In Conversation with Walter Mignolo: The Failures of Neoliberalism and the Roads to the Future

The failure of neoliberalism as the last attempt of the modern/colonial world order and global designs, to homogenize the globe precipitated what was unavoidable after 250 years of Western Civilization building and 250 of hegemony. Western Civilization is the youngest of all civilizations on the planet. Its foundation started with the Renaissance and found itself at the pick in the second half of the eighteenth century. An emerging ethno-class took over in a series of revolutions (Glorious Revolution, American Revolution, French Revolution) and above all, the Industrial Revolution.

The world before 1500 (that is, before Western Civilization) was polycentric and non-capitalist. Western imperial expansion created the conditions for a polycentric and capitalist world order which is the one we are already living in. One of the big questions we can ask ourselves is: what are the roads to the future. I see three major global designs in the making: re-westernization, which is the project of Barack Obama since his first day as President (c.f.: his discourse in Cairo and the recent declaration of the 21st Century as the American Pacific Century); dewesternization, a tendency with two trajectories: the secular politico-economic dewesternization lead by East Asian states and intellectuals and now being joined by African and Latin American countries; and the politico-religious dewesternization that we can find in countries with a predominant Muslim population from Iran to Malaysia and Indonesia; and decoloniality, a tendency that was announced by Sukarno in the Bandung Conference, that unfolded in Africa, South America and the Caribbean and that, today, it is the project of the political society rather than States or Institutionalized Religions that more often than not tend to prevent the unfolding of the political society. Neither to say, none of these tendencies are homogeneous and fixed in one place. But they can be clearly distinguished as three main designs of the roads to the future.

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