A POST-WESTERN ACCOUNT
OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITAN
SOCIAL THEORY

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to propose a conceptually post-Western centric and critically oriented theory of cosmopolitanism capable of cutting across disciplinary and epistemic boundaries. Such an account moves beyond contemporary versions of critical cosmopolitanism and decolonial theory. The paper sets out a critical reconstruction of the concepts of cosmopolitanism and decolonialism with the goal of overcoming the frustrated potential contained in the two approaches of critical thinking. The first is the critical cosmopolitanism of Gerard Delanty and the second by the decolonial theory of Walter Mignolo. It does this through creating a "border" for these works within the social ontology of the Japanese philosopher and historian, Watsuji Tetsurō. The outcome of this encounter between these three thinkers is understood as a post-western account of cosmopolitan critical theory. The paper will develop as follows. The introduction presents the work of Watsuji to the reader. Here the paper will set out his concepts of fūdo, aidagara, and emptiness. It also introduces the reader to the question of cosmopolitan space. The next stage of the paper sets out the triadic models of cosmopolitan critical theory presented by Delanty and Mignolo. It draws attention to how both accounts of human space are understood as diametric dualities: self, other and the world are separated and distinct. In both cases this fails to account for internal heterogeneity, limited as they are to abstraction. The third section sets out a conceptually post-Western centric account of cosmopolitanism as a synthesis of the work of Delanty, Mignolo and Watsuji and t begins by setting out a brief description of emptiness's use as an epistemic principle for cosmopolitan critical theory. The outcome of this synthesis is similarly a triadic model. This is composed of an ultimate unit of analysis being a post-individual subjectivity, that the encounter occurs within a concentric understanding of space, and the result of this encounter is a radical cosmopolitan imagination. This overcomes the present restrictions placed on the possibilities of the cosmopolitan imagination through expanding agency by safeguarding the infinity of otherness and simultaneously requiring the opening of infinity within self.

Keywords: post-western theory, cosmopolitanism, decolonial theory, Delanty, Mignolo.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to set out a conceptually post-Western centric and critically orientated theory of cosmopolitan social theory[1]. It moves beyond contemporary versions of critical cosmopolitanism and decolonial theory through positive critiques of Walter Mignolo and Gerard Delanty, which is then developed through a critical reading of the work of the Japanese thinker, Watsuji Tetsurō[2].

Both Mignolo and Delanty offer triadic models of what they describe respectively as critical cosmopolitanism. As we shall see both understand their endeavours in different ways. Delanty's rests on the individual as the ultimate unit of analysis, that this is universal, and that these two-components bring about the cosmopolitan imagination. Delanty, in maintaining the transformation and translational effects of modernity, argues that conjoining critical theory with cosmopolitanism provides for a non-universalising account of global dialogue that overcomes the intellectual and normative residues of Eurocentrism. However, as shall be discussed in this paper, though important his project fails as it remains tied to fundamental assumptions of Western thought. The claim that the cognitive order of modernity, as a context-transcendent principle, that all hold corresponding cognitive state, divides the world into diametric dualities of tradition vs. modernity, self vs. other. This assumption of the nature of social space restricts his project's ability to engage with a more conceptually confident post (de) colonialised world.

Mignolo's model provides an ultimate unit of analysis through the recognition of a socially embedded ethnic identity traumatised through colonialism. As this trauma was experienced in different ways across multiple locations such an identity is not universal but as a form of relative universalism that draws on multiple autochthonous epistemic and ontic locations. It is through the connection between these communities that the cosmopolitan imagination emerges develops, through which social and political experimentation can develop. Like Delanty, Mignolo, even more powerfully and compassionately, draws our attention to the fallibility of claims to certainty

which highlights incompleteness. However, Mignolo's totalization of reality either spatially or temporally, which is in many ways Manichaean, causes ambivalence in his account of difference and identity (Pappas 2017). His reliance on the ethnic as the unit of analysis indicates a totality that lacks the internal dynamics to provide a vocabulary through which to enunciate societal tensions beyond abstraction. This also forces us to question Mignolo's professed rejection of Eurocentric universalism as he himself set up a singular universal perspective.

In what follows the encounter of Delanty with the decolonial theory shatters critical theory's commitment to an inherently Eurocentric idea of historical progress and opens it to up to the prospect of relative universalism. However, in the contrary movement, of introducing Delanty to Mignolo, equally shatters the totalities through which the decolonial theorist represents the world. Through understanding the encounter between Mignolo's decolonial project and Delanty's critical cosmopolitanism as an originary though non-binary moment allows us to begin a moment of cosmopolitan creativity. To comprehend the significance of this encounter two things must be achieved. First, we need to consider what are the characteristics of the space of human history through which cosmopolitanism is practiced. In the work of Delanty and Mignolo they betray the potential and criticality of the cosmopolitan imagination as they understand the world as being constructed of diametric dualities; us vs. them, west vs. the rest, modernity vs. tradition (figure 1).

The distinctive characteristics of such a space are the assumed separation between systemic parts, the symmetry as a mirror image, and against the background of human history, a relative closure (see Downes 2016: 148). If we consider figure 1 in respect of the development of critical theory as a cosmopolitan endeavour. Though there is the recognition of a connection, humanity, both spaces are basically detached. We have the proposition of a separation of modernity v non-modernity, a West and the rest, of self, other and the world, through the assumed exceptionalism of western thought. In failing to recognise how the limitations of critical ideals were realised through the co-cognitive process of colonialization re-

Fig. 1. *Diametric dualities*

stricts the possibilities of an account of the cosmopolitan, rad-
ical or critical imagination, as it is hemmed in by axiomatic
principles. The decolonial project does recognise how the
"outside" effects the "inside". However, it fails to move be-
yond a dualistic critique of Eurocentrism. This, in turn, leads
to a failure to provide the normative basis for an all-inclusive
account, capable of considering the politics of "internal heter-
ogeneity" that emerges through its encounter with a West. It
does appreciate the relationship between the historico-social
identity of the colonised and coloniser, but because it views
back-condition, colonisation, as a diametric duality, self and
other, tradition vs. modernity, coloniser and colonised, it fails
to provide a means of enunciation for internal heterogeneity.

    In this sense, consciousness relates to social reality by limit-
ing possibilities. In both critical traditions, framing the world in
such epistemological and ontological terms, in a world of abso-
lutes, ensures that neither the critical nor decolonial theorist can
engage with each other productively. Such a conversation would
not aim to reject European thought or traditions merely as a form
of radicalism but in the acknowledgement of its role as only one
of many interpretative, historically informed, strands of thought
which are available to the thinker who wishes to draw from glob-
al resources[3].

