the knower so as to control the relations among people and nature and among them with respect to it, in particular the property in means of production". This way of knowing was imposed on the whole of the capitalist world as the only valid rationality and as emblematic of modernity (Quijano in Lugones, 2014, 6) […] The long process of coloniality begins subjectively and intersubjectively in a tense encounter that both forms and will not simply yield to capitalist modern colonial normativity. The crucial point about the encounter is that the subjective and intersubjective construction of it informs the resistance offered to the ingredients of colonial domination (ibid., 16).

> Certainly, the colonial matrix is still there; yet there are also visions of the horizon of life that the colonial matrix repressed and is still trying to kill. But life cannot be killed. […] "The decolonial" option, turn or gesture is always at once analytic of and signs of delinking from coloniality.

Delinking means always already being engaged in project and processes of re-existence, re-surgence and re-emergence of all signs of living in plenitude and harmony that coloniality repressed, suppressed, or disavowed in the name and justification of "modernity" as salvation. (Mignolo, 2014, 4).

5 – Analysis and Discussion

5.1 – Summary

Our suspicion of "the city" as a symbol of human evolution and development has been confirmed. In fact, 'our' perception of "the city" has radically changed. Simplified, we can say that "the city" discursively, that is conceptually, as well as spatially is primarily 'occupied' by, and the 'home' of modernity/coloniality, and thus of a "post-local" elite and its respective interests. For this mobile elite, the city appears as the most critical spatial and discursive resource in the reproduction, that is further normalization and global consolidation, of the racialized global division of labor (Dussel). In other words, through the control over the image of the city (Zukin), this post-local and interconnected society possesses the legal faculty to construct not only an image of the city and of itself, but of "who belongs" where and thus of 'reality' at large. By means of these master discourses and representations (and their foundations by extension), it thereby continuously reproduces the symbolic and cultural foundation on which it justifies its cognitive needs (Lugones) and its delocalized, hegemonic spatial practices (Lefebvre).

With regard to diversity and identity and the geographical re-scaling of the tempo-spatial divide – the re-articulation of the imperial and colonial difference – "the city" appears as the present locus and container for a 'new' form of nation building, one that goes beyond and in fact departs from the idea of the nation state. In fact, the tempo-spatial divide is reproduced on a daily basis. Borders are implicitly or explicitly redrawn and "adapted to new circumstances", one being the 'new' centrality of the urban, of the city. City-states like Singapore but also cities like Paris bring to the surface a division, segregation and essentially rearticulation of the imperial and colonial difference around the axis of the urban on a global scale. Anywhere, the city is increasingly taken hostage and institutionally monopolized by a mobile global elite whose tradition of governance continues to rest on the strategies of Othering and b/ordering (Van Houtum, Krasch & Zierhofer, 2005), and whose sense of entitlement rests, not entirely but significantly, on the coloniality of race, space and time. Reading the modern notions of space and time decolonially in relation to the city, reveals the growing global apartheid that is currently being articulated around the spatial and cognitive borders of modernity and the city, imposed and defended through the rhetoric of modernity and the coloniality of knowledge. In fact, it seems as if the hegemonic project and aspiration of national integration, in light of the increasingly sophisticated management of resistance, has been abandoned once and for all. In other words, the

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modern discursive construction of the "collective we" seems to have moved from the scale of the nation state to the much smaller, much easier controllable, and globally distributed unit and scale of "the city", effectively resulting in a spatially scattered "global urban nation" connected by infrastructure, communication and travel networks. Simply put, if modernity is an imperial army, then the city becomes its 'civil' military base and strategic frontier. This analysis is even more substantiated if we consider the economic logic of financialization that currently shapes states and cities alike, in which cities appear as inherently more efficient and cheaper, particularly with regard to distant social service provision.

All of this calls for a sincere and collective reflection on the geo-political role of knowledge, the politics of representation, and 'our' conception of the normativity and prospects of reason and scientific conduct. If we assume that 'reason wins' then why is the, by now nearly half a century old, spatial turn not the new ruling framework for how to conceive space? In fact, the spatial turn only achieved a marginal, or better specialized exposure, particularly in contrast to the omnipresent representation of the cultural turn and its associated discourses like that of the creative economy. If we are honest, then the spatial turn, but also cultural studies, radical geography, as well as decoloniality all struggle with representation. All emancipatory projects are by default in a more than disadvantaged position with regard to the faculty to represent and to achieve far reaching exposure, in contrast to modernity/coloniality's regime of representation. The democratization of the means of representation, thus seems as the most immediate proposal to the otherwise deeply asymmetrical politics of visibility.

