Two Decades of Aníbal Quijano's Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America

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Abstract: Aníbal Quijano has been one of the most astute and purposeful Latin American social theorists of the second half of the 20th century. His pioneering essays on the 'Coloniality of Power' not only inspired the project of Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality, but have also influenced countless intellectuals and activists who were not necessarily involved in the so-called 'Decolonial Turn'. While Quijano has not left behind a text in which all of the characteristics of his theory on 'Coloniality' are systematised, it can be argued that the lengthy essay 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,' published for the first time twenty years ago, was intended to provide such an overview of his thought. The purpose of this forum is to critically debate the legacy of the Peruvian sociologist during a period which Quijano himself later described as the 'Root Crisis of the Coloniality of Global Power.' In the first section, José Gandarilla presents the Latin American antecedents and precursors of the use of the term 'Coloniality'. Next, Haydeé García reflects on the interdisciplinary perspective in Aníbal Quijano, the weight of totality, and its historical articulations. Finally, Daniele Benzi opens up and addresses some queries regarding 'colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism,' from the perspective of macro-historical sociology.

Keywords: Quijano, Aníbal; Coloniality of Power; Latin American Critical Thought; interdisciplinarity; macro-historical sociology.

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To Realise the Real Mutation and Not Succumb to the Procrustean Bed

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The text (Quijano 2000a) that motivates our deliberation is, undoubtedly, the most important of a very fruitful creative period for Aníbal Quijano, which took place during the close of the 20th century, yet which signifies the consummation of the intellectual domain mobilised by the category of the Coloniality of Power throughout its itinerary. For this reason, after some initial lines regarding the impact that this categorical framework unleashed at the level of analytic repertoires in various points of the globe, we propose delving along a particular route of immediate propositions of Quijano's work that crowd together in a cascade (Quijano 1998, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2001). Along a period of several years, prior to 2001, Quijano published or presented, in various important forums, five texts that, in some of their iterations, are of great importance. Amidst this conceptual mesh, like a cord that ties the ensemble together, we find the text upon which we are commenting zigzagging between the themes of Eurocentrism, social classification, the arc of institutions of coloniality, globalisation, and democracy. Of this handful of texts, the first was presented in the town of Colonia Tovar, in the outskirts of Caracas, from 7-10 July 1997. The last of these to be integrated within this ensemble was printed in the same city, by the Pedro Gual Institute of Higher Diplomatic Studies, on 1 July 2001, although the text corresponds to a conference offered by that very same annex of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in October 2000.

The task of tracing out some preliminary propositions is important, given that such a body of work is capable of expressing a mixture of intellectual stimuli whose best formula is to be found in this expository thread. Therefore, this lengthy essay (Quijano 2000a) establishes itself as a hinge, not only representing a new stage in Quijano's thought, but also as the first opening point of an entire agitating movement in the social sciences and humanities, not only in our Latin America and the Caribbean, but also elsewhere, thanks to the work of Latino intellectuals attached to northern academia and of others who attend gatherings of greater global impact.

The importance of the text (Quijano 2000a) can be gauged by its role as a binding axis for a recommencement of the exercise of thinking, beginning with and drawing upon the founding and constitution of the Americas and the complex, open and conflictive social totality inaugurated by modernity/coloniality. A not unimportant fact is that we are faced with the emergence of a creative moment for Quijano at a time of full intellectual maturity in his seventies, to signify, among philosophers and social thinkers, the moment in which a deepening of vision regarding problems that are contemplated as the synthesis of one's entire trajectory is achieved.

'Coloniality of power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,' edited in its definitive version in the year 2000, was launched as one of the chapters of perhaps the most consulted book published by CLACSO. It had originally been presented in Spanish a couple of years ago, 1998, before a forum convened by UNESCO, and was immediately published in English in the journal of the *International Sociological Association*, edited by Sage Publications, and in the third issue of *Nepantla: Views from South*. The text was also immediately translated into French; a preprint document was in circulation from 2000 on, and was incorporated to an edited book last year (Contarini et al 2019). The Portuguese version dates from 2005 – also edited by CLACSO, and the text was translated into German in 2016. Having already covered such a broad linguistic spectrum in the movement of academic knowledge, it is unsurprising that the issues of coloniality and the Coloniality of Power offer themselves as the categorical scaffolding through which to capture or recover historical experience in many points of global geography. Examples thereof can be seen in South East Asia, in the case of Korea (Nak-chung 2000), or in Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). They likewise prove as useful for demystifying barbarous Europe (Galcerán 2016) as for exhibiting the destruction of nature or denouncing the patriarchy and feminicide.

It is well known that Quijano, throughout his full intellectual trajectory, made contributions on diverse topics that marked caesuras within social thought on the Latin American reality, namely his studies on urbanisation, marginality and the political-cultural phenomenon of 'the cholo' in Peru in the early 70s; his overtures on the crisis of imperialism and historical-structural dependency along that decade; raising awareness of the crisis of disciplinary paradigms and his initial approach towards the subject of modernity, mobilised by the search for another rationality in the mid-80s. Additional studies also entail the vindication of the explanatory coupling of modernity/coloniality in the early 90s, and setting forth the discussion of the idea of 'race' and indigenous mobilisations by the end of that same decade – the period that concerns us here – when he presented his systematisation of the explanatory arc of the Coloniality of Power.

We believe the contributions above are tributes to the period in which the text we are honouring was produced and in which they play the role of key supporters. By virtue thereof, something remains to be said about the routes, initially travelled by other minds and other personalities, and the trials (argumentative essays) that led to these paths, including the paths undertaken by Quijano himself at other moments in his career, which finally encountered, in this redaction, the meeting point, the new opening from which further argumentative journeys were undertaken.

We will attempt to tackle the article's three elements in the reverse order they are mentioned in the title of Quijano's work. As such, the points to be covered are Latin America, Eurocentrism and Coloniality of Power. It is easy to understand that the question of Eurocentrism retains its place as a key link and an anchor of questions turned towards emerging dilemmatic blocks.