    However, it is possible for a creative border between self-
other-world to be revealed. If we understand this relationship as
an assumed connection then an epistemic and ontic landscape is
revealed in which actors within different spaces act upon each
other, individually or societally, as a phase of reciprocal devel-
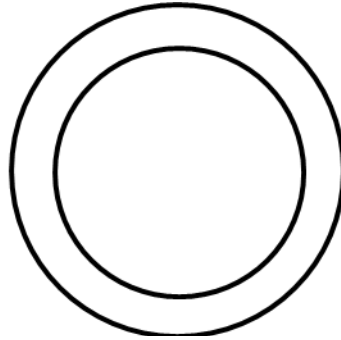opment. To facilitate this process, a concentric duality of human

Fig. 2. *Concentric duality*

space is proposed (fig. 2). Such an account of social ontology has the distinctive characteristics of assumed connection, a symmetry of unity, the co-cognitivity of knowledge, and against the background of human history, relative openness[4].

As would be expected, rather than a homogenous account of knowledge and how this is experienced, this represents an example of non-dualistic heterogeneity that is a pre-condition for co-creation, co-cognitivity and exchange of power[5]. In this sense, consciousness relates to social reality by limiting possibilities through the adoption of certain objects that are "convenient fictions" (diametric dualities) in respect of problem-solving-but it can also be creative. That is, it is not contrary to conventional experience, only in the claims of closure in respect of conventional fictions. This can only be understood against the background of concentric space as a pre-condition, in that it cannot be colonised by a single reference point but must be populated by "the infinite combinations" (Sheard 1993: 306; Price 2017)[6]. This entails not a fusion or integration but the notion of speaking from many places at once (Canclini 2014). Socially, this represents the possibility of the reimagining of truths through the exposure to the logic of concentric duality (emptiness, see below) as a heuristic tool that destabilises conventional knowledge for intra and intercultural communication. Individually this means that the "script" that one obtains through life, against the background of "convenient

fictions” is alterable. To do so, in moving away from perpetu-
al, conceptual and linguistic reification, requires that the sub-
ject must gain independence from not only external coercion,
negative liberty, but that the structures of society must provide
the structures or conditions that would be required for that
self-expression is to be realised, positive liberty.

What, as social theorists, this understanding of social on-
tology is asking for us to enunciate analytically and normative-
ly is that though we are sharing the same space as a back-
ground environment, we will all experience it differently with-
in a socio-historical context and that this will be ontic. Here
there are spaces within space, with the focus of analytical and
normative attention being at the intersection of ideals and the
practices of life. That is, rather than viewing the individual
subject as atomistic, distinct, and antagonistic, it stresses the
non-distinction between “out there” as in social space, and “in
there”, as in inside one’s head. Through focusing our attention
on the effects of the co-cognitive construction of knowledge
within societies leads to an account of agency informed by
praxis, constructed and experienced through the body, emo-
tions, memory, cultural knowledge, opportunities, and ten-
sions[7]. In providing an understanding of the social as located,
co-cognitive and interconnected, allows for that “smoke” to
be changed and for analysis to articulate injustices beyond an
exclusive emphasis on abstractions which are far from neutral.
Here, not only are self and societal advances highlighted but
also limitations and responsibilities.

However, the creativity required to navigate the proposed
account of cosmopolitan space will not come from old ways of
seeing and acting in the world. What is required is a way of
thinking for the cosmopolitan to engage with concentric
space. Here we turn to the work of Watsuji. But before
providing a cosmopolitan way of navigating cosmopolitan
space, as most readers will not have encountered Watsuji be-
fore, it is worth briefly outlining his key concepts.

Rather than present the individual as the homo economi-
cus, or as the norm-following and role-playing actor of the
homo sociologicus, Watsuji was instead concerned with ex-
ploring how ethical practice is enacted within concrete human

relationships[8]. Watsuji's two-stage social-epistemology of *fūdo* and *aidagara* stresses the inter-dependence of the individual and society[9]. Watsuji's concepts of fūdo (milieu) and aidagara (betweenness) gives a two-stage account of a relational socio-epistemology. Drawing on the Sino-Japanese linguistic tradition, fūdo literally means wind and earth. In the concept of fūdo Watsuji aimed to "uncover" the fundamentally social and intersubjective nature of human existence, and the resulting definition of human existence, Ningen Sonzai[10], as inextricably both individual and social. Watsuji did not treat fūdo as solely the natural environment, but as a concept in which biological, physical, and geographical features exert forces on human living and through which human beings in turn transform the environment. In this view fūdo is a relational web in which life unfolds.

Watsuji stresses how *aidagara* involves not merely reason, but the body, feelings, the will, everyday action-connections, gestures, vocal and bodily expressions, and that these are mediated through concrete things (fudo) and practical act-connections[11]. Watsuji argues that the immediate connection with another is possible because the physical body is an expressive vehicle that externalizes, via "practical act-connections", aspects of another's subjectivity in such a way that I have immediate perceptual and emotional access to them. Though aspects of their subjectivity stay transcendent it is the case that the body, as a communicative modality, makes manifest other aspects of subjectivity within the *aidagara* of social interaction (Krueger 2014: 57). This is not a merely cognitive account but indicates for Watsuji the "subjective extendness" of the social self.

Here we return to the question of how does a cosmopolitan thinker and the third of Watsuji's concepts to be used in this paper, emptiness. Through the dialectics of emptiness, Watsuji attempted to overcome what he saw as the one-sidedness of other ethical systems, in order to consider key dual-structures of human existence: subject vs. object, individual vs. totality, and other dualities that arise from these (private vs. public, space vs. time, climate vs. history, universal vs. particular, ideal vs. material, etc.). Derived from the con-

tribution of thinkers such as the second century (CE) Nāgār-
juna, the concept of emptiness appears in Watsuji's scheme as
double negation, or the two negations that characterize the
structure of being human. Watsuji writes:

> We cannot first presuppose individuals, and then explain the
> establishment of social relationships among them. Nor can we pre-
> suppose society and from there explain the occurrence of individu-
> als. Neither the one nor the other has "precedence" (Watsuji T 1996
> [1938]: 102).

As will be briefly discussed below there are issues with
Watsuji's presentation of emptiness. However, it is possible to
provide a reading that delivers the epistemic basis for a post-
foundational account of critical cosmopolitan social theory not
as a metaphysical account but as a basis for a non-dualistic
heterogeneous method of social analysis. Here such a post-
foundational approach does not attempt to erase completely
such ontological categories such as the individual or commu-
nity but only to weaken their ontological status and stress their
reciprocity. This ontological weakening does not lead to the
assumption of the total absence of all grounds, but rather to
the assumption of the impossibility of a final ground and an
awareness of contingency.

