Metropolitan Theory, 'City' as Concept, and Issues in Latin American Cultural Studies

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Anthony King once stated that "The cosy viewpoint of looking at our cities from within must be replaced by the more uncomfortable view of seeing them from the outside"(King 1990, p. 82). This statement concludes a chapter focused on the field of urban history. I am not familiar with that field, nor with what has transpired there in the years subsequent to King's intervention. Nevertheless, I will make use of this statement to position my own intervention here. I dislike certain components of King's formulation--the use of the terms "replaced," and "cosy," and the use of "viewpoint" in the singular to refer to "looking at our cities from within." At the same time, I appreciate much of what King does in the book in question— *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World-Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System*—though I would question the use of the term "system," amongst other things. Arguing that "cities" are colonial in more than one sense, King references numerous bodies of literature, including dependency theory. He considers: differences and commonalities across broad spans of time and space; flows and accumulations of value within various phases of the colonial era and subsequently; culturally- and spatially-inscribed raciology; and built environments as traces of global history. Developments in the core and in the periphery are understood in terms of interrelated processes spanning or connecting both sites.[1]

Much ink has rightly been spilled on the limitations of "core versus periphery" political economy frameworks largely focused on market relations and flows and accumulations of value. That does not, to my mind, render them dispensable in accounts of global history, and such frameworks, as well as critical interventions in response to them, figure amongst my subjects here. I draw on this

work in a consideration of some of the contemporary conditions of knowledge production, and of some of the conditions of possibility for the production of theory in "the metropolis." I suggest that we need to continue acknowledging the significance of certain "debts," and to attend to global differentials in access to education and to critical social analysis in its academic articulations—differentials which relate in part to the so-called "debt crisis" and to the shackling of peoples to the chains of debt.

My concerns include how "the urban" has been understood with reference to flows and concentrations of value, and over against "the rural" (though I have no wish to set up a binary opposition). Within certain traditions of political economy analysis, "city" was to "country" as "metropolis" was to "periphery."

Raymond Williams notes, in the entry for "City" in his *Keywords*, that England was "the first society in the history of the world in which the majority of the population lived in towns"(1976, p. 55). England arrived at this state in the middle of the 19th century. In his brief contextualization of this development, Williams mentions the Industrial Revolution, but not the position of London at the heart of a vast empire.

It is not my intent to exhaustively chart the landscape of conceptualizations of city, nor to suggest that I have any marked degree of familiarity with all of the great range of issues figuring in Latin American cultural studies today. Rather, I would like to speak to the some of the conference themes (of Culturepoles: City Spaces, Urban Politics and Metropolitan Theory), to reference a few observations and concerns expressed relatively recently by Jesús Martín-Barbero, and to indicate how my own present research plans inform my interest in related issues.

I hope to undertake a research project related to globalizations and perceptions of media and identity in three rural communities in El Salvador. I have done some preliminary research in preparation for this project, which would entail (though it would not be limited to) qualitative and comparative study from a cultural studies approach.

Jesús Martín-Barbero, a major figure in Latin American cultural and communication studies, has aptly characterized globalization as a mix of nightmares and dreams (2001). I prefer to speak of globalizations rather than globalization. In doing so, I follow the lead of a new interdisciplinary journal entitled *Globalizations*. *Globalizations*, in the words of the editor, seeks to contribute to "critical globalization studies." This would seem to imply that there is such a thing as "uncritical globalization studies." However, if I take the example of a text entitled *The Globalization Reader*—or more specifically, the example of the editors' introductions to this book and to its various sections—I find that it may be more significant to refer to slippages between passages, framings and points of reference which do and do not articulate critical visions of social orders, of conceptual frameworks and of global history. Such critical visions and their analytic languages may be appropriated in the articulation of liberal pluralist frameworks largely evacuating issues of power even as they purportedly address them.[2] In countering this, one resource I have found helpful (though not sufficient) is a framework set out by Anthony Giddens some time ago, in his **The Consequences of Modernity**. Giddens refers to four dimensions of globalization: the nation-state system, the world capitalist economy, the world military order, and the international division of labour. I find this framework to be of continuing importance as a way of attending to global history, to the broad social horizon, and to interdisciplinary work. At the same time, I greatly value the attention within cultural studies and elsewhere to the microstructurally political—as it relates

to gender and to much else—and in theoretical terms, I am very far from seeing analyses of the microstructurally-political as necessarily entailing a focus on the "smaller" picture.[3]

