

REVIEW ESSAY

Coloniality and its Future

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Abstract

Decoloniality emerged in the last two decades as a new mode of critique against colonialism and coloniality. While its insights are inspired by dependency and postcolonial theories, decoloniality challenges them both, particularly their inability to depart with modern Western epistemology. Written in response to Arjun Appadurai's recent critique of *On Decoloniality* by Catherine E. Walsh and Walter D. Mignolo, this article attempts to articulate decoloniality's approach to epistemology and discourse analysis. Whereas Appadurai describes Walsh and Mignolo's position as an anachronistic attempt to "return to the precolonial past," this article underlines his inability to transcend the modern linear order of time.

Keywords

Decoloniality, postcoloniality, Walter Mignolo, Arjun Appadurai, coloniality of time.

If you wish, you may call me whenever you please,
I am not a bygone time that cannot return.

– Ghalib¹

...

It is time it were time.
It is time.

– Paul Celan²

1 M. Ghalib, *Diwan-e-Ghalib*, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ghalib/089/index_089.html.

2 P. Celan, 'Corona', M. Hamburger (trans.), *golempoem*, <https://matthewsalomon.wordpress.com/2007/11/23/paul-celan-corona/>.

Other Cape

Reading *Kronos*' recent call for papers felt like an intrusion into an internal conversation. The nuances of the text and the terms I could only comprehend through the kind and patient mediation of the journal Review Editor Ross Truscott reminded me of the difficulties of arbitrating the complex social fabric of my homeland Israel or my struggle to understand the cultural subtleties of India, the place I call home in the last two decades.³ Falling into a rabbit hole, as it were, my reflections on 'An Other Cape', of the 'Eastern Cape' as 'another heading', are constrained (but also enabled, facilitated, made possible) by my geopolitical position. If from a South African perspective, the Eastern Cape is a space of intense colonisation but also of resistance, for me, as an Israeli who believes that the decolonisation of Israel is not only just but also inevitable, it exemplifies a futurity for which I wait with hope but also, truth be told, with 'fear and trembling'.⁴

Looking at Eastern Cape as another shore and for another heading is to unfold a new horizon but also to construct a boundary. The horizon, as Derrida notes in the essay that lent the name to this special issue, designates in Greek a limit.⁵ If comparing Israel to other settler colonial projects is a threshold for new historical, political and cultural insights, it also produces conceptual constraints. Like other adherents of the settler colonialism paradigm, I am suspicious of Israeli exceptionalism and the projection of a Zionist difference.⁶ The assertion of particularity, however, is not only a cog in the Israeli Hasbara machinery, but an important aspect of the pluriversalist vision of a decolonised world. A universal decolonisation, if such an oxymoron makes any sense, reiterates the logic of coloniality by other means. The heading of Eastern Cape facilitates an alternative prism to view the 'Israel-Palestinian conflict', but also halts the process of individuation that is inherent to the decolonising project.

Seen through the lens of decolonisation, the paradigm of settler colonialism is a double-edged sword. It yields a radical critique of colonialism, but paradoxically harbours its triumph. The analogy to other settler states in which the settler eliminated nativity as a political problem, might normalise the ongoing Israeli colonial project.⁷ It is in this context that the heading of Eastern Cape and South Africa is crucial, as it circumscribes other futurities of Israel/Palestine. While Israel reiterates the discourse of Western exceptionalism that enabled the completion of settler projects in Australia, Canada and USA, South Africa offers another heading and a decolonial vantagepoint.

3 I borrow this expression and its layered signification from the woodcut print series of Zarina Hashmi *Cities I Call Home* (2010).

4 J. Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 6.

5 *Ibid.*, 28.

6 See L. Veracini, *Israel and Settler Society* (London: Pluto Press, 2006), 1.

7 Arnon Degani, for example, maintains that 'arguing for the comparability of Israeli history to that of the U.S., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, pulls the rug from under the agenda of singling out Zionism and its deeds as particularly evil'. A. Degani, 'Israel is a Settler Colonial State – and that's OK', *Haaretz*, 13 September 2016, <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-israel-is-a-settler-colonial-state-and-that-s-ok-1.5433405>.

