

***Piel blanca, máscaras negras: Crítica de la razón decolonial.* Edited by Gaya Makaran and Pierre Gaussens. Mexico City: Bajo Tierra A.C., 2020. Pp. 341. ISBN: 9786079890162**

By Benjamin P. Davis

He aprendido menos de los libros que en las diferencias que hay, que he sentido y visto, entre un grillo y un alcalde quechua, entre un pescador del mar y un pescador del Titicaca, entre un oboe, un penacho de totora, la picadura de un piojo blanco y el penacho de la caña de azúcar: entre quienes, como Pariacaca, nacieron de cinco huevos de águila y aquellos que aparecieron de una liendre aldeana, de una común liendre, de la que tan súbitamente salta la vida. Y este saber, claro, tiene, tanto como el predominantemente erudito, sus círculos y profundidades.

—José María Arguedas, Tercer diario, *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* [1]

Despite its subtitle, *Piel blanca, máscaras negras* (PBMN) is not about decolonial theory today. It primarily puts forth criticisms of Enrique Dussel, Walter Mignolo, and Ramón Grosfoguel—criticisms to which I will respond in what follows.[2] I specify the focus of my review at the outset because I think PBMN’s attempt to portray its criticisms of Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel as damning for decolonial thinking as a whole is misguided and misleading for at least two reasons. First, arguably any critique of “decolonial reason” that focuses on Mignolo and Grosfoguel would need to treat the antecedent work of Aníbal Quijano with considerable attention, which PBMN does not. Second, it is also the case that decolonial theory—historically and today—expands well beyond these three authors. As Mariana Ortega has emphasized in her own constructive critique of how decolonial theory has proceeded in the United States, a concentration on the work of Dussel and Mignolo tends to cover over contributions from women authors, especially Chicana philosophers.[3]

As a whole, PBMN simply missed how Dussel’s, Mignolo’s, and Grosfoguel’s conceptual work has been critiqued and developed by authors such as Karina Ochoa Muñoz, Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso, Ochy Curiel, and Omar Rivera—among many, many others.\* Perhaps PBMN simply omitted this dialogue because accounting for these developments would have nullified many of its criticisms. Along the way in this review essay, I will cite pre-PBMN decolonial theory that addresses its criticisms as well as some of the most recent (2020) work that also speaks to them. My main argument is that PBMN misses both the depths and expanses of decolonial theory today: both the antecedents to and layered contributions of Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel and the ways their work has been elaborated upon, in critical and reconstructive ways, since their initial articulations.

PBMN's attempt to impugn decolonial theory by criticizing the essentialist tendencies of Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel without reading decolonial authors writing in their wake is equivalent to publishing an edited volume today that denounces Marxian theory by criticizing the masculinist tendencies of Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer without reading Nancy Fraser and Seyla Benhabib. PBMN's reader is greeted with an editors' Introduction purporting to conduct an "autopsy" of decolonial theory and has to read half the book before—in Gregory Pappas's chapter—gaining any sense that decolonial theory is still, in fact, being developed (177). Undergraduate students assigned PBMN might assume that decolonial theory is a lost tradition re-discovered here only to be condemned back into oblivion. Reading PBMN's term "the decolonials" (18), these students might also assume that what the editors call "decolonial studies" (14) is a coherent, clearly defined entity with its own canon and its own kind of academic department. It is not.

There are no U.S. college tour guides who say, "Here is English in Old Main, over there is Biology in Rockefeller Hall, and across the quad. is Decolonial Studies." To use the term "decolonial studies" in this way fabricates unity and overstates drastically the institutional influence of a set of questions that is still marginalized as "not real philosophy" in the U.S. academy, which is still dominated by analytic philosophy. Further, the work of Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel is contested among themselves. With this institutional fragmentation and internal contestation in mind, Mignolo himself has long talked about "decolonial thinking" and not "decolonial studies." In other words, PBMN attempts to slay a monster that doesn't exist.

From its first page, PBMN refers to decolonial theory as "an intellectual sham [*una impostura intelectual*]" (9). It later claims that decolonial theory is a form of "intellectual terrorism" as well as a "religious sect with its devotees and high priests" (119, 118). While I prefer to throw the accusation of terrorism back on the police and military forces of the modern nation-state, I will here playfully accept the second accusation. For having associated myself with decolonial research and used its methods and sources in most of my first publications, only then to be asked to review PBMN, I feel like a young 16th-century priest who, having just left the seminary, was asked to review Martin Luther's 95 Theses. In what follows, I re-construct PBMN's central theses and explain, as a good Church defender, why I think there will be no Reformation. Throughout, I will maintain a personal tone, lest I claim to speak for the multifaceted developments of decolonial thinking occurring even as I write.

1. **Thesis 1:** *The decolonials simply invert racist and colonial logic* (29). This inversion maintains the logic of the Clash of Civilizations even as it denounces Samuel Huntington's claims (24). In remaining Manichean, it simplifies the history of modernity (154). It glosses over both pre-1492 colonization—such as the English in Ireland or the Incan and Aztec empires (107), failing to see that Quechua was itself a hegemonic language (24, n. 6)—and ongoing colonization internal to Europe, seen in Catalonia and

Crimea (24). At such a high level of abstraction, decolonial thought cannot account for poor white people or for an Indigenous bourgeoisie (33, 59). Further, Dussel and Mignolo simplify pre-contact realities to the point of waxing nostalgic (109). In doing so, they re-essentialize Indigenous people as “pure” and uncontaminated by European thought (37, 96-97). One concrete assumption they make is that Indigenous social forms are inherently egalitarian (110). And when they actually employ the voices of Indigenous people in their work, they tend to ventriloquize them (97). This is just one example of the decolonials’ problematic granting of an *a priori* epistemic advantage to the subaltern (cf. 32, n. 8). In other words, because of their simple inversion of the colonial racial hierarchy, the decolonials bestow a kind of racialized epistemic privilege on the oppressed (78). This epistemic privilege results in an asymmetry at the expense of democratic/egalitarian norms (83). It also centers race in a way that misses the insights of intersectional theory, which would demand a more thorough investigation of class (274). In sum, the decolonials racialize thinking in unhelpful ways (85, n. 5).

*Depth:* I think this criticism is partially correct. It is a criticism that has been advanced from several angles in recent years. For instance, writing from the tradition of Frankfurt School Critical Theory, Antonio Vázquez-Arroyo has argued that “the dyad modernity/coloniality” actually “de-differentiates struggles” and thus “decolonial critics subsume what is particular about colonial situations into an abstract universality.”[4] It is correct that the concept “coloniality” works on an abstract level.