In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the international division of labour and the transfer and concentration of value figured as concerns within a body of scholarly work which Latin Americans made a huge contribution to—a body of work which came to be named with reference to theories and studies of dependency—of which, more later. The terms of global production and division of labour have, of course, changed significantly in recent decades, but I will not focus on these changes in the present intervention.

In the research project I have planned, television viewing in my three fieldwork sites in El Salvador would constitute one of my main focuses. However, from a perspective such as that articulated by Jesús Martín-Barbero—notably, in his *De los medios a las mediaciones: Comunicación, cultura y hegemonía*--such viewing invites understanding in terms of mediations--in terms of its intersection with other dynamics of media, culture and society. Martín-Barbero's theorization in the seminal work mentioned above resonates with certain arguments advanced by Martin Allor in a text published in 1988—"Relocating the Site of Audience." Allor addressed the significance of an oscillation, within mass communication research, between voluntarism and determinism, as it related to the deployment of the concept of "audience" and of high levels of abstraction in conceptualizations of the social. Such levels did not present a problem *in themselves*; rather, the issue was a pivoting around "single planes of contradiction, such as gender, class, or subjectivity in general, rather than multiple determinations"(Allor, 1988 p. 219).

Martín-Barbero has recently been doing research related to media use by youth in Latin America. He has commented that the degree to which engagement with media figures large in the lives of many young people does not reflect some universal power of the newer media to always and everywhere have precisely the same impact and a drawing power. Rather, as he has emphasized, the force of this engagement has something to do with the range of paths and emotional investments which are and are not available to these young people. That, in turn, has to do with developments we need to bring into view in the context of the broad social horizon. (Martín-Barbero 2001)

In an interview a few years ago, Martín-Barbero (2001) registered a concern with a loss of attention, in academic work in Latin America, to the broad social horizon. He noted that there is much transdisciplinary work being done. This has been productive in the generation and application of frameworks able to address social complexity in very pertinent ways. However, the academic context does not support this work very well. There is much focus on the formation of professionals for workplaces of various kinds, including the academy. Martín-Barbero stressed that this latter dynamic is not *in itself* problematic; rather, the problem is the degree to which it has come to predominate, to the exclusion or relative absence of other things. In my translation, one of his statements reads: “In the field of communication and culture, there has been a regression. The market absorbs professionals, and the universities are directed towards the needs of the market. It is not this in itself which is unhealthy; the unhealthy thing is that there should be only this... First, more and more, the market is dictating what must be thought. Second, knowledge becomes desocialized (se desocializa) in the face of the practical dimensions of life: there is a loss of social horizon in the field of communication, which teaches how to compete more than how to reflect and to propose, to question and to innovate”(See Martín-Barbero 2001, p. 9).

In 2002, the World Bank produced a lengthy document entitled "Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education." The Executive Summary of this document provides an indication of the continuing extent to which instrumental reason and technocracy are seen as solutions—although now, the World Bank seeks to move further way from its past history of "piecemeal" interventions in relation to higher education, while retaining its stated primary mission to contribute to the alleviation of poverty. It is instructive to consider the language, the thrust and the implications of the World Bank document alongside the comments of Martín-Barbero [4]

In the executive summary of "Constructing Knowledge Societies," it is stated that "Social and economic progress is achieved principally through the advancement and application of knowledge"(xix). Knowledge of power/knowledge, however, does not appear to have had any impact on World Bank formulations, despite the results of more than five decades of the application of knowledges of development. The promised land has yet to materialize on a global scale; and now, "technological transformation carries the real danger of a growing digital divide within and between nations"(World Bank 2002, p. xvii). Nevertheless, "countries can adapt and change their tertiary education systems to confront successfully the combination of new and old challenges in the context of the rising significance for tertiary education of internal and international market forces"(xviii).

