

- 3 Siba Grovogui, *Otherwise Human: The Institutes and Institutions of Rights*, accessed May 30, 2016, <http://sibagrovogui.com/current-projects/otherwise-human-the-institutes-and-institutions-of-rights>.
- 4 Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder y subjetividad en América Latina," in *Decolonialidad y Psicoanálisis*, ed. María Amelia Castañola and Mauricio González, 11–34 (Mexico City: Ediciones Navarra and Colección Borde Sur, 2017).
- 5 Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man—An Argument," *New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337.
- 6 See "(De) Coloniality at Large: Time and the Colonial Difference," in Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, 118–48 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); "The Moveable Center," in *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality and Colonization* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, [1995], 2003), chap. 5; Daniel Astorga Poblete, "La colonización del Tlacauehtli y la invención del espacio en el México colonial," PhD dissertation, Duke University, 2015, <http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/10448>; "Modernity and Decoloniality," *Oxford Bibliography Online*, 2011, accessed May 27, 2016, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0017.xml>.
- 7 For an update on the social struggles in the Andes that called for "coloniality," see Catherine Walsh's part I of this volume.
- 8 Postmodern critiques of *representation* have been eloquently advanced by Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967) and by Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982). For a decolonial critique of *representation*, see Rolando Vázquez, "Colonialidad y relacionalidad," in *Los desafíos decoloniales de nuestros días: Pensar colectivo*, ed. María Eugenia Borsani and Pablo Quintero, 173–97 (Neuquén, Argentina: Universidad del Comahue, 2014).
- 9 Research, analysis, and reflections on coloniality of being and of subjectivity (racism and sexism) are due to forward-thinking María Lugones and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. From Lugones, see "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," *Hypatia* 22, no. 1 (2007): 186–209, and "Toward a Decolonial Feminism," *Hypatia* 25 (2010): 742–59; from Maldonado-Torres, see "On the Coloniality of Being," *Cultural Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 240–70.
- 10 "Modernity and Decoloniality" *Oxford Bibliography Online*, 2011, accessed May 27, 2016, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0017.xml>.
- 11 For a detailed account of Émile Benveniste's displacement from the signified/signifier to the enunciation, see my "Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thoughts and Decolonial Freedom," in *Theory, Culture and Society* 26, nos. 7/8 (2009): 1–23.
- 12 Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience."
- 13 Mignolo, "Epistemic Disobedience."

## 7 The Invention of the *Human* and the Three Pillars of the Colonial Matrix of Power

### *Racism, Sexism, and Nature*

The previous section outlined the CMP—the apparatus that was built by a selected community of humans of a given religion (Christianity), in a continent called Europe and around the fifteenth century, in the process of defining themselves as humans. The question is not “what is human and humanity” but rather who defined themselves as humans in their praxis of living and applied their self-definition to distinguish and classify and rank lesser humans. The self-definition became, subsequently, the self-identification of living organisms that used their two upper extremities to build instruments (that is, the extension of the hands) and cultivate their own food, build shelters and have a global impact on Earth. The description and explanation of the *human species* (a species of living organism) in recent history and specific languages (Greek *anthropos*, Latin *humanus*) shall not be confused with the point of origination (dates and places), which is the starting point in the past invented in the present of the storytellers, whatever the present was when the words *anthropos* and *humanus* were introduced. However, Greek and Roman intelligentsia were not the only storytellers who created words to describe themselves and their point of origination. The invention of the model/human was fundamental in building, managing, and controlling the CMP by silencing all other self-identification of the species.

This chapter explores the local and self-promoted emergence of the *model/human* in the European Renaissance. The fictional conceptualization was achieved through the (epistemic) invention of imperial and colonial differences. Western imperial subjects secured themselves and their descendant as the superior subspecies. They invented also the idea of *nature* to separate their bodies from all living (and the very life-energy of the biosphere) organisms



on the planet. Current conceptualization of posthuman and posthumanism carries the weight of its regional racial and sexual classifications and ranking. What follows is not an attempt to provide a true definition of human species, human, and humanity but to provide an answer to how it came to be the self-definition of certain praxis of living taken as model and horizon of all (e.g., universal) praxis of living. My argument is decolonial in the sense that it focuses on coloniality of knowledge (epistemology) constitutive of coloniality of being (ontology): the invention of the human.

### Before 1500 the World Order Was Polycentric and Non-Capitalist

What follows is not an ethnohistorical narrative, but a decolonial argument grounded on Aníbal Quijano's pioneering concept of *coloniality*. Coloniality redefined the concept of *modernity*, revealing its darker side, coloniality, as well as opening up the possibilities of reconceptualizing decolonialization into decoloniality, as argued in previous chapters. However, I bring into conversation strong conceptual formulations akin to the concept of *coloniality*: Frantz Fanon's *sociogenesis*, Sylvia Wynter's *Man1* and *Man2*, Gloria Anzaldúa's *border dwelling* and *la facultad*, the Andean concept of Sumak Kawsay, and Anishinaabe equivalent concept of *mino bimaadiziwin* (Leanne Simpson); the latter two underscore the resurgence of the communal, not individualistic, praxis living, sensing, thinking, doing, believing. I conceive them all as decolonial concepts with which my argument engages in respectful and, I hope, productive dialogue. By doing so I walk the roads, on the one hand, of decolonial analytics (the three pillars) and, on the other, of decolonial openings toward paths of delinking and relinking (re-existence).

Before 1500, most known cultures and civilizations on the planet (perhaps with the exception of Greece) were built on the assumption of the coexistence or complementarity of the opposite. It is known that, for example, Buddhist philosophy rejects the law of noncontradiction (which holds that "A is B" and "A is not B" are mutually exclusive and cannot coexist), and it is assumed that, in Greece, Heraclitus rejected it too. But Plato and Aristotle argued in favor of it.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, all the inheritors today of the many cultures and civilizations in the territory named America, from the Mapuches in southern Chile to the Crees in Canada, conceived complementarity and not opposition. The law of contradiction or of noncontradiction (both terms are used

to refer to it) seems to be the seed for the semantic construction of binary opposition in Western thoughts.

The story is well known, and this is not the place to repeat it.<sup>2</sup> What is necessary here is to understand how the narratives built around the idea of modernity, its rhetoric and goals, assumed the logic of noncontradiction and the semantic of binary opposition. It is this assumption that made and still makes it possible to tell stories and brand promises and build hopes of salvation, progress, development, democracy, growth, and so on; stories that hide and silences *coloniality*: the darker side of Western modernity. Decolonial thinking is akin to nonmodern ways of thinking grounded on cosmologies of *complementary dualities* (and/and) rather than on *dichotomies* or *contradictory dualities* (either/or). In Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations the consecration of the Sun and the Moon was a consecration of the necessary complementarity for the regeneration of life, of all life: the life of organisms that can tell stories and the life of organisms that are not telling stories but belong to the same world.