But I also think this criticism misses the utility and value of a concept like “coloniality.” It is easy to condemn a concept that works on an abstract level for missing particulars—as easy as it would be to criticize hyper-specified analysis for not expanding into a context of larger patterns. Quite simply, the abstract is the level “coloniality” intends to work on. When Quijano describes “the coloniality of power,” he diagnoses “the social classification of the world’s population around the idea of race” that is “globally hegemonic today.”[5] He is interested in how peoples as diverse as “Aztecs, Mayas, Chimus, Aymaras, Incas, Chibchas” became “united into a single identity: Indians,” just as peoples such as “Ashantis, Yorubas, Zulus, Congos, Bacongos” became “Black.”[6] “Coloniality” is the term that diagnoses and summarizes these processes of abstraction, classification, and dispossession. It is to do that work that it moves away from the particular level it is criticized for missing. So, if you are looking to study pre-1492 social realities across the Americas, coloniality is not your concept. But it is an extremely helpful concept for other worthwhile projects.

*Expanse:* Consider for instance An Yountae’s 2016 *The Decolonial Abyss*. He writes, “In the current debates of continental philosophy of religion and political theology particularly, an in-depth analysis of the conditions and political effects of ongoing ‘coloniality’ at a global level is, to a large degree, missing.”[7] Yountae’s project, like Quijano’s, has a global focus, going on to provide an important account of theological contributions from Caribbean and Latin American philosophers, starting from and referring back to “the ongoing reality of colonialism.”[8] Similarly, Ochy Curiel has used the concept “coloniality” to theorize how feminisms travel globally, writing that

“coloniality has also permeated feminism, including the hegemonic feminism of Latin America and other countries of the Third World.”[9] It is at this level of making connections of social and political patterns across the Americas, and the planet, that coloniality is a particularly helpful concept. “This is the utility of the concept,” Breny Mendoza writes in a 2020 article, “to discover the historical continuity of the colonial logic in the configuration of power locally and globally in the present.”[10]

Silvia Tieffemberg makes a claim similar to Mendoza’s, though it is about not Quijano’s “coloniality” but Mignolo’s “locus of enunciation”: “Addressing the idea of the ‘mestizo’ from its *lugar de enunciación*,” Tieffemberg argues, “permits restoring the implied social, political, and cultural context as well as to apprehend it [the idea of the mestizo] not as a fact of the past but rather as an unfinished process,” a process that “begins with the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese to America, and that until the present demonstrates a notable activity.”[11] In short, several recent authors, writing from different geographical positions, subject positions, and economic positions, have found useful, built upon, and departed from decolonial theory’s central concept of “coloniality” as well as other concepts, such as Mignolo’s “locus of enunciation”—and they have done so precisely because these concepts are helpful *in their abstraction* for diagnosing ongoing re-installations of colonial patterns.

Referring back to Thesis 1, I think it is also correct that Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel give epistemic privilege to the oppressed, a kind of theoretical analogue to liberation theology’s preferential option for the poor. On this point, PBMN criticizes Grosfoguel’s claim that Aimé Césaire was able to see social processes Europeans could not because of the color of his skin. It is surprising, the criticism says, that a theory that denounces the discourse of blood purity would base an epistemic privilege on skin color (85, n. 5).

PBMN’s criticism mis-diagnoses when the racialization occurs, implying that it is Grosfoguel who inserts troubling racial connotations. In doing so, it takes away from the importance of different embodiments to theoretical articulations. In re-writing Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, Césaire has Caliban call Prospero “a grand illusionist”: “You have finally imposed upon me an image of myself: an underdeveloped man, as you say, an incapable man. That is how you have forced me to see myself.”[12] Césaire shows here that racialization occurs in the white gaze, an experience Césaire (and later Fanon and Glissant) documents as a microcosm of Martinique’s history of colonization. In sum, racialization occurs as part of colonization and continues in daily life across the Americas, the Caribbean, and the rest of the world. To suggest that Césaire’s diagnoses of colonialism emerged in part from his subject position is not to racialize thinking but to acknowledge the racialization that has already occurred and that he himself points out. Based on their lived experiences as racialized people, Black phenomenologists from Fanon to George Yancy have made important correctives to white phenomenologists’ discussions of perception. To acknowledge the provenance of those correctives—how they were made according to the theorists themselves—is different from imposing a logic of blood purity on thinking.

PBMN's concerns around racialized epistemic privilege focus on the politics that follows from such a claim. One of its contributors stresses that criticisms of "white privilege" reinforce neoliberal subjectivity in that responses to white privilege tend to include personal trainings, readings, and workshops that ask the individual to overcome their sense of privilege (284). Another contributor asserts that having a particular identity does not necessarily mean that you are somehow subversive (292). Even if what we might call "decolonial theory" today overwhelmingly avoids the language of "privilege," I agree with these claims, which have been presented recently in regard to both "whiteness studies" in the U.S. academy and identity politics more broadly.[13] But we should note that PBMN's claims here are not inconsistent with Grosfoguel's presentation of Césaire (or, say, with Dussel's Marxism). Grosfoguel's point is not that Césaire is Black and therefore inherently radical. It is, rather, that Césaire's being Black entailed an experience of anti-Black racism and therefore meant that he perceived the world in a way different from a white person. These perceptions contributed to, but did not determine, what would become his radical politics. Grosfoguel's claim does not treat racial groups in a monolithic way, but still acknowledges the importance of racial identities. "[T]he project of decolonizing epistemology," Linda Martín Alcoff summarizes in a 2011 *Transmodernity* article, "assumes the epistemic salience of identity because it assumes that experiences in different locations are distinct and that location matters to knowledge." [14]

Finally, in a 2019 article, Emma Velez theorizes the relationship between decolonial theory and intersectional theory with a view toward coalitional politics. Her innovative research in general cuts against PBMN's claim that decolonial theory does not engage intersectionality. Velez's scholarship stresses the importance of working not to make oppressive categories (e.g. "woman") more inclusive, but "to dismantle categorical logics with the aim of transforming their very meanings." [15] She is an example of a contemporary theorist working creatively to bring intersectional insights to bear on decolonial theory (and vice versa). Engaging, criticizing, and building on the work of María Lugones, Velez's reconstructive tone differs sharply from PBMN's attempts to perform takedowns of a few claims of a few decolonial theorists. It was Lugones, after all, whose path-breaking work maintained a decolonial key while challenging the concept of modernity/coloniality in regard to its theorization of gender. [16]

**2. Thesis 2:** *Decolonial thought uses the charge of "Eurocentrism" to reject, rather than refute, concepts and theories* (16, n. 3). By dismissing authors of a European origin or authors who use European methods, decolonial theory forecloses an engagement with several authors who could be helpful for anti-colonial projects, including Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and Gayatri Spivak (84). In short, the decolonials prefer to reject critical thought with a European origin because of that origin (114).



