

## Coloniality and Disciplinary Power: On Spatial Techniques of Ordering

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### English Abstract

This essay argues that a new technique of ordering and producing space emerged in the sixteenth century, whereby the Américas were taken as a heterotopic laboratory for the space of the grid. As the ordered grid of space lightened the physical fortification of heavy walls traditionally found in medieval Europe, it implanted new methods of ordering the behavior of the human body and soul. In this way, the grid gave rise to disciplinary techniques of controlling and producing human subjectivity. The global problematic of space as it emerges after 1492 is a central thematic of decolonial philosophy and critiques of coloniality. Many accounts of decolonial philosophy emphasize the ontological nihilation of the periphery, the European production of the other as non-being in an empty space beyond the line. This article supplements this view by arguing that we need an account of the production and ordering of this space that goes beyond simple negation and emptiness. The coloniality of power, thus, has a disciplinary dimension that involves the ordering and production of subjects and spaces in the Américas, while Foucauldian disciplinary power is entangled with the coloniality of power.

### Resumen en español

Este ensayo argumenta que en el siglo XVI surgió una nueva técnica de ordenar y producir el espacio, mediante la cual las Américas fueron tomadas como un laboratorio heterotópico para el espacio de la cuadrícula. A medida que el espacio ordenado de la cuadrícula suavizó la fortificación física de los enormes muros tradicionalmente encontrados en Europa medieval, implantó nuevos métodos de ordenamiento del comportamiento del cuerpo y del alma humana. Así, la cuadrícula originó técnicas disciplinarias para controlar y producir la subjetividad humana. La problemática global del espacio que emerge después de 1492 es un tema central de la filosofía decolonial y de críticas a la colonialidad. Muchas versiones de la filosofía decolonial enfatizan la aniquilación ontológica de la periferia, la producción del otro como no-ser en un espacio vacío más allá de la línea. Este artículo complementa esta perspectiva argumentando que precisamos de un entendimiento de la producción y ordenamiento de espacio, que no es simplemente reducible a una negación o un espacio vacío. La colonialidad de poder, por lo tanto, tiene una dimensión disciplinaria que involucra el ordenamiento y producción de sujetos y espacios en las Américas. Al mismo tiempo, el poder disciplinario de Foucault está enredado con la colonialidad de poder.

### Resumo em português

Esse ensaio argumenta que uma nova técnica de ordenamento e produção espacial surgiu no século XVI, através da qual as Américas foram tomadas como um laboratório

heterotópico para o espaço da quadrícula. Na medida em que o espaço ordenado da quadrícula suavizou a fortificação física das pesadas muralhas, tradicionalmente encontradas na Europa medieval, este implantou novos métodos de ordenamento do comportamento do corpo e da alma humanos. Assim, a quadrícula originou técnicas disciplinares de controle e produção de subjetividade humana. A problemática global do espaço que emerge depois de 1492 é uma temática central da filosofia decolonial e das críticas à colonialidade. Muitas versões da filosofia decolonial enfatizam a aniquilação ontológica da periferia, a produção do outro como não-ser em um espaço vazio além da linha. Esse artigo suplementa essa visão ao argumentar que nós precisamos de um entendimento da produção e ordenamento desse espaço que ultrapasse a simples negação e o vazio. A colonialidade do poder, portanto, contém uma dimensão disciplinar que envolve o ordenamento e a produção de sujeitos e espaços nas Américas, enredando o poder disciplinar foucaultiano com a colonialidade do poder.

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The evil that besets the Argentine Republic is the expanse (*la extensión*).  
-D.F. Sarmiento[1]

The colonization of the Américas marks the commencement of a global problematic of space.[2] Global lines are drawn by European crowns and the Papacy: on one side they see organized, settled, European space, and on the other, empty, abyssal space, free for exploration, discovery, and appropriation. On May 4th, 1493, Pope Alexander VI marks out such a line to “donate” the land beyond for discovery and settlement by the Spanish. In 1494, the Treaty of Tordesillas draws another line, on the meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands, to settle claims between Portugal and Spain.[3] The problematic of global space is not limited, however, to the drawing of abyssal lines that mark out supposedly empty space from ordered, civilized spaces. The other side of the line is not only defined by ontological negation and emptiness, but the production of a whole regime of order, connected to disciplinary practices of shaping the spiritual, gendered, and economic habitus of Indigenous, African, and *criollo* subjects.

The global problematic of space has been a central thematic of decolonial theory and critiques of coloniality. Enrique Dussel’s work has long traced out these global lines that divide between center and periphery, totality and exteriority.[4] In his work, he emphasizes that beyond the line, in the zone of exteriority, is the space of non-being. The European center construes itself as the space of being, while it negates the being of the other in the periphery. The history of modernity, for Dussel, is also the history of the ontological nihilation of the periphery that began with 1492.[5] Indeed, the concept of coloniality suggests that the structures of power (particularly race, labor, and gender[6]) that emerged with the history of colonialism continue to fundamentally structure the supposedly postcolonial world. Additionally, modernity was never separate

from its colonial history, thus, modernity/coloniality is the corrective decolonial concept to center this history.[7] In this sense, Aníbal Quijano, emphasizes that the emergence of global capitalism (and the coloniality of the modern world system) was predicated upon new practices of labor linked with hierarchical racial classification that were shaped in the colonial encounter with the Américas.[8] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, furthermore, coined the term “abyssal thinking” to refer to the epistemology that emerges with this ontological nihilation of the periphery and what is beyond the line. While these theories emphasize the notion of the periphery, what is beyond the line, and the negation of the other, a richer understanding of the production of order and disciplinary space is needed to understand the dynamic of space on the other side of the line.[9] The local production of colonial subjects and spaces will also be crucial to understand modes of resistance and creativity that escape or counter coloniality. While the Spanish conquistadors often construed the “beyond the line” in terms of ontological negation, the production of coloniality, in fact, also involved a complex engagement and ordering of these spaces.