I argue that in the sixteenth century of the Christian era, many civilizations were organized and living within cosmologies that, in contradistinction with Greek cosmology reframed by Christian theology and the European Renaissance, did not operate in accordance with the logic of contradiction and even less with the logic of binary opposition. The idea of human and humanity was built upon this logic disguised as denotation of an existing entity. Human was a fictional noun pretending to be its ontological representation.

The system of oppositions and the logic of noncontradiction were set up, since the European Renaissance (antiquity, medieval) and since the Enlightenment (primitives, traditional) by chronology and by geography (Saracens, barbarians, uncivilized, underdeveloped, communists, terrorists). *Human* was the classifying entity in the process of defining itself as such. Since the Renaissance the *rhetoric of modernity was and continues to be built on the logic of coloniality: the denial and disavowal of non-European local times and spaces and non-European ways of life*. The rhetoric of modernity was built on the opposition between Christians and non-Christians, masculine and feminine, white and nonwhite, progress and stagnation, developed and underdeveloped, First and Second/Third World.

The chronology and geography of these denials are the constitutive act of coloniality, legitimized by the rhetoric (narratives) of modernity. In the next section, we will explore the constitutive acts of coloniality: the invention,



transformation, and management of colonial and imperial epistemic and ontological differences.

### The Idea of the *Human* and *Humanity*: Exclusionary Logic and the Advent of a Monocentric World Order

Although Aristotle apparently thought that the law of contradiction was an ontological law and that binary oppositions were ontological oppositions, decolonially speaking oppositions are both imaginary entities created by the enunciator and the apparatus of enunciation (that is, actors, institutions, and languages) sustaining and building images of the world through storytelling, including logical and mathematical storytelling (e.g., Maya's mathematics continued to be ignored in the history of Western mathematics). The enunciation (actors, institutions, and languages) that created, transformed, and managed the colonial matrix of power (CMP) has hosted—since its foundation and through the centuries—many people. The mutual foundation of the enunciated (the domains) of the CMP and the enunciation that created the domains at the same time that it created itself as such, was founded on ceremonial acts and events. The CMP was put in place in the process of dealing with an unexpected situation (the invention of América) without the awareness that something different was being created. Singling out the level of the enunciated and its domains (governance, economy, knowledge, classification (racism and sexism, the invention of nature) and the level of the enunciation and its actors, languages, and institutions is a theoretical conceptualization that has emerged in recent years. It is a theoretical reconstruction of historical process. The “unconscious” in Sigmund Freud's work, to give a parallel example, was a reconstruction of what he thought operates in the human psyche. What one can say with confidence today is that the actors who created the CMP could not consciously know that they were creating what today we, in our analyticity, identify as such; but they certainly knew and believed that they were acting as *humans* in a world populated by lesser humans. Let's remember some etymologies from the *Online Etymology Dictionary*.

#### **human** (adj.)

mid-15c., *humain*, *humaine*, “human,” from Old French *humain*, *umain* (adj.) “of or belonging to man” (12c.), from Latin *humanus* “of man, human,” also “humane, philanthropic, kind, gentle, polite; learned, refined, civilized.”

This is in part from PIE \*(dh)ghomon-, literally “earthling, earthly being,” as opposed to the gods (see *homunculus*). Compare Hebrew *adam* “man,” from *adamah* “ground.” Cognate with Old Lithuanian *zmuo* (accusative *zmuni*) “man, male person.”

Human interest is from 1824. Human rights attested by 1680s; human being by 1690s. Human relations is from 1916; human resources attested by 1907, American English, apparently originally among social Christians and based on natural resources.

#### **human** (n.)

“a human being,” 1530s, from *human* (adj.).

Latin *humanus* was the translation of Greek *anthropos*. But there is another noun in the languages of Western civilization (Greek, Latin, and modern vernacular and imperial European languages) that is relevant for the argument:

#### **man** (n.)

Old English *man*, *mann* “human being, person (male or female); brave man, hero; servant, vassal,” from Proto-Germanic \**manwaz* (cognates: Old Saxon, Swedish, Dutch, Old High German *man*, German *Mann*, Old Norse *maðr*, Danish *mand*, Gothic *manna* “man”), from PIE root \**man-* (1) “man” (cognates: Sanskrit *manuh*, Avestan *manu-*, Old Church Slavonic *mozi*, Russian *muzh* “man, male”).<sup>3</sup>

*Human* doesn't “represent” a given entity; it was an invention—who invented it? What was the purpose? Sylvia Wynter has argued, innovatively, that the constitution of *Man*<sub>1</sub> (in the Renaissance imaginary) and *Man*<sub>2</sub> (in the Enlightenment imaginary) stood for the humanity of the human.<sup>4</sup> The humanity of the human was universally postulated. What this meant was that those who conceptualized *Man*<sub>1</sub> and *Man*<sub>2</sub> as standing for the human were self-identified with the entity (*Man*<sub>1</sub> and *Man*<sub>2</sub>=*Human*) that they were describing. Wynter's argument carries the weight of African history and of the African diaspora in the Americas.<sup>5</sup>

In order for these actors to self-identify with the human, they needed to draw on differences with entities that were lesser than or nonhuman. Two spheres of meaning were available to this purpose in the early Renaissance: one was racial/religious, the other sexual. Racism and sexism emerged at that point—two constitutive pillars of the colonial matrix of power. In the sphere of religion, there were the Saracens, the Canaanites, and the Pagans; in the



sexual sphere, a distinction was traced between necessary and dispensable women. Dispensable women invented by Human/Man were *witches*; necessary women were *wives* whose function was to secure the regeneration of the species.

When Christians encountered lands and people they did not know and baptized the people Indians and the land Indies, and when later on in the sixteenth century the trade of enslaved Africans began, it was necessary to situate the human and humanity in relation to people whom the Bible did not account for, and in relation to the massive contingents of enslaved Africans displaced to Indias Occidentales. If the inhabitants of Indias Occidentales became *Indians*, enslaved Africans became *Black* and, therefore, lesser beings in relation to the prototype of the (*White*) human. While in Europe racism manifested itself in the sphere of religion, in the New World (Indias Occidentales, and then America) racism was established in the secular realm, with people who, according to the Christians, had no religion.

Racism in the New World impinged upon sexism already established among Western Christians. Racism and sexism are inseparable and constitutive of the CMP. That is the beginning of *intersectionality* (a theoretical concept that identifies praxis of living enacting modernity/coloniality), and intersectionality is founded on the racial and sexual colonial differences (for the colonial difference, see the next chapter). If witches continued to be targeted in the New World, a significant difference in their categorization could not have gone unnoticed. *Witches* in Europe belonged to the same cosmology as *women*. The difference between the ideas of women and witches lay in the behavior Man attributed to them: the former complaisant, the latter disobedient. In the New World, however, neither Indian women nor African women belonged in the same cosmology as European women. Indian and African women were not properly considered women by Christian men, so that the women versus witches opposition that applied in Europe did not pertain in the New World: Indian and African females could be witches, but they could never be women. And that was the result of the ascendancy of racism over sexism, which has persisted to the present day and around the world. With Western expansion, colonial-racial differences encroached upon colonial-sexual differences.