*Depth:* Even a slightly more-than-cursory reading of even simply the authors on which PBMN focuses refutes this point. Mignolo attributes his “locus of enunciation” in part to Foucault.[17] Dussel acknowledges his debts to Levinas.[18] Further, Dussel is one of the 20th century’s most important readers of Marx.[19] More recently, Nelson Maldonado-Torres has thought with Martin Heidegger to develop his concept of “the coloniality of being,” and he cites Spivak approvingly in his critique of human rights.[20]

A more nuanced variant of Thesis 2 attacks Mignolo’s concept of a “locus of enunciation.” For instance, Stefan Pimmer criticizes this concept for positing “an intrinsic link between thought and place” and thus for promoting a kind of “epistemological determinism that is not in a position to consider the political and mediated character of the production of knowledge, and that ends up circumscribing all thought to its respective place of origin.”[21] I have written elsewhere that I disagree with this claim because it misses how Mignolo developed his concept following Foucault’s *mode d’enonciation*, thus allowing for a focus less on place (*lugar*) and more on style, form, and method (*mode*) of enunciation—all part of what Pimmer calls the “mediated character” of knowledge.[22]

*Expanse:* Much recent decolonial theory evades appeals to something like epistemological (or racial or geographical) determinism and avoids assuming anything like a non-heterogenous Latin America. Miguel Gualdrón Ramírez’s 2018 reading of Édouard Glissant’s concept of “the expanse” alongside the work of Gloria Anzaldúa sees possibility for decolonial theory and praxis in the present “not only because of the impossibility of return to an absolute communal origin, but also because the impossibility of return for this community is made explicit.”[23] Returning to land, then, for instance, “can only point to new horizons (new futures) within the present itself, in the here and now. To return is to intermingle the past and the present in a vision that seeks a transformation of the conditions that have allowed such suffering.”[24] This is a development of decolonial theory that looks not to a specific origin, nor to a non-existent pure past, but instead “focuses on the present as the locus of resistance and decolonization.”[25]

3. **Thesis 3:** *When decolonial theory is translated into practice, it reinforces national and capitalist extraction across Latin America.* That is, decolonizing discourses hide nationalisms and policies that support the mining of Indigenous land, such as those policies we have seen recently in Ecuador and Bolivia. In obscuring such projects, decolonial thought in fact contributes to the deepening of capitalism and colonialism (20, esp. 20, n. 5). Decolonial thought, therefore, is “an intellectual piracy that not only has pacifying and nullifying effects on rebellious and emancipatory political projects but also has been an active accomplice of domination [*una piratería intelectual que no sólo tiene efectos de pacificación y anulación de proyectos políticos rebeldes y emancipadores, sino que, además, ha sido cómplice activo de la dominación*]” (20). The editors’ justification for this claim in their Introduction comes from textual support Mignolo,

Dussel, and Grosfoguel give to Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales as well as the presence of Dussel and Grosfoguel at Nicolás Maduro's instantiation of the National Institute for Decolonization in 2018. Other authors stress that Bolivia, under Morales, has remained both a patriarchal country and a country that dispossesses Indigenous populations in favor of capitalist extraction (307, 337). Another way of stating this thesis is that "the decolonials" do not develop a sufficient critique of the nation-state. This criticism also echoes Thesis 1 in noting that just as a reversal of racist logic is not sufficient to challenge colonial patterns, so too is an Indigenous president not sufficient to change colonial power structures (322).

*Depth:* The final two chapters of PBMN stress an important and thoughtful critique of the nation-state. In my view, the criticism of Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel in regard to how they theorize the state could be productive. I think, for example, that we should acknowledge the ambivalence of Dussel's theorization of the state. In his *Ethics of Liberation*, he writes that "liberation praxis as tactic and strategy, as the fulfillment of an ethical-critical feasibility, always walks a fine line [*el filo de la navaja*]: between anti-institutionalist anarchism and integrationist reformism." [26] Dussel maintains this position into the present, and it leaves unsatisfied many contemporary decolonial theorists who think in part with the philosophy of liberation. [27] I will elaborate on this point in my "Expanse" response to this thesis. For now, staying with Dussel, it is only fair to note that he has long been strongly anti-capitalist. This is true not only given his contributions to social change via liberation theology, which would need to be tracked through a sociological lens, but also throughout his corpus, which I can track textually here. Staying with just his *Ethics*, we see that his concept of "transmodernity" not only looks "to recuperate what is salvageable in Modernity"—and so already is a counterexample to the reductions of Theses 1 and 2—but also offers a path for "the overcoming of the world system itself," with capitalism singled out in particular. [28]

*Expanse:* Here we can consider for instance Yuderkys Espinosa's drawing our attention, in a productive interview alongside Nelson Maldonado-Torres, to the way that "nation-states and the institutions they shelter have constructed an official history and have needed these foundational myths to legitimize themselves"; in response, Espinosa goes on, "discourses of decolonization" have sometimes avoided attending to how epistemic racism is a "survival of imperial reason" functioning today in the histories of many nation-states. [29] Further, and more recently, of the figures PBMN says it treats centrally, Walsh, for instance, noted in 2020 that "many (including myself) argue that [the] state is not the vehicle for social change, worse yet, for decolonial shifts and movements." [30] And Mendoza adds, "The acceptance of indigenous principles in the constitutions by mestizo-criollo and even indigenous politicians such as Evo Morales have been cosmetic reforms that legitimize rather than transform the mestizo-criollo state." [31] "They are not," she concludes, "interventions that endeavor to change the colonial character of the state." [32] We see here that Mendoza does not disparage Dussel as her main mode of argumentation. The question of the state remains live in decolonial theory beyond the articulations of Dussel and others; and many decolonial theorists are learning from critical theory that has stressed the colonial violence inherent

to the nation-state as a political form in the Americas.[33] So we also see that much contemporary decolonial theory is in fact developing a robust critique of the nation-state.

Still, a strength of the final chapters of PBMN is their unwillingness to accept what Dussel calls “integrationist reformism” insofar as that reform comes at the expense of Indigenous dispossession. But the tone of the editors’ Introduction—that Dussel is conducting intellectual piracy and actively supporting domination—strikes me as wildly unfair regarding a philosopher who has lived his life in exile forced by a paramilitary bomb. Dussel founded a philosophical tradition with “liberation” in the name in order to resonate with the decolonial struggles of Algeria. Those were struggles waged on nationalist and extraction-friendly lines. The FLN understood oil as the basis of economic independence. Instead of portraying Dussel as an agent of domination, PBMN would have done better to acknowledge and elaborate on its own sense of anti-nationalist or anarchist politics, recognizing that they disagree with Dussel about what constitutes an emancipatory political project. But it makes little sense to offer an Introduction that claims to start from the anticolonialism of Frantz Fanon, which proceeded on nationalist and, via the FLN, pro-extraction lines, only to criticize Dussel and Grosfoguel for falling into these positions. I will return to the editors’ presentation of Fanon at the conclusion of this essay.