The paper will develop as follows. The first part of the
paper sets out Gerard Delanty's and Walter Mignolo's ap-
proaches to cosmopolitanism as a critical theory. From both
thinkers, what emerges is an account of Critical Cosmopolitan
thought that supports the hermeneutic of suspicion of every-
day life, is a site of contestation, and which also maintains a
radical interdisciplinarity of a relational social ontology. Both
also aim to positively address the problems of conceptual Eu-
rocentrism and its accompanying universalism. The second
part consists of a brief critique of their accounts. This focuses
on the themes of a relational sociology, transmodernity, and
the cosmopolitan imagination. The third section sets out a
conceptually post-Western centric account of cosmopolitan-
ism as a triadic model. This will begin with a brief description
of emptiness's use for the cosmopolitan, then go on to outline

a post-individual account of subjectivity as an ultimate unit of analysis.

COSMOPOLITANISM AS CRITICAL THEORY

In a manner that echoes the concerns of the decolonial theorist, Gerard Delanty's project aims to offer a solution to the neglect of globalization by critical theory through drawing on the critical aspects of cosmopolitanism. Though Delanty concedes that historically, ritical theory has neglected the implications of cosmopolitanism in respect of the development of theoretical perspectives, he argues that cosmopolitanism is relevant to both the renewal of critical social theory and in the need to address new challenges. To develop this argument, he draws on key defining features of the critical theory as developed through its Hegelian/Marxist heritage (Delanty 2012: 38).

Critical theory undertakes to understand social phenomena through the dialectical interpretative process of articulating contradictions. This is conducted through a process of self-problematizing and reflexivity. For Delanty it is Honneth's notion of a disclosing critique, the encounter of different viewpoints, that provides the basis for the cosmopolitan analytical perspective[12]. For Honneth (2000) the conception of critique is a "disclosing critique" that exposes the social world to new interpretations and existential perspectives. Here critique is understood as being immanent in social relations and the self-understanding of social actors. However, Delanty transforms Honneth's notion of a disclosing critique through the encounter with alternative and competing worldviews, or "civilizational encounters" (Nelson 1981).

Cosmopolitanism represents the confrontation with our own incompleteness and signifies a process, intensified through globalisation, of cultural translation and of the global in respect of its effects on consciousness (Delanty 2006: 38). This then requires cultures to adopt the perspective of the other in evaluating others' orientations (Arnason 2003: 139-157). By doing so, cosmopolitanism is transformed from a "vision of the world" to a critical account through the introduc-

tion of another key concept, immanent transcendence. As Piet Strydom notes:

[T]he sense of the concept of immanent transcendence which distinguishes Critical theory's form of critique from the rest, resides in the basic conceptual and methodological requirement that the adoption and exercise of the critical perspective must have an objective foothold in social reality (2010: 5).

Such a notion of immanent transcendence constitutes, as argued by Strydom (2011):

the core of the cosmopolitan imagination in so far as this is a way of viewing the social world in terms of its immanent possibilities for self-transformation and which can be realized only by taking the cosmopolitan perspective of Other (cited in Delanty 2012: 41).

It is in the recognition of this moment of transformative dialectic, maintains Delanty, that newness is created. Therefore, in ontologising social relations, the moment of immanent

transcendence offered through cosmopolitanism "provides [a] promising approach to connect normative critique with empirically based analysis focused on exploring news ways of seeing the world" (Delanty 2009: 2-3).

What Delanty seeks to find are sources of critical dialogue for the cultivation of critical thought. In stressing a relational account of social ontology, mediated through an account of culture that stresses the cognitive over the symbolic, it aims to go beyond the simple excavation of cultures to find globally shared values or occurrences of exchange and multiplicity. This offers the opportunity to re-imagine agency through multi-dimensional social negotiations of global cultures that overlap, confuse, and juxtapose one another. That is, that the subject must not only gain independence from external coercion, but that this must be coupled with an insistence on the right to choose in terms of views on the nature of "reality". As an account of "cognitive universalistic principles" and "moments

of openness", though not stated in such terms, the implication is the development of a global account of "negative liberty".

However, such a cognitive universalism is precisely the hegemonic "imaginary" that Mignolo is concerned about. This project, which draws significantly on the work of such thinkers as Enrique Dussel, Gloria Anzaldúa, Aníbal Quijano, and Emmanuel Levinas[13], aims to address the impact of epistemic hegemony in terms of the lived experience of colonialized communities. Whereas Delanty sees the project of modernity holding the "promise of new freedoms", though freedoms with the power to "unleash[ed] forces that have the tendency to destroy the future possibilities contained within it" (Delanty 2009: 19), for many those destructive forces were present at the initiation of the project of modernity. Here the emphasis is not on the abstracted application of universal claims or ideals that have no foothold in the social reality of the other. Rather, the aim is the development of an account capable of bridging the gap between theory and practice to provide loci of enunciation for claims of injustice[14]. Within such a framework, like the case of the emperor's new clothes, the grand claims of the universalizing impartiality of modernity are shown to be merely an eloquent secularized mysticism. This obscures the profound dehumanizing effects of socio-genic norms on the interpenetrative "practical-act connections" of self-other-world.

Rather than the "patented" claim to originality of the critical theorist as a companion to modernity, for Mignolo cosmopolitanism is critical when it acts as a critique of the Eurocentric presuppositions of cosmopolitan thought. From his perspective a benevolent interpretation of the march of progress and modernity containing the possibility of cultural translatability and transcendence omits an important aspect: some-one paid the price for this.

For Mignolo, acting as a curator[15], it is only in the overcoming of the dichotomies of modernity, when viewed from the exterior of modernity, that we can transform its historical, cultural, and civilizational legacies. For Mignolo, just as capitalism cannot exist without colonialism, modernity does not "stand by itself, since it cannot exist without its darker side: coloniality" (Mignolo 2000a: xi, 13-17)[16]. Therefore, the Mi-

gnoloian project aims to develop an account of self- realisation on the part of the colonialised that discards the dichotomy of colonised and coloniser. As a vision of the right of a people to be, positive liberty, capacities within the individual subject and peoples must be allowed to emerge[17]. To achieve this, it needs to address the ontic and epistemic subjugation that has been internalised through colonialism. Therefore, the need for the decolonial critique.