Overall, this essay argues that a new technique of ordering and producing space emerged in the sixteenth century, whereby the Américas were conceived as a heterotopic laboratory for the space of the grid. The first section of the paper, beginning with a 1513 Royal directive, examines the heterotopic dimension of the Américas as a laboratory of “empty space,” which gave rise to the production of new techniques of spatiality and proto-disciplinary modes of subjection. The ordered gridiron space lightened the physical fortification of heavy walls and aimed to implant new methods of ordering the behavior of the human body and soul. The second section continues this argument through a close reading of disciplinary and spatial dimensions of the 1512 Spanish legal document aimed to codify colonial behavior in the Américas, the Laws of Burgos. The third, and final section turns to the 1573 Royal Ordinances on City-Planning issued by the crown. These ordinances demonstrate the formalization of the spatial technique of the grid and the disciplinary rules for the construction of the space of the city. This section also considers the intersections between sovereign and disciplinary spaces that are at work in the sixteenth century. To conclude, I consider the persistence of coloniality in the spatial techniques of ordering that pervaded the post-independence nation-state in Latin America.

### **1513: “Let the city lots be ordered from the start”**

On August 2nd, 1513, King Ferdinand II writes the following Royal directive to the conquistador Pedrarías Dávila: “Let the city lots be ordered from the start, so once they are marked out the town will appear well ordered as to the place which is left for a plaza, the site for the church, and the sequence of the streets; *for in places newly established proper order can be given from the start.*”[10] These cities of the Américas were often built without the walls and defensive enclosure that defined medieval architecture.[11] Instead, they were constructed according to a principle of

order and the grid. In these cities, “spiritual walls” were to replace the heavy fortification of brick or stone.[12]

Spanish colonial architecture in the Américas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries emphasizes the grid over and above the wall or the fortress. A new relationship between human subjectivity and spatiality emerged in the long sixteenth century as the Américas and the Atlantic became the key spaces of a new global history. In this process, the globe emerged for the first time as a material object to be circumnavigated, mapped, and known. This new spatial ordering can be understood as an invention: an invention consolidated through techniques of power and knowledge as they converged around problems of how to order and organize human communities and how to adequately grasp the globe as a whole during the long sixteenth century. This problematic transformed the meaning, practice, and construction of space and spatiality.

The grid emerges as an apparatus of ordering across a variety of practices and institutions in related, interlocking, and, sometimes, discontinuous fashions.[13] The (re)birth[14] of the grid apparatus in the sixteenth century involves the deployment of techniques in various domains that organize reality at the practical and epistemological levels in early modernity/coloniality, in such a way and to such a degree that was unthinkable in previous centuries.[15] The grid does not only refer to the spatial mapping of geographical locations onto a coordinate system, but also to a network of power and epistemology operative for the organization of language, writing, and urban space.[16] The grid is a matrix for the ordering of geographical locations and physical bodies into and onto a coordinate system that can be known and controlled, and an epistemological practice for the ordering of knowledge onto an abstract plane. In this sense, the grid serves as a fortification for the ordering of human behavior that will not have to rely on the physicality of walls and restriction but instead on the geometry of sightlines and the ordering of bodies in space.

Colonial techniques of organizing space, thus, emerged as a heterotopic laboratory for the organization, flow, and order of communities within a space. The problematization of space in the sixteenth-century European scramble to respond to the opening of what they considered an “empty space” beyond the line *releases* the technology of the grid and a new exercise of governmental power. Thus, the ordering of gridded space is the correlate of this notion of emptiness. Spain did not invent gridded space rather they implemented and exercised it in such a way that it gave birth to a new reality and a new political epistemology. The (re)birth of the grid refers, thus, to the emergence of a new political apparatus, whose forces were released through a *heterotopic practice*.[17]

A heterotopia is to be contrasted with the non-space or ideal-space of a *u-topia*, literally meaning no-space or good-space. A *hetero-topia* is, instead, an *other* space, a space that is constructed and organized according to a different set of rules than those that organize and constrain the rest of a society.[18] Heterotopias can involve sites and methods of resistance: the maroonage of escaped slave communities, the flaneur who

carves out new paths in the monotonous city, or the construction of communes as alternative modes of social and spatial organization. On the other hand, they can be laboratories for the construction of new forms of power and subjugation: the prison, the school, the factory, the spaces of confinement, the plantation, or the colony. Or, they might simply be places where the normal rules of space and time do not apply: airports, train stations, resort towns, or ships out at sea.