**4. Thesis 4:** *Dussel and Mignolo write about the oppressed as if they were passive victims.* Dussel turns those who suffer into docile victims, effectively freezing the Other into a static position (60, 212). In turn, Mignolo has inherited Dussel’s tendency to victimize, including his commitments to authenticity, identity, and antagonism (71). To be a subject on the border (Mignolo) is to be in the place of the victim (Dussel) (76). Further, Mignolo’s border thinking is racialized and culturist; it prescind from class (89).

*Depth:* Again, I think it is only fair to individuate our analysis. I would argue that Dussel’s reading of Emmanuel Levinas’s concept of “alterity” and “the Other,” leading Dussel to formulate a geopolitical concept of “exteriority” in *Filosofía de la liberación*, starts decolonial theory off on the wrong foot. In my view, bringing Levinas’s ethical (but really quasi-theological) concepts to the level of geopolitics, as Dussel does, leads to all sorts of epistemological and political problems, such as: How do justice-oriented actors communicate with the Other? Just who is this Other? In my view, the fact that Dussel follows Levinas means that PBMN is right to criticize him for at times assuming a “pure” Other, one somehow outside of the mediations of globalization. It is in following Levinas that Dussel often brings decolonial theory into problems we could avoid in the first place by taking up a different vocabulary of difference—Édouard Glissant’s “opacity” instead of Levinas’s “alterity,” say, because Glissant’s “right to opacity,”[34] as I have argued elsewhere, carries a sense of radical difference but also allows for coalitional participation in striving for a “right to opacity.” That is, the vocabulary of opacity does not necessarily prioritize ethics over politics, something unavoidable in following Levinas.



Mignolo's concept of "border thinking," however, is quite different from Dussel's emphasis on exteriority. Mignolo describes both "interior borders of the modern/colonial world system" —such as England's overtaking of Spain as colonially hegemonic in the seventeenth century, so again challenging Thesis 1— and "exterior borders," such as borders between Spanish and Islamicate worlds or between Incan and Aztec peoples.[35] Here again Mignolo is thinking with Foucault as well as with Glissant, Abdelkebir Khatibi, and Gloria Anzaldúa.[36] Following these figures, Mignolo posits a sense of the border that is far from a claim to racial authenticity, of which Glissant, Khatibi, and Anzaldúa would be suspicious.

Overall, there is a world of difference between Dussel's thinking with Levinas and Mignolo's thinking with these figures. The difference is that whereas Levinas maintains a sense of absolute difference (alterity), which Dussel carries into his philosophy of liberation (exteriority), Glissant and others are trying to think through cultural contacts where difference is relative and relayed. This track allows for agency—for both the subject and those with whom she is in contact and relation—well beyond Levinas's ethical call for prayerfully receiving the rupture of the Other. Mignolo's border thinking, then, would be more accurately read as a corrective to Dussel's stress on exteriority. PBMN misses the latter part of what Mignolo calls his "debts and differences" with respect to Dussel.[37]

*Expanse:* Other authors writing with decolonial thinking in mind take up Dussel's concepts in productive ways. Based on her aforementioned 2011 article, Alcoff might challenge my above criticism of Dussel. She finds promise in his concept of "analectics," which "seeks to bring that which is beyond the dialectic into visibility." [38] "The idea of analectics," Alcoff argues, is "to get to a larger, more comprehensive, and more adequate understanding of all that is true concerning the experience of those whose experiences are most often ignored." [39] In doing so, Dussel accords "epistemological authority to the poor." [40] Here you might think, as I do, that "analectics" moves too far away from historical mediations that are always present in stressing the "beyond." Or you might think, as Alcoff does, that there is epistemological promise in how Dussel's analectical method re-orientations of knowledge. Whatever the case, it is worth noting here that Dussel and decolonial theory—via the concept of analectics—do consider epistemic authority not just on the basis of race, but also on the basis of class.

**5. Thesis 5:** *The decolonials present themselves as the new liberators of Latin America, when in reality they are elite actors located at prestigious sites in the Global North* (17, 114). (Due to his position at UNAM, Dussel is left out of this criticism; the focus is on Mignolo's and Grosfoguel's positions at Duke and Berkeley, respectively.) Several authors in PBMN follow Silvia Riviera Cusicanqui in arguing that the decolonials have built an (academic) empire within a (political) empire, one that is colonizing the Latin American academy (31, 39). Other problems include that they do not reflect sufficiently on their own their own academic positions and that they do not know

Indigenous languages (21, 51). The result of not being in contact with Indigenous peoples and Afro-descended theory is that decolonial theory becomes de-politicized, on the one hand, and ventriloquizes these voices, on the other. Taken together, these claims want to argue that Mignolo and Grosfoguel are imperialists in the disguise of liberators.

Because the Introduction and four chapters of PBMN cite Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's 2010 book *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa*, translated into English and published in 2020 with the same title, I will briefly re-construct her argument. Here is her claim and its surrounding context that draws much attention in PBMN:

[W]ithout altering anything of the relations of force in the “palaces” of empire, the cultural studies departments of North American universities have adopted the ideas of subaltern studies and launched debates in Latin America, thus creating a conceptual apparatus, and forms of reference and counterreference that have isolated academic treatises from any obligation to or dialogue with insurgent forces. Walter Mignolo and company have built a small empire within an empire, strategically appropriating the contributions of the subaltern studies school of India and the various Latin American variants of critical reflection on colonization and decolonization.[41]

“[T]he North American academy,” she goes on, “does not follow the pace of our discussions; it does not interact in any meaningful way (except by providing scholarships and invitations to seminars and symposia).”[42] And Cusicanqui extends her critique to Catherine Walsh for teaching “a course of graduate study completely based in the logocentric and nominalist version of decolonization,” using “[n]eologisms such as *decolonial*, *transmodernity*, and *eco-si-mía*.”[43] It is due to lines like these that, Véronica Gago, in introducing Cusicanqui's book in English, argues that Cusicanqui “has formulated the most radical critique of the decolonial lexicon now sacred in the academy.”[44] Cusicanqui's counter-proposal, against a decolonial attention to a “geopolitics of knowledge,” is to undertake a “political economy” of knowledge.[45]

*Depth:* This criticism has merit as far as it goes. I see no disadvantage for theorists to work in closer proximity to the communities they write about, even if I worry about the proposal of ethnography that the chapter's author suggests (51). In the 2018 *On Decoloniality*, a book co-written with Mignolo, Catherine Walsh responds to this criticism: “Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui's argument that decoloniality is part of a multiculturalist discourse and a new academic canon with its own ‘gurus’... negates the broad range of decolonizing practice that... gives substance, significance, and form to decoloniality in/as praxis.”[46] Walsh then goes on to cite favorably María Galindo's *A Despatriarcar*, on which the penultimate chapter of PBMN is based. Further, *On Decoloniality* cites favorably two of Cusicanqui's articles and one of her books. It does not have the take-down approach of PBMN; it acknowledges and learns from Cusicanqui's criticisms even when defending itself.