Of further interest is a lengthy text by Akilagpa Sawyerr of the Association of African Universities—"Challenges Facing African Universities: Selected Issues." The latter presents an excellent historical overview of what has led to contemporary dynamics, a detailed map of these

dynamics, and a grim assessment of the situation of African academics, including those who might wish to counter a decline in the production and dissemination of critical social thought. Many if not most academics with full-time positions at public institutions do not make a comfortable living wage from these positions, and consequently it is common for professors to engage in "moonlighting" and other strategies. Given this, and given the history Sawyerr maps, their opportunities for independent research, critical reflection, personal development, mentoring, community service, and access to good library holdings are limited in the extreme. Further, infrastructure conditions in many places have remained the same or have worsened despite big increases in student enrolments. Happily, the ratio of female to male students has changed substantially; at the same time, privilege is being transferred from one generation of the relatively privileged to another (and "relative" may be understood with reference to the fact that "in many African countries," "the salaried middle class remains pauperized"(p. 34)). To mention just two of the issues Sawyerr raises: currently, in the context of stiff competition for places in African public universities, in many nations a relatively small number of secondary schools provide the majority of the successful candidates for admission; and these secondary schools are situated in the major cities. Concentrations of capital of various kinds within capitals and major cities thus has a big effect on the lives of many of those who aspire to higher education. Further, for reasons including the predominance of neo-liberal ideology, "the idea of the university as a space for reflection and critical thinking"(p.33) carries little weight.

To return to the issue of institutional support in Latin America for critical interdisciplinary work--I would in no way want to suggest that administrative decisions in institutions of higher education are reducible to the funds available. However, that is surely one factor at play; and in some sites, if

more funds where available, more innovation and more support for critical social thought might be considered.

In Latin America, and elsewhere, the public funding of education at all levels has been a site of struggle, closely related to global political and economic processes and the so-called "debt crisis." I say so-called because we have reason to question who owes whom, and to interrogate the dominant discourses which serve to rationalize policies and to leave peoples shackled to the chains of debt. However, in the official discourse, Latin American countries owe a staggering amount of money. In order to secure both new loans, and the restructuring of payment mechanisms for existing debts, they are under strong pressure to follow the dictates of the International Monetary Fund. This means less funding for public services and education—particularly that brand of education which is not obviously geared primarily towards "meeting the human capital needs" of "the economy and the knowledge society" (to use the language of dominant institutions).This situation of "indebtedness," which has had an impact on the shaping of scholarly work, relates in part to a long history of the transfer of surplus value in the context of the international division of labour and the terms of trade.

In underscoring the importance of attending to the broad social horizon, it is not my intent, nor the intent of Martín-Barbero, to suggest that "the best analysis" is that which most broadly and comprehensively charts the landscape of a social order. We necessarily and productively "bracket off" in order to address specific dynamics in pertinent ways. However, a good general knowledge of what it is that is being bracketed off remains important, and informs how the bracketing is done, how an analysis is framed, and how its pertinence is formulated. Further, this knowledge facilitates awareness of possible theoretical borrowings from multiple fields and disciplines, and a productive

and thoughtful use of what Mike Bal (2002) refers to as concept clusters. And, last but not least, a good general knowledge of the broad social horizon and of global history facilitates awareness of the factors making for what Gayatri Spivak has referred to as the "epistemological violence" of imperialism. (1988, p. 171) Awareness of our own positioning within processes which have left some of us relatively privileged can facilitate modest efforts to counter this epistemological violence.[5]

Gayatri Spivak once wrote that "In 1985, Walter Benjamin's famous saying, "there has never been a document of *culture* which was not at one and the same time a document of barbarism" (Illuminations 256) should be a starting point rather than a stopping point for Marxist axiological investigations"(1988, p.168). With this in mind, I would suggest that documents of cultural studies as well as culture are traces of flows and concentrations of value enabled by domination and exploitation. Such flows figure as a condition of possibility for a certain concentration of scholarly resources.