While Foucault refers to the sea as a vast reservoir of heterotopias, we might further specify the Américas, conceived as an “empty space” beyond the line, as the ultimate heterotopic reservoir service for the construction and production of new modes of order. The examples are many but just consider the heterotopian dimensions of the unprecedented scenario of the Jesuit attempts to make “utopian” communities and modes of life with the Indigenous people of Paraguay[19] or Vasco de Quiroga’s attempts to implement principles derived from Thomas More’s *Utopia* in sixteenth-century Mexico.[20] The colony is a heterotopia that above all creates relations of domination and oppression through its impulse for order, but one that also produces new modes of subjectivity and complex practices of resistance.[21] The colonies are the laboratories that engender the emergence of a new European technique for the distribution and organization of human spaces through an exertion of power beyond the shores of Europe, outside of the spaces given within their society.

Angel Rama explores this heterotopic dimension of the Américas when he writes, “Over the course of the sixteenth century, the Spanish conquerors became aware of having left behind the distribution of space and the way of life characteristic of the medieval Iberian cities—‘organic,’ rather than ‘ordered’—where they had been born and raised.”[22] The techniques of empty space in the New World made possible a new relationship to urban space, a planned order different from the organic development of medieval cities. That is to say, medieval European cities were usually built up in an “organic” fashion, spiraling outwards with jagged streets like the arrondissements of Paris, rather than pre-planned in advance according to an ordered gridiron structure. In this sense, it is worth remembering that colonial spaces are often overlooked as derivative and instrumental to more fundamental cultural and architectural expressions in the metropole. Instead, this relation should be read in reverse: the sixteenth-century transformation of space occurs with its greatest intensity in the colony and not in the metropole: we can call this *the heterotopic logic of coloniality*. [23]

Foucault’s account of disciplinary power operates according to a similar heterotopic logic; yet, it is limited to spaces within Europe. Disciplinary techniques of power emerge precisely through a construction of other spaces outside the normal confines of society: factories, prisons, schools, hospitals, and military camps. These institutions construct their own rules of spatial distribution and organize the space and time of the body in fundamentally unprecedented ways, giving birth to a new apparatus of power. The construction of a docile body is precisely predicated on this production of a new spatiotemporal order in which the subject is enmeshed within a school, a factory, a prison, or a hospital.

Despite his confinement to European examples, Foucault indicates that disciplinary power could just as easily be read as emerging out of practices of colonialism and slavery,[24] two topics about which he writes little in his corpus.[25] In a brief footnote in *Discipline and Punish*, he writes, "I shall choose examples from military, medical, educational and industrial institutions. Other examples might have been taken from colonization, slavery and child rearing." [26] How would following out the genealogical insights from the space of the colonies shift some of the periodizations and methods for reading power that Foucault offers? This paper precisely aims to interrogate this point hinted at by Foucault in his footnote to consider how techniques of power tied to coloniality might shift our understanding of the supposedly European shape of disciplinary power.

In this sense, it can be asked: does colonialism involve or invent disciplinary institutions or apparatuses? Specifically, is sixteenth-century Spanish colonialism a disciplinary practice and can we identify the birth of the grid as a moment in the spatial construction of the disciplines? Foucault identifies the birth of disciplinary practices with the shift from Renaissance notions of ideal-types and stable natures (the ideal sixteenth-century soldier with their discernible marks of courage and nobility) to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries where a new politics of the body was born, an anatomo-politics. The notion was that a body could be molded to become more forceful and useful as it also became proportionally more disciplined and obedient: the increase of extraction of forces alongside the increase of subjugation. Foucault writes, "Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)." [27] Given Foucault's periodization focusing on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it might be surprising to find disciplinary institutions emerging in sixteenth-century colonies. However, if we follow the definition of discipline as the increase in extraction of forces from the body in proportion to increases of political obedience, we are faced squarely with a fundamental dimension of both colonization and slavery.

As Anibal Quijano has argued, the birth of European colonialism in the long sixteenth century gave rise to new structures of the domination of the body in terms of race and labor, a matrix of power and knowledge that he refers to as *coloniality*, which continues to exert force more than five-hundred years later despite the end of most forms of direct colonial rule.[28] Colonization and slavery give rise to power structures that are concerned with extracting forces from the body while at the same time operating a wholesale domination and restriction of the political forces of the body in terms of obedience. One principle question of difference to be raised with respect to the anatomo-politics and the disciplines of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Europe versus those of the colonies and the plantations is the way in which force is extracted from the body and the way in which domination is enacted. Violent forms of submission appear quite differently than subtle tactics of coercion.[29] I aim to show, however, that colonialism was not only concerned with violent submission (and ontological negation)

but also with the production of new forms of subjectivity through the construction of ordered and gridded spaces alongside the inculcation of Christian morality.

In this sense, one might suspect that violent forms of domination only occur under models of sovereign power, a form of power that tortures the body and marks its signs of superior force directly on the body. However, colonization and slavery also give rise to a microphysics of power relations around the body. Their aim is not just to mark the body, torture it, destroy it, or stun it into submission: the colonial project also revolves around the extraction of forces from the body. In order to achieve this increase in force, the colony and the plantation develop a microphysics of organizing all of the minute details of how a body is used and exerted throughout a day, a year, a life. In order to organize these minute details of the body, spatial proximity, order, and visibility are required.