European exceptionalism: pharmakon

European exceptionalism plays a decisive role in the colonial matrix of power. The rhetoric of Western modernity, as Walter D. Mignolo argues following Aníbal Quijano, justifies the logic of coloniality.⁸ Drawing on Edward Said's analysis of Orientalist structures, Homi K. Bhabha highlights the ambivalence that undergirds the intimacy between colonialism and modernity. The colonial discourse maintains two contradicting apparatuses, synchronic and diachronic, that ensures its dominance: the assertion that colonial subjects are ahistorical and stable, and the endeavour to civilise and transform them.⁹ If colonialism justifies itself through the civilising mission, Bhabha argues, it also makes sure that the realisation of the universal vision of modernity will never be fulfilled. The discourse of mimicry guarantees that the colonised may become 'almost the same but not quite'.¹⁰

If the complicity between modernity and coloniality culminates, according to Bhabha, in a farce that reveals the indeterminacy of the colonial discourse, it does not expel the possibility of accomplishing modernity's universal promise. Derrida's reflections on Europe's identity are predicated on this prospect and can be seen as the mirror image of Bhabha's analysis.¹¹ Whereas the 'mimic man' manifests the impact of colonial domination but also the ambivalence of its discourse, European exceptionalism enables this subjugation but forces its agents to open themselves towards other shores. The universality and modernity in whose name the colonisers speak compel them to be inclusive.

To view the matter through Derrida's own terminology, exceptionalism, or perhaps and in a sense more precise, exemplarism, functions in his reconstruction of the European identity as a pharmakon of sorts, a poison that cures its own sting. If exemplarism led the coloniser to make himself at home in places to which he was not invited, it has the inverse potential of becoming hospitable: 'The *same duty* ['to respond to the call of European memory, to recall what has been promised under the name Europe'] also dictates welcoming foreigners in order not only to integrate them but to recognize and accept their alterity...'²

The metaphor of hospitality, however, is not accidental, as it regulates the play of supplements that Derrida initiates. The law of unconditional hospitality, according to which guests should be welcomed without even asking their names, can be realised only through the conditional laws of hospitality.¹² Without their restrictions, selections, and exclusions, 'It would risk being abstract, utopian, illusory.'¹³ Thus, the duty of preserving the European critical tradition necessitates its submission 'to a deconstructive genealogy that thinks and exceeds it', but 'without yet compromising it'.¹⁴

8 W. D. Mignolo, 'Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality', *Cultural Studies*, 21, 2-3, 2007, 449-514.

9 H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 122.

10 *Ibid.*, 127.

11 J. Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

12 J. Derrida and A. Dufourmantelle, *Of hospitality* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2000), 25.

13 *Ibid.*, 79.

14 J. Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 77.

While the alterity of the Other may be accommodated, the alien horizon is accepted on condition that it does not violate the host's episteme.

The Derridian notion of hospitality ensures the specificity of the European identity and the continuity of its tradition, but its regulatory procedure, if read inversely, attests to the scope of free epistemic exchange. The heading of the other shore, therefore, can be interpreted in two different ways: either letting the Other appear on the horizon or seeing the horizon from another shore. These two possibilities engendered two critical responses to the colonial matrix of power whose apple of discord is the attitude towards European modernity. While postcolonial theory enters a critical dialogue with the modern Western worldview and expands its universalism to include other subjectivities, decoloniality endeavours to reformulate the terms of the conversation and envisions a pluriversalist world in which diverse cosmologies co-exist. Admittedly, the theoretical domain does not distribute itself neatly, and texts, let alone their authors, do not always follow a coherent program. Thus, while portraying postcoloniality and decoloniality as two 'distinct sensibilities',¹⁵ my aim is not to essentialise them but to accentuate different tendencies.