But that was not all. There is one more facet in the procedural constitution of the human: the invention of *nature* and the degradation of life. *Nature* doesn't exist, or it exists as an ontological fiction—what there is is the relentless generation and the regeneration of life in the solar system from which

processes emerged a species of living/language organisms. A limited sector of these creatures were able to define themselves as human and impose their self-referential description as standard for all living organisms of the same species. From life on Planet Earth to the other planets touring around the Sun, there is no single entity that could correspond to the noun *nature*. There is no such concept in other (non-Western) languages, from Aymara and Quechua to Tojolabal and Mandarin. If there is no such concept, it is because there was no conceptualization corresponding to what Europeans understood as nature. Indigenous peoples do not make this distinction,<sup>6</sup> and *Runa* in Kechua or *He* in Mandarin or *Bashar/Insan* in Persian means that living organisms who can describe themselves and the rest of the living system of the universe have a different way of conceptualizing than do the living organisms who dwelled in Greece and the outposts of the Roman Empire and spoke Greek and Latin.

Thus, as Wynter explains it, Man/Human, more than an existing entity, is an entity that “exists” (like Don Quixote or Madame Bovary) because those who named it defined themselves by looking at their image in the mirror. Decolonially, Man/Human must be located in the act of enunciation rather than in the entity that is enunciated. Focusing on the enunciation allows us to see who is behind the scene—who is manipulating the marionettes. Decolonially, we shall not be drawn by the mirage of the marionettes.

### The Fictional Ontology of *Nature*: Classifying and Shattering the Whole Diversity of the Living

Extractivism, possession, and dispossession have a long history in the formation and transformation of the CMP. From the sixteenth century through the nineteenth, extractivism targeted New World gold, exploiting and enslaving Indigenous and African peoples. After the Industrial Revolution, extractivism concentrated on those natural resources needed to feed the machines. And from the second half of the twentieth century to the present, extractivism has fueled the so-called Fourth Industrial (Technological) Revolution. What extractivism couldn't do was to “extract” the knowledge and the soul of the people. That is why, today, we are witnessing the powerful resurgence of Indigenous knowledges, philosophies of life, and ways of helping the world to realize how vicious and devilish the concept of nature and its proxy, *natural resources*, was and continue to be.



The point I want to make is that the CMP has been created by actors (languages and institutions) who saw and felt themselves as Man/Human and upon that belief built the *colonial differences*: racial, sexual, and the separation from nature.

Philippe Descola published an important book in 2013 titled *Beyond Nature and Culture*. He argues strongly that *nature* and *culture* are two concepts that make no sense beyond Western civilization and, I would add, beyond westernized anthropologists and educated persons outside of Europe and Anglo-United States tamed by Western education. Briefly, nature and culture are two Western fictions. Many of us in South and Central America and, of course, the Caribbean began to understand that in ancient civilizations in Mesoamerica and the Andes, the binary opposition *nature/culture* made no sense. There was no equivalent for such words. If there had been, it would mean something similar to “it is the nature of our human organism that generates culture.” For ancient Mesoamerican and Andean people and for those who survived until today, nature and culture are two meaningless concepts.<sup>7</sup> How to get out of them is a decolonial question.

Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas (PRATEC) began in Urubamba, Cuzco in November of 1986. It was led, and still is, by scholarly trained persons in collaboration with the knowhow of Indigenous and peasant communities. At that time, it was very common to see PRATEC as a romantic, new-age, irrelevant project to satisfy the non-Indigenous. One of the key points of PRATEC was to tell non-Indigenous readers that, among other things, nature and culture were irrelevant concepts in Indigenous philosophy (thinking). For PRATEC non-Indigenous leaders (Eduardo Grillo, Rengifo Vázquez, Valladolid Rivera), learning to think in and from—not about—indigenous concepts and engaging in their (indigenous) praxis of living means a radical shift in their thinking and subjectivities.<sup>8</sup> I am aware that counterfactuals are inconsequential for the trajectory that factually followed. Nevertheless, imagine that PRATEC would have had some strong support and funding institution using their financial privileges to appropriate their initiative. In that case, PRATEC would have ended enacting coloniality covered by the rhetoric of generosity of the founding institutions. However, since PRATEC did not enroll in modern global designs to enact coloniality, it remains less visible to the public eye, although decolonially effective in the sphere of its operation. Decoloniality to be defended cannot be funded.

What are we learning from PRATEC and what have its leaders learned from Indigenous philosophy and praxis of living?

To nurture a *chakra* is not merely to domesticate plants and animals; it is to nurture lovingly and respectfully, in other words, to nurture ritually, together with the plants and animals, the soils, waters, microclimates and, in general, the whole land.<sup>9</sup>

These words were written by Julio Valladolid Rivera, co-founder of PRATEC. The claim is to revamp millenarian Andean ways of living together in the *chakra*. It is the whole where *Runas*, *sallqas*, and *huacas* interrelate in the process of *nurturing* (*nutrir*, “nutrients” in Spanish) and living—living requires nurturing, and nurturing regenerates living in all its dimensions. If you look up *nurture* in current dictionaries you would understand how coloniality of knowledge works: it is translated as and related to *development*, when indeed *chakra* is exactly the opposite. PRATEC was founded in 1987, during the years in which *development* was being radically critiqued. Its foundations offered a way of delinking from modernization and development.

*Chakra*, modern dictionaries will tell you, is a piece of land outside of the city where food is produced for city dwellers. Well, it is not what *chakra* means in ancient Andean cultures: *chakra* (also *chacra*) refers to *vincularidad* (interrelations) between *Runas*, *sallqas*, and *huacas*. *Runa* could not be translated as “human” because *human* in Western vocabulary was separated from *nature*, which is not the case in Indigenous philosophies. *Sallqas* are all living organisms, and *huacas* refers to the sacred, such as mountains or rivers that are also *sallqas*. Valladolid Rivera conceived *decolonization* in terms of delinking from Western cosmo-vision and relinking with Indigenous *cosmovivencia*. We need vocabulary that comes from many other experiences, not only from the Greek. There is no reason to continue privileging Greek and Latin sources. Epistemic disobedience means to recognize them and denaturalize them at the same time. Epistemic disobedience requires border thinking.<sup>10</sup> Yes indeed, nature and culture are two Western concepts only valid within Western cosmology. Indigenous scholars and intellectuals know it from their own memories and education. No need for them to read the discovery of an anthropologist from Le Collège de France.