### **1512: The Laws of Burgos**

The attempt to regularize the habitus of the indigenous subject in América is already clear, for example, in the first codification for the governance of subjects under the reign of the Spanish in America: the 1512 Laws of Burgos. The central concern of this 1512 document is the “idleness and vice” of Indigenous peoples and the difficulty of inculcating a productive, virtuous, and religious subjectivity when they live at such a distance from the Spanish settlements. The subject may very well appear to accept the doctrines of the Christian faith and even begin to practice in a pious manner when in the presence of the Spanish colonists, yet as soon as they wander back home these doctrines slide right out of their subjective world. The Spanish are confounded by an apparent forgetfulness. The Laws of Burgos explain: “although at the time the Indians go to serve them they are indoctrinated in and taught the things of our Faith, after serving they return to their dwellings where, because of *the distance* and their own evil inclinations, they immediately forget what they have been taught and go back to their customary idleness and vice...”[30] The active force of forgetting is a continual threat to the production of an obedient subject.

The express concern is that the given spatial arrangement does not allow for a completed subject-formation, the distance allows the Amerindians to wander off back into their own subjective space of idleness and vice. On the other hand, virtue and productivity can be habituated if the Amerindian settlements are destroyed and relocated to the adjacent regions of the Spanish settlements. All of this is justified not in the name of the great power of the king, nor in some show of the force of Spanish colonizers, but is, instead, framed as a benevolent practice which will also reduce the hardships and health problems of the Amerindians. With the construction of a space that is said to produce a healthier, more benevolent condition, along with a virtuous and productive subject we surely have the proto-type of a disciplinary formation.

The full-scale microphysics of anatomical detail described by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* are certainly not fully developed at this point in the sixteenth century. Yet, we do find the emphasis on the production of a subject as opposed to the restrictive or deductive model of sovereignty. The productivity of power is a key movement away from the violent excess of the sovereign's deductive demonstration of force against the subject. The aim of bringing the Amerindians into immediate proximity of the Spanish gaze is to form a virtuous and productive subject that will yield more spiritual and physical value for the Spanish crown. Distance is a key problem that does not allow for sufficient supervision and shaping of the indigenous subject. The space of wandering and idleness must be extinguished and the Spaniards go so far as to justify the burning of their previous villages in the name of this subjective transformation. Although this question is principally posed in religious terms of conversion and virtue, there is certainly a parallel interest in the economic terms of productivity (increase of force) and political terms of obedience or docility (decrease in forces of resistance).

The supposed idleness and wandering of the Amerindian is opposed to the stable and rooted nature that the Spaniards wish to impress upon them: "the principal aim" of these practices on the part of the Spanish, as the document states, is that the "Faith shall be *planted and deeply rooted*."[31] The desire for a stable and deeply rooted subject was a consistent concern across various Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Américas. For example, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro cites the sixteenth-century Jesuits in Brazil who were struck by the problem of the *inconstancy* of the Amerindian soul.[32] The problem for the Jesuits was not so much an active resistance to the teaching of Christian doctrine but instead a practice of forgetting carried out by the Amerindians. The Amerindians would readily accept the doctrines of the Christian faith and participate in its rituals only to turn around and forget them. Thus, the Jesuits were struck with this problem of inconstancy, the instability and mobility of the Amerindian soul that refused to have a stable or rooted relationship to Christian religious belief. Here we see an overlap with the problematic raised in the Laws of Burgos: how to produce a stable and rooted subject out of an inconstant and flexible one.

These laws offer one of the first formulations of an emerging Spanish colonial urban order but additionally they act as a kind of handbook for the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly activities that the Amerindians will perform in their close proximity to the Spanish. Every two weeks they will be examined "to see what each one knows... and to teach them what they do not know," also ensuring against the stubborn practice of forgetting.[33] After five months of working in a gold mine, Amerindians should be allowed to rest for forty days.[34] They are to confess once a year and whenever they fall ill.[35] Churches are to be built in all of their towns and next to the larger mines, and if a church is too far from any estate a new one is to be built. They are to attend mass on Sundays and all holidays and are to eat their best meal of the week on this day.[36] They are not to take more than one wife and must be repeatedly reminded of the evils of doing otherwise. They are to be given one peso every year to buy clothing so that they go about sufficiently clothed.



We should remember, of course, that these laws were intended as a code for the “good treatment” of Indigenous peoples and many of them were not followed, especially those that required “better” treatment from the Spanish. These were also fundamental principles that were established to the end of formalizing and justifying the economic system of the *encomienda*. In the *encomienda* system, similar to a feudal system, the Amerindians were supposed to be “free subjects” but they were required to complete semi-compulsory labor in exchange for religious guidance, cultivation, and protection laid out in these laws. In short, the point is that we can isolate in this discourse, (which has been hailed by some as one of the first documents of human rights), the problematization of certain proto-disciplinary techniques for the subject-formation of a wandering or inconstant subject, and these techniques involve the construction of a spatial and temporal world to govern, regularize, and examine the conduct of these subjects.

The heterotopia creates a counter-space to those existing spaces in the center of a society, and this is precisely one way we can read the practice of colonialism for Europe. The Américas function as a laboratory for Europe: Europe constructs a blank slate upon which new apparatuses of power and knowledge can be ordered. The epistemic practice of colonialism is not simply one of exclusion, exteriorization, and ontological nihilism of the periphery: it is also a productive practice of power, an organization and control of subjects and space. A heterotopia is the name for a practice of producing new technologies of power and knowledge within new and different spaces. The emergence of the grid in this sense involves a heterotopic practice. It emerges out of an encounter with an *other* space and the practices built on the construction of this space as empty, organizable, and gridded.