A principal goal of Delanty's project is the overcoming of the intellectual and normative residues of Eurocentrism[18]. The point being to develop a methodological approach that does not rely on European historical or epistemic influences through which to identify global sources of critical dialogue (Delanty 2009: 180; 2014: 11). Rather than his point of departure being the idea of multiple modernities (see for examples Taylor 1999; Eisenstadt 2003), which maintain a nominal universality, but which deprive this universality of any determinate historical content or analytical function, Delanty approaches the problem of modernity from the perspective of global history (Delanty 2009: 186-192). Here Delanty draws on Arnason (2003) who extends the civilizational perspective of Nelson (1981) and Eisenstadt (2003). Delanty's aim is to highlight the hermeneutical dimension of the 'entangled' nature of modernities in a way that recognises how such interconnectedness makes a degree of cultural translation imaginable (Delanty 2014:9). Therefore, rather than over-pluralise "modernity" Delanty puts forward the argument that "modernity" should be theorised in terms of "self-transformation" which take different forms against the background of widening networks and communication. If one argues that the universalising feature of modernity, its cognitive universalism, "is the drive to make all of culture translatable" (Delanty 2009: 194), then the difficulty of epistemic and historical privilege no-longer arises as we can no-longer "assume[s] that post-Western societies exist" (Delanty 2009: 181). This would then seek to identify those features of all civilisations that display internal logics of learning and is characterized by a new role for the imagination in social life (Delanty 2009: 180).

However, from the perspective of the exteriority of modernity as a "disruptive counterforce to the social practices which says, "do not tamper with me for I am good, and eternal" (Poster 1989: 3)[19], the project of decolonial cosmopolitanism challenges such a benevolent belief in translatability. Whilst the thought of the "critical theorist" has largely been insulated from the effects of colonialism, whether in respect of its effects on their own identity or the identity of the other, decolonial theorists have attempted to demonstrate how colonialism was constitutive in the making of modernity and the capitalist world-system. Therefore, if modernity is linked to Eurocentrism the notion of "transmodernity"[20] would operate to displace the teleological and linear progression of modernity and postmodernity[21]. For Mignolo, drawing on this intellectual history, otherness, "[r]ather than [being] an empty signifier, it works as a *connector* that can bring the diversity of local histories into a universal project, displacing abstract universalism and allowing for diversality as universal project" (Mignolo, 2000a: 92). For Mignolo, such a "critical consciousnesses and decolonization" will stem from those who were excluded from that exclusivist construction (Mignolo 2006: 323), when "'the exteriority' discovers itself as innocent" (Mignolo 2000b: 118).

This underlines the importance of constructing theoretical approaches that instigate research from the perspective of the marginalized through which to shatter the complacency of reality. Such research intends to show how the underlying logics of epistemic, social, political, and economic coloniality can be traced in the very distinct situations of the modern, "wretched of the earth" (Fanon 2008) but which indicate new forms of social being. The focus here is on creating a border thinking where epistemic traditions may intersect in novel and more democratic ways, (Mignolo 2000b). Reminding one of the disclosing critique, border thinking arises, "at the intersection of local histories enacting global designs and local histories dealing with them". Here the former is launched by a "desire for homogeneity" and a "need of hegemony" (Mignolo 2000a: 310), confronts the latter, the "subaltern perspective", in which the imaginary of the modern world system cracks. This reveals the instances where the modern/colonial system has

created spaces for new thinking and acting (Mignolo 2000: 23; Escobar 2004; Mignolo 2007).

The question now becomes how is it possible to frame the methodological approach in a way that maintains its post-universalism? For Delanty culture, like cosmopolitanism, is a discursive arena of claim-making which entails the imagination, that raises the possibility of critique of the status quo (Delanty 2011: 641). Culture and social structures, like cosmopolitanism itself[22], are sites of dialectical tension in which conflicting orientations are played out. It is situated in the present in relation to the past and future, and through which innovative solutions to societal problems are formulated (Delanty 2012: 341 and 350). On this basis, then, cultural phenomena can be theorized as more than simply differentiated but as fluid, fragmented, contested, diverse, and open to new forms of sense-making and narrative construction.

Therefore, it is through separating the normative, symbolic and cognitive dimensions of culture and in emphasising the latter (Delanty 2011: 640), that allows Delanty to posit a cognitive universalism with the potential to overcome not only objections of Eurocentrism but to all ethnocentric methods (Delanty 2014: 10). Cognitive universalism would see such values embedded in all cultures to varying degrees but would not see it as feasible for individuals to simply transcend their cultures. It would follow from this that what are often referred to as European values, such as democracy, freedom, autonomy, are not specific to Europe but were simply developed there first. Depending on how such values could be conceptually and culturally translated, the problem of Eurocentrism might disappear completely with increased global interconnectivity (Delanty 2014: 10).

In contrast to Delanty's development of connectors, Mignolo's project of decolonial cosmopolitanism aims to offer connectors on grounds that maintain the ontic and epistemic location of the subject. If "Modernity" was imagined in the house of epistemology (Mignolo 2006: 93), this has also included the distinguishing and defining of reason from the aesthetic. If, "decolonial corpo-politics of knowledge, perception, and being" (Tlostanova 2017: 38), stresses the exploration of

the aesthesis of society[23], such a "corpo-politics of knowledge" stresses that global localities are not only a "geohistorical location of the knowing subject, but also an epistemological correlation with the sensing body, perceiving the world from a particular locale and specific local history" (Tlostanova 2017: 38). At its most fundamental, aesthesis is about heightened alertness to the world as experienced through space and time combined; it involves "perception" beyond mere "recognition" or representation. In stating such a multi-dimensional account of the access to knowledge as ontology draws our attention to the "perceptual abstraction" or "semblance" whereby through symbolic forms the human actor partakes-physically or imaginatively-through which the vital dynamics of a life are captured. Here the decolonial imagination aims to undercut reality through the enunciation of the real through an understanding of sensibility as heterogeneous and accentuates the opportunity for coexistence and the interaction of the pluriversal within a multi-spatial transmodern world (Dussel 2002). It is a conscious and self-reflective critical movement for the development of practices of subversion and the emancipation of experience (re-appropriation of identity) (Tlostanova 2017: 33).

CRITICAL AND DECOLONIAL THEORY AS DIAMETRIC DUALITIES

Delanty and Mignolo do contribute to the development of the family of cosmopolitan social theories. The task of this family of theories is one of undermining homogenous claims of finality or closure. Whilst it is correct to state that the traditions of European and Latin American critical theory do advocate notions of emancipation, what emerges through the analysis of both thinkers is that they do so through maintaining a diametric dualistic understanding of social ontology. Both miss the space in-between.