Thus, for those of us who dwell in the Americas, who have been raised and educated in the Americas (regardless of our skin color, religious beliefs, migrant status, sexual preferences, etc.), and who have sensed through different aromas five hundred years of Western epistemic racism, it shall be evident that the classification and invention of “Indians”; the classification and invention of “Blacks” to homogenize the African population; the identification of



the New World with “nature” and with the wealth of “natural resources” after the Industrial Revolution—all of these are epistemic invention of ontological natural and cultural entities. Ontology was created by the diversity of a single Eurocentered story: there were and are many stories but a single logic of coloniality hidden by the rhetoric of modernity.

Here is a tip to better understand what I am arguing:

**nature** (n.)

Late 13c., “restorative powers of the body, bodily processes; powers of growth;” from Old French nature “nature, being, principle of life; character, essence,” from Latin natura “course of things; natural character, constitution, quality; the universe,” literally “birth,” from natus “born,” past participle of nasci “to be born,” from PIE \*gene- “to give birth, beget” (see genus).

From late 14c as “creation, the universe”; also “heredity, birth, hereditary circumstance; essential qualities, innate disposition” (as in human nature); “nature personified, Mother Nature.” Specifically as “material world beyond human civilization or society” from 1660s. Nature and nurture have been contrasted since 1874.<sup>11</sup>

“Restorative powers of the body.” But not only Man/Human has a body: plants have bodies, fish have bodies, birds have bodies, vegetables have bodies, fruit have bodies. I will take body to be “living organisms.” Living organisms deontologize the entity *body* (molecular self-regenerative system) and restore it to the irreducible processes in the praxis of living.<sup>12</sup> That is, every living organism and their regenerative processes have a *body* (that lives and dies). It is the materiality of the living that constitutes the body. The second definition of *nature* refers to “creation, the universe.” Man/Human molecular organisms have been also created, along with the universe, but a great deal of the time “he” (Man/Human) acts as if “he” is only observing (with telescopes or experiments) the creation of the living.

For Acosta, as a good Jesuit, knowing and understanding *nature* had moral dimensions, and sacred dimensions as well. Knowing and understanding *nature* (energy of living and regeneration, not an object or entity) meant understanding and worshiping its Creator: the “Creator of the Universe,” and of life, of course.<sup>13</sup> About twenty years later, Francis Bacon—an English philosopher, statesman, scientist, jurist, orator, and Viscount of St. Alban—was much less interested in understanding *nature* and in admiring and understanding its Creator like Acosta did. Bacon was the kiss of death for the living

reduced to what became “natural resources” and more recently “human resources.” He was riding a different wave: that of the secular humanists (Man2). Nature, for Francis Bacon, was out there, separated from him—something to be dominated and exploited.

Francis Bacon’s injunction took hold in the secular scientific minds of the eighteenth century. This time, Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, wrote the voluminous *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (second half of the eighteenth century). Buffon assumed not only that nature was something separate from Man/Human, but also that she was subject to the chronological laws of human history, as narrated by Man/Human. He took literally the expression “New World” and argued that the New World was so young that not only its people but also *its nature* were behind the stages of history that Europe had already reached. Nature, for Buffon, and particularly the history of the New World, had the same status that the history of the state would have for G. W. F. Hegel, some fifty years later.

Responses from non-European Indigenous people (I am assuming here that European are Indigenous and are precisely the Indigenous Europeans who have problems with immigrants and refugees)<sup>14</sup> arose in different times, places, and vocabularies and political projects. In the South American Andes, *Pachamama* (Mother Earth) was always invoked by Indigenous people in spite and in front of the European idea of *nature*. *Pachamama* became increasingly meaningful to confronting the destruction of nature and its recent version, the *environment*, by transnational corporations exploiting and extracting *natural resources*. It acquired also a significant political meaning when it made its way into the Ecuadorian Constitution.

This Man/Human who created and managed the CMP, posited himself as master of the universe and succeeded in setting himself apart from other men/humans (racism), from women/humans (sexism), from nature (humanism), from non-Europe (Eurocentrism), and from “past” and “traditional” civilizations (modernity). Nature, in the domains of the colonial matrix of power, lies between the domains of economics and politics; it was invented by Man/Human in the process of him setting himself up in the locus of the enunciations (institutions, actors, and languages) that created, transformed, and managed the rhetoric (narratives) of modernity, and the necessary and concomitant logic of coloniality. He who governs does not obey, became the assumption in the growing affirmation of the secular *Ego* in Western civilization.



In Indigenous cosmologies, as I mentioned before, there is no such divide between *nature* and *culture*, a misleading formula, for nature is a cultural concept; and the *ego* is disseminated in the communal. That is, nature and culture are both cultural Western concepts that were established as ontologies. For that reason, current urgencies among Western scholars and intellectuals of moving “beyond nature and culture” is a regional and provincial Western urgency.<sup>15</sup> It is welcome of course, but it is not universal. Indigenous cosmologies do not present us with such urgency, for the simple reason that in this cosmology there are neither nature nor culture and even less a cultural structure of knowledge that needed to invent the concept of *nature* to highlight Man/Human as maker of culture.

#### Stories of the Creation of the Cosmos and of the Living Species that Tell the Story of the Creation of the Ethnicity of the Storytellers

All known storytelling about the creation of the world (including scientific ones, like the Big Bang), and about the creation of the living species (including recent storytelling about the *anthropocene*) to which the narrators telling stories about the origin of the world belong, aim at and claim totality. It could not be otherwise. The narrators of the Popol Vuh, of the Legend of the Fifth Sun (as well as sacred books such as the Bible and the Qur'an) as well as of the many cosmological narratives of ancient China or ancient India, or of any other non-Western texts we might consider, would aim at the totality. Western Christian philosophers of the European Middle Ages formulated their own local totality in terms of *universals*. Universals, then, are a philosophical formulation within one specific cosmology (Christian) of the totality, for which this cosmology, as any other cosmology, aims.<sup>16</sup> The problem with universals is that, in aiming at the totality, they became totalitarian. What this means is that totalities are totalitarian if they succeed in overpowering or disavowing similar claims in other cosmologies. When that happened in the historical period we here describe as modern/colonial, a totalitarian totality provides a frame for coloniality of knowledge. *From being a local totality, Christian cosmology became a universal totality* (as redundant as this may sound). In eighteenth-century Europe it was translated into Western secular cosmology having science and philosophy as its two pillars. It is only for Christian believers that the world originated as the Bible story says.

And that is valid for any other cosmology, with the exception that Christianity became the leading story in the historical foundation of the CMP and its aftermath.