The analytical layer to which we have made reference in Quijano's intellectual itinerary, located as a nodal point within the text that concerns us, is marked in the international context by tendencies that, in superficial ways or ideologically overcharged readings, point to a supposed homogenisation of modern life supported by the intensification of the flows and circuits of globalisation and in which the only space that appears to allow 'difference' is the option of multiculturalism or hybridisation. 'The Eurocentric proposal of García Canclini,' as Quijano (1997: 80) went as far to say, does not question but rather supports the neoliberal order of the world. Quijano (1998: 28), on the contrary, sees in this process a capitalist counterrevolution occurring on a global scale, one which, on the one hand, adjusts the matrix of domination/exploitation/conflict as a 'drastic re-concentration of the control of power in the hands of the functionaries of capital,' and on the other, acts as a 'profound and massive modification of the life of all societies and all peoples.' In his words,

It is a real mutation [...] the formation of the imperial block [...] is the other face of the denationalisation of the weakly nationalised states, of the de-democratisation of societies where the Coloniality of Power was not, or was not completely, removed (Quijano 1998: 8).

By the end of the 20th century, 'the universalisation of capitalist civilization' had been fully consolidated (Quijano 1998: 28), and the basic question should be: how did this happen? From the unsurpassable standpoint of our region moving away from Eurocentrism, the process encountered two activating levers, one in the short and immediate term in a historical sense, and the other in the long term, with profound magnitude. Starting by distinguishing the specific from the historical break, we find ourselves in another period of that *age of extremes*: Cuba and its 1959 revolution, the end of which was marked by the military coup against Allende in Chile; from seeking to avoid the paradigm of modernity, developmental dualism and national populism, social scientists fell back upon the obstacles of historical-structural dependence (Quijano 1981).

This intervention of heteronomous powers and their internal allies, opened, on a continental scale, a period of reversal of historic gains, both in the realm of social and political struggle and in the cognitive plane. Its inaugural moment, 11 September 1973 in Santiago de Chile, represented the first major advance of neoliberal economists in the form of a 'task force,' who arrived to enact the plans of the US State Department to be executed, in some cases, by conservative military forces; this stage came to an end with the other 11 September 2001, with the fall of the Twin Towers in New York, another tightening of the screw in the virtual state of global exception decreed by the American Empire.

Amidst this phase of neoliberal global counter-offensive, Quijano identified, as early as the mid-eighties, in a lecture delivered at the University of Puerto Rico, the most paralysing or threatening configurations for social thought. He did so by first noting in them a return of social atomism, functionalism, empiricism, and a naturalisation of neoliberal technocratic knowledge. Then, he distinguished them among later works – the deceptive mask of refinement which, at the end of that decade, was exuded by the lament of weak postmodern thought or by the pallid metaphysical countenance at the heart of Marxism, whose remnants endured in the more Eurocentric versions of historical materialism (matching views in González Casanova (1982); Lander (1990)).

The world of disputed and discontinuous reality posed questions in 1989, among the most important, on the other side of the world, with the resounding fall of real socialism, and in our hemisphere, with the defeat of the Sandinistas, the assassination of the Jesuits in El Salvador, and the indictment that the ruling classes were obeying a decalogue of

economic measures designated the 'Washington Consensus.' From that exposition in the enclosure of Río Piedras, on 18 April 1986, Quijano sketched out a Gramscian image: 'there is an exhaustion of the problematic of an entire period [...] without the alternative problematic being equally visible [...] Latin American research is [...] in crisis' (Quijano 1988: 158). According to him, 'the categories have been left behind the questions' (Quijano 1988: 160) and 'a profound victory of neoliberal ideology can be registered' (Quijano 1988: 163). This was another moment of perplexity, in which the theory available seemed to fall short of the policy required. The game seemed to have been won by the pragmatist worldview, by the Social Democratisation of social thought, by the 'propensity to place oneself in the mediation between capital and labour, between international domination and national domination, to place all problems on the rim of the national, the propensity to account for what emerges, not to change it' (Quijano 1988: 163, author's italics). This would be nothing but a way of submitting to the immediate and short-term mandate of the capitalist order, a form of succumbing to the Procrustean bed, to the common sense labelled as functionalism, which is incapable of advancing beyond a biased, ahistorical, conformist knowledge.

Yet for him, this was not the role of the intellectual, nor of social research: 'In reality, what matters is not what is seen, but what is not seen' (Quijano 1988: 168). Thus, the Peruvian sociologist does not offer us a mere prognosis when he states: 'I believe we are on the threshold of a new debate in Latin America.' Conversely, he rather attempts, in a Gramscian way, to commit to a scheme of 'the latent instigating motif' (Quijano 1988: 169) to activate, as Rosa Luxemburg would call it, 'the spark of the conscious will' that draws us out of the state of surprised astonishment in which we have been submerged by the triumph of neoliberalism, whose victorious offensive was only comparable in its devastating effects - the 'morbid symptoms,' of which the Sardinian communist also warned - to the period of conquest that razed the native cultures of the continent to the ground. Hence the need for this change of perspective, for the redirection of the theoretical gaze towards the entire block of problems which opened the incursion, at that time, of similar heteronomous forces that contemporary personifications of power still carry within themselves as constitutive logics of their forms of action, albeit invisible at first sight. What was still latent and allowed him to close out his presentation in a hopeful tone amidst this defeat, was the fact that

> all myths of Eurocentric origin are beginning to disintegrate. And this entire mythology built at the level of a paradigm, of the theory of social classes and its form of knowledge, is falling apart. What remains of it will become the founding core of the problematic which will emerge from this moment onwards (Quijano 1988: 169).

We already see here how this new research programme began to reveal itself. Very remote gestures have been detected in Quijano regarding his reservations on Eurocentric perspectives. However, what was initially a defensive strategy not to succumb to an ethnocentric provincialism –as had happened with the scientific version of North American

sociology upon judging itself capable of claims to universality – would take on another turn upon highlighting his positions (and others that were not precisely the most influential or had reached the greatest editorial prominence). This pointed at highly pertinent issues that positioned themselves like a lever to move the new cognitive armature into place, against a theoretical component whose origin dated back to the 60s, but from a different provenance. These proposals could not have been more distant from the sanitised tendency of dependency theory (developmental), or from the other variant of that lineage which chose to exile itself in the cloisters of academia, in search of the recognition of a theoretical status. A name that becomes key to this inquiry was José Medina Echavarría, whom Quijano met during his Masters studies in FLACSO. The exiled Spaniard had arrived in Santiago from Puerto Rico in 1952, and managed to influence a whole host of authors in a multiplicity of directions (Gandarilla 2020). For what interests us here, it suffices to say that, for Medina Echavarría (1976: 29), who translated Weber into Spanish, 'economic development is a total social process' which, in an ontological sense, meant that *what is is the consequence of that which has been*.