The rich inheritance of cultural studies in the economic north is something I have great respect for. Recently, I have encountered a few contemptuous generalizations about cultural studies. I do not like sweeping characterizations of fields within which there are diverse types of interventions, and I do not see fields as neatly-definable boxes into which we all fit with perfect comfort, though I am aware that, as Mieke Bal (2002) has recently pointed out, scholars continue to bump up against those invested in older disciplinary notions of coverage.

In a recent publication, *Travelling Concepts: A Rough Guide to Interdisciplinary Work in the Humanities* (2002), Bal set out a framework for what she calls cultural analysis. Cultural analysis

brings together the analyst, the object of study, and concept clusters, in a process such that there is a work both from and on concepts. In the context of an abundance of interdisciplinary work, and of the travelling of concepts, she speaks against a too-easy recourse to trashing, and she presents what I take to be an important plea for greater attention to the complexity and worth of diverse academic trajectories, some of which do not fit all that comfortably with the notion of coverage. Concepts, as she underscores, travel--between disciplines and fields, between individual scholars, across time, and between geographically-dispersed academic communities. Given this, the question of "where analysts are coming from" is worth considerable attention; and yet, many of the contexts of scholarly engagement do not facilitate much attention to this.

As mentioned earlier, I hope to undertake a research project in El Salvador. The numerous reasons why I have chosen to embark upon this particular project include my understanding of the importance, at present and in the long term, of what has been referred to as food security. Food security is the retention or the construction of the capacity for locations, regions and nations to locally produce sufficient food to sustain people in the vicinity—with "people" making special reference to the poor or relatively-poor majority. This concept figures within the revindications of social movements, and within a struggle against what might be called "selective neo-liberalism"; agribusiness in the United States in particular is highly subsidized, even as the capacity of the least affluent nations to support local production is, within a global correlation of force, highly limited. Of course, it is not the case that the governing bodies in all such nations are militants in the cause of small- and medium-scale agricultural production. Nevertheless, the politics of agriculture have been referred to as the "Achilles' Heel" of the World Trade Organization, and have generated a significant degree of solidarity across the Global South.[6]

While I have a reasonable general knowledge of the global politics of agriculture, I have not yet developed a detailed knowledge of how this plays out in my fieldwork sites and in specific life worlds there. However, I am eager to develop this knowledge in the course of mapping the dynamics at work in these sites. Many people in these rural communities work lands that have been won, at great cost, relatively recently. (There was civil war in El Salvador from 1980 to 1992.) However, a number of dynamics, including the global politics of agriculture, render the future of small- and medium-scale agricultural production uncertain. This is something I wish to take into account when considering perceptions of media and identity in my fieldwork sites. My concerns include the multiple factors involved in decisions to stay in rural areas, or to leave for the city or for North America. (One in four Salvadorians lives outside the country, and family connections facilitate migrations, while remittances contribute to the capacity of some to stay put.)

I now turn to a consideration of centre and periphery, metropolis and satellite, city and country. These terms, along with "developed" and "underdeveloped" countries—terms I do not subscribe to--figured within dependency theory and dependency studies. In *Development Theory in Transition: The Dependency Debate & Beyond: Third World Responses*, authors Blossom and Hettne state at one point that there may be as many dependency theories as there were dependency theorists; that, however, seems to overstate the case. Blomström and Hettne chart the emergence of dependency theory and dependency studies, with particular attention to post-World-War-Two Latin America, and they map debates and critiques internal to a body of work by scholars sharing many assumptions and concerns.

Whatever its limitations, dependency theory posed a major challenge to the evolutionary perspective of classical economists and to the assumptions of many theorists of development. An

evolutionary as well as a revolutionary perspective was inscribed in the writings of Karl Marx; Marx stated in *The Communist Manifesto* that all regions could see, in Europe, the image of the future awaiting them, and capitalist development and the integration of all into a world-system was to “rescue” a “considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life”(Marx 1968, p.33).