### **1573: Royal Ordinances on City-Planning**

The Laws of Burgos exemplify an early expression of Spanish colonial transformations of space and organization of subjects. These heterotopias engender the construction of proto-disciplinary spaces outside of and different from those spaces of European societies. Yet, these 1512 laws only sketch the very beginnings of a spatial transformation that would vastly increase and intensify as the Spanish reach expands across the Caribbean, South America, and Mexico during the sixteenth century and beyond. The disciplinary heterotopias of colonial cities become a central concern for the power apparatus of the Spanish crown and its viceroyalties, and their laws of construction more refined. These practices magnify the anatomo-politics of making bodies known, visible, and productive through the technique of the grid, which offers an ordered, knowable, and manageable citizenry.

The construction of the Spanish colonial city as a grid had many precedents in the sixteenth century, as we can glimpse from the Laws of Burgos above, along with King Ferdinand’s 1513 letter to Pedrarias Dávila. By the second half of the sixteenth century most Spanish colonial cities were already built or being built according to the

model of the grid. In 1573, then, the rules for constructing a colonial city were given official codification with Phillip II's Royal Ordinances on city planning.[37]

In these ordinances, the requirement of a grid design is formalized in great detail along with the importance of placing a plaza at the heart of any city. Ordinance 110 of 148 states, "On arriving at the place where the new settlement is to be founded a plan for the site is to be made, dividing it into squares, streets, and building lots, using cord and ruler, beginning with the main square from which streets are to run to the gates and principal roads and leaving sufficient open space so that even if the town grows, it can always spread in the same manner." [38] The center or starting point of these gridded towns was always the plaza, which should be a square or a rectangle (Ord. 112). In towns on the sea, the plaza would be at the start of the town but when inland, it would be in the center. This plaza was, furthermore, designed to be proportioned to the size of the town along with its future anticipated population. The plaza was not built to house any private residents but to be the commercial, legal, and religious center of the city: always complete with a church, government buildings, a bank, and space for merchants (Ord. 119, 121 & 126).[39] A hospital for the poor and for those with non-contagious diseases would be built close to the church in the plaza-center, and one for those with contagious diseases would be built at the outskirts of the town (Ord. 121). Businesses that produce considerable waste or filth such as slaughterhouses, fisheries, and tanneries are also to be positioned away from the center of town but in a space where the waste can be easily disposed of, for instance, alongside the river or sea (Ord. 122).

The town should also be designed in such a way that its grid can easily be expanded in the event of future population growth, and the buildings should be uniform in their design and appearance as far as possible, for the sake of beauty (Ord. 134). No indigenous subjects are allowed to enter the town until its basic construction has been completed.[40] This ordinance is designed to prevent any conflict while the city is being set-up, so that once it is completed the Amerindians will recognize the firm roots of the colonists planting themselves in the New World and be less inclined to attempt to expel them or rebel. Here, the Spanish especially demonstrate the importance of their spatial technique of producing order: if they are able to successfully root themselves and the spatiality of their grid, it will be too difficult to uproot them and send them back to the shores from whence they came. Spanish colonization and conquest explicitly required a spatial technique of urban ordering in order to secure their claims and positions in the Américas.

These ordinances laid out the methods for the Spanish to construct a space anew. As Foucault argues in relation to different spatial techniques in *Security, Territory, and Population*, whereas sovereignty capitalizes a space, "...discipline structures a space and addresses the essential problem of a hierarchical and functional distribution of elements." [41] Disciplinary spaces are based on the construction of space, which operates according to its own rules and the distribution of roles within that space: the placement of the churches, government buildings, hospitals, and commerce. In the colonies, space became a new problem subject to new rules of construction: as a

heterotopia, as a space freed from spatial entanglements of Europe, the Spanish constructed towns that could order a multiplicity of subjects according to a newly established logic of ordering. Foucault points out how this geometrical model of the town differs from the sovereign model, and he sees the Roman military camp as a prime influence: "In the case of towns constructed on the model of the [Roman military] camp, we can say that the town is not thought on the basis of the larger territory, but on the basis of a smaller geometrical figure, which is a kind of architectural module, namely the square or rectangle, which is in turn subdivided into other squares or rectangles." [42] Sovereign spatiality is based on the territory, capitalizing the control from the center, and policing and preserving the borders at the limit of the territory. Disciplinary space is not tied to the logic and order of the territory but is produced based on its own model, such as a geometrical figure. Indeed, among a variety of influences, many scholars emphasize the Roman and Vitruvian influences of the grid structure of Spanish colonial urban design. [43] The Roman imperial project offered resources and inspirations to the Spanish architects of managing an overseas empire.

Like the Roman project, the exercise of early modern Spanish power does not fit strictly within the nation-state model of sovereignty. At the same time, however, Spain is one of the first emerging models for the possibility of an absolutist and unified sovereign territorial state in Europe. In this light it is perhaps surprising to think of its colonial machine as one that produces disciplinary spaces. Could it be that the problematization of sovereign territorial space and constructed disciplinary spaces takes place simultaneously? If we take the example of Madrid, this intertwinement can certainly be evidenced. In 1561, twelve years prior to the ordinances on city-planning, Phillip II decided to move the capital city of Spain to Madrid. This decision was made according to a very sovereign logic of territory: the need to place the government in the center of the state so that the sovereign's reach can extend across the territory and so that their power can be felt radiating across it. As Foucault explains, "...sovereignty capitalizes a territory, raising the major problem of the seat of government..." [44] This was the logic that led to choosing Madrid as the capital city. Madrid was an old medieval city, with windy roads and lack of any gridiron structure. However, Phillip II would decide to redesign the center *Plaza Mayor* of Madrid to conform to his love for the rational gridiron structure. This would not be an easy process given the historical density of the organic development of Madrid's urban center. As Jesús Escobar points out, "The imposition of a grid atop the historic core of Madrid was not a possibility, and yet some of the theoretical concepts behind grid planning were actually carried out." [45] The desire for the grid to be placed atop medieval European towns points to the boomerang effect of bringing colonial styles of urban planning back to the metropole.