The problem of society approached in question allowed only one perspective: 'The first thing that must not be forgotten when considering this issue is the relative historical-cultural heterogeneity of the two great fragments of Latin America' (Medina Echavarría 1976: 51). These fragments, along very long-term historical lines, refer to pre-Columbian autochthonous worldviews, and the worlds transplanted by the colonisers during the traumatic moment of the conquest of the Americas. In addition, the dynamic that characterises them is not that of a dual static structure but that of a shifting magma of relationships in permanent fusion, a relational complex which results in 'the juxtaposition in a given country, by colonial actions in particular, of two technical-economic worlds at an infinite distance from each other' (Medina Echavarría 1976: 46-47). Some of the directions that Medina Echavarría suggested in his work - written between 1961 and 1962 but only first published in 1963 – are deployed with a more demanding level of depth by some of his former students or collaborators. As is often the case with great teachers, the kernel of the new approach is advanced in the practice of teaching, with a host of problematising elements. Some years later, he would have to rediscover them as his prominent critical interlocutors, as Medina Echavarría died in 1977. The same occurred with Aníbal Quijano, who having analysed the issues of 'the cholo' in Peru from the early seventies, was later exiled in Chile, participated in the ILPES, and worked at CEPAL on the expansion of urban centres in the Atlantic coast of Latin America, then went on to examine the issues of marginality and marginal poles, these problematic knots which would later have to be undone in the light of persistent and renewed historical-structural heterogeneity in Latin America. The mark of the teacher made itself perceptible not only here, but also in the relationship established with Puerto Rico, a part of the colonised world of the Antilles to which Quijano frequently returned. The virtue of the Peruvian sociologist would consist in nourishing these intuitions, while saving them from the liberal quicksand into which Medina Echavarría had fallen, having been stimulated by the Mariateguian rebuke of the 20s and 30s as to 'not give in to the Eurocentric manner of using Marxist categories' (Quijano 1981: 241).

In our opinion, two other analytical trajectories that had announced themselves in our region at least two decades earlier, also converge and configure increasingly illuminating approaches to the historical trajectory of Latin American societies. These are the following: the polarisation of centre-periphery, which in the work of Raúl Prebisch (1949) explained the sustained deterioration of the terms of trade, and that could guide additional investigations (as was the case of the world-system theory of Wallerstein, for example), and Sergio Bagú's historiographic clarification (1949) that the main logic of our region is explained by our insertion within 'colonial capitalism' – a term Quijano revisited many times in the inquiries that later matured into the notion of Coloniality of Power.

A pair of methodological requirements from that period at the beginning of the eighties pointed in the direction of a new conceptual framework. Firstly, 'to do away with the arbitrary boundaries between disciplines [...] in order to access a holistic understanding of social phenomena' (Quijano 1981: 241); secondly, 'to reconstruct the theoretical representation of the previous history of our societies because it had been totally occupied by the ideological perspective of the liberal and Eurocentric [...] ruling classes' (Quijano 1981: 243). If the first echoes the work of Medina Echavarría and a calling to interdisciplinary perspectives in the background, the latter highlights a family resemblance to the subaltern approaches that were developed in the Eastern reaches of the world by Ranajit Guha and his disciples. Quijano committed himself, from the second half of the 1980s, to another exploration of the irremissible component of historicity, from which his most important contributions (Quijano 1989) emerged. These already came to light at the beginning of that decade, as a demand to

> [P]lace in the foreground of the social-scientific debate, the demands of a totalising vision, which of course includes the historical past and the equally historical present, and where significant interrogations proceed for the purpose of inquiry into reality and for the production of its knowledge (Quijano 1981: 243).

There is no such thing as history or the world. Both are remade and rebuilt during each of the periods in which our societies dispute their horizon of meaning. It was necessary to take changes of course and return again and again (Quijano's texts from twenty years ago are true palimpsests) in order to realise the germination of 'the embryo of the concept of historical-structural heterogeneity', like a beam of light that shines through the theoretical apparatus constructed a decade later. Therefore, categories such as 'other rationality,' 'modernity/coloniality,' coloniality of power,' are all incomplete if not pierced through with this historical exigency that also revitalises the analytical Marxist *corpus* of social totality. And here indeed, Quijano could claim with every right a significant degree of influence over the emanations that were carried to planes of excellence for literary analysis used by another Peruvian, Antonio Cornejo-Polar (1994), on the 'heterogeneity' and contradictory totality' concepts. These propositions are alone sufficient to enter, once again, into the theoretical stream entrusted to us by the wise Yanama district, from the province of Yungay.

The Interdisciplinary Perspective in Aníbal Quijano

María Haydeé García-Bravo

If we carefully reread the twenty-year old text 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America' (2000a), it becomes apparent that it weaves together and references a great deal of work which Quijano carried out in collaboration with others a decade earlier, in the 1990s. Here we seek to trace out its elaboration, selecting what we consider to be its main knots of argument and approach and focusing on its interdisciplinarity.

As it is well known, this text was presented during the XIVth Congress of the International Sociological Association in Montreal in August 1998, chaired by Immanuel Wallerstein at that time. Quijano – in addition to being part of the Program Committee and coordinator of the symposium – participated in the panel 'Alternatives to Eurocentrism and Colonialism in Contemporary Latin American Social Thought' organised by Edgardo Lander, where Fernando Coronil, Arturo Escobar and Walter Mignolo were also present, among others (Mignolo 2010; Lander 2000).

Quijano's thought emerges as part of this Latin American intellectual production that has been broad, cross-cutting, dialogic, critical, but never exclusionary. The call for papers for the panel in which these questions were discussed proclaimed that:

Eurocentrism and colonialism are like *many-layered onions*. At different historical moments of Latin American critical social thought, some of these layers have been revealed. Subsequently, *it has always been possible to recognise aspects and dimensions (like new hidden layers) that had not been identified by previous critiques* (Lander 2000: 9, emphasis added).