In twentieth-century western “development theory,” the evolutionary perspective was represented, perhaps most notoriously, in the work of Walt Rostow, author of “The Stages of Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto”(1960). There were universal stages of growth; the underdeveloped nations had to organize to reach the take-off stage, subsequent to which they would in due course reach the society of mass consumption. Dependency theorists and their predecessors emphasized that such things as the international division of labour rendered this narrative highly suspect. So, for example: Latin American nations produced primary products and agro-export commodities, within production processes requiring relatively low capital input, while northern nations were much more industrialized, and/or had contrasting production processes and mass market conditions. The terms of trade, amongst other things, where such that wealth remained concentrated in the North. Various initiatives directed towards industrialization in the south, such as import substitution—local production of consumer goods--ran up against limitations including the small internal market, in the context of low wages and limited savings, and the need to import the components for “import substitution” production. Some of those associated with dependency theory in its emergent stage were highly focused on overcoming what they referred to as “stagnation.” They emphasized that, while new initiatives and investments where needed, existing structures were such as to limit the possibility that these could come from within peripheral nations, and could thus be shaped by concerns with the national and local “public good.” (This involved assessments of the potentialities of “national bourgeoisies” which subsequently generated much criticism.) This provides a partial

explanation for the use of the term “dependency”—which is not a term I favour. We might pose the question of who was and is dependent on whom—dependent in all manner of ways—as this relates to economic and extra-economic coersion. Answering this complex question, as many came to stress, required much more than the concepts of metropolis and periphery.

A widely-circulated article written in the early 1970s--Ernesto Laclau’s “Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America”(1977)—did much to clarify the limitations of the work of a leading figure in dependency theory, André Gunder Frank. This article, and the introduction to the book by Laclau in which it was reproduced, is also of interest in relation to the history of frameworks within cultural studies. As Jennifer Daryl Slack has noted (Slack 1996), Laclau’s work contributed much to the understanding of “articulation” as theory and method, although this has not been widely acknowledged.

André Gunder Frank had referred to a chain-like flow of value:

> ...it is this exploitative relation which in chainlike fashion extends the capitalist link between the capitalist world and national metropolises to the regional centres (part of whose surplus they appropriate), and from these to local centres, and so on to large landowners or merchants who expropriate surplus from small peasants or tenants, and sometimes even from these latter to landless labourers exploited by them in turn. (Frank 1967, pp. 7-8, quoted in Blomström and Hettne 1984, p. 67)

In critiquing the work of Frank, Ernesto Laclau was not out to deny that general directions in the flow of surplus value could be discerned. Rather, he questioned Frank’s implicit construction of capitalism as something defined primarily by market relations, and he underscored the complexity and diversity of relations of production. According to Frank, Latin America had been capitalist since its very colonization by European powers in the 16th century, because, as Laclau formulates

it, “even the most apparently remote and isolated regions of Latin America participated in the general process of commodity exchange and ...this exchange was to the advantage of the dominant imperialist powers”(Laclau 1977, p.19). Laclau did not challenge this claim; however, Frank totally excluded “relations of production in his definition of capitalism and feudalism”(Laclau 1977, p. 23). He focused instead on the presence and intersection of markets, and consequently he constructed a very thin narrative of the exploitation of value and a grossly inadequate conceptualization of capitalism. Laclau observed that “we could conclude that from the Neolithic revolution onwards there has never been anything but capitalism”(p. 23), and he underscored the need to reference, not only market relations, but also “the capitalist mode of production.” As formulated by Marx—and by Laclau, drawing on Marx—this concept references a situation in which labourers free of extra-economic coercion sell their labour power, and no longer have direct access to means of production, including land. Particularly in a postscript to “Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America,” published some six years after the first appearance of the latter, Laclau underscored that the “capitalist mode of production” should not be thought, at it so often had been, within a stagist and linear historical narrative, even as it remained of value as an analytic abstraction. Laclau attended to the great and continuing differentiation of relations of production and social relations over time and space (though he touched on the latter quite superficially, in passing). Various articulated configurations were such that the capitalist mode of production in fact figured within a world capitalist economic system which worked to articulate multiple modes of production—including non-capitalist modes not to be understood as simple holdovers from the past.