Postcoloniality, decoloniality and modernity

In May 2007, the PMLA journal dedicated its Editor's Column to explore 'The End of Postcolonial Theory?'¹⁶ The publication was preceded by a panel discussion in Michigan University that examined whether postcolonialism is pertinent as a critical political theory. The participants in the roundtable expressed conflicting views about 'the status of postcolonial studies', but detractors and defenders alike sensed an exhaustion and even a crisis.¹⁷ At the same time that postcolonialism was contemplating its end or attempting to rejuvenate itself, a group of Latin American intellectuals published a collection of articles in the Cultural Studies journal, titled 'Globalization and the De-Colonial Option'.¹⁸ Inspired by the concepts of the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano and co-edited by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, the volume presents an alternative, perhaps more radical, approach to the critique of colonialism. The contributors explore Quijano's notion of coloniality that defines the continuous domination of the West since the Renaissance and extends beyond specific colonial projects. The contiguity between 'the potential exhaustion of postcolonialism as a paradigm' and the emergence of decolonial thinking might have been fortuitous,¹⁹ but it stresses the gap between the two projects. If the critics of postcoloniality argue that it should be replaced by 'critiques of imperialism' or 'superseded by globalization',²⁰

15 W. D. Mignolo, 'Response to Arjun Appadurai's book review', *Facebook*, 7 March 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/walter.mignolo.9>. Accessed 16 April 2021.

16 P. Yaeger, 'Editor's Column: The End of Postcolonial Theory? A Roundtable with Sunil Agnani, Fernando Coronil, Gaurav Desai, Mamadou Diouf, Simon Gikandi, Susie Tharu, and Jennifer Wenzel', *PMLA/Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 122, 3, 2007, 633-651.

17 *Ibid.*, 633.

18 W. D. Mignolo and A. Escobar (eds.), 'Globalization and the decolonial option', *Cultural Studies*, 21, 2-3, 2007.

19 Yaeger, *Ibid.*, 633.

20 *Ibid.*, 634, 638.

decoloniality probes the foundations of knowledge, and hence resists submersion into a 'broader' academic field.

The contemplations about the end of postcoloniality are indicative of its point of departure. Jennifer Wenzel, who co-organised the panel discussion in Michigan University, conjoins the reception of postcolonial studies to its finale. Drawing on Arif Dirlik's 'partially facetious' remark that postcolonial theory began 'When Third World intellectuals have arrived in First World academe',²¹ she suggests that 'perhaps it ends when every department has hired a postcolonialist'.²² Ironic as it were, this quip contours the scope of postcolonial theory, and demonstrates Mignolo's argument regarding the postcolonial inability to (or indifference toward) delinking itself from Western epistemology. Wenzel's comparison between postcolonialism and other marginalised subjectivities that contest the Western canon such as 'women writers and United States writers of color' is thus illuminating.²³ Feminism and identity politics do not undermine the tenets of the European Enlightenment but rather stipulate it as a project that is not yet completed. Similarly, her thesis regarding the 'end' of postcolonial theory is predicated on the modern notion of linear temporality that gave birth to the idea that a theory or a field of study may have a limited shelf life. In the post 9/11 era, she argues, postcolonial theory fails to tackle the US imperialist policy and hence should give way to the critique of imperialism. Ironically but not surprisingly, the attempt to criticise the US policy enhances its imperialist narratology, as the event that announces the finale of postcolonialism emerges from Western history, or a history dominated by the West. This is not only because every critique inevitably puts a spotlight on the objects it wishes to decentre, but the result of an uncritical adherence to Western epistemology.

Decoloniality was developed by Latin American scholars and activists who felt that postcoloniality does not reflect their past and present colonial experiences. Apart from the widening of the 'Anglocentric' horizon of postcolonial theory,²⁴ decoloniality defines new goals, predominantly breaking away from Western epistemology. Mignolo argues, following Quijano, that coloniality and modernity are not separate projects that inadvertently occurred at the same time. Rather, 'coloniality is constitutive of modernity', its darker side.²⁵ One way of apprehending this coupling is that the rhetoric of modernity hides the logic of coloniality.²⁶ This projection of modernity as accomplice with coloniality resonates with the arguments of dependency theory about the reciprocity between development and underdevelopment. Decoloniality, however, is not a readymade theory that can be applied to diverse case studies, but a project or a work in progress, in which the pairing of modernity and coloniality is not a conclusion but a hypothesis that orients the discourse analysis of modern epistemology. The criticism against decoloniality's want of nuance is missing this aspect,

21 A. Dirlik, 'The postcolonial aura: Third world criticism in the age of global capitalism', *Cultural Politics*, 11, Winter 1997, 329.

22 P. Yaeger, *Ibid.*, 633.

23 *Ibid.*.

24 *Ibid.*, 645.