But upon closer examination, to be fair, Walsh would have to be left out of this thesis: in 2002, with Juan García Salazar, she formed an Afro-Andino archive of oral and visual culture—and performing oral histories is one of the suggestions for decolonial theory (51) that this author makes! Walsh's work at the Fondo Documental Afro-Andino militates against the criticism that she is one of the gurus out of touch with local communities. And Walsh herself has longstanding relationships both with the Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador (CONAIE) and with the communities she has worked alongside in educational and cultural initiatives close to her university as well as in other places across the Americas. This is related to her work with Paulo Freire in the 1980s.

Further, a distinction needs to be made between Grosfoguel's position and Mignolo's position. While they both teach at elite U.S. universities, Berkeley is public and Duke is private. Further, Grosfoguel works in Berkeley's Department of Ethnic Studies, while Mignolo is situated in Duke's Program in Literature. It matters that Grosfoguel teaches in an Ethnic Studies department and further that he teaches at Berkeley's department. Like many Ethnic Studies departments in the U.S., Berkeley's department emerged from national uprisings in the late 1960s. At Berkeley there was an extended student strike that resulted in the creation of the Department of Ethnic Studies, which was to house four undergraduate programs: African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicano Studies, and Native American Studies. The authors in PBMN who speak about the decolonials' inability to analyze exploitation and oppression within the U.S. willingly overlook not only Grosfoguel's lifetime of work on race, migration, and struggle, but also the importance of ethnic studies itself as a radical site of theory and praxis within the U.S. academy.

*Expanses:* Once again, we will see that calling for attention to the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge, as well as the role of the state in that process, occurs within decolonial theory. For instance, in research developed from 2015-2017, Eugenia Fraga works through Quijano in interrogating center-periphery epistemological inequalities, and Fraga's research on state violence builds on previous work Fraga conducted on Mignolo.[47] Other decolonial authors are more critical of Mignolo. Mendoza writes recently: "Decolonial authors situate themselves geographically and historically in colonial history but do not delve into their own racialized locations." [48] Mignolo's "I am from where I think," she continues, "does not go far enough to reach the place that deals with the history of racialization." [49] Her conclusion is exemplary in not just pointing the finger at a few bad actors, but for its reflexivity, implicating herself, her own position, and the theoretical lines in which she works constructively: "We do not examine our own involvement in the coloniality of power. We do not question our presence on the land we inhabit; we take it for granted. Although the nation-state is seen as a product of colonization, we do not demand its destruction. At least up to now, such a demand has not been prioritized." [50] Here also we have a response to Thesis 3's concerns about Dussel and Grosfoguel's too-easy acceptance of the nation-state.

The authors of PBMN might respond that Mendoza—like Mignolo and company—works in the U.S. academy and therefore profits from the business of decolonial thinking without engaging further in decolonial practice (hence the “sham” of decolonial theory). This claim would need to consider Mendoza’s practices outside of the academy. But as we have seen, while PBMN is quick to point out Dussel’s associations with nation-states, it is not forthcoming with most authors’ other associations, including the South-South dialogues Dussel has fostered, that might complicate its attempted take-downs. PBMN’s manner of engagement aside, I want to echo Cusicanqui’s call for more attention to “political economy”: decolonial theory, like all justice-oriented theory today, would indeed do well to engage further the struggles and actors we treat in our writing. I have stressed this point elsewhere, noting—to return to a *Depth* argument—that Dussel’s reading of Levinas’s concept of “substitution” calls for intellectuals to be in more robust communication with the communities they claim to serve.[51]

But there is a more telling response to this thesis than everything I have written above. It is that in her own chapter of PBMN, Cusicanqui employs the work of Rita Segato. In addition to being an influential reader of what in this essay I have been calling “decolonial theory,” Segato holds the Aníbal Quijano Chair at the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid, the webpage of which begins with an epigraph from Quijano’s “Coloniality of Power” essay.[52] The fact that Cusicanqui orients her chapter through Segato suggests to me that PBMN stretches Cusicanqui’s critique further than it goes. I read her critique as being not so much of the questions decolonial theory asks as it is of the political-economic implications of how those questions circulate. And so the next move might be to change institutional practices, not to dismiss the inquiry.

**6. Thesis 6:** *Decolonial thought advances a jargon that is unhelpful for contemporary struggles* (28, 34, 47, 52, 115). This specific jargon is part of why decolonial theory has become “a new academic canon” (88).

*Depth:* I do not have the space to treat each decolonial neologism PBMN criticizes, so I will consider only one representative example, Dussel’s concept “transmodernity” (96, n. 8). For Dussel, “transmodernity” posits a “future humanity” in which “all cultures (not simply European and North American cultures) will be able to affirm their alterity, and not simply a process of ‘modernization’ wherein European-North American culture of the center imposes on those other cultures.”[53] This line runs into all the problems PBMN wants to highlight. It flags an uncontaminated Otherness in adopting Levinas’s “alterity.” It assumes a one-way imposition of a European/North American project of modernization without accounting for a variety of modernizations and heterogeneities in Latin America. It adopts a center/periphery binary. And so on.

But as I showed above, Dussel’s articulation of “transmodernity”—again even if we read only his *Ethics*—is more complicated than this thesis suggests. Indeed, and again *pace* Theses 1 and 2, “transmodernity” tries to engage with European

contributions helpful to liberation thought and struggles—it tries to redeem what is redeemable about modernity. The reason that Dussel at times in his writing utilizes a concept at a level of abstraction as high as “transmodernity” has to do with how he thinks about the relationship between the intellectual and the community. In his *Ethics*, he suggests a role for experts to clarify systems of oppression to the victims of oppression.[54] For some this conception of the intellectual remains too paternalistic—even if Dussel is trying to portray, with Antonio Gramsci, an “organic intellectual.” And that is a fair point. But there is also a flip side to the utilization of jargon found in the imaginary it tries to construct.