As Laclau emphasized, it was more useful to attend to differences and discontinuities than “to attempt to show the continuity and identity of the process [of accumulation], from Hernan Cortes

to General Motors” (p. 41). Attention to flows from peripheries to centres was necessary, but was not to be accorded undue emphasis.

Andre Gunder Frank had rightly rejected the “dualist thesis”—the idea that there was, on the one hand, a closed, traditional sector resistant to change and unintegrated into the world economy, and on the other hand, a dynamic modern capitalist sector which carried the potential to further social progress (with these two existing in relative isolation from each other). The so-called backward and the so-called progressive were not to be brought into view as isolated phenomena understandable within a linear chronology. Rather, the things which had been so named were bound up with each other. However, connections through market relations, as Laclau stressed, were but one part of a complex intersection in which the “extra-economic cohersion” of indigenous and peasant formations had continued to play a significant role, well into the twentieth century, despite the increasing presence of capitalist relations of production from the nineteenth century onward.

The above arguments figured within the history of increasing attention to social formations on the part of Marxist analysts in Europe and Latin America—attention sometimes entailing heightened recognition of processes of communication and culture as factors in the overdetermination of outcomes. They also figured in traditions articulating the arguments of scholarly work to support or lack of support for various instances of left practice in Latin America--including “communist” practice which in key respects was highly conservative, based as it was in Eurocentric intellectual and political traditions. (Historically, “the Latin American left emerged as the left wing of liberalism”(Laclau 1977, p. 33); and the communist parties of the twentieth century had Moscow-line orientations.) This articulation relates to many sad histories, and to many commitments and

interventions—some of which were extremely problematic. At the same time, a great deal of laudable effort also went into dependency studies and dependency theories, within a long scholarly legacy which others have both drawn on, and reconfigured.

Given more space, I would relate the analysis above to the argument David Theo Goldberg presents in his “Racial Rule”(2002). Goldberg emphasizes the historical coexistence of naturalist and historicist raciology—traditions of raciology which may be brought into view as conceptually distinct but as intertwined in practice. His article is suggestive of the pertinence of further attention to the grand narratives of development discourse as they relate to raciology and to traditions in the philosophy of history.

If I have attended to flows and concentrations of value here, and to the international division of labour, it is not because I wish to suggest that they ought to be the focus of everyone’s attention, in the context of cultural studies and elsewhere. Gayatri Spivak, in “Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value”(1988), indicated that all instances of attention to this question could in no way simply be equated with “pre-critical economism”(p. 175); I join her in seeking to counter the overly-hasty embrace of such equations, and at the same time in refusing the game of handing out medals within an Olympics of suffering. I hope we will continue to reference the history of past efforts to address capital accumulation on a world scale, and I hope that we will look at our cities from a great range of viewpoints, including those which envision them as sites of accumulation enabled by centuries of brutal domination and exploitation, “at home and away.” The latter do not provide stopping points; rather, they figure amongst many important starting points.

Notes

[1] King states that "In at least two senses, all cities can be described as colonial: at the local level, the powers that form them organize their hinterland and live off the surplus the non-urban realm provides. At the global level, existing cities organize the surplus both of their own society and that of other overseas...; the local relationship of town-to-county becomes the metropolis-colony connection on a world scale"(15). In the view of some, this statement might be read simply as a statement that cries out for deconstruction, or as dated in the wake of developments in the twentieth century. However, it might instead be considered in terms of its relative degree of purchase for the analysis, within histories of the present, of particular socio-economic configurations situated across large spans of time and space—including, for example, social organization related to major centres in the western hemisphere in the centuries prior to the sixteenth century. That is to say, in part, that it could be reformulated without the use of the simple present tense.