The claim that the cognitive order of modernity, as a context-transcendent principle, is applicable to all without exception relies on a systemic account that divides the world into

Fig. 3. *Diametric dualism*

diametric dualities of tradition v modernity, self v other. From the imperious projection onto the human and non-human world, it cries out for humanity, "if only they could all be like us", but fails to recognise its own fragile subjectivity. This has allowed critical theory to disregard modernity's cognitive dissonance and its ability to exist and prosper alongside war, hunger, and poverty[24]. Delanty does embrace the notion of cosmopolitanism. However, he does so whilst maintaining modernity's fundamental claim to provide a singular cognitive-temporal moment. It is through this moment that the critical theorist augments reality as modernity. The objectivity produced by this moment saturates the social environment and the body as a "deep structure" through which the life-form of the west and agency-individual and societal- is justified and stabilised.

Cosmopolitanism then becomes a question of what story about us do we want to tell ourselves. Or is the assumption that that a civilisation may inflict such distress on the planet and human beings and get away scot-free? The "deep structure" of modernity and critical theory, whose "eyes see nothing", is only now at the start of a process of conciliation in respect of the damage done to the practices of life through epistemic and ontic violence of colonialism. The recognition that not only did colonialism negatively effect colonialised societies but also distorted the ontic and epistemic culture of colonising societies reflects the concentric and co-cognitive nature of knowledge as a practical activity. The point here is that a cosmopolitan project that fails to recognize its own incompleteness and its own set of initial circumstances, in relying on im-

perious accord, is incapable of reciprocity and cannot be a cosmopolitan non-assimilative project. This applies not only to the cosmopolitan response to the outside but also to the incompleteness of the inside. It is the relationship between inside and outside, the past and present, and the how the changes of the last 250 years have effected space, and the spaces in between that we live in and how we have responded to these changes, that has motivated this research.

Mignolo does appreciate how space has been affected by temporal claims to universalism. From such a perspective it resists the ethical universalism of Eurocentrism. The decolonial project is based on the fundamental proposition of the concentric duality of social space through which to analyse the causes and effects of ontic and epistemic violence. This acknowledges that it was the experiences of colonialism that mediated the co-cognitive self-representation of coloniser and colonised. It has rightly reacted to the temporal enunciations of modernity's ideals with a call for the enunciation of injustices of the global economic, legal, and political system from "other spaces". However, though derived from the acknowledgement of the co-cognitivity of space and for the articulation of injustices through the medium of transmodernity it fails to provide a site of enunciation in terms of the face-to-face encounter.

Focusing further, it fails in two respects, to provide a conceptual space to release the creative societal forces that it itself brings to the fore. First, though it recognises the concentric co-cognitive production of knowledge, it still maintains a diametric duality of space and time through relying on a systemic account that builds on totalities in absolute terms. It misses the relationships "in and between". A result of this totalising of space and time is to produce a reductivist method which excludes the internal heterogeneity that his very method is claiming to represent (Mignolo 2000: 103; see also Alcoff 2007: 99). Though the resources for such analysis are present within the decolonial project, transmodernity, it fails to follow through on the potential of its own fundamental proposition for the creation of new and inclusive forms of social and political experimentation. Once again social theory fails as it has no

resources through which to identify the infinity within self, internal heterogeneity, as well as the infinity of the other, beyond the rejection of the other: the west. As the potential of the globally enhanced imagination of the critical theorist is frustated, the potential for transmodernity to offer transcendence is restricted by its insistence of a diametric duality of the world-the West and the rest. In doing so, in proclaiming with righteous anger, "I have been wronged and I will now find my own way in this world, alone", it sets itself apart from humanity. Not a humanity of reason that it has rightly cursed, but the humanity of the tapestry of the human condition that decolonialism, by its very existence, proclaims into existence.

Second, in understanding human space as concentric duality, the outside effecting the inside, with co-cognitive creativity as a fundamental characteristic, the decolonial project offers the opportunity to transform knowledge and its production. If the epistemic and ontic effects of colonialism were pernicious within colonised societies, these were equally present within colonising societies. The decolonial rejection of decontextualized ideals represents a radical account of transmodernity that undercuts elite discourse to instead focus on the re-appropriation of self, social, cultural, economic, and political projects. However, what is striking is the failure of decolonial thought to advance exciting opportunities for social and political experimentation, as a decolonial project, beyond its own geography due to its captivity within a self-imposed separation of self, other and the world.[25]

The paper now turns to developing such an account of a post-Western centric account of critical cosmopolitanism in greater detail.

CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM PRACTICED WITHIN A CONCENTRIC DUALITY OF SPACE

The process of developing a post-Western account of critical cosmopolitanism begins by returning to the question of how does a cosmopolitan think? This may seem such a naïve
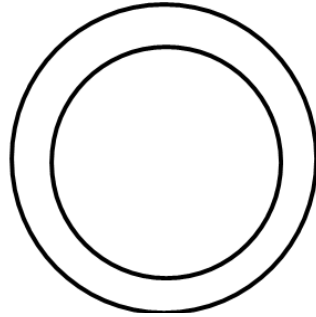
Fig. 4. *Concentric duality*

question. However, the answer to it is only assumed in the literature and lies at the heart of the problem of cosmopolitanism. Is one a cosmopolitan because one moves thought beyond the confines of methodological nationalism or is one a cosmopolitan through engaging with the consciousness that arises at the border where different forms of consciousness meet? Both Delanty and Mignolo do recognise the practical nature of co-cognitive interconnectedness of self, other and the world. But this "immanent transcendence" is prejudiced through a reliance on temporal moments of clarity, of beginnings, of uniqueness. This fails to recognise thought's own incompleteness and socio-historical interconnectedness across and between multiple sources of creativity. Both fail to return thought from "out-there" to "in-here", through which to provide for internal transformation-being cosmopolitan. Remaining "out-there" leads to assimilation and the reification of "in-here". Therefore, if an account of critical cosmopolitan thought is to overcome the frustrated potential of both the critical and decolonial projects, it must be necessarily be inclined to endlessly shatter the meaning of reality and legitimise practical creativity.

Cosmopolitanism is a spatial critique of the temporal. If critical cosmopolitanism's claim to evidence of incompleteness is to be supported, then it needs to offer a method of thought that is practical. To imagine other than thought, our own

thought, needs a neutral "place", an unbiased universal medium in which various cultures can meet, converse, and consider our interdependence and the effects on our own sense of reality. This would have to acknowledge one's consciousness' need not be fixed within an unchanging perceptual world accompanied by a stable conceptual system, but still capable of being grounded. A post-foundationalist, or positionless account, characterised in such a way proposes an ecology of knowledges and intercultural translation as an alternative to a general theory that cannot grasp the infinite diversity of the world. Can Watsuji's concept of emptiness offer such an account?