*Expanse:* Eduardo Mendieta is one figure who has advanced decolonial theory, especially the work of Dussel, in important directions. His wide-ranging writing could respond to many of the above criticisms, but he is mentioned only once in PBMN. In a 2015 interview, Mendieta provides a defense of decolonial neologisms. “The decolonial turn,” he says, is “about challenging the givenness and naturalisation of disciplinary boundaries. For this reason a methodological issue turns into a matter of style—that is, into an issue about developing new ways to investigate, analyse and present work that hitherto had been deauthorized, or at least not allowed to be considered as important and credible.”[55] He goes on to say that “philosophy is about generating new terms, new ways of thinking and saying what we are just beginning to realise” and that great philosophers “gave birth to new ways of speaking.”[56] It is to place a wager on the “new” that decolonial theory, in Mendieta’s view, rightfully employs jargon.

PBMN would have done much better to present its anti-jargon claim, evaluate the previous literature on the topic, and then re-state its claim, which would now carry much greater significance having treated the discussion on that topic in an up-to-date manner. But the mode of PBMN, from its very first page, is one not of critique but of reduction. This is especially the case in how it treats Fanon to begin its “autopsy.”

### *Some Remarks on Fanon*

I feel compelled to say something about the tone of PBMN. I have never encountered a book that takes on such a denigrating tone. The Introduction is called “Autopsia de una impostura intelectual,” which carries the two virtues of calling decolonial theory a sham while also asserting that it is dead.[57] It continues by disparaging decolonial thought as “una moda intelectual” (10), which could be translated as an intellectual style or mode, but, as becomes clear in the next few pages, wants to invoke the more petty accusation of “an intellectual fad.” The goal of the book is to separate decolonial studies from “genuine anticolonialism” (19). The final paragraph of the Introduction is especially harsh. After reiterating the sham point, Makaran and Gaussens add that they want to make the masks of the decolonials fall, citing Fanon (*podremos... hacer caer sus máscaras, siguiendo el camino abierto por la seductora irreverencia de Fanon*) (39). This addition explains the title: it is accusing white decolonial theorists—or perhaps more precisely Latino decolonial theorists with European ancestry—of putting on Black



masks, which this book will make fall, revealing the whiteness of decolonial theory, the way it, in fact, *contributes* to domination. And finally they cite Fanon in order to imply that they want to demonstrate that the decolonials are “imbeciles” (39).

With their title, epigraph, and Introduction, Makaran and Gaussens make clear that their key point of reference for their corrective to decolonial thought is Frantz Fanon. They claim that they follow a “Fanonian spirit” in order to position themselves “from his active, critical, interrogating, and anti-essentialist anticolonialism in the face of what we consider a misrepresentation of his legacy by an intellectual fad” (9-10). They present that “misrepresentation” by beginning a habit of bulldozing texts instead of reading them. They reference Grosfoguel’s, Maldonado-Torres’s, and Mignolo’s appendices to the 2009 Akal (Spanish) edition of *Black Skin, White Masks*, saying that decolonial studies took up Fanon’s legacy “without respecting its autonomy or the historical and theoretical circumstances from which it emerged” (14). Their charge is that the decolonials imposed terms such as “modern/colonial subject” and “modern/imperial subject” onto Fanon’s work (14). They write that Mignolo, Grosfoguel, and Maldonado-Torres impose decoloniality onto Fanon. (While Fanon might not use the term “decoloniality,” he does use the word “decolonization” from the very first paragraph of *Les Damnés*.)<sup>[58]</sup> I do not have space here to treat each appendix to that 2009 text, so I will consider Mignolo’s contribution as an example.

PBMN’s editors’ specific concern with Mignolo is that the terms he uses, such as “modern/colonial subject,” are alien to, and thus imposed on, Fanon’s usage (14). But they make these points quickly as they hurry toward their next heading, which calls decolonial studies “an intellectual colonialism” (14). So let me here briefly re-construct Mignolo’s section of the Appendix. He first translates a block quotation from Fanon’s original 1952 *Peau noire, masques blancs*. He continues by defining modern/imperial knowledge in relation to the nation-state and capitalism.<sup>[59]</sup> He then employs his specific terms to show how Fanon makes an advance on Freud. Freud’s limitation is that he attempted to universalize a European humanity (modern/imperial subjects), thus excluding those exploited in Europe’s colonies (modern/colonial subjects) from the realm of humanity. “The work of Fanon,” Mignolo says, by contrast “reclaims and establishes an other-knowledge: he installs the modern/colonial subject as a legitimate subject of knowledge against the modern/imperial subject.”<sup>[60]</sup> Because Mignolo introduced his terms, this “other-knowledge” is clearly the knowledge of the modern/colonial subjects. So Mignolo is not illegibly imposing terms on Fanon; he is reading Fanon in his own way, perhaps as Fanon would prefer given his own skill at theoretical invention.

A thought experiment makes a different point. Let’s say that Mignolo and company do not at all describe the historical and theoretical context of Fanon’s texts in any of their writings on Fanon. I would argue that much of Fanon’s anti-colonial influence lies precisely in how he has been de-contextualized. Consider for example John Berger’s beautiful eulogy for his friend Eqbal Ahmed: “Influenced by the writings of Frantz Fanon – and particularly by *The Wretched of the Earth* – he became deeply

involved in several liberation struggles, including that of the Palestinians.”[61] Berger has us understand that *Wretched* pushed Ahmed into a way of life, that Ahmed expanded from a Martinican’s writing about Algeria to the context of Palestine. The point I am making here is that anti-colonial efforts might want to affirm methods that abstract away from textual “autonomy” and toward practical interventions, including Grosfoguel’s Appendix section on decolonizing social sciences. The analogy here would be that the best readers of Marx are not academics situating *Capital* in an exile’s London but activists living out the *Manifesto* in anti-capitalist, anti-imperial struggles.

The editors continue their Introduction by discussing Fanon’s critique of *Négritude*, arguing that he “puts [*Négritude*] on trial until ridiculing it as another reflection of colonial pathology [*pone en juicio hasta ridiculizarla, como un reflejo más de la patología colonial*]” (11). The insight of Fanon here, they say, is that “he refuses to be subjected to an abstract collective,” such as “Black people” or “Black culture” (12). Makaran and Gaussens’s “reading” is a flagrant reduction of Fanon’s complicated relationship to *Négritude*. In their Introduction, they mention *The Wretched of the Earth* but quote from only a translated *Black Skin, White Masks*, which is hardly Fanon’s last word on *Négritude*.