I consider these multiple layers to be specifically displayed and articulated in the work of the Peruvian intellectual in three problematic nodes, organised in the form of Russian dolls, that is, nested inside one another, without obeying a linear logic. Rather, they are imbricated in a dialectical movement of thought which entail a complex causality in their configuration, one that implies that the whole is in and between the parts and emerges from the interaction between them, without being reduced to their sum. The first layer or node is Quijano's characterisation of **social totality**, whose source is the historical-structural heterogeneity that stems from the so-called 'discovery' of America, that outlines a pattern of global power and which is configured by the institution of certain power relations; it is crossed/threaded in turn by two intersecting axes: the process of racialisation and the forms of production and labour. The second node refers to the **cognitive-rational layer** that structured the Eurocentric dualist epistemology. The third, yet by no means the least important layer, concerns **the capture and modulation of subjectivities** and of symbolic and cultural creation and production.

These three layers or threads have resulted in various formulations of the Coloniality of Power (by Quijano himself as a condensation of his thinking-doing and sensing), the coloniality of knowledge (Edgardo Lander), the coloniality of being (Nelson Maldonado-Torres), alongside other equally productive contributions, such as the coloniality of gender (María Lugones).

With regard to the first layer, Quijano delineated the racial codification of difference with considerable clarity and attention. For Europe, America was a New World, an *other*, separate world; a codification that was instituted and gained hegemony during the American colonial period and is exercised to this day. It constitutes a process that permeates all labour relations, which Nancy Fraser would later refer to as the division between core and periphery, exploitation for Europe and expropriation for others:

Historically, the capitalist core appeared as the emblematic heartland of exploitation, while the periphery seemed to be the iconic site of expropriation. *And that geography was explicitly racialized* from the get-go, as were *the status hierarchies associated with it*: metropolitan citizens versus colonial subjects, free individuals versus slaves, "Europeans" versus "natives," *"Whites" versus "Blacks"* (Fraser & Jaeggi 2018: 42-43, emphasis added by the author).

I choose to highlight this aspect because there are those who have based their critique of Quijano on his supposed omission of class relations and the primacy of racialisation, when this is not the case. The dehumanisation of American alterity allowed for the naturalisation of slavery *and* the application of an inhuman labour discipline to exploitation forms:

They are associated, as in an *interlocking assemblage*, reciprocity, serfdom, petty commodity production, slavery and wage labour. Of course, the hegemony of capital exists, which is why all this is ultimately capitalist, but it does not refer exclusively to wage relations (Quijano 2015: 44).

We can see metaphors or analogies in the Quijanian language which continually seek to account for this articulated interdefinability of the following: interlinkage, assemblage, coetaneity, coexistence, mesh of relations, umbilical relationship, interdependence, entanglement, imbrication, etc. Thus, both in his conceptual framework and methodological outline alike, interdisciplinary overtones are clearly discernible and, as we shall see, Quijano also reflected on these in a rigorous and incisive way.

We cannot fit the full gamut of academic outputs regarding interdisciplinarity into this text, yet we can instead attempt to underscore the Latin American current work and criticism thereof, of which we consider Quijano to be one of its mainstays. Along with others, such as the Argentine-Mexican physicist and epistemologist Rolando García, and the Mexican intellectual Pablo González Casanova, the three, during their time, critiqued the concept of development and proposed an interdisciplinary approach; among them, there is an important Marxist imprint, and the ideas of totality, history and articulation of levels are all cardinal. It is there to be noticed that José Carlos Mariátegui, an author studied by Quijano since his youth in 1956 and to whom he referred back again and again, accentuated Marx's postulate that 'the concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse' (Marx 1993 [1857/1858]: 101). In his lengthy prologue to the 'Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality,' written in 1978, Quijano emphasised:

Unity of contradictory elements, in a determinate and concrete historical situation, where unequal levels of development are combined, constantly *interpenetrating* and *conditioning each other* and where one of its elements cannot be destroyed *without affecting the whole* and vice versa, is the categorically Marxist and dialectical vision that Mariátegui gives us as a specific formulation and as an epistemological-methodological position. (Quijano [1979] 2014: 398, emphasis added)

In this manner, being the good historian that he was, he labelled this a historical knot, since distinct but simultaneous temporal layers overlapped. In one of our previous works (Gandarilla and García 2019), we have proposed paying attention to this allegory of the knot in order to read and understand Quinano's work in all its complexity. Quijano knew that beneath every present process or problematic there exists an underlying historical background, a depth of history that must be accounted for in the analysis and for the proposal of alternatives. His method of working was always interrogative and articulating, and his conceptual framework, enriched over time by discussions, the vast majority of which carried out orally, implying that he practised deep listening, soaking lavishly in narratives and poetics. His nomadic trajectory caused him to traverse among several worlds, including Lima, Paris, Santiago, Cuzco, Binghamton, Mexico, and from his native district Yanama to Quito, passing through the Caribbean. Quijano combined training as a historian and a sociologist in what Lucien Goldmann has termed a historical sociology:

Every social fact is a historical fact, and conversely [...] It is not a question, then, of bringing together the results of sociology and history, but rather of abandoning all abstract sociology and history to arrive at a concrete science of human facts, which can only be a *historical sociology* or a *sociological history*. (Goldmann 1977: 9)

We can see that throughout his work, Quijano made use of multiple methodologies and diverse disciplines, covering the full spectrum of the social sciences and humanities, that is, by covering anthropology, history, sociology, economics, philosophy, politics, literature, linguistics and the arts (music, dance, singing, etc.). In that sense, he is similar to González Casanova and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who detach themselves from disciplinary classifications not only because of their multidisciplinary backgrounds, yet also because their thinking encompasses various fields and they interrelate them in a creative way.