25 W. D. Mignolo and C. E. Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), 139.

26 Mignolo, 'Delinking', 450.

and concomitantly does not see the forest for the trees. If decoloniality tends to narrate the history of the last five decades with broad strokes, it is because the destitution inflicted in the name of enlightenment and progress was equally sweeping and all-encompassing.

Epistemology, according to Mignolo, is not a set of rules that one can adopt or renounce at will, but what ‘regulates the terms of the conversation.’²⁷ This hermeneutic position, often overlooked by supporters and critics alike, is crucial for the apprehension of decoloniality. Since modern epistemology shapes the horizon of our thinking, it is both ‘unavoidable and on the other [hand] highly limited and dangerous.’²⁸ Accordingly, ‘de-linking cannot be understood as a new conceptual system coming, literally, out of the blue,’ but as a project that seeks to detach itself from modernity by employing archaeological and genealogical tools. Mignolo dubs this kind of critical engagement with modernity as ‘border thinking.’²⁹

The engagement with epistemology distances decoloniality from petty identity politics and vulgar decolonialism. While racial considerations still dictate the canon of various fields of knowledge, the impact of coloniality goes ‘deeper’ to fashion their frameworks. Epistemologically speaking, to decolonise is not to introduce more postcolonial authors into the curriculum nor to retrieve colonised artefacts to their original sites.³⁰ Important as they are, these measures do not alter the terms of the conversation and at times camouflage the crux of the problem. If decolonisation became a popular catchword in Western universities and museums today, it is not only due to its urgency and importance. By transforming decoloniality from a qualitative to a quantitative project, these institutes contain and neutralise the challenges it poses to their very foundations. Modernity does not only differentiate and exclude, but in its attempt to constitute a universal order employs inclusive apparatuses that dilute the context, meaning and function of their objects (e.g., a statue of Buddha in the museum or an academic study of the Quran). It is for this reason that modernity is relatively comfortable now with Other subjectivities. As long as they do not modify its episteme, it willingly observes them.

If dominant trends in postcolonial theory ‘turned culture, broadly understood as forms of representation into a center of analysis,’³¹ decoloniality returns to issues that engaged anticolonial thinkers, primarily decolonisation and the domination of Western modernity. In a similar manner to Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Aimé Césaire and many other intellectuals and activists, decoloniality insists that

27 Mignolo and Walsh, *On Decoloniality*, 5.

28 Mignolo, ‘Delinking’, 455.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that the Africanisation and decolonisation of universities in South Africa during the 1960s and 1970s ‘was largely superficial, entailing changing the names of universities, taking over the administration of universities by installing black chancellors and vice-chancellors, increasing the number of black academics and black students as well as including work by African academics in the curriculum. This type of Africanisation and decolonisation did not touch the structural Eurocentric epistemological scaffolding on which the university in Africa is built and did not constitute the genuine “epistemic disobedience” called for by advocates of decoloniality’. S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘The emergence and trajectories of struggles for an “African university”’: The case of unfinished business of African epistemic decolonisation’, *Kronos*, 43, 1, 2017, 60-61. <https://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2309-9585/2017/v43a4>.

31 Yaeger, *Ibid.*, 636.

decolonisation is not merely a political but an epistemological and cultural project. Nonetheless, while Gandhi and Césaire centred their struggles around national and pan-national identities and at times lapse into essentialism, Mignolo opposes decolonial pluriversalism to modern universalism. Decoloniality is not a quest for lost origins, but a call for epistemic pluralism that questions the destitution engendered by modernity.

Colonisation of time

Arjun Appadurai misconstrues this point in his recent book review 'Beyond Domination: The Future and Past of Decolonization'.³² While comparing *On Decoloniality*, by Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, and *Out of the Dark Night*, by Achille Mbembe, he accuses Mignolo and Walsh of promoting 'a return to the precolonial past'.³³ Mignolo already dismissed this allegation and rightly proclaimed that none of his arguments supports this interpretation.³⁴ Appadurai, it seems, does not appreciate the complexity of decolonial thinking and therefore presents a reading that is partial at best. Whereas decoloniality probes the modern conditions of possibility that shape our thinking in order to circumvent them, Appadurai portrays its adherence to indigenous epistemologies as a matter of choice: 'Walsh and Mignolo recommend decoloniality, an outlook that embraces Indigenous modes of thinking and rejects those Western expressions of modernity imposed on much of the world through colonialism and empire'.³⁵ Mignolo's concept of border thinking, as discussed above, does not license such an easy freedom of choice. Since we are determined by modernity, we cannot simply replace it with 'an alternative, one that is rooted in Indigenous thought and practice about nature, community, and solidarity'.³⁶ Rather, decoloniality is a constant attempt to delink from modernity, while indigenous epistemologies and those of other cultures pave the path to surpass its presuppositions.