Fanon’s relationship with *Négritude* is complicated in *Toward the African Revolution*. There he described *Négritude* as a “metamorphosis,” “an inverted axiological activity, a valorization of the rejected.”[62] David Marriott comments that *Négritude*, thought this way, “resolved the *colonisé* to take hold of blackness by possessing it as a new kind of knowledge and composition”; the politics here being that “[t]he Vichy state could hardly stand by and tolerate this position... The state could then condemn negritude as anti-republican and, if it persisted, as an insurrection.”[63] Then, in *Wretched*—a book that must be considered in developing any “Fanonian anticolonialism” (12)—Fanon’s critique of *Négritude* is that white culture has put people in Chicago and Nigeria in the same basket. *Négritude*, accordingly, is only a response to white domination; it remains derivative instead of creative.[64] Fanon’s larger point in that chapter of *Wretched*, which was first a speech at the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Rome in 1959, is that colonial racialization works through the homogenizing and de-politicizing category of African culture instead of national culture. And it is to the level of the nation—a nation, as David Macey argues, that is not defined in ethnic terms but is more a form of consciousness—that Fanon wanted to direct political efforts.[65]

It is additionally noteworthy that by the time he was writing *Wretched*, Fanon was critical of *Négritude* not just on a conceptual level, but also because Léopold Sédar Senghor, who was so influential to *Négritude*, had as President of the Republic of Senegal directed his delegates to side with the French at the U.N. General Assembly vote on Algeria and remained sympathetic to de Gaulle.[66] When he was writing that chapter that became part of *Wretched*, Fanon was understandably upset with Senghor. Still, on my reading Fanon writes less in a dismissive manner and more in a way that addresses the limits of *Négritude* (*La négritude trouvait donc sa première limite...*). [67]

Taken together, Fanon's context for writing and style within *Wretched* suggests an engagement with *Négritude* that develops his position well beyond his early articulation in *Black Skin, White Masks* and that is much more robust than ridicule, which is the mode not of Fanon but of PBMN. Attention to the development of Fanon's corpus or to the language he uses demonstrates this point rather quickly. Marriott summarizes as follows:

Fanon's relationship to negritude is divided across several works, and his emphatic rejection of its aesthetic was mediated by texts and events that arguably present a more complex engagement. Although I do not think that he ever wavered in his rejection of the metaphysical bond between diaspora and identity, (racial) citizenship and the nation-state, humanism and culture, his relationship to a text such as Césaire's *Cahier* attends to the emergence of a new relationship to the universal and the particular as the simultaneous rebuilding of the polis through art and regaining of black particularity through the abyssal.[68]

If PBMN wanted to follow Fanon's anticolonialism, it would have been better, again, to debate the practical advantages and disadvantages of his strategic nationalism, as opposed to simply throwing the accusation of nationalism at the decolonials (20). For a sophisticated reading of Fanon's relationship to *Négritude* with respect to contemporary decolonial politics, I would point my reader to Glen Coulthard's fifth chapter, "The Plunge into the Chasm of the Past: Fanon, Self-Recognition, and Decolonization," in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*.

How Makaran and Gaussens take up Fanon's critique of *Négritude* is representative of their style: an author's position is considered without commenting on how, as Marriott put it about Fanon's relationship to *Négritude*, that position is "mediated by texts and events that arguably present a more complex engagement." [69] The editors' framing of what the book does is so polemical that this reader wonders how many of the contributors would at least in private walk back their association with such a volume. *Piel blanca, máscaras negras* could have been a productive intervention if it acknowledged that it is making a critique not of "decolonial reason" but of the limitations of *some* decolonial theorists who at some points in their work have tended to essentialize, to use jargon, and to proceed through binaries. PBMN could have then developed in most of the book a positive option, an anticolonial route. But instead it maintained its attempt to deny decolonial theory page after page, blow after blow—which is a strange approach to something that is already dead and in need of an autopsy. What *Piel blanca, máscaras negras* lacks is what Fanon was always able to link to his critiques, namely, a *poesis*, a creation, what Marriott describes as work "to invent, theoretically, a new poetry, a new praxis of thought, capable of negating colonialism's limits in the service of revolution." [70]

The visions of authors such as Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel have a way of pushing their readers into building political communities, into learning from the differences of the world(s). The community-oriented work of The Latin American

Philosophy of Education Society (LAPES) is a strong example that links the insights of the philosophy of liberation to contemporary struggles across the Americas today. If *Piel blanca, máscaras negras* had taken on even a scintilla of a Habermasian principle of charitable interpretation, rather than proceeding through its own need to reduce decolonial theory to the point of declaring it dead, it would have been able to track decolonial theory not just through a few articles, affiliations, and appearances of a few theorists, but through some of the depths and expanses of what Walsh calls “perspectives, expressions, thoughts, struggles, processes, and practices” that reflect the multifaceted aspects of *praxis*, in their strengths and limitations, that decolonial authors understand themselves to be working on today.[71] Or so suggests one priest from a low-level post at a prestigious public university in Toronto.

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\* Some theorists who immediately come to my mind are: María Lugones, Ofelia Schutte, Linda Martín Alcoff, Mayra Rivera, Gabriela Veronelli, Don Deere, Sylvia Wynter, Rafael Vizcaíno, Eduardo Mendieta, Kris Sealey, and Miguel Gualdrón Ramírez. You likely have in mind others.

## Notes

[1] José María Arguedas, *El zorro de arriba y el zorro de abajo* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1971), 244.

[2] Their full list of the “principal exponents” of decolonial thought includes: “Aníbal Quijano, Enrique Dussel, Walter Mignolo, Ramón Grosfoguel, Edgardo Lander, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Catherine Walsh y Santiago Castro-Gómez,” but the book treats Dussel, Mignolo, and Grosfoguel much more than the others (15).

[3] Mariana Ortega, “Decolonial Woes and Practices of Un-knowing,” *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 31, no. 3 (2017): 504-516.

[4] Antonio Y. Vázquez-Arroyo, “Critical Theory, colonialism, and the historicity of thought,” *Constellations* 25, no. 1 (2018): pp. 54-70.

[5] Aníbal Quijano, “Colonialidad del poder, eurocentrismo y América Latina,” *Perú Indígena* 13, no. 29 (1992): 201. Translation mine.

[6] *Ibid.*, 221.

[7] An Yountae, *The Decolonial Abyss: Mysticism and Cosmopolitics from the Ruins* (New York: Fordham, 2016), 23.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Ochy Curiel, "Descolonizando el feminismo: una perspectiva desde América Latina y El Caribe." Paper presented at the Primer Coloquio Latinoamericano sobre Praxis y Pensamiento Feminista. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2009. Translation mine.

[10] Breny Mendoza, "Decolonial Theories in Comparison," *Journal of World Philosophies* 5, no. 1 (2020): 49.

[11] Silvia Tieffemberg, "Lugares de enunciación inestables," *Telar* 11-12 (2013-2014): 273. Translation mine.

[12] Aimé Césaire, *Une Tempête* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1997), 88. Translation mine.

[13] See e.g. Cedric Johnson, "The Wages of Roediger: Why Three Decades of Whiteness Studies Has Not Produced the Left We Need," *Nonsite.org* 29 (2019), <https://nonsite.org/the-wages-of-roediger-why-three-decades-of-whiteness-studies-has-not-produced-the-left-we-need/>; Jodi Dean, *Comrade: An Essay on Political Belonging* (New York: Verso, 2019).