There are, thus, overlaps between the grid-structure planning of colonial cities and the desire for gridded plazas in the Spanish metropole. Yet, the choice of Madrid as the capital city and the redesign of its central plaza are not strictly disciplinary. The concern with Madrid was, first of all, territory. Secondly, the architecture of Madrid was intended to exhibit the strength and glory of the sovereign: to display a spectacle for all subjects to see. Yet, the desire to impose the grid atop of this sovereign space points to

the clash and the complex engagement between sovereign and disciplinary power. Indeed, as Foucault suggests in "Of Other Spaces," the heterotopias of the colonies can be considered heterotopias of compensation.[46] The colonies compensated for the messy space of Europe, offering a new regime of order that was then imported back to the metropole and superimposed atop the logic of sovereignty.

Furthermore, as discussed above, the construction of space in the New World was not primarily concerned with traditional military conceptions of defense in terms of the heaviness of walls and fortification, as is the case in sovereign conceptions of territory. Defensive concerns with respect to attacks from Amerindians were formulated instead in terms of gaining recognition of the colonists' stable foundations in these new spaces, showing strongly planted roots.[47] In short, the defensive technique of the wall was actually replaced by a productive technique of creating a predictable and virtuous subject alongside an organized and well-rooted space. These colonial towns and cities long predate the intensive and open (non-walled) cities of circulation and security of the eighteenth century in a more developed moment of capitalism and liberalism; however, they do prefigure many of their technologies with their emphases on control through the openness and distribution of gridded space rather than the enclosure of the wall or the fortress.[48]

### **1845: The Persistence of Coloniality**

The long-durée of the colonial grid extends into the independence period in Latin America, where we see the persistence and failures of the grid. For example, in the nineteenth century the problem of ordering a newly born nation-state is posed in terms of how to govern the whole expansive state, including the unending countryside, on the model of a city. The project of Spanish colonization did not so much involve the attempt to produce ordered space across the entirety of the continent, but instead to create intensive cities of order. There was a multiplication of the colonial city with its grid and the attempt to bring the Amerindian from the countryside into the ordered space of the city, especially as noted in the Laws of Burgos. However, the post-independence nation-state would look to a new problematic, the frontier of space that needed to be order and civilized across the countryside.

These concerns are crystallized in Domingo F. Sarmiento's seminal 1845 text on the physical and moral geography of Argentina, *Facundo: or, Civilization and Barbarism*. According to Sarmiento, the natural landscape of Argentina, with its infinitely expanding *pampa* and the rural *gauchos* who inhabit it, pose a nearly unsurpassable obstacle to the march of civilization, which has only taken hold in the city: "Immensity is in all parts of the country: immense are the plains, immense are the woods, immense are the rivers, the horizon always uncertain, always blending together with the land, lost in haze and delicate vapors which *prohibit the marking of the point in the distant perspective, where the land ends and the sky begins.*"[49] The geographical landscape and immensity of the Argentine countryside impede the ordering project from imposing any

grid. One cannot clearly mark any perspective within this space: in fact, it is impossible to differentiate the sky from the land on the horizon. The ordering epistemology is rendered uncertain by this natural immensity. Parallel to the sixteenth century problems of mapping and gridding urban space and the globe, the Argentine *pampa* is a smooth space par excellence: expansive, undifferentiated, and populated with intensive and unordered flows.[50]

For Sarmiento this physical geography, thus, also translates to a moral geography.[51] The disorder of nature produces a degeneracy or barbarism of the people who inhabit these spaces. Civilization and order must be produced: they are not naturally provided by the landscape. Without proper order, the other is not yet produced as citizen and the possibility of proper moral conduct is ruled out. Prior to the independence period in Latin America, the production of order neglected most of the expansive countryside. The transformation marked here by Sarmiento points to the difference between the attempt to order an entire nation-state (the coloniality of the independent state) versus the attempt to order a colonial city or an outpost of trade, intended to concentrate and extract the greatest amount of forces possible with the least amount of resources.

Phillip II's 1573 ordinances evidence the formalization of a set of rules that crystallize a spatial technique for order in the Américas. The disciplinary technique of producing a certain kind of productive and industrious moral subject was concentrated within the city-space, where the colonists could "plant their roots." In the post-independence nation-state the questions of how to impose discipline on an entire population and how to cultivate the proper moral conduct of an entire nation do not translate to independence from the shackles of colonial techniques of power, but rather the search for new avenues through which to transmit and generalize the disciplines across the nation.

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## Notes

[1] My revised translation, Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Facundo: or, Civilization and Barbarism*, trans. Mary Mann (New York: Penguin Books, 1998 [1845]), 9. The original reads: "El mal que aqueja a la República Argentina es la extensión."

[2] I would like to thank the two anonymous readers who reviewed an earlier draft of this article. Their comments were both insightful and valuable. They have helped me to clarify key moments of the argument.