[2] The editors of *The Globalization Reader*—Frank Lechner and John Boli--make passing reference to "the Cold War," but decolonisation, colonization and imperialism do not figure as key frames (with the exception of "the thesis of cultural imperialism"). In the General Introduction, we are told that "Europeans established worldwide trade connections on their own terms, brought their culture to different regions by settling vast areas, and defined the ways in which different peoples were to interact with each other" (p. 1). This gloss, with its gross and troubling euphemisms, is presented as an adequate summing-up of the insights of many scholars as to how and when "globalization" came to be. In representing critical takes on contemporary "globalization," Lechner and Boli would largely draw the attention of readers to totalizing critical takes formulated with little nuance. The latter, I would underline, provide the easiest targets for critique.

Anthony Giddens (1994) has referred to the world military order as one of the key dimensions of globalization. The paucity of attention *The Globalization Reader* accords to this dimension is one of the most troubling aspects of this collection, as is the positivist discourse the editors deploy. So, for example, they state that "this reader presents a comprehensive picture of globalization, covering economic, political, cultural, and experiential dimensions"(2), and that the "end of the twentieth century has witnessed the consolidation of a new world society. The selections compiled in this reader aim to describe and explain the course of globalization and the shape of its outcomes"(1).

[3] See Spivak's analysis of this, in Spivak, 1979, and in her work more generally.

[4] The executive summary of the World Bank's "Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education" concludes with the following sentence: "Strengthening the capacity of tertiary education institutions to respond flexibly to the new demands of knowledge societies will increase their cotribution to poverty reduction through the long-term economic effects and the associated welfare benefits that come from sustained growth"(xxxi). This document indicates that, whereas in the past, the interventions of the Wrold Bank in relation to higher education have been "piecemeal," it now seeks to intervein with "comprehensive reforms" in view. The World Bank's agenda includes the facilitation of "policy dialogue and knowledge sharing"; it "can bring to the same table stakeholders who would not normally converse and work together"(xxvi), and "can tie reform of tertiary education to economywide reform"(xxvii).

A range of "stakeholders" will, of course, have a place at the table—though apparently the discourse which is to frame exchange there has already been determined.

[5] In 1992, which marked five hundred years since the great stumbling-upon, Latin American philosopher Enrique Dussel was invited to deliver the Frankfurt Lectures in Germany. In the introduction to his lectures, he stated that he should mention something in passing; the man "who provided the initial subsidy for the Insitute Horkheimer and others founded in this city" was from his country, Argentina, and was "involved in the export trade of agricultural commodities between Argentina and Great Britian"(Dussel 1995, p. 66): "That is, it was the valued produced by the labor of the gauchos and peons of the pampa, objectivized in wheat or beef and appropriated by the great landowing and merchant families of Argentina, that, transferred to Germany, gave birth to the Frankfurt School. It is in the name, then, of those semi-Indians, peons, and gauchos of my country, demanding, in a way, an accounting of the uses to which the fruits of their labour were put, that I undertake to deliver these lectures here and now"(p. 66). Dussel goes on to examine Eurocentrism (and blatant supremacist affirmations) within European intellectual traditions, with particular reference to Habermas and to Hegel, and to the occlusion of the role of Spain and of the history of conquest in formulations of the concept of modernity. Edward Said (1993) has also underscored the Eurocentrism of Habermas, noting that certain silences cannot "be interpreted as an oversight"(p. 278); Habermas has acknowledged his

"eurocentrically limited view," while indicating that there are certain matters he has no intention of speaking to. Said thus refers to a "deliberate abstentation"(p. 278).

[6] In the months leading up to the September 2003 WTO Ministerial Conference in Cancun, Mexico, "Analysts like Walden Bello of Focus on the Global South, based in the Philippines, were starting to call agriculture 'the WTO's Achilles Heel" (Tokar and Canning 2003: 20). Negotiations at Cancun were in fact stalled, and policies related to agriculture were at the centre of the rift. "Trade representatives from the Global South united against the trade agenda of the European Union and the United States...and their allies"(Ballvé 2003: 16). Via Campesina, an organization which represents an international movement of small- and medium-scale producers, has been active in mobilization and advocacy related to the global battle over agricultural policy. (See the Via Campesina website.)

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