5.2 – Space and Time

With regard to space we can conclude that space cannot be decolonized in isolation. A deconstruction of 'space' that fails to recognize its intersecting with other pivotal modern/colonial concepts like time, anthropos, race, gender, universality, aesthetics, order, and so on, reinforces the fragmentation of understanding and contributes to the conservation of the coloniality of knowledge rather than its decolonization. In short, there is no point in fetishizing space. Accordingly, in this thesis we focused on the intersecting of the modern/colonial notions of space and time, and how they, in spite of the spatial turn, continue to co-constitute each other first and foremost in the rhetoric of universality. In the course of doing so, we have come to see how they coincide in 'presence' and the spatialization of representation – in the practices of spectacle and display (Vázquez) – and in the enunciation of master

representations with universal pretensions like that of the UN Cities Report. At large, the coloniality of space and time are well alive, sustained and defended, implicitly and explicitly in the various ways the coloniality of knowledge continues to "escape our attention". The continuity of the coloniality of space and time are thus before anything else a matter of the control over representation and enunciation.

The power of reading space and the spatial turn decolonially, furthermore lies in how it allows us to move beyond space as the spatiality, i.e. multiplicity (Massey). A decolonial reading of space allows us to see space in its discursivity as universality. By connecting universality to the conception of space and its antagonism to place, we can reveal space as the essence of modern ontology; a delocalized, post-local ontology with no connection what so ever to the land or sense of responsibility for anything beyond the individual. When further disentangling modernity's dichotomous discursive formation, space (in opposition to place) is also where universal knowledge is thought to reside. Modernity's characteristic quest for universal natural laws, instead of conditions of enunciation (Foucault), is precisely that – the assumption that knowledge is 'pure' (Lugones) and 'uncontaminated' by local human imagination and essentially located in space, waiting to be discovered. The resulting 'equation' is thus that space = universality, and (linear) time = superiority. It is this mutually reinforcing co-constitution that must be challenged and undone inside and outside the academy.

The effect of space as universality on place is first of all that place ("the here and now of social action") and all that it entails "in the definition of social life" is marginalized (Escobar, 2007, 182). Place, as particularity, is rendered irrelevant in contrast to the universality of the global (Santos, 2006, 17). Local histories, the histories of people in specific places, are appropriated into a global total history located in space. Space, as the universal container for universal history and knowledge, is thus also the realm of universal time; where time is 'captured' and recorded. Thinking space through the critique of chronology and universality thus already suggest a radically different notion of space than merely as spatiality, and allow us to describe modern ontology as inherently opposed to place, as 'post-local'. The modern notions of time and space thereby become synonymous with universality; like universal knowledge they are thought to exist irrespective of place and of local human perception. In other words, and here time and space acquire the theological component we addressed in the beginning, both are conceived as 'discoveries' and not as universalized local human social constructions. As a consequence, everything that is observed in space and time falls into and is interpreted against the overarching, absolute, post-local, 'superhuman' notion of the universal, of universal space and linear time.

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Practically speaking, space, furthermore, serves as the 'objective' and 'universal' *conceptual infantry* to lay the foundation through rationalization and homogenization in law and policy, for the forces of accumulation and dispossession to operate. The modern/colonial forces of accumulation are thus first and foremost constituted in their rationality, and may thus be thought of as the *representatives* of space. Representations of space are thus precisely that, spaces that represent their conception. Lefebvre's indispensable emphasis on the conceived level, for how it informs perception and practice, thus equally suggests to not underestimate the geopolitical relevance of knowledge, or epistemology more specifically, and the need to represent a historicized and politicized re-reading of the re/production of knowledge and its representation.

Through the decolonial critique we thus arrive at a rereading of the hegemonic notion of space as: a) post-local and globality; b) evolution and integration; c) rationalization, abstraction and alienation; d) the locus of universal knowledge, vice versa places as lacking and 'depending' on space's knowledge (education); e) as one of the essences of what constitutes modern ontology – the rhetoric of modernity is predicated on its notion of space; and thus f) as modernity's locus of enunciation (e.g. UN or scientific community); as g) taking place – colonizing 'real space' and h) as the philosophical representation of the neoliberal mantra and the popular modern perception that There Is No Alternative (TINA).