Emptiness[26] is a difficult concept to fully appreciate and Watsuji did not make this process easy for his readers[27]. Given that for many readers this will be a first exposure to the concept it may be useful to approach emptiness by describing what we mean when we say that a phenomenon, such as a table, is empty. To say that the table lacks essence is to say that it if our culture had not advanced this custom of furniture, what seems to us to be an obviously unitary object, might instead be correctly described as a collection of pieces of wood. It is also to say that the table depends for its existence on its parts, on its causes, on its material, and so forth. Apart from these, there is no table. The table, we might say, is a purely arbitrary slice of space-time chosen by us as the referent of a single name and not an entity demanding, on its own, recognition and a philosophical analysis to reveal its essence. That independent character is precisely what it lacks on this view. The point to take away is the view that entities do not bear their own essence within themselves. Rather, it their relationship and interdependence on other entities through which we give them meaning (Garfield 2002: 26). This draws our attention to the presuppositions about the conceptual and perceptual foundations of the world. The view that the world is comprised of independent, self-sufficient entities is a tacit, pre-conscious, pre- theoretical failure to engage with the contextualised nature of reality. Here the concept of emptiness is at odds with the conventional view of reality which takes the conventional view of reality to be more than merely conventional (Garfield 1995: 314). What I wish to highlight at this

stage is that the concept of emptiness is not a belief system about the metaphysical nature of reality, but a heuristic deconstructive method for conventional reality that does not rely on a metaphysical account to substantiate its claims.

Aidagara, predicated on the epistemic principle of emptiness[28], turns our attention to how we coordinate our inner experience with outer reality through the "nervous system of society." Watsuji's concept of *aidagara*, alerts us to the partiality of beginning social analysis from the individual or the social. Here the body becomes an epistemological site and is mediated by actual things, shared emotions, a shared environment, power, ideology, and institutions (also see Krueger 2020)[29]. As Krueger notes, Watsuji claims that the "the 'deep structure' of intentionality, as we might refer to it, is constitutively regulated by features of the betweenness [aidagara] within which that intentional activity first arises" (Krueger 2020: 9). Furthermore, as objective we learn "how to constitute intentional objects as desirable from others" and which "may be modulated by the sociocultural contexts in which these processes arise" (Krueger 2020: 11; 13). Here we have a sense of self-alienation as a lack of self-identification of one's own goals or desires as it is "appropriated" by an other.

However, *aidagara* is also subjective, with the potential for dynamic reinterpretation, renegotiation and re-appropriation of one's wants within the world of social relations. Whilst objectively *aidagara* lends itself to signification, subjectively it also provides an inexhaustible supply of otherness and an irreducible challenge to every established signification. Included in this challenge is that self can find exhaustible infinity: change[30]. In bringing the critical perspective of the critical theorist and the decolonial theorist together emphasises the tension between the ideal and practices of life. Siting this within aidagara provides the opportunity to incorporate both singularity, relationality and difference as a phenomenological analysis and the articulation of injustices beyond modernity, rationality and totality.

And yet, though this offers a rich social ontological landscape there is a persistent charge against Watsuji's work which claims that it tended towards the establishment of closed so-

cial systems[31]. As will be apparent, this would be a significant issue that will need to be addressed if, as this paper claims, the work of Watsuji is to offer an opportunity to format new questions in global social theory. Watsuji's equivalence of emptiness and nothingness gives rise to a tension, and it is a tension that is incompatible with a reading of emptiness as an epistemic concept, in that Watsuji seems to ground reality in it[32]. Rather than an ontic category for Watsuji it became an ontological concept that is incapable of providing a mechanism of societal challenge and transformation. In identifying Watsuji's vacillation between different forms of social ontology, it raises the concern that Watsuji's work whilst providing a means of analysis beyond individualistic or holistic societal analysis, would nevertheless fail to accommodate a critique of existing ideologies (existing *aidagara*), for the emergence of new forms of *aidagara*.

Characteristic of this approach to the study of Watsuji is *Translation and Subjectivity*. In this important work Naoki Sakai criticizes Watsuji's invocation of emptiness, as, claimed Sakai, by introducing such a conceptual framework was to present a "reductionist" account of personhood. On Sakai's reading, Watsuji's person is no more than the social construction, that is as a construction of a closed social structure, that defines their capability, subjectivity, and agency. As the argument goes, Watsuji's desire to posit the harmonious, seamless "imaginary" character of the Japanese nation, effectively argued for a system of society wherein individuals are completely subsumed into various roles. However, is this a fair reading of Watsuji's position?

The problem for the reader, once again, is that he did not make it easy to fully appreciate the significance of *aidagara* for the analysis of society and, if we extend beyond Watsuji's original intent, for societal transformation. However, the key to understanding the dynamic qualities of this socio-epistemology is in his application of emptiness. As Liederbach (2012) argues, it is possible to distinguish two meanings of *aidagara* that Watsuji presents in his analysis, and to find resources through which to overcome the difficulties that these meanings present. First, following his use of Confucius

thought, it is concrete relationships such as the family, children, and community that structure social relationships. Second, there is the use of the term to designate the ontological structure of human existence. The problem arises in Watsuji's presentation in that he makes no effort to distinguish both meanings.

Liederbach begins to unravel the problem by turning to Watsuji's investigation of spatiality. Liederbach argues that the movement involved in the double negation (emptiness) of the individual and totality hints at the problem of spatiality as the negation of the individual and its return to totality must, for Watsuji, be understood, as "movement of disruption and then of unification" (WTZ 10: 27; Watsuji 1996: 24; Liederbach, 2012:127). As this is a negation of multiple individuals then it is necessary for Watsuji to give a phenomenological description which will be achieved through an investigation of *ningen's*[33] spatiality.

Watsuji incorporates the Confucius concepts of *li* and *Dao* which when interpreted as "Ritual proprieties" may suggest a static, unchanging, conservative understanding of social reality.