[14] Linda Martín Alcoff, "An Epistemology for the Next Revolution," *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1, no. 2 (2011): 72.

[15] Emma D. Velez, "Decolonial Feminism at the Intersection: A Critical Reflection on the Relationship between Decolonial Feminism and Intersectionality," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 44, no. 3 (2019): 400.

[16] See e.g. María Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," *Hypatia* 22, no. 1 (2007).

[17] Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), 5.

[18] See e.g. Enrique Dussel and Daniel E. Guillot, *Liberación, Latinoamericana y Emmanuel Levinas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Bonum, 1975).

[19] See e.g. Enrique Dussel, *Towards an Unknown Marx: A Commentary on the Manuscripts of 1861-1863*. Translated by Yolanda Angulo. Edited by Fred Moseley. New York: Routledge, 2001.

[20] See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the development of a concept," *Cultural Studies* 21, nos. 2-3 (2007): pp. 240-270; Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "On the Coloniality of Human Rights," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* 114 (2017): pp. 117-136.

[21] Stefan Pimmer, "Gramsci y su lugar de enunciación: una crítica a la geopolítica del conocimiento de Walter Mignolo," *Observatorio Latinoamericano y Caribeño* 1 (2017): 199, 200. Translation mine.

[22] See Benjamin P. Davis and Jason Walsh, "The politics of positionality: the difference between post-, anti-, and de-colonial methods," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 60 (2020): 10, n. 12.

[23] Miguel Gualdrón Ramírez, "Resistance and Expanse in *Nuestra América*: José Martí, with Édouard Glissant and Gloria Anzaldúa," *Diacritics* 46, no. 2 (2018): 25.

[24] *Ibid.*, 23.

[25] *Ibid.*, 21.

[26] Enrique Dussel, *Ética de la Liberación: En La Edad de la Globalización y de la Exclusión* (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2009), 552. Translation mine.



[27] At a conference on liberation philosophy in 2019, over breakfast I asked Dussel if he maintains this position in favor of reforming and not abolishing the state, and he answered unequivocally that he does.

[28] Dussel, *Ética*, 64; see also 64-65ff.

[29] José María Barroso Tristan, "Decolonizando. Diálogo con Yuderkys Espinosa Miñoso y Nelson Maldonado-Torres," *Iberoamérica Social: Revista-Red de Estudios Sociales* 4, no. 6 (2016): 10.

[30] Catherine E. Walsh, "Decolonial learnings, askings, and musing," *Postcolonial Studies* 23, no. 4 (2020): 608.

[31] Mendoza, "Decolonial Theories in Comparison," 52.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] See e.g. Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (New York: Verso, 2019).

[34] Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la Relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 203-209. See Benjamin P. Davis, "The Politics of Édouard Glissant's Right to Opacity," *The CLR James Journal: The Journal of the Caribbean Philosophical Association* 25, nos. 1-2 (2019): 59-79.

[35] Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 11.

[36] *Ibid.*, 19.

[37] *Ibid.*, xvi.

[38] Alcoff, "Toward," 67.

[39] *Ibid.*, 71.

[40] *Ibid.*, 68.

[41] Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: On Practices and Discourses of Decolonization*, translated by Molly Geidel (Cambridge: Polity, 2020), 51.

[42] *Ibid.*, 59.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Véronica Gago, "Introduction: The Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui Principle: The Rebellion of Thought" in *ibid.*, xxxi.

[45] Cusicanqui, *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa*, 60.

[46] Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 99.

[47] See Eugenia Fraga, "Desigualdad Centro-periferia en el Campo Académico-Intellectual. División Internacional del Trabajo entre Producción y Consumo de Teorías," *Revista de Prácticas y Discursos* 6, no. 8 (2017): pp. 61-78; "Territorio e identidad. El lado oscuro y violento de los estados," *Revista Miriada* 9, no. 13 (2017): pp. 251-269; "El concepto en Walter Mignolo. Cinco dimensiones de un mismo concepto," *Revista electronica de estudios latinoamericanos* 13, no. 50 (2015): pp. 1-13. See also Eugenia Fraga, "Walter Mignolo, La comunidad, entre el lenguaje y el territorio," *Revista Colombiana de Sociología* 38, no. 2 (2015): pp. 167-182.

- [48] Mendoza, "Decolonial Theories in Comparison," 57.
- [49] Ibid.
- [50] Ibid.
- [51] See Dussel, *Ética*, 377. Translation mine. See also Benjamin P. Davis, "Responsibilities of the Intellectual: Dewey, Dussel, and Democracy," *Inter-American Journal of Philosophy* 11, no. 2 (2020): pp. 35-48.
- [52] See <https://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/study-centre/anibal-quijano-chair>.
- [53] Dussel, *Ética*, 82, n. 106. Translation mine.
- [54] Ibid., 468.
- [55] Eduardo Mendieta, "Decolonising Epistemologies, Politicising Rights: An Interview with Eduardo Mendieta," *Birkbeck Law Review* 3, no. 1 (2015): 18.
- [56] Ibid., 19.
- [57] Consider also the sentence that today decolonial theory "is no more than a rudimentary academic strategy based on intellectual terrorism that seeks, above all, identity in the market and the recognition of its counterparts starting, ironically, with that of its European opponents" [*lo decolonial no es más que una rudimentaria estrategia académica, basada en un terrorismo intelectual, que busca ante todo identidad en el mercado y reconocimiento de sus pares, empezando, irónicamente, por el de sus contrincantes europeos*] (119).
- [58] Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la Terre* (Montreal: Kiyikaat Éditions, 2016), 27
- [59] Walter Mignolo, "Frantz Fanon y la opción decolonial: el conocimiento y lo político" in Frantz Fanon, *Piel negra, mascararas blancas* (Madrid: Akal, 2009), 309-310.
- [60] Ibid., 312.
- [61] John Berger, "Sones (Palestine, June 2003)" in John Berger, *Landscapes: John Berger on Art*, ed. Tom Overton (New York: Verso, 2016), 228.
- [62] Frantz Fanon, *Pour la révolution africaine: Écrits politiques* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2001), 39. Translation mine.
- [63] David Marriott, *Whither Fanon? Studies in the Blackness of Being* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 175.
- [64] Fanon, *Les Damnés*, 153-155.
- [65] Ibid., 151-152. See also David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography* (New York: Verso 2000), 374.
- [66] Fanon, *Les Damnés*, 167.
- [67] Ibid., 154.
- [68] Marriott, *Whither Fanon?*, 314.
- [69] Ibid.
- [70] Ibid., 363.
- [71] Walsh, "Decolonial learnings," 4.