5.3 – The Third and the Decolonial Turn

The spatial turn stems from the acknowledgement of the hegemony of temporality under modernity. We thus had good reason not to turn away from temporality but to equally historicize its hegemonic representation by having a look into its genealogy. We did so under the guidance of the decolonial option, or decoloniality, for how it challenges modernity's claim to universality and 'totality' in representation from the perspective of the colonial difference. The decolonial option thus allowed us to move beyond the confinements of Eurocentrism and to deconstruct its foundations and continuities. Lefebvre's implicit critique of Eurocentrism, and equally implicit anticipation for the need for epistemic diversity beyond the borders of modern thought, could thus be replied by the decolonial option and the way it, through affirmation and denial, appropriation and representation makes visible that there is no modernity without coloniality. An inquiry of the modern representation and genealogy of time thus also meant an inquiry of modernity at large. All in all, we learned from the decolonial

intervention into western academia that knowledge cannot be separated from from the material systems of oppression, but that it is an immanent and essential component in the reproduction of the modern/colonial world order. In other words, that 'our' modern knowledge is the product of and a resource for the continuity of modernity/coloniality. 'Our' perception of knowledge and science is thus severely partial and ideological, and moreover a matter of ones position and classification within the colonial matrix of power. Concerning these matters, the decolonial option provided us with the necessary 'distance', to denormalize and demystify what otherwise would have remained normal and certain from within the perspective of Eurocentrism. We this way unraveled the presence of modern/colonial governmentality (Foucault). Whether we read Lefebvre decolonially or arrive at the decolonial critique through the spatial turn or otherwise; putting the intra-modern critique of the modern representation of space into dialogue with the extra-modern critique of the representation of time, thus appeared fruitful. Most importantly, Lefebvre shared the need to move away from all established epistemologies to ontology, based to a large degree on his recognition of the severe limitations of thinking in dichotomous terms.

> The logic of modernity features categories, dichotomies, and logical oppositions of the A and not A sort. Reality is organized in terms of dichotomous categories in relations of opposition: Mind/body, public/private, reason/emotions, men/women, white/black. Each term of any oppositional dichotomy stands in an evaluative relation to the other: one is superior to the other, more important, and the less valuable makes the existence of the more valuable possible. The oppositional dichotomizing hides the violence of oppression as it hides the intersection of categories through rendering the social world into impermeable, homogenous, complete categories of people in relation and as it hides the power that needs to be deployed to maintain the oppositional dichotomizing. As people are conceived, classified and treated in terms of homogenous categories, each group is rendered from the inside. Those who are categorically not homogenous, are disappeared. Indigenous and black women are disappeared (Lugones, 2014, 1-2).

What, accordingly, Lefebvre and decoloniality share is their implicit and explicit critique of Eurocentrism and their rejection of monoculture and rigor of knowledge (Santos, 2011, 16). A critique that involves the critique of dualistic thinking as it involves the critique of the categorical separation of time and space, with all that it entails. Both also recognize the supremacy of Historicality, of time over Spatiality and space/place. Both see in the production of knowledge and its historical context, that is in the cognitive level, be it the 'mental space' or the coloniality of knowledge and subjectivity, the prevailing obstacle for discontinuity and transformation. However, their most significant overlap may be their shared concern for the Third, for the Option. That is their insistence in t*he very possibility of epistemic shift* and the existence of exteriority, alterity and thus of alternatives and resistances to the fiction of totality. Accordingly, Lefebvre's shares in his recognition of the war on diversity the

decolonial collective's focus on human diversity and the horizon of pluriversality. Moreover, Lefebvre's rejection of all established epistemologies and his call for a re-centering on ontology as a critique of abstraction and alienation, greatly corresponds with the decolonial critique of the coloniality of knowledge and being, of subjectivity. Their offering of the Third is thus more than a direct response to the culture of thinking in dichotomies and a plea to overcome the binaries of modern-traditional, urban-rural, superiority-inferiority, expert-layman, left-right, theory-practice, and so forth. The Third represents the opening once the system of dichotomous classification has been dismantled. In short, the Third is the belief in hope, agency and transformation. Lefebvre's initialization of the spatial turn and the decolonial intervention into the discursivity of modernity/coloniality, are thus both activisms and resistances to the representation of totality and its production of fragmentation, idleness, apathy, and nihilism. Moreover, they both, as counter currents, evidence in their marginality the asymmetry in the faculty to represent the world otherwise. At large, the time has come to move from the spatial to the decolonial turn and decolonize the university, the production of knowledge and its representation altogether.

5.4 – Place, Struggle and Knowledge Production

Taken together this thesis' conclusion is a call for the radical reaffirmation of 'place' as the locus of and for social action, intervention and resistance, community- and coalition building, and as a way to counteract the abstraction, fragmentation and alienation we experience in the culture of 'space' – modernity/coloniality. The reaffirmation of place thus also entails a reversal in ontology, perspective and responsibility away from master representation and the conceived level to the issues and contradictions facing us where we are – the re-appropriation of lived spaces. In other words, only in place can we subvert, disobey and delink from the vocabulary of modernity/coloniality and reclaim representations of space and transform them into spaces of representation. The reaffirmation of place is thus immediately also a reaffirmation of relationality and the possibility of collective focus and action. In other words, the reaffirmation of place transcends the dialectic of the global and the local, because it is not a question of either or, but of unleashing the potential and capacity for emancipation waiting to be actualized in place. A collective disengagement or at least intervention in the discursivity of modernity/coloniality thus lies at the heart of a reaffirmation and reappropriation of place, marking it as the spatial and social foundation for the project of pluriversality.