I would surmise that, for speakers of Aymaran, Anishinaabemowin, Osage, and Zapotec, as well as Chinese, Indonesian, Urdu, Bengali, Hindi, and so on, the above might sound a little strange—or at least as something that belongs to “those people, over there,” to the west of Athens and to the west of Rome. To illustrate what I am arguing, I provide here one example from Persian and another from Kechua. Why do they have to surrender to the six modern European imperial languages and the knowledge built into them?

In Ali Shari'ati's discussions of the Holy Qur'an, he makes a distinction between *Bashar* and *Insan*: “By using *Bashar*, the Qur'an is talking about the two-footed creature that emerged at the end of the evolutionary chain. . . . *Bashar* is that particular being that contains physiological, biological and psychological characteristics which are shared by all *men* . . . . On the other hand *Insan* is that unique and enigmatic being that has a special definition that does not apply to any other phenomenon in nature. . . . *Bashar* is ‘being’ while *Insan* is becoming” (italics mine).<sup>17</sup>

I double-checked Shari'ati's definition of both terms (since I speak neither Arabic nor Persian), with Hamid Dabashi, Persian scholar and intellectual. Dabashi confirmed the definition through an email conversation:

BASHAR and INSAN—both mean “human” in slightly different senses—they are both Arabic/Qur'anic that have entered Persian too; one might also add ADAM to it;

ADAM is the first *human being* God created—according to Qur'an;

BASHAR is the generic name for the corporeal body of the person;

INSAN is the generic name for the *humanistic* disposition of the person.

(7/29/13) (italics mine)

Notice that the translation of Persian to Western languages requires the uses of *human* and *humanistic*, which doesn't mean that Western theology and epistemology got it right. It means that Western theology and epistemology became hegemonic, then dominant, and now are losing both, hegemony and domination. The decolonial option is contributing to such demise. In fact, it is a fundamental task of decolonial politics of scholarship. If we move from Persian to Kechua, we find that the noun *Runa* is often translated in modern European vernacular languages as “human” or “human being.” But *Runa* is quite different from Man/Human. Man/Human, as we have seen,



fashioned himself by cutting ties with “nature” and, by the eighteenth century, in an act of de-Goding (to use Sylvia Wynter’s vocabulary), and also by setting up the rule of division between two things that are (or are represented as being) opposed or entirely different: Man and Woman, Human and Nature, Life and Death, Day and Night, Matter and Spirit, Mind and Body, and so on.

Runa cannot be flatly translated into Man/Human, and vice versa, for reasons that have to do more with power differential (and the entanglement the CMP generated) than with the problems of the incommensurability of translation. For people who conceived of themselves as Runa (parallel to other people who conceived of themselves as Man/Human, or as Bashar/Insan, or as Ren [人的]), this conceptualization implies a local universe of meaning.<sup>18</sup> Let’s take Runa, to make a long story short, since we have already said something about the Persian Bashar/Insan.

Runa was and still is conceived in relation to and in *convivencia* (a literal translation would be “living-with-other-living-organisms,” but the term is generally translated as “coexistence” or “conviviality”)<sup>19</sup> with huacas (deities, entities of the sacred sphere), sallqa (all living organisms), and the Apu (the tutelary spirit that inhabits the snowed peaks of the mountains). These organisms are all weaved together, for the metaphor of *tejido* (weaving) is commonly invoked to express *convivencia* and *vincularidad* (translated as “relationality”). *Convivencia*, furthermore, is *convivencia* in the *ayllu* (equivalent to *oikos* in ancient Greek), a fluid structure of kinship—kinship not only among Runas, but also among huacas, sallqa, and Apu.

Consequently, in translating Runa into Man/Human you erase the *convivencia* of the living and the spiritual world and you “endow” Runa with the same violence that Man/Human has enacted in defining himself.<sup>20</sup> You then would continue the erasure that Man/Human started during the Renaissance in Europe and in the processes of epistemic conquest and the colonization of the world. *Convivencia* is not necessarily pacifistic, but it is a struggle in search of balance and harmony. Andean philosophy included the concepts of *tinku* and *ayni*. *Tinku* and *ayni* bring the opposite into the unity of complementary relations.<sup>21</sup>

It shall be pointed out here, that in introducing coloniality and distinguishing it from colonialism, Quijano reconceived decolonization as decoloniality: taking hold of the state apparatus is no longer the goal of decoloniality (see chapter 5). Decoloniality aims at epistemic reconstitution (see chapter 6). By doing so he meant that while colonialism referred to the military, political, and economic domination of other regions, coloniality illuminated

the cultural aspects and, of course, the epistemic and hermeneutical principles upon which Western religions, science, and philosophy were built. It was through the control and management of knowledge that the colonial matrix of power was created, managed, transformed, and controlled. There cannot be military, political, and economic doing without an epistemic and hermeneutic framework—a framework of knowing and understanding upon which Man/Human (as well as Runa, Anthropos, Ren, and Bashar/Insan) acts on the world. Since the European Renaissance, it has been the self-definition of Man/Human and the principles of knowledge and understanding that have grounded both His affirmation in Western Christianity and in relation to cultures and civilizations around the world.

Now, taking a cursory look at Daoism, one finds that the concept of *nature* in Western (west of Jerusalem) medieval Christianity, and in Western civilization after it, hides more than it reveals. In this respect, it is similar to the translation of *Runa* into Man/Human. *Qi* cannot be translated as “nature”; it must be translated as “energy”: the energy of the living *in the* living universe, named *Pacha* (cosmos) and Pachamama (Earth) in the Andean civilizations and Gaia (the Earth) and Cosmos in ancient Greece—it is the energy that enables living organisms that are able to define themselves in relation to all other organisms in *convivencia*. In some cases, the relation is convivial; in others, it is antagonistic.

*Qi* is the energy that must be governed by the complementarity and harmony of *yin-yang*: there is no yin without yang, there is no yang without yin because movement is relentless; there is no masculine without feminine, there is no day without night, there is no life without death, and so on. Like *tinku* in Andean philosophy and other indigenous cosmologies in the great civilizations of the Americas shattered by European invasions, *yin-yang* involves the constant search for harmony and equilibrium, and is the goal of living organisms endowed with the capacity to define themselves/ourselves as particular entities in convivial or antagonistic relation to other living organisms.

In Taoist or Daoist philosophy, the diversity of living that Western epistemology reduced to *nature* does not exclude the spiritual and the social. In this sense it is much like Andean philosophy: sallqa doesn’t exclude Runa and huacas, since Apu is at once sallqa and huaca. In more familiar terms, Apu is both materially living entity and spiritual.