Appadurai's review, however, accentuates the gap between 'the distinct sensibilities of postcolonial and decolonial universes of sensing and knowing',³⁷ and hence is an important contribution to the ongoing debate between the two projects. Notably, he formulates, following Mbembe, a postcolonial vision of decolonisation and juxtaposes it to decoloniality.³⁸ If decoloniality attempts to escape the grip of modernity, for Appadurai decolonisation should be achieved without 'requiring the wholesale abandonment of the complexities of modernity'.³⁹ Since Europe and France in

32 A. Appadurai, 'Beyond Domination: The Future and Past of Decolonization', Review of *On Decoloniality*, by Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, and *Out of the Dark Night*, by Achille Mbembe, *The Nation*, 9 March 2021. <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/achille-mbembe-walter-mignolo-catherine-walsh-decolonization/>.

33 Ibid.

34 W. D. Mignolo, 'Response to Arjun Appadurai's book review', *Facebook*, 7 March 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/walter.mignolo.9> (accessed 16 April 2021).

35 Appadurai, *Ibid.*

36 Ibid.

37 Mignolo, 'Response to Arjun Appadurai's book review'.

38 For a decolonial critique of Mbembe, see Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'The emergence and trajectories of struggles', 71.

39 A. Appadurai, *Ibid.*

particular do not extend ‘the universal values of reason, equality, and freedom... to its own Black and brown citizens even today’ and ‘have engaged in a massive effort to place their colonial subjects outside the space where solidarity, humanity, and conviviality properly belong, Africa can become ‘a model for the decolonization of the planet’ and a source of ‘global emancipation.’⁴⁰ This vision adds a surprising twist to the plot of the Enlightenment: modernity can realise itself in sites and through bodies that it initially rejected. This postcolonial unity of opposites, however, camouflages the destitution entailed by modernity, whose completion marks the final dismissal of its competing epistemologies.

Appadurai’s critique ensnares decoloniality in a double bind. By responding to his criticism, decolonial thinking enters a conversation whose terms were dictated by the modern articulation of time. The charge of regressionism is akin to what Foucault dubs ‘the “blackmail” of the Enlightenment’:⁴¹ ‘you either accept the Enlightenment and remain within the tradition of its rationalism... or else you criticize the Enlightenment and then try to escape from its principles of rationality...’⁴² Likewise, the linear notion of time promoted by modernity imposes two options: you are either progressive or reactionary, forward-looking or stuck in the past. The conclusion of Appadurai’s review makes this binarism emphatically explicit: ‘One book points us to a more desirable past [Mignolo and Walsh’s], another [Mbembé’s] to the future.’⁴³ Foucault ‘escapes’ the ‘blackmail’ by rendering its choice dubious. Since we are ‘historically determined, to a certain extent, by the Enlightenment’, the issue at hand is not if we are for or against it, but ‘what is not or is no longer indispensable for the constitution of ourselves as autonomous subjects.’⁴⁴ Mignolo also accentuates the impact of modernity on the horizon of our thinking, as discussed above, but his goal is to overcome its presuppositions and promote epistemic pluralism.