Thus, also explicitly with regard to social struggle, cognitive justice and knowledge production, place becomes decisive. The reaffirmation of place signals the reaffirmation of the faculty to live, love, learn and understand, supply and defend what is commonly dear in dignity and autonomy. The radical re-connotation of place is thus the very foundation for how to move beyond the violence of universality and modernity/coloniality's regime of representation, and reconstitutes a social ecology based on the certainty that "we have all we need in place".

5.5 – Geography and the Task of Listening

In a similar way the implications of our argument for the discipline of geography are several. The reconceptualization and decolonization of space as universality confronts this discipline, like any other, with an unprecedented challenge. Any department will have to ask itself the question of situatedness, that is embeddedness and thus of responsibility. Or in other words, who or what does the respective department "swear allegiance" to; the institution it is part of, the global scientific community, corporate interest or the place and thus to the people and communities it is located in. The dialectical question thus rather becomes one of how the institutions in a place relate to that place, and whether they are controlled by and shaped by local, place-bound interests or the opposite, abstract global conceptions of certainty. In short, the question becomes what institutions in place represent – place or space. Counter-acting the disembeddedness of modernity thus also entails the Task of Listening; of learning to listen. Listening to the silences and absences, whether its excluded parts of the population that are denied enunciation and representation, like undocumented or homeless people, or 'minorities', or also if its students and the experiences of ordinary people, thus entails the promise of breaking and overcoming social and spatial (and temporal) divisions characteristic of modernity/coloniality.

5.6 – Personal Reflection

The journey of writing this thesis has been a long and existential one and probably dates back as far as to my childhood. If I lacked something in my upbringing, then it was a belief in the certainty of things. There did not seem to be much that could promise me or my social environment any real sense of orientation. Most of what we received as certainty, seemed to merely reflect unreflected, taken for granted orthodoxies. This initial skepticism was then echoed and confirmed when I moved to higher

education and studied Human Geography and Sociology at a Liberal Arts and Sciences college in the Netherlands. Instead of defending the Order of Things, here we were allowed and encouraged to question and denormalize the Normal. This was even more reinforced by my exposure to the decolonial critique, which finally provided us with the much needed analytical and ethical orientation in an otherwise modern/colonial institutional environment. The following three years were an existential confrontation with my identity and the society that had made me. I thus owe most of what has been said in these pages to my mentor Rolando Vázquez. The will not to reproduce the Normal thus lead to the decision to write a 'theoretical' thesis instead of a conventional, standardized volume of work in which the ruling frameworks of thought are out of question. This naturally extended to the question of a case study and comparative methodology, but which was, to my advantage, met with great trust and support by my supervisors. Consequently, also the decision to focus on the conceived level sprang from my education in the critique of Eurocentrism and the way it is fundamental to the reproduction of the modern/colonial world order.

5.7 – Future Studies

Future inquiries into the coloniality of knowledge and decolonial futures can be several and diverse. First of all, one might want to deepen the analysis I have attempted to make here in the examples of space and time, and further develop the arguments or otherwise criticize them. Other studies on the coloniality of knowledge in respect to representation and "the city" might want to scrutinize the intersecting of additional central modern/colonial concepts, particularly those of gender, sexuality, aesthetics and order. Especially aesthetics, and the degree to which it has been normalized and internalized offers a challenging but promising domain for decolonization in a diversity of cases and with immense emancipatory potential. With regard to the city more specifically, one might want to dive into such recent studies like that of "ordinary cities" (e.g. Robinson, 2008) and develop a more robust notion of a decolonial urbanism; one that reverses the modern/colonial trend of homogenization towards the representation of diversity in dignity and autonomy. Another critical field of research, but also of participation, are social movements and the by Mignolo proclaimed global political society, and how they bring to the surface alternative forms of understanding and visions for the future, that either do not share the same genealogy like modern/colonial traditions of thought or that have delinked from them. These movements might be the most relevant of all research topics since they are the living

alternatives in practice – the living alternative social practices – that can teach academics like us more about ourselves, about dignity, democracy, relationality, and hope, than we will ever be able to teach them. Above all, it is the re-conceptualization of difference and diversity beyond its modern/colonial representation that will be the key to a pluriversal future of inter-subjective and inter-cultural dialogue, solidarity and horizontal cooperation.

At last, the fact that "we all love the city" is not a coincidence nor natural. The question of how we will conceive the city in the future will greatly determine that future.

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