However, as Confucius put it, "[t]he *ren* person is one who, wishing himself to be settled in position, sets up others; wishing himself to have access to the powerful, achieves access for others. To be able to proceed by analogy from what lies nearest by, that may be termed the formula for *ren*" (Eno 2015: 6, 30)[34]. As Tan (2017: 335) states, this means, understood through the idiom of Confucius thought, that within the network of social relationships one must perform one's roles in accordance with *li* (Hall, Ames 1998). Tan (2017) describes *li* as the pattern of the "internal structure" of *Dao* (Hall and Ames, 1987: 237), and that to broaden *Dao* is to observe *li.* Such an effort requires critical thinking where individuals apply the cultural resources and shared ideals found in *Dao* to particular situations in accord with *li*. Therefore, rather than rigid hierarchy, self-cultivation and articulation define the lives of individuals living in a *li*-ordered community (Hall, Ames 1998). Broadening *Dao* entails that the observance of *li* in-

volves not just an adherence to but also a critique and revision of prevailing beliefs and practices (Tan 2015).

The task of broadening *Dao* needs the cultivation of both the self and others. Therefore, what is expected is the continuing and expansive examination of the meeting place of the ideals that are taken for granted and the practices of every-day life. This presupposes that structures must be in place that are capable to provide the necessary conditions for the possibility of self-realisation. Here we are being asked to continually compare and contrast our actions with our proclaimed ideals within the space of practical activity. Furthermore, the assumption here is that those ideals have a bite in reality. This highlights that it is out of the space of "practical interconnections through acts" that a contextualised immanent transcendence can emerge.

As stated above the accounts of critical cosmopolitanism of Delanty and Mignolo are formed through triadic models. Though Mignolo and Delanty do emphasise the critical aspect of thought these are only partial accounts. To overcome this Watsuji's account of social ontology is introduced to the positive aspects of critical theory, the protection of the individual, and decolonial thought, the socio-historical identity and the promise of decolonial heterogeneity. However, Watsuji's work lacks critical perspective through which to enunciate an account capable of robustly critiquing over-positioning of individuality or the over-positioning of socio-genic norms[35]. The introduction of the individual of critical theory and the socio-historical identity of decolonial theory to *aidagara* provide a substantive critical perspective of how inside and outside are interconnected. The outcome of this synthesis is similarly a triadic model. This is composed of an ultimate unit of analysis being a post-individual subjectivity, that the encounter occurs within a concentric understanding of space, and the result of this encounter is a radical cosmopolitan imagination. This overcomes the present restrictions placed on the possibilities of the cosmopolitan imagination through expanding agency by safeguarding the infinity of otherness and simultaneously requiring the opening of infinity within self.

There is no sovereign self. Through the application of emptiness as a post-foundationalist epistemic principle, the proposed ultimate unit of analysis, the conceptual persona as a post-individual, combines the individual of critical theory and the socio-historical identity of decolonial thought within the concentric duality of Watsuji's account of socio-epistemology. In contrast to positioning the relationship of self, other and world within a space of diametric duality, the application of a concentric understanding of space reveals a social landscape that characterises the dynamic of change as connection, a symmetry of unity, the co-cognitivity of knowledge, and relative openness. Here, rather than Sakai's suggestion of emptiness acting to subsume the individual, the ontological (the objective) and the ontic (the subjective) are intertwined to present a reflexive perspective. Any distortion of either as privileged is an illusion and reification of Reality. Completeness is never achieved with internal heterogeneity as a necessary condition for this personally, locally, and globally.

The dynamics of this understanding of social space allows no distinction between the material and symbolic structures of society. As such this appreciates the exercise of agency as a phenomenon of intersubjective, inter/intracorporeal exchange. This is distributed within the dynamics of the human and natural worlds. Here, subjectivity, intersubjectivity, and objectivity are mediated through concrete things that are necessarily spatial and temporal. Such an account of the space 'in between' appreciates how all points of mediation, social, cultural, economic, political, and technological, between self, other and the world are part of a totality. This is preconscious, which gains immediate awareness within the consciousness of self through "the nervous system of society".

In stressing a move away from an overly concrete and diametric dualistic understanding of space, the account of critical cosmopolitanism presented in this paper focuses on an interdependent and co-cognitivist form of communication. The operation of *aidagara* within concentric duality provides for the infinity of otherness and simultaneously recognises the infinity of self within a necessarily contingent, hetero-plural account of space.

For such a radical sociological imagination, the political cannot consist in a vision for the future, institutions, or social practices as being necessary, but must necessarily intertwine the ontological vision with ontic reality as a never ceasing practical activity of expanded agency. In realizing the structure and limitations of one's own and one's own society within the concentric duality of space allows one to gain an awareness of the infinity of possibilities at the meeting place of the ideals of a society and their realisation in practice. This is possible through the subversion of objective *aidagara* by the subjective appropriation of the world that new worlds are imagined and not immediately at the level of structural transformation or state reinvention. That is, immanent transcendence that has a bite within the reality of a globalised and interconnected world of practical act-connections.

The decolonial project has produced a vivid social ontological landscape through its conceptualising of the meeting place of forms of consciousness. Here Watsuji shares an affinity with the decolonial movement in that he rejects absolute universalism and instead posits a multi-spatial transmodernity that challenges singular accounts of being human. In Watsuji we see a path of philosophy, arguably the first, of a global philosophy that tried to blend and learn from different philosophical positions. Watsuji's account of socio-epistemology offers a glimpse of a "border", a contextualised immanent transcendence, that emerges where forms of consciousness meet. This stresses the tensile reciprocity of the created and creating cultural interconnections across infinite geo-political horizons. This is only revealed through cultural, social, intellectual exchange and social movements that challenge the contextualised *aidagara* meaning of the subjective, the intersubjective and the objective that all societies hold.

However, the richness of borders only come through the nourishing of self-appropriation that is revealed through internal heterogeneity and the recognition of the mediation of agency. In this recognition comes the perspective to expand agency to initiate self and societal change. In rejecting the diametric dualities of self, other, and world, or the west and rest, and engaging with the cosmopolitan imagination as a practical

endeavour within a concentric understanding of space, locally and globally, offers us the opportunity to create a new vocabulary of global social theory. And it is into such an understanding of a decolonial pluriversal world that Watsuji's cosmopolitan embracing of various cultural and intellectual practices and methods offers further resources for the decolonial project.

CONCLUSION

The motivation behind this research is to take-up the opportunity to draw on global perspectives to present a problem-orientated conceptually post-Western centric account of critical cosmopolitanism. This must be capable of cutting across disciplinary and epistemic boundaries. Modernity is intellectually tied to the same roots of "emancipation", "liberty", "equality" and democracy stemming from the enlightenment. The same enlightenment whose values of abstraction and the separation of culture and nature that thinkers like Walter Mignolo and Watsuji criticize for its dehumanization of humanity. Of course, these values have demonstrated a readiness to flourish alongside poverty, war and violence. Through acknowledging the failure of hegemonic norms, such an account looks to the potential for a post-Western centric social and political theory that open in the confrontation with cultures alien to our own as being a reciprocal space of societal development. Here one needs to be clear on what is meant by the articulation of a post-Western centric account of social theory.