Convivial and/or antagonistic relations should not be understood *universally*, through Western notions of dichotomy and war. Struggle (e.g., the struggle between yin and yang, between day and night) is not synonymous



with war. In Kechua language and Andean philosophy, *yanantin* and *masintin* are parallel to yin and yang.<sup>22</sup> What they have in common is the acknowledgment that there cannot be A without its opposite B. Once you acknowledge that these entities are inseparable (two moieties in movement), you have at least two options: either you can try to eliminate what you declare to be opposite; or you can recognize that you cannot forever eliminate or dominate your opposite—you can eliminate some of its manifestations but not its energy and living force. If you try to eliminate and control the opposite, you enter the realm of *war*; if you seek harmony and balance, you enter the realm of *struggle*, “weaving” relations (*convivencia*, *vincularidad*) with all that exists: rocks and mountains; spirits and plants; plants and mountains that are spirits; animals who do not speak Kechua, Hebrew, Latin, or any other of the known languages; and animals who do speak one or more languages.

#### Changing the Terms (Principles, Assumptions, Regulations) by Changing the Questions Holding Up Western-Led Conversations

What does it mean to be human is no doubt a fundamental question for the twenty-first century. Why? For several reasons but mainly for the argument I am unfolding, because the very concept of *Human* is called into question by scholars and intellectuals who carry in their own bodies the traces of racialization and sexualization. I have identified myself with the *anthropos*, and have engaged in *barbarian theorizing* (this is what I do, this is my praxis of thinking in my praxis of living).<sup>23</sup> Both racialization and sexualization are systems of social classification that presuppose, on the one hand, a standard and superior idea of race and, on the other, a normal code of sexual relations between men and women. This normal code of sexual relations is established along the power differential between men and women. Crucially, both racial and sexual classifications presuppose a concept of the human that is both racially and sexually superior. Human and humanity are not only concepts; they are concepts created by agents who considered *themselves* humans and who were in a position to project their own image of themselves as humanity. Racial and sexual norms excluded from this territory all those “entities” that were less human or not quite human.

We can perhaps now begin to grasp what it means to be human and what it means to be Man as overrepresentation of Man/Human, in Wynter’s power-

ful argument. *Human* is a noun we can pedagogically accept when referring to a living organism who can speak any of the thousands of spoken languages on the planet. This organism could equally be named *Runa* or *Ren* or *Bashar/Insan*, or any of the other existing nouns that I haven’t listed here; and also *human*. Regional humans have the right to exist next to the previous ones. But keep in mind that I am more interested in logic than in ethnography of naming. Naming in the CMP has been a parallel activity next to building statues, which are torn down for political inside fights (e.g., Stalin or Saddam Hussein) or for decolonial reclaiming (Rhodes in Cape Town, South Africa; Robert Edward Lee in Virginia, the U.S.). Accordingly, we can begin to grasp the role of the level of enunciation in building, transforming, and managing the CMP.

Let’s recall from chapter 6, the *levels* of CMP: the level of the enunciation and the level of the enunciated. The enunciated is the level composed by the domains to be managed and controlled. The domains form the level ontologically constituted by the level of the enunciation. They do not exist by themselves, although we have the impression they do. That is, epistemology configures (and in that sense, creates) the domains’ ontology. Racial and sexual ontologies, in Western civilization, emerge from classification and configuration (e.g., the features that identify ontological domains). Economy and politics, and of course nature, are constituted and configured by knowledge and the principles and assumptions upon which knowledge is a machine of world making. That is, epistemology creates ontological domains.

The enunciation is the level in which actors, languages, knowledge generation, and institutions enable the circumscription of the domains of the enunciated. Power of decision takes place in the enunciation, though there would never be consensual or homogeneous agreements between actors and institutions operating at the level of the enunciation. Democrats and Republicans control the enunciation, and though they do not agree on every policy and disagreements are common, the state enunciation is both Democratic and Republican. Nothing else. They share control of the enunciation since the state is a crucial institution controlling the political domain of the enunciated. Both levels (the enunciated and the enunciation) are *connected by flows of energy* in the spheres knowledge, subjectivities, and interests. The flows between the levels permeate the flows between the domains. Consequently, the separate domains—economics, politics, knowledge and subjectivity, racism and sexism, the domain of the living (or “nature”)—cannot be grasped in isolation, for they are all interconnected.



The flows from the enunciation to the enunciated secure management, transformation, and control of the CMP—the flows from the enunciated to the enunciation, in turn, secure benefits and self-interest for all persons, institutions, and languages embedded in the enunciation. For instance, when in 2008 the media and other publications underscored the need to save capitalism, it meant saving institutions rather than saving the people who were thrown into the crisis. In terms of language use, if English is today the international language of communication, it is because the language of enunciation is always the language of the leading imperial state shaping the management and control of the CMP. At one point the leading language was Spanish, then French, then British English, and now U.S. English. Latin was never a global language: it was the language spoken in all the extensions of the Roman Empire but not in Asia. Sanskrit was the equivalent in Asia, but it was not known or spoken in Europe.

As already mentioned, problems arise when a concept belonging to one civilization is taken as a point of reference for similar concepts in all civilizations. That is truth without parentheses. Thus, once *human* and *humanity* were established as both the universality of the enunciated (the ontology of the human and of humanity) and the universality of the enunciation (the epistemology that invented the concepts of the human and humanity), all other equivalent concepts became subordinated to the human and humanity. Managing and controlling the idea of human and humanity allowed those who define and are allowed to identify as such, to establish a hierarchy among humans: racism and sexism served that purpose.

Human and humanity are today under attack from two perspectives. One is the postmodern conceptualization of the posthuman, and the endowment of a new history: the anthropocene, the era of the *anthropos*. The other arises from decolonial questioning. The aim of this chapter is precisely to show how Man/Human as a concept is embedded in the CMP and is the reference point in every domain: for example, *homo economicus*, *homo politicus* (“man is by nature a political animal,” as Aristotle is often quoted as saying). Man/Human is the regulator of racial and sexual classification; the regulator of aesthetics and of spirituality through religious institutions; the regulator of knowledge and understanding through theology, science, and philosophy. Wynter’s Man<sub>1</sub> and Man<sub>2</sub> as well as Fanon’s sociogenesis are outstanding contributions toward changing the terms of the conversation, reducing the pretended ontology of Man/Human to size. This is one of the crucial tasks of decoloniality: to decolonize Man/Human, to liberate *pluriversal humanity*.

Exposing the analytic of the CMP is always already a decolonial task, aimed at the restitution (epistemic reconstitution, see chapter 10) of every aspect of life that Man/Human has displaced, negated, and destroyed through the manipulation of the CMP, and the covering up of this manipulation with the promises and the blinding lights of the narratives promoting modernity: conversion, progress, development. By asking what it means to be human, decolonial thinking rejects the ontology and the epistemology of the human and of humanity. As decolonial thinker, once I know what Human/Man means, I do not want to be human. But instead of simply rejecting its content and adding a prefix (posthuman), decolonial thinkers start by asking how these concepts came into being: when, why, who, and what for? And then moving toward molecular nervous system organisms who in their/our praxis of living liberated our hands and engaged in languaging and conversations to name and describe ourselves and, when possible, impose our descriptions on other organisms we want to control and dominate: the CMP emerged at a particular junction of the history of our ancestors (living biological-cultural organisms) that redirected praxis of living on the planet.