Some of the central ideas of the text we are summoned to discuss are found in previous writings, and I would like to present one referred to within the text, but that is little known and even less frequently cited. It is a short but consistent work that Quijano presented at the International Colloquium on Interdisciplinarity, organised by UNESCO in Paris between 16-19 April 1991. It was divided in four sections, and while Quijano participated in the third, named 'Interdisciplinarity in the face of Development', his intervention cut through many of the issues raised, as he deployed an epistemological and methodological analysis that questioned the Eurocentric foundation of science itself. This began with a critique of works that are labelled as interdisciplinary but only juxtapose 'studies from different disciplines, but that neither depart from a common problem nor allow us to arrive at one' (Quijano 1992: 349). In presenting the problem of development, Quijano underscored its multidimensional character, enabling a conception of society as a totality, by noting that 'what makes social existence an articulated totality or transforms even scattered and fragmentary experiences into a totality was and continues to be power' (Quijano 1992: 350). That way, Quijano's interdisciplinary work necessarily entails taking into account two interdependent arguments: the notion of social totality and the highlighting of power and the struggles to combat it. We consider that his work from the year 2000 meets both these requirements.

A few years prior to that date, Rolando García (1986) set out his proposal for interdisciplinary research as the study of complex systems, also putting totality and the articulation between parts and the whole at the forefront of his analysis in what he called relative organised totality, with inter-definable relationships between its heterogenous elements, placing great importance on historicity, and advancing via successive approximations. We can observe resonance between their positions, sharing the Latin American context and a critical approach.

Quijano likewise attacked classical economics, pointing out that, as a discipline, it not only constituted itself outside of totality but against it, dividing the social universe into separate spheres, as if they were effectively isolated and autonomous. At the height of neoliberalism in much of Latin America, Quijano argued that the neoliberal economy also operated by denying the political and, by doing so, forcefully exerting its own power, investing itself with an illusory objectivity.

For the Peruvian thinker, who interchanged ideas with other intellectuals from around the world at the meeting in Paris, including Felix Guattari, Michel Maffesoli and Gianni Vattimo, bringing about inter- or transdisciplinarity involved a re-founding and re-building of disciplines in relation to totality. For that reason, it was essential to problematise their own history to attempt to break with the reductionism that places borders between them. He criticised postmodernism precisely because, for him, it undermined the notion of social totality, fragmenting the social world and the social subject.

At that time, for Quijano (1992: 352), totality could be 'neither 'organic' nor 'systemic.' He considered these approaches to be part of 'the homogenizing claim to power within the framework of European experience.' I presume that his rejection of the systemic related to the systematism attributed to the computational sciences, which conceive systems from an uncritical position, as closed, in which the systems studied appear devoid of conflicts, ambiguities and contradictions.

However, Quijano overcame his reticence to systemic thinking following his association and dialogue with Wallerstein, adding to his scheme of the world-system, which he put into practice ten years later in his most well-known work and our present object of concern, emphasizing embedding levels within a trans-scalar approach that I cite *in extenso*:

> In the first place, the current model of global power is the first effectively global one in world history in several specific senses. First, it is the first where in each sphere of social existence *all historically* known forms of control of respective social relations are articulated, configuring in each area only one structure with systematic relations between its components and, by the same means, its whole. Second, it is the first model where each structure of each sphere of social existence is under the hegemony of an institution produced within the process of formation and development of that same model of power. Thus, in the control of labour and its resources and products, it is the capitalist enterprise; in the control of sex and its resources and products, the bourgeois family; in the control of authority and its resources and products, the nation-state; in the control of intersubjectivity, Eurocentrism. Third, each one of those institutions exists in a relation of interdependence with each one of the others. Therefore, the model of power is configured as a system. Fourth, finally, this model of global power is the first that covers the entire planet's population. (Quijano 2000a: 544-545, emphasis added)

This paragraph clearly summarises our characterisation of the interdisciplinary approach presented by Quijano himself and by Rolando García, in which totality can only be historical and no area or dimension can be left aside. An outstanding feature of this critical interdisciplinarity is the attempt to formulate alternatives. If totality is historically open, what must be provoked is a modification, a mutation that generates the production of new historical meanings. In very similar terms, González Casanova (1996: 22), in the 1990s, also mentioned that 'the interdisciplinarity of systems, in the scientific and humanistic terrains, pursues the creation of historical novelties.'

The demand for epistemic plurality hence dares to break with the modern Eurocentric binomial of subject-object and seek intercultural dialogue without reproducing the inequalities of the established epistemic statute. Regarding this arbitrary partition, which became universalised as a paradigm of reason and power, Quijano (1992: 352-353) set out that the subject is not only 'the individual constituted by herself, her capacity for reflection and discourse, but rather the seat of multiple social relationships.' Moreover, neither is the object 'an entity identical to itself, endowed with specific properties that 'define it, but a moment and a mode in a field of given relations.' And, as he points out, this is not far removed from advances in physics, as it will be these 'that finally remove all footing and solidity from this paradigm.' Coupled with this is the inescapable recognition that in other cultures, with other worldviews, 'diversity is fully legitimate,' which has to impact the notion of totality, broadening it and 'taking into account the incoherence, diversity and heterogeneity of history, alongside its articulation in a given moment and during a given period.'

We can assume that Quijano's (1992: 354) explanatory conceptual argument is located in his problematising attempt to connect the capitalist character of social relations with the colonial character of relationships with other societies and cultures, and the hierarchy and inequality generated by that association. He also indicates in the text that the simultaneous creation of otherness and negation of the other takes place in every sphere and realm: cognitive, symbolic, aesthetic and of belief. In his words, 'In fact, symbolic and formal expressions – the visual arts in particular – could not be destroyed' but they are denied recognition on their own terms and instead relegated to the rank of 'folkloric' expression, as a source of 'inspiration' for 'true' Western artists (Quijano 1992: 354).

He concludes by signalling that the problems of development cannot be unravelled without one studying how global power is in the process of being constituted, around which he links three issues: 1) a hyper-concentration for the benefit of a minority, 2) a concentration that operates in terms of class and colonial relationships, and 3) an established cognitive model that converts other cultures into the object of study. According to Quijano (1992: 355), 'It is not possible to sustain development without fighting for the global redistribution of resources. This objective, in turn, cannot be achieved without the decolonisation of cultural relationships.' While Wallerstein had proposed opening up the social sciences, Quijano renders this possible through his conceptual framework, which is solid, consistent, systematic, but expansive - hence the varied complementary extensions of his theory, such as those of Rita Segato, Santiago Castro Gómez and José Gandarilla. The character of his intellectual and political work with its 'exhilarating wisdom and enlightening passion' (Arguedas cited by Quijano 2015: 34) leaves no loose ends in terms of developing its powerful interdisciplinary perspective. Quijano analysed not only economic structures but vast cultural domains, including diverse narrative and aesthetic elements, while incorporating the extensive civilisational reservoir furnished by indigenous and diasporic communities. The Quijanian approach is a form of knowing that is born in struggle and out of it, and with and for transformative social movements. Just as Arguedas had conveyed to Duviols that his novel Deep Rivers had cured Quijano of his terrible pessimism (Quijano 2015: 27), as of today, we can read, reread and reinterpret Quijano, as a stream of diverse founts and multiple tributaries, in an attempt to cure ourselves of pessimism to then return, renewed, to action, to the wave of 'germinal forces' loaded with utopias.

Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America from the Perspective of Macro-Historical Sociology

Daniele Benzi

'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America' is probably Aníbal Quijano's most read and cited essay. In fact, it is often the only one. I suggest three possible reasons. The first is that it attempts to synthesise in a single text all the central points of his pioneering reflections regarding 'Coloniality.' The second is the fact that it was published in a book by Edgardo Lander (2000) which was very well received by the public. The third reason is because it encapsulates the intellectual climate of an era, capturing the essence of the alter-globalist spirit at the end of the century.

Its opening lines still possess an impressive evocative power: 'What is termed globalization is the culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and colonial/modern Eurocentered capitalism as a new global power' (Quijano 2000a: 533). In turn, its conclusion is a call that strikes a sensitive chord concerning Latin American identity, as it states: 'Consequently, it is time to learn to free ourselves from the Eurocentric mirror where our image is always, necessarily, distorted. It is time, finally, to cease being what we are not' (2000a: 574). In the middle of the essay, we find the description of what Robert W. Cox (1981) conceptualised as a 'historical structure' decades ago, namely, the 'colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism.' This, in its essentials, concurs with the characterisation of the 'modern world system' put forth by Immanuel Wallerstein. Nevertheless, following the publication of an article written in collaboration with the American sociologist (Quijano and Wallerstein 1992), Quijano placed greater emphasis on the material and symbolic role of 'America' in the formation and successive evolution of the 'world-system.'

The social theory that Aníbal Quijano produced for more than fifty years, and in particular, the historical-conceptual architecture embodied in the 'Coloniality of Power,' has as its centre a dynamic but tense balance between the notion of social 'totality' and its 'historical-structural heterogeneity.' This tension is the mirror of the dialectical relation-ship between theoretical foundation and historical data and levels and scope of analysis that characterises all critical historical sociology. Nonetheless, it also reflects the 'peculiar tension of Latin American thinking' and its complex heritage (Quijano 1990: 33).

I believe that the intellectual climate in which 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America' was developed, about twenty years ago, was particularly opportune for asserting the most universal, abstract, continuing and, in some ways, homogenous aspects of patterns of global power based on coloniality. It was, after all, its culmination in the wake of the apparent triumph of neoliberal globalisation. I suggest that the time passed since then invites us to explore more thoroughly the more particular, concrete, discontinuous and heterogeneous elements of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism. Quijano's essay provides an excellent starting point to that. Notwithstanding, as with all 'grand narratives,' it is subject to the scrutiny of time, that is, to changing world conditions that influence our perception of the present and vision of the past. It is likewise subject to the scrutiny of new ideas and materials provided to us by scientific research in order to conceptualise, represent and interpret this past in the light of the present, in the stumbling pursuit of images and actions with which to change the future.

Unlike the majority of his readers, my appreciation of Aníbal Quijano's work is inseparable from a macro-historical sociological perspective. According to a quintet of recognised scholars:

> Macrohistorical sociologists study the origins of capitalism and modern society, as well as the dynamics of ancient empires and civilizations. Seeing social patterns in the longer run, they find that human history moves through multiple contradictions and conflicts, crystallizing over long periods in impermanent configurations of intersecting structures. (Wallerstein et al 2013: 5)

Quijano's work on colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism corresponds to this type of approach. When all the pieces of the puzzle assembled by Quijano are combined and the threads are woven together on a plot that only appears in a relatively more structured form in 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America,' and in another essay, 'Coloniality of Power and Social Classification' (2000b), what emerges is a sketch of a historical configuration packed with contradictions, conflicts and intersecting structures.

Colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism is, in other words, a system or labyrinthine historical structure that Quijano endeavoured to account for through intertwining four main threads, namely a historical theory of capital, that is, of capitalism, conceived of as a motor of extraction and transfer of value via the control and subordination of all existing forms of labour to capital (Quijano 2000a: 535-536, 550-551); a historical theory of social classification based around the category of 'race' linked to a new 'racial division of labour' (Quijano 2000a: 534-535, 536-540); a historical theory of modernity and Eurocentrism interpreted as a 'perspective of knowledge' that establishes a new global intersubjectivity (Quijano 2000a: 540-550, 551-556); and finally, a historical theory of the modern nation state, perceived as a process of 'the relative, although real and important, democratisation of the control of the means of production and of the state' (Quijano 2000a: 561; see also Quijano 2000a: 560-570).

The grand structures of history are changed or toppled very slowly (Wallerstein et al 2013: 163). They are not eternal and there is no reason to assume that colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism should be an exception. In this sense, the very concept of Coloniality becomes nebulous outside the Braudelian *longue durée*.

The impulse to reopen certain issues has the immediacy to shed some light on the 'root crisis of the global coloniality of power' currently underway (Quijano 2011: 81). In a time of gradual disintegration and fragmentation of the global pattern of power founded with Coloniality, this could even prove useful for continued reflection on the question of Latin America's identities and its place in the modern contemporary world. Our sociolog-ical knowledge of world history allows us today to rethink issues surrounding colonial/ modern and Eurocentered capitalism.

The general proposition that serves as a framework for what follows relates to the opportunity of enhancing the debate regarding the spatial perimeters and temporal links of the 'totality' of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism, by broadening the historical and global perspective of reference. My argument is that its 'structural heterogeneity' – that is, the distinct reach, depth and persistence of coloniality, both material and symbolic – depends to a great extent on these spatial perimeters and temporal links. Upon being simplified with an image, it proves intuitive that the imaginary of five hundred years of resistance by native peoples in the Americas against European domination alludes to a very different historical experience to the one considered the century of humiliation to the Chinese Empire and peoples.