[3] Cf. The Papal bull *Inter Caetera*, 1493 and the Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494.

[4] Cf. Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, trans. Aquilina Martinez and Christine Morkovsky (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003) & Dussel *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995). In the latter text, Dussel describes the "invention" of the Américas as a "covering over" of the other rather than a simple ontological negation.

[5] Philosophy of liberation is, as what Dussel terms a "barbarian philosophy," an affirmation of the periphery and the creativity that surges forth from beyond the domination and determinations of the center. To be clear, then, philosophy liberation argues for the metaphysical *reality* of the other who is beyond *being*. Justice, creativity, freedom, and the other are all exterior to the determinations of the dominant system of being. Cf. Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*, Chapter 2. My approach is different here in that I aim to look at the materiality of the production of the other as proto-disciplinary subject—the goal is to understand the entanglements of a new mode of power that involves the production of coloniality and discipline.

[6] On the coloniality of gender and the shaping of gendered spaces in coloniality, see María Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," *Hypatia* 22.1 (2007): 186-209; and Sylvia Marcos, *Taken From the Lips: Gender and Eros in Mesoamerican Religions* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006).

[7] Walter Mignolo often makes this statement in his public lectures: "modernity is not a decolonial concept. Modernity/coloniality *is* a decolonial concept." I take this to mean that one of the first steps of decolonial thought is to highlight the colonial history that is inseparable from modernity. The second step is the "affirmation of the periphery" and the historically excluded—giving voice to subaltern knowledges and modes of existence that have been destroyed or covered over by coloniality. In this paper, as a genealogical work, I operate primarily at the first level of situating a colonial history of domination, which is inseparable from modernity—I envision future work that would operate at the second level of engaging with the practices of resistance and local modes of organizing spatiality that are not captured or totalized by the heterotopia of the grid.

[8] Quijano, like Dussel, is also steeped in the language of center and periphery introduced by dependency theory in Latin America. Earlier in his career, Quijano was one of a group of dependency thinkers engaging in radical global economic critique. Later, with the critique of coloniality the notions of race and labor are articulated within a global system spatially organized with a center and various peripheries. Santiago Castro-Gómez describes this as the Marxist determination of Quijano's work, which also determines much of the global discourse of coloniality more generally: cf. Santiago Castro-Gómez, "Michel Foucault y la colonialidad de poder," *Tabula Rasa* 6 (2007): 153-172. Castro-Gómez argues for a "heterarchic" conception of power that would account for the articulation of global, local, and regional (state-level), modes of power. I am indebted to Castro-Gómez's notion of heterarchic power in this article.

[9] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Beyond Abyssal Thinking: From Global Line to Ecologies of Knowledges," *Review*, 30.1 (2007): 45-89.

[10] Cited in Richard L. Kagan, "A World Without Walls: City and Town in Colonial Spanish America," in *City Walls: The Urban Enceinte in Global Perspective*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 136. My emphasis.

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

[12] Cf. Kagan, "World Without Walls."

[13] For a review of geographical literature on the grid through the lens of genealogical history, cf. Reuben S. Rosewood, "Genealogies of the Grid: Revisiting Stanislawski's Search for the Origin of the Grid-Pattern Town," *Geographical Review*, 98.1 (2008): 42-58.

[14] There are a variety of arguments about the influences, and origins of the grid-pattern town and, especially, its extensive deployment in the Américas. Dan Stanislawski famously argues that the grid was born in the ancient town of Mohenjo Daro in the ancient Indus civilization, and diffused throughout history from there. Others emphasize the Roman Empire and Vitruvius' writings on architecture as key influences on the Spanish. Others have pointed to the presence of grid patterns in Indigenous American urban planning as a key influence for the Spanish design. Rather than attempting to answer the question of "origins", I emphasize the function of this grid-pattern in a way that it had not hitherto been deployed. Cf. Dan Stanislawski, "The Origin and Spread of the Grid-Pattern Town," *Geographical Review* 36.1 (1946): 105-120.

[15] To be sure, grids are not unique to the sixteenth-century Atlantic. In the sixteenth century, however, the problem of order and the grid is problematized in such an intensive fashion that it gives rise to a new technique for the ordering and epistemology of human space.

[16] This notion of the grid with its connections to urban space and writing is indebted to Angel Rama's notion of the lettered city. Cf. Angel Rama, *The Lettered City*, trans. John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

[17] Foucault makes a similar methodological operation with respect to the problem of the population as it emerges in the eighteenth century. He points out how the arts of government are blocked between the problem of the state and the problem of the family but there is no way for governmentality to link up the two and to be unblocked as its own apparatus until the problem of the population emerges in full swing. Cf. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 103-104.

[18] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

[19] Foucault mentions these communities as an example of a heterotopia in "Of Other Spaces."

[20] Cf. Fernando Gómez, *Good Places and Non-Places in Colonial Mexico: The Figure of Vasco de Quiroga* (Lanham, MA: University Press of America, 2001).

[21] For a reading of the plantation as a kind of spatial arrangement which is deeply violent and repressive in its formation but one that also gives rise to a new set of spatial practices and resistances, not only repressive but also productive of a new kind of Caribbean subjectivity and modernity, cf. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

[22] Rama, *The Lettered City*, 1.