What, then, is the posthuman, once we have reduced Man/Human to size and stripped him of his universality by showing that it is merely the universalization of a regional vocabulary and a regional concept of unilinear time to name a certain species of organism for which every existing language and civilization has its own name, concept, and storytelling? Reading and reflecting on Wynter’s argument on “towards the human, after Man” alongside (not in comparison to) Rosi Braidotti’s argument on *the posthuman* might help in understanding the broad spectrum of two epistemic, intellectual, political, and ethical trajectories of our time.<sup>24</sup> Wynter’s and Braidotti’s concerns to a certain extent overlap: two women confronting Western hegemony (*overrepresentation* would be Wynter’s term) of the idea of *human* and of its bodyguard, *humanism*. Posthuman is a Eurocentric critique of European humanism, while Wynter and Fanon open up for a decolonial critique of both the concepts of human and posthuman.

Humanism, as mentioned, is a set of discourses enunciated by agents who identify themselves as human and who project their self-fashioning ontology to a universal scale. Needless to say, the universal claim that universalized *human* in the European Renaissance had its genealogy in the European Middle Ages. The question that Sylvia Wynter posed when she dismantled the invention of Man<sub>1</sub> in the Renaissance and its transformation into Man<sub>2</sub> during the Enlightenment could be extended to Man<sub>3</sub>, the posthuman: what



does the posthuman mean today, beyond the regional and limited concerns of Eurocentrism? If today it is meaningless to universalize the Man/Human, it is equally limiting to conceptualize posthuman beyond the regional scope of actors, institutions, and languages managing the CMP. Human, Man/Human, and Posthuman are three moments in the history of the CMP attempting to maintain control of epistemic meaning in the sphere of culture, parallel to the control of meaning and power in the sphere of economics and politics. The question of universality runs through the history of Man<sub>1</sub>, Man<sub>2</sub>, and Man<sub>3</sub> (Posthuman).

The sources of the universality still paramount in Western cosmology (with consequences for other cosmologies) are located in ancient Greece.<sup>25</sup> There is no reason—as I mentioned above—why Greece (and the Western prefix *post-* on all things derived from Greece and Rome) shall be the universal origin of all storytelling of communities of living organisms engaged in conversations. One issue has been debated at length in Western philosophy. The question is—decolonially speaking—whether universals indeed exist or whether they are merely concepts taken as *representations* of what exists. Consequently, a second issue could be whether universals, in the event that they have substantial existence, are separated from sensible entities or are embedded in them; and the third issue to explore would be whether universals, if they exist separately from sensible entities, are corporal or incorporeal substances.<sup>26</sup> The medieval European problem of the universal is nothing more than a claim of totality for every cosmology. In order to establish one totality—a set of discourses that create an ontology—you have to debunk all other cosmologies that have a claim to totality. And in order to do this, you have to impose your own totality over all others. That is how truth without parentheses overrules the possibility of truth in parentheses, that is, living in a pluriversal rather than in a universal mode of existence. You have then not only to assert your own totality, but also to devalue, demonize, and silence coexisting ones.

The course of action leading to the historical foundations of the CMP in the sixteenth century was not merely a question of physical actions (discovering, setting up institutions, managing indigenous civilizations, appropriating lands, exploiting labor, etc.). It was above all a massive conceptual (epistemic) machine: building and managing knowledge that the actors ruling institutions believed was superior or truer than others. Such beliefs authorized actors and institutions to promote their universality and to demonize and devalue praxis of living and knowledges, though they could not be destroyed. And

they are re-emerging today. Decoloniality and dewesternization (see chapter 5) rely on knowledges that are embedded in praxis of living that generated such knowledges, before self-defined Westerners began to impose, since the sixteenth century, their narratives of their praxis of living (that they felt was the true one) around the planet. Praxis of living and knowledges that have been devalued and demonized are resurging today, even if the devaluation continues. A fundamental task of decoloniality enacting resurgences and re-existence of devalued and demonized praxis of living, whatever form they take in the myriad local histories that have been intervened by modernity/coloniality (e.g., CMP). There is no blueprint for it. This introduction is certainly not one. All we are saying is that resurgence and re-existence are taking place, on the planet. Ours, Catherine and Walter, is a singular trajectory of decolonial thinking and doing. It is neither a master plan nor a planetary ethnography.

One could say that modernity/coloniality is above all a question of knowing and knowledge and that coloniality is justified in and by the narratives of modernity (the enunciation: actors, institutions, languages that founded and maintained, though transformed, the rhetoric of modernity) that enact and transform existing knowledge systems and create a new one as the enterprise goes on. Indeed, one of the main assumptions guiding the actions of European Man/Human in the New World was the universality of his knowledge and his belief. If universal, then it was total: the knowledge and self-conception of Man/Human helped him in his advance toward the totality that Man/Human apprehended in the process of apprehending himself as such.

Quijano helps us in locating how the universal in medieval philosophy became crucial in building and justifying the narratives of modernity and enacting coloniality:

In spite of its absence in the Cartesian paradigm, the intellectual necessity of the idea of totality, especially in relation to social reality was present in the European debate; early on in the Iberian countries (Victoria, Suárez) and in the preservation of power defended by the Church and the Crown, and in France somewhat later (eighteenth century), and then already as a key element of social criticism and of alternative social proposals.

Above all, from Saint-Simon, the idea of social totality was spread together with proposals of revolutionary social change, in confrontation with the atomistic perspective of social existence then predominant among the empiricists and among the adherents of the existing social and political



order. In the twentieth century, totality became a perspective and a category generally admitted in scientific investigations especially those about society.<sup>27</sup>

*Human* and humanity (again), and all their derivations, were since the Renaissance the names by which those who identified themselves as human identified the rest of the inhabitants of the planet. The basic operation implemented to secure epistemic dominion was *social classification*. Social classification, rather than social class, is the foundational epistemic moment of the CMP. This is the theme of the next chapter.