Appadurai’s critique of decolonial regressionism is predicated on what became a common-sense in the modern attitude towards history (or better still, the approach of history i.e., historicism). The French historian François Hartog argues, following Reinhart Koselleck, that up until the 18th century the dominant historical approach adhered to the principle of *historia magistra vitae*. The view that history can guide the present assumes a continuity between past, present and future. This regime of historicity was replaced at the end of the 18th century by a future oriented order that introduced new conditions of possibility into the discourse of time. Hartog ascribes this shift to the ‘rift in time which was the French Revolution.’⁴⁵ Since the past could no longer explain contemporary political occurrences, the study of the past had to redirect itself towards the future and to replace the notion of historic recurrence with a linear concept of progress. This future oriented regime came to an end with the fall of the Berlin Wall that marks ‘the end of an ideology that had always regarded itself

40 Ibid..

41 M. Foucault, ‘What is Enlightenment’ in P. Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 42.

42 Ibid., 43.

43 Appadurai, Ibid..

44 M. Foucault, Ibid., 43.

45 F. Hartog, *Regimes of historicity: Presentism and experiences of time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 11.

as the vanguard of modernity,⁴⁶ and succeeded by a regime that Hartog calls ‘presentism’: the sense that only the present exists.⁴⁷

Hartog’s archaeology underscores the contingency of our perception of temporality, but its limited Eurocentric vantagepoint prevents the consideration of other events such as colonisation and decolonisation and their impact on the modern regime of historicity and vice versa. Within the colonial matrix of power, the modern articulation of time had an important function. By constituting a linear and progressive temporality, modernity devaluates other traditions of knowledge that threatened the colonial epistemic stability. Hegel’s Philosophy of History epitomises this operation,⁴⁸ and so is Appadurai’s vision of the future. Similarly, the break in the modern regime of time should be explored in light of the gradual peripheralisation of Western Europe in the aftermath of decolonisation and the difficulties in charting a unified and linear progression in face of the cultural multitude that was suppressed by colonialism.

Appadurai does not specify what he considers as a decolonial reactionarism, and since Mignolo’s appeal for pluriversalism opens the door for various traditions of knowledge – not only indigenous Latin American as Appadurai claims but also Islamic, Chinese, Hindu and so forth – any epistemology that does not correspond to the norms of the European Enlightenment might be seen as a return to the past. This view leads to an evident, perhaps trivial, complication. While modernity led to an epistemic destitution, as Mignolo forcefully argues, it did not displace non-modern forms of knowledge entirely. Pluriversalism is therefore not only an ethical orientation, but – without losing sight of the Western epistemic hegemony – a better description of the dissemination of knowledge today. The alleged return to the past is in fact an acceptance of the multiplicity of the present.

The gap between Appadurai’s vision of decolonisation and decoloniality is thus not rooted in varying temporal orientations but competing articulations of temporality. His analysis of Mignolo and Walsh’s project is predicated on an order of time that decoloniality endeavours to transcend: ‘Their joint goal is to make the case for decoloniality, the idea that a different form of decolonization or anti-colonialism was and continues to be possible in the Global South—one that does not rest on Western forms of knowledge but instead on Indigenous epistemological styles and claims.’⁴⁹ Here again the debate is over the terms and not only the content of the conversation. If decolonisation were a historical stage or destiny, one should consider whether it can be accomplished through the ‘Indigenous epistemological styles and claims’ of which Appadurai is so suspicious.⁵⁰ The phrasing however is misleading. The restitution of nonmodern epistemologies is not meant to facilitate decolonisation but is a decolonial act by and of itself. By projecting decolonisation into the

46 Ibid., 146.

47 Ibid., XV.

48 Mignolo and Walsh. *On Decoloniality*, 110-111.

49 Appadurai, Ibid..

50 Ibid..

future, Appadurai dismisses traditions of knowledge that allegedly cannot advance this ambiguous destination.

There is no harm, of course, in envisioning a better world nor even in imagining a utopia, as long as the cultivation of messianic yearning is not a pretext to expel other cultures and traditions of knowledge. For Appadurai, who uses the terms decolonisation and emancipation interchangeably,⁵¹ decolonisation should extract humanity from the ‘impasse of nation-state politics and globalized capitalist economics.’⁵² Decoloniality’s task, on the other hand, is both more modest and more ambitious; more modest because it shies away from grand-narratives, and more ambitious since it attempts to delink from the futuristic episteme that gives rise to them. Since both the nation-state and capitalism are predicated on the modern order of temporality and epitomise its culmination, as Hegel and Adam Smith respectively argue, it is perhaps the time to consider other epistemologies in order to escape the tyranny of the future.

51 For a decolonial critique of the juridical regime of emancipation, see R. Walcott, *The Long Emancipation: Moving Toward Black Freedom* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2021).

52 Ibid..