[23] In Aimé Césaire's terms this could also be described as the "boomerang effect" of colonial techniques of power that are later imported back to the metropole: cf. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972). Foucault echoes Césaire in "*Society Must be Defended*" when he describes a boomerang effect that leads to an internal colonialism of Europe. He writes, "A whole series of colonial models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself," Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 103. This is a moment where Foucault offers a glimpse of how his method of genealogy might trace out colonial modes of power. This moment, which remains underdeveloped in his work, might be paired with the suggestive footnote from *Discipline and Punish*, mentioned below.

[24] The third domain that he mentions in this note is child-rearing, a topic which he lectured on more extensively in *The Abnormal* and on which he intended to publish a full volume in original plan for the five volumes of *The History of Sexuality*.

[25] There are a number of important works that have developed critiques of Foucault and expanded his genealogical methods to account for his omission or limited accounts of the dynamics of race, slavery, and colonialism. For an extensive treatment on Foucault and the questions of race and colonialism, including a look at how slavery and colonialism create disciplinary spaces especially with respect to sexuality, cf. Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995). For an account of the flesh and biopolitics with respect to race and colonialism, cf. Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

[26] Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1995), 314, note 1.

[27] Foucault, *Discipline*, 138.

[28] Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," *Nepantla: Views from the South*, 1.3 (2000): 533-580.

[29] For an excellent reading of Foucauldian accounts of power in relation to the coloniality of power, see Santiago Castro-Gómez, "Michel Foucault y La Colonialidad del Poder," *Tabula Rasa*, 6 (2007): 153-172. For a related dialogue between Foucault and Dussel, see Linda Martín Alcoff, "Power/Knowledges in the Colonial Unconscious: A Dialogue Between Dussel and Foucault," in *Thinking from the Underside of History: Enrique Dussel's Philosophy of Liberation*, eds. Linda Martín Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 249-268.



[30] My emphasis, *The Laws of Burgos of 1512-1513: Royal Ordinances for the Good Government and Treatment of the Indians*, trans. and ed. Lesley Byrd Simpson (San Francisco: John Howell Books, 1960 [1512]), 12.

[31] Byrd Simpson, *Burgos*, 22, my emphasis.

[32] Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *The Inconstancy of the Indian Soul: The Encounter of Catholics and Cannibals in 16th Century Brazil*, trans. Gregory Duff Morton (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2011).

[33] *Burgos*, 18.

[34] *Ibid.*, 24.

[35] *Ibid.*, 23.

[36] *Ibid.*, 19-20

[37] For a selected translation of these 1573 laws, cf. Graziano Gasparini, “The Laws of the Indies’: The Spanish-American Grid Plan,” in *The New City: Foundations* (Miami: University of Miami School of Architecture, 1991) 6-33.

[38] Gasparini, “Laws of the Indies,” 24.

[39] *Ibid.*, 24-29.

[40] *Ibid.*, 27.

[41] Foucault, *Security*, 20.

[42] *Ibid.*, 16.

[43] Cf. Rose-Redwood, “Genealogies of the Grid.”

[44] Foucault, *Security*, 20.

[45] Jesús Escobar, “Toward an *urbanismo austríaco*: An Examination of Sources for Urban Planning in the Spanish Habsburg World,” in *Early Modern Urbanism and the Grid: Town Planning in the Low Countries in International Context, Exchanges in Theory and Practice 1550-1800*, ed. Piet Lombaerde and Chales Van den Heuvel (Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2011) 171-172.

[46] Cf. Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 27. This is a point at which Foucault provides a very helpful opening to think further the spatial logic of coloniality.

[47] It is worth thinking more here about the modes of resistance that are produced and lived out in relation to the imposition of the grid. One example suggested above is the forgetfulness that shrugs of this spatiality and its attempted inculcation of virtue. One might then highlight further the internal tensions produced between the heterotopias of order as being constructed by European colonists and Indigenous peoples’ understanding and modes of living spatiality that resist this order. Furthermore, it would be worth thinking about what crises and what deviations these heterotopias form in relation to the existing spaces of Europe. I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this paper for these insightful suggestions on heterotopias of deviation, compensation, and the notion of resistance with respect to the existing spaces and modes of living space within Abya Yala.

[48] “And finally, an important problem for towns in the eighteenth century was allowing for surveillance, since the suppression of city walls made necessary by economic development meant that one could no longer close towns in the evening or closely supervise daily comings and goings, so that the insecurity of the towns was increased by the influx of the floating population of beggars, vagrants, delinquents, criminals, thieves, murderers, and so on, who might come, as everyone knows from the

country. In other words, it was a matter of *organizing circulation...*” Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*, ed. Michel Senellart (New York: Picador, 2009) 18.

[49] My revised translation and emphasis. Sarmiento, *Facundo*, 9.

[50] Cf. Pierre Chaunu *L’expansion européenne: du XIIIe au XVe Siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, “1440: The Smooth and the Striated,” *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 474-500.

[51] For an in depth genealogy of the issues of moral and physical geography in the preceding period of 1750-1816 in the *Criollo* discourses of Northern regions of South America in relation to Enlightenment European discourses, cf. Santiago Castró-Gomez, *La hybris del punto cero: Ciencia, raza e ilustración en la Nueva Granada (1750-1816)* (Bogotá: Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2005) 228-303. English translation forthcoming as *Zero-Point Hubris: Science, Race, and Enlightenment (1750-1816)*, trans. George Ciccariello-Maher and Don T. Deere (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, Forthcoming).