At the time of the first modernity, during the long 16th, and at least until the middle of the 18th century, that is, throughout the founding stage of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism, the influence of the agents of colonialism outside 'America' was extremely limited, if not negligible. Even more important is to note that, in this period, large states and empires emerged or were consolidated in vast areas of the world, whose relations with 'Europe' were offered on a basis of equality and even political superiority, economic supremacy and with little or no interest for European culture (to the great irritation of Europeans).

As John Darwin (2008: 50) stresses, 'Europe's "colonizing" history is often viewed in splendid isolation from the larger context of world history.' One of the merits of non-Eurocentric global history is precisely to have liberated the non-Western world from the apathetic drowsiness in which liberal or Marxist Eurocentrism attempted to relegate it (Hobson 2004). In this regard, the 'great divergence' (Pomeranz 2000) of the 19th century is scarcely intelligible outside of the setting of the 'Eurasian revolution' (Darwin 2008), which between 1750 and 1830 disrupted the balance of the first modern age. This was not only about independence and revolution in the Euro-Atlantic area. Additionally, while the exploitation of American colonies played a crucial role in that transformation, it is doubtful that it was the only or decisive factor thereof.

The other side of my argument highlights that 'if it is true that one colonization was different from another, the response of the conquered societies was equally varied in terms of their respective pasts and of their own identities' (Ferro 1997: vi). An important corollary of this observation is that to decentre the gaze has been a key contribution of the subaltern, postcolonial and decolonial studies research programme. In all these cases, the decentring had to do with the experience of regions (India, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America) and their specific subjects (basically peasants, indigenous peoples, black peoples and women). Nevertheless, when it comes to widening the historical and sociological framework of Quijano's synthesis, it is also very useful to carefully take into account the point of view and behaviour of non-Western elites and ruling classes, as well as the middle strata of these societies alike. This, of course, entails also examining the imperial and ethnocentric, and the nationalist and capitalist (or at least proto-capitalist) features observable prior to Western colonisation, during and after Western colonisation.

Likewise, it is important not to give in to the temptation of reifying 'Europe' and of 'European being.' The persistence of common traits over time, in particular that of those

which pertain to the perception and rationalisation of their cultural, and at some point, biological superiority, is beyond doubt. However, a key element in the dynamics of Western colonialism and imperialism also concerns the peculiar infra-European state of bellicosity and semi-permanent war, a centuries-old history of terrible conflicts that, from very early times, encompassed ideologies of religious, ethnic, regional, national and even racial supremacy in their repertoire.

Quijano shows full consciousness in his writings of these and other elements. Nevertheless, their visibility in the conceptualisation of the colonial/modern and of Eurocentered capitalism is quite limited. They add paths to the maze, making it more twisted yet also more apt for thinking about the current crisis. Let us take a brief look at some points related to capitalism, social classification and Eurocentrism.

The cornerstone of Quijano's historical theory of capitalism consists of turning the Marxist theory of the 'articulation of modes of production' on its head, transforming it into the dispute for control and subordination to capital of all existing forms of labour, namely slavery, servitude, petty commodity production, reciprocity and wages. Starting with 'America' he posits its existence alongside the formation of a 'new technology of domination/exploitation' that combining race and labour would establish 'a global model of control of work [...] for the first time in known history' (Quijano 2000a: 537, 535). This shift reconciles the reality of a capitalist world-system beginning in the long 16th century with the simultaneous existence of different forms of labour subordinated to capital – an issue that was always of little relevance for Wallerstein. However, by developing on the intuitions of Mariátegui and other authors, this perspective greatly enriches the reflection on the specificity of the Latin American 'historical-structural dependence' that transcends the 1970s dependency theories.

Nevertheless, expanding this argument to the global level is a matter that requires great care, that risks incurring historically unfounded generalisations. Until the 19th century, the relationships between the agents of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism and great empires and sophisticated market societies were very complex. Their peripherisation was not a rapid, linear process, and in some cases, such as the case of China, for example, not even complete. Only at the end of that century would it be possible to speak with some authority of 'a systematic racial division of labour' (Quijano 2000a: 536). This was extremely heterogeneous and relied on networks of production and trade that were already marked by disparities, and often by ethnic, regional, national and even racial discrimination.

The open question is how to articulate Quijano's suggestive idea with the reality of the unequal geographical development of capitalism in different hegemonic cycles of accumulation (Arrighi 2010) and world history as a whole. The sophisticated narration of Anievas and Nişancioğlu (2015) has many points in common with that of Quijano and offers some hints. Feminist theories regarding social reproduction are also illuminating (Federici 2004; Fraser and Jaeggi 2018), alongside debates over the 'capitalocene' (Moore 2015). Nevertheless, they still tell us little about how to explain the radical transformations in the global geography of capitalism over the centuries, and particularly in the second half of the 20th century. It is also the case that in light of what has taken place in recent decades in Latin America, resuming the dialogue between the perspective of the Coloniality of Power and the renewed debate on the political economy of dependency could prove to be very fruitful.

The crux of Quijano's (2000a: 533) theory of social classification is the category of race, 'a mental construction that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination and pervades the more important dimensions of global power, including its specific rationality: Eurocentrism.' Many open questions around its genealogy, codification and historical transformations remain. Nonetheless, it is clear that since the 15th century, its intellectual elaboration ran parallel to European colonial expansion, encompassing in a flexible and heterogeneous way cultural and religious, biological/phenotypic/genetic and environmental elements. It is thereby possible to problematise the continuity and homogeneity of the concept of race as it appears in Quijano's writings to, that way, better understand the persistence and metamorphosis of racism.