## Notes

- 1 The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* tell us that "according to Aristotle, first philosophy, or metaphysics, deals with ontology and first principles, of which the principle (or law) of non-contradiction is the firmest. Aristotle says that without the principle of non-contradiction we could not know anything that we do know." "Aristotle on Non-Contradiction," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2007) 2–15, accessed July 21, 2017, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-noncontradiction/>.
- 2 "Binary Opposition," accessed July 21, 2017, [http://www.gutenberg.us/articles/binary\\_opposition](http://www.gutenberg.us/articles/binary_opposition).
- 3 "Human," *Online Etymology Dictionary*, accessed May 21, 2016, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=human>; "Man," *Online Etymology Dictionary*, accessed May 21, 2016, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php>.
- 4 See Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, after Man, Its Overrepresentation. An Argument," *New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–337.
- 5 Memories and bibliographies are enormous on this topic. Since this is an argument doing theory, not an ethnographic report, I shall mention for interested readers Paget Henry's magnificent *Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
- 6 Although *people* is plural, I pluralized anyway to underscore the diversity of human beings identified as *Indigenous*.
- 7 Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- 8 See "On the History of PRATEC," accessed May 23, 2016, see <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1021021.shtml>.
- 9 "Andean Peasant Agriculture: Nurturing a Diversity of Life in the Chacra," in *The Spirit of Regeneration: Andean Culture Confronting Western Notions of Develop-*

*ment*, ed. Frédérique Apffel-Marglin with PRATEC (London: Zed Books, 1998), 57. The word *culture* is difficult to avoid in this context. However, if we start from *nurture and regeneration*, we would be able to avoid nature and culture.

- 10 *Cosmo-vivencia* could be translated as "cosmo-sense," which privileges all the senses, not only the eyes, like in cosmo-vision. See Simon Yampara, "Cosmovivencia Andina: Vivir y convivir en armonía integral," *Bolivian Studies Journal* 18 (2011), <https://bsj.pitt.edu/ojs/index.php/bsj/article/view/42>.
- 11 "Nature," *Online Etymology Dictionary*, [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com).
- 12 Humberto Maturana and Ximena Dávila, "Cultural-Biology: Systemic Consequences of Our Evolutionary Natural Drift as Molecular Autopoietic Systems," 2016 (edited version of previous publication), <http://www.univie.ac.at/constructivism/archive/fulltexts/3900.html>.
- 13 José de Acosta took a hermeneutic detour in relation to Genesis, where it is said that "and the Lord said: Let us make Mankind in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So the Lord created Mankind in His own image, into the image of the Lord. He created Him, male and female" (Genesis 1:25–26). See *Natural and Moral History of the Indies*, trans. Frances López-Morillas (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, [1590] 2002).
- 14 For this argument see Walter D. Mignolo, "Coloniality Is Far from Over and, So Must Be Decoloniality," *Afterall* (Spring/summer 2017), <https://www.afterall.org/journal/issue.43/coloniality-is-far-from-over-and-so-must-be-decoloniality>.
- 15 See Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013).
- 16 For the continuity of the topic in contemporary philosophy, see Gabriele Galluzzo and Michael J. Loux, eds., *The Problem of Universals in Contemporary Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), accessed May 25, 2016, [http://assets.cambridge.org/9781107100893/excerpt/9781107100893\\_excerpt.pdf](http://assets.cambridge.org/9781107100893/excerpt/9781107100893_excerpt.pdf).
- 17 Ali Shari'ati, *Man and Islam*, trans. Fatollah Marjari (North Haledon, NJ: Islamic Publications International, 2005).
- 18 Pluriversality promotes the coexistence, in cooperation among compatible universes based on truth in parentheses and in antagonism and conflict with universes of meaning based on truth without parentheses.
- 19 See note 10 above.
- 20 On "double translation" and the directionality that the CMP imposed and the erasure that coloniality enacts, see Walter Mignolo and Freya Schiwy, "Transculturation and the Colonial Difference: Double Translation," in *Translation and Ethnography: The Anthropological Challenge of Intercultural Understanding* (Phoenix: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 3–29.
- 21 A similar conceptualization was at work in Aztec philosophy. See James Maffie, "We Eat of the Earth Then the Earth Eats Us': The Concept of Nature in Pre-Hispanic Nahua Thought," *Ludis Vitalis X* (2002): 5–20. For more detail, see James Maffie,



- Aztec Philosophy: Understanding a World in Motion* (Denver: University Press of Colorado, 2014).
- 22 Tristan Platt, "Mirrors and Maize: The Concept of Yanantin among the Macha of Bolivia," in *Anthropological History of Andean Politics*, ed. J. V. Murra, N. Wachtel, and J. Revel, 228–59 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). See also Deisy Núñez del Prado Béjar, "Yanantin y masintin: La cosmovisión andina," in *Yachay: Revista Científica de la Universidad Andina del Cusco* 1 (2008): 130–36. Similarly in Aztec philosophy, the goal is the search for balance and harmony. The *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* provides this helpful insight and bibliography information. "Because of this I suggest Nahua philosophy is better understood as a 'way-seeking' rather than as a 'truth-seeking' philosophy. 'Way-seeking' philosophies such as classical Taoism, classical Confucianism, and contemporary North American pragmatism adopt as their defining question, 'What is the way?' or 'What is the path?' In contrast, 'truth-seeking' philosophies such as most European philosophies adopt as their defining question, 'What is the truth?'" See James Maffie, "Aztec Philosophy," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/aztec/>. For a discussion, see David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Thinking from the Han: Self, Truth and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998).
  - 23 Santiago Slabodsky has pursued this line of reasoning as a "Jew of consciousness" in his book *Decolonial Judaism: Triumphal Failures of Barbaric Thinking* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
  - 24 Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).
  - 25 For an update on the problem of the universal, see Gyula Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, fall 2013 ed., accessed May 25, 2016, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/universals-medieval/#2>.
  - 26 Mauricio Beuchot, *El problema de los universales* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1981).
  - 27 Aníbal Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder y clasificación social," 174.

## 8 Colonial/Imperial Differences

### *Classifying and Inventing Global Orders of Lands, Seas, and Living Organisms*

#### Ontologies Are Epistemic Inventions

The issue at stake in this chapter is cultural classification, which includes social class. Cultural classifications are made, not ontologically inscribed in whatever is classified. Hence, classifications are cultural because they are inventions, not representations. Classifications are epistemic building of ontologies. Although classification is not privilege of any culture or civilization in particular, this chapter focuses on the type of classifications constitutive of modernity/coloniality. That is, classifications that built and activated by the CMP. For this reason, knowledge is the paramount domain of the CMP. Economy is knowledge organizing and legitimizing praxis. *Capitalism* names a type of knowledge that justified and justifies the subjugation of noncapitalist economies.

Hence, the basic, most fundamental, decolonial task is in the domain of knowledge, since it is knowledge that holds the CMP together and that con-form subjectivities whether of theological believers or of supposed free subjects of secular subjectivities, as I explained in chapter 6. Managing and controlling knowledge means managing and controlling subjects (subjecting them/us to the CMP) in all latitudes: the individuals who created, transformed, and managed the CMP and become subjected to their own pragmatic fantasies, as well as individuals subjected by the creators and managers of the CMP. Coloniality of knowledge is the invisible side of modernity, theological in the Renaissance; secular in the Enlightenment. Coloniality of knowledge here means schooling and training from elementary to higher education as well as the mainstream media that propagates and consolidates it, and, therefore, consolidates the working of the CMP in all the domains of the enunciated (from