From a macro-historical sociological perspective, it is more important to question the absolute primacy that the Peruvian sociologist assigns to race as a criterion of classification of the world population. Even though it may have been predominant in some times and places, such as in Latin America, a question remains over the heterogeneous articulation of 'race' not only with labour and sex/gender, but also with other forms of social organisation and politics based on collective identities such as 'ethnicity' (tribe, caste, kinship, lineage) and 'people-nation,' beyond the European and Western experience, not to mention other phenomena of subjectivation and identity construction, with religion historically occupying a prominent role. This is also important for understanding the different forms of resistance to Western rule. For that reason, it could be useful to revisit the relationship of the Coloniality of Power with the peculiarly of the Latin American characteristics of 'internal colonialism' (González Casanova 1969). Moreover, a factor that also served from early times as a criterion for the differentiation and classification of human diversity and, notably, of European superiority was the comparison of scientific-technological development between cultures and civilisations. The idea of 'machines as the measure of men' instituted a formidable technology of power, especially in the 19th century, whose relationship to other forms of social classification such as race cannot be underestimated (Adas 2014). This leads directly to the question of Eurocentrism.

In spite of the work of various scholars, that fact that the debate regarding the origins of modernity no longer makes a great deal of sense needs to be recognised, at least from the perspective of the global non-Eurocentric history (Hobson 2004; Goody 2004). The "perception of historical change" was present in different societies before the constitution of "America" as "an entire universe of new material relations and intersubjectivities" as a mark of "modernity" (Quijano 2000a: 547). Its globalisation, on the other hand, was anything but linear over the course of four centuries. Furthermore, it is doubtful that the hegemonic institutions of European modernity, that is, the nation-state, the bourgeois family, the capitalist enterprise and Eurocentric rationality have simply 'universalised,' as Quijano argues, or that the 'human liberation' that the concept of modernity also involves, and necessarily requires, 'the desacralization of hierarchies and authorities' (Quijano 2000a: 548). In any case, the current challenge is to understand the heterogeneity rather than the universality of these institutions and, in particular, the deep crisis of the European/Western formula.

For Quijano, Eurocentrism is the elaboration of a perspective of knowledge associated with 'colonial ethnocentrism and universal racial classification.' It is a turbulent process that

involved a long period of the colonization of cognitive perspectives, modes of producing and giving meaning, the results of material existence, the imaginary, the universe of intersubjective relations with the world: in short, the culture (Quijano 2000a: 541).

Its ontological and epistemological bases are located in the 'peculiar dualist/evolutionist historical perspective' (Quijano 2000a: 556) that not only formed the basis of the European scientific-technological development during the 18th and 19th centuries, but also of diverse theories of purportedly universal history and culture. These premises also influenced the critical social sciences. Gradually, Eurocentrism formed the contours of an ideology and even of a rather diffuse common sense. However, according to Quijano himself, 'the radical crisis that the Eurocentric perspective of knowledge is undergoing opens up a field full of questions' (Quijano 2000a: 553). We have come a long way towards answering a number of them.

Since the publishing of Eric Wolf's pioneering work (1982), Eurocentric historical and cultural theories have been brilliantly challenged, not only those premised on a parochial Kantian universalism or on the Hegelian teleology of spirit, but also much more sophisticated versions that have as their nucleus certain moments of the work of Karl Marx and the complete corpus of Max Weber (Blaut 2000; Goody 1994, 2006; Hobson 2004). Moreover, Eurocentric ideology and common sense are progressively losing their value, although they remain strong and their revitalisation cannot be ruled out, as occurred in the past. A question remains over the gap between the consolidation of criticism of Eurocentrism and its very modest influence on the transformation of capitalist structures and power relations within everyday life, be it Western or subaltern worlds. Meanwhile, the dualist/evolutionist perspective has also been in crisis within scientific-technological fields for a considerable time. Nevertheless, besides continuing to serve the machinery of capitalist reproduction (and destruction), alternatives based on other ontologies and epistemologies are still too dispersed to challenge this exhausted paradigm.

I believe that the most important open question with respect to Eurocentrism is how to reflect and position oneself regarding what was always extremely difficult to fit into its mould, that is, 'the Orient.' The easiest path to take is to continue to reproduce an inertial Orientalism by default. The other would be to believe that 'the Orient' or, rather, East Asia and China, have been completely colonised and that, thereby, either in an analogous fashion or on their own account, they also reproduce the Coloniality of Power. I suspect that neither of these options help us much to understand the collapse of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism that is taking place before our eyes. I have argued in another text that Aníbal Quijano could be considered the last great Latin American social theorist of the 'long 20th century,' the era of the greatest expansion of colonial/modern and Eurocentered capitalism marked since 1945 by the global hegemony of the United States. Now that we are currently living through and experiencing its gradual collapse, it is perhaps easier to notice that the theory of the Coloniality of Power closes out a long cycle of Latin American critical thinking. In a way, this essay, which was published twenty years ago, symbolises its apogee. It is therefore necessary to both celebrate and question it at the same time, thereby keeping alive Aníbal Quijano's extraordinary intellectual, political and moral lesson.

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Vinte anos da Colonialidade do Poder, Eurocentrismo e América Latina de Aníbal Quijano

Resumo: Aníbal Quijano foi um dos teóricos sociais latino-americanos mais astutos e decididos da segunda metade do século 20. Seus ensaios pioneiros sobre a 'Colonialidade do Poder' não só inspiraram o projeto da Modernidade/ Colonialidade/Decolonialidade, como também influenciaram inúmeros intelectuais e ativistas não necessariamente envolvidos na chamada 'Virada Decolonial.' Embora Quijano não tenha deixado um texto no qual todas as características de sua teoria sobre 'Colonialidade' sejam sistematizadas, pode-se supor que o extenso ensaio 'Colonialidade do Poder, Eurocentrismo e América Latina,' publicado pela primeira vez nos anos 2000, pretendia fornecer uma visão geral do seu pensamento. O objetivo deste fórum é debater criticamente o legado do sociólogo peruano durante um período que o próprio Quijano posteriormente descreveu como a 'crise da raiz da colonialidade do poder global.' Na primeira seção, José Gandarilla apresenta os antecedentes e precursores latino-americanos do uso do termo 'Colonialidade.' Em seguida, Haydeé García reflete sobre a perspectiva interdisciplinar em Aníbal Quijano, o peso da totalidade e suas articulações históricas. Finalmente, Daniele Benzi abre e discute algumas questões a respeito do 'capitalismo colonial/moderno e eurocentrado' através da perspectiva da Sociologia Macro-Histórica.

Palavras-chave: Quijano, Aníbal; Colonialidade do Poder; Pensamento Crítico Latino-Americano; interdisciplinaridade; sociologia macro-histórica.

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