There are two meanings. The decolonial, and before them Watsuji, are correct when they show that novelty is created when multiple forms of consciousness meet. It is in the encounter between protagonists, in the revealing of anomalies and problems with current answers, that new questions emerge, and new perspectives reached. The second sense is that as has been shown in this paper cultures other than the West possess conceptual frameworks capable of enriching the vitality of the meeting space of self-other-world. This is not to simply reject European norms or values. It is only to politely

suggest that the reliance on such accounts signifies a lack of ambition in the face of a conceptually accessible globe.

Through bringing the thought of Europe, Latin America and South-East Asia together as a tensile synthesis is capable of: *a)* providing an embodied and localised ultimate unit of analysis, capable of overcoming the significant criticisms of cosmopolitanism such as its abstractness and the imposition of assimilatory value systems on local and global populations; *b)* that rather than providing an assimilatory answer to the problems facing the self, other and the world, that the synthesis was capable of serving as a critical hermeneutic resource of exchange for global relational sociologies; *c)* rather than act as a new answer, that it was capable of broadening the "questions" available to social theory for the analysis of the general conditions of democratic society and for the development of innovative and exciting opportunities for individual and societal development.

This is opposed to understanding the heterogeneous identities of self, other and the world within a diametric dualistic relational space, as totalities that critical theory and decolonial theory establish. Despite their pronounced and real differences, in both accounts critical self-reflexivity fails as it is assumed that people must be in the corresponding causal internal states. Instead, Watsuji offers an account that can be understood as providing a spatial understanding of this relationship as a concentric duality. The distinctive characteristics of such a space are interdependence, interconnectivity, and co-cognitive creativity. As stated, this can be limiting as objective, but when understood subjectively becomes a moment of contextualised immanent transcendence. This carries forward decolonial theory's concern with the shared, socio-cultural, historical, and contextual conditions of knowledge within existing power relationships and critical theory's concern for the autonomy for the individual. However, replacing diametric duality with dualistic concentricity produces an account of systemic social dynamics as hetero-spatial-temporal. This maintains the safeguards of the critical reflexivity of the infinity of otherness but simultaneously requires the opening of infinity within self. It is the tensile reciprocity between the dif-

ferent elements of the synthesis that provides for effective double reflexivity and the critical imagination of a conceptually post- Western and multi-disciplinary perspective of time, space, agency, and knowledge.

Drawing on the work of Watsuji allows for the inclusion within the speculations of social theorist's work several interesting avenues of thought that present a significant critique of modernity. Watsuji was a global thinker who drew on Western intellectual resources, but who then transformed these through his cultural indebtedness to Buddhist and Confucian traditions. These latter traditions, with their epistemological emphasis on practical interconnections, provide a unique and bold vision of the potentiality of social analysis. The crucial point to keep in mind here is that Watsuji, or this paper for that matter, is not suggesting that a "Asian" vision of social analysis is more suitable than the cluster of traditions generated in the "West" or the "South". Rather, the aim has been to set out a cluster of ideas that provide a hermeneutical point in which all traditions are capable of communication. Introducing the diametrically opposed premises of critical theory and of decolonial theory to the concentric space of aidagara provides a theoretical space to overcome the impasse of either/or of social theory. The point is to find a means of inter-cultural critique that acknowledges the ontic reality of our shared life.

Watsuji, as a cosmopolitan thinker recognised that all hegemonic systems of thought, were broken and that the intertwining of the ontological and the ontic provided a positive challenge to the limitations of our social consciousness. In doing so Watsuji pursued the goal of an account of global social theory that may allow for the development of new forms of positive and humanistic thinking. Where Watsuji investigated the potential of the European mind for localised circumstances, it would follow that that process continues through a postwestern centric project of critical social theory. This is theoretically enabled through the shifting of analytical attention from a homogenous and ideal understanding of culture or the exclusivity of the individual, to the meeting point of the imaginary axis of ideals and the practices of life. What the model also allows is for the general analysis of the effects of colonisa-

tion on the practical act-connections of identity-formation, so-
cial freedom, capitalism, and democracy.

NOTES

[1] In this paper the terms Eurocentric and Western-centric will be used inter-
changeably. By conceptually post-Western centric the paper is referring to a focus on
a practical relational sociology as an ultimate unit of analysis for critical cosmopolitan
theory. This is contra to the individual or economic unit of mainstream social, eco-
nomic, and political thought, and its accompanying universalism.

[2] As will become apparent as the paper develops Watsuji's work stresses the re-
lational and embedded nature of the human condition. And of course, one could co-
opt him into the cosmopolitan tradition of Beck and Apphia which stress an embed-
ded aspect of cosmopolitanism. However, Watsuji's work is radically post-individual
and would therefore consider such works as partial and incomplete.

[3] This is an important point as some may consider that this paper represents
"another" form of critical cosmopolitanism. This would be to misunderstand the pro-
ject. This is not intended as a call to reject the accomplishments of the human scienc-
es, only to recognise that an understanding of the human condition developed
through the Eurocentric perspective is a view from somewhere and that productive
and meaningful interaction with other accounts of the human condition may provide
moments of creativity. As the initial synthesis of critical theory and decolonial should
indicate, the aim is to draw into conversation the positives of global intellectual tradi-
tions in an effort to address social, political, environment and economic problems, but
also to allow for creativity that the meeting place of thought/praxis to be revealed.

[4] It is important to note that, following Lévi-Strauss, in human societies diamet-
ric and concentric relational structures co-exist. However, this paper is concerned
with providing an account of critical cosmopolitan thought. Therefore, the emphasis
will be on overcoming the obstacles to political and theoretical experimentation that
are encountered through understanding human space(s) as diametric dualities to in-
stead focus on understanding social ontology as a concentric duality. I would like to
note my indebtedness to the work of Dr. Paul Downes for his work on Lévi-Strauss
which this project has applied to the relational sociology of Watsuji. See Downes,
2012; 2016.

[5] It needs to be stressed, and as will be discussed later in the paper, there is no
distinction between the material and symbolic systems of a society.

[6] Sheard and Price are describing what they understand as kairotic space. As
will become apparent as the paper develops the sentiment of their work is present
within this paper.

[7] Again, to reaffirm, there is no distinction between material and symbolic structures.

[8] He writes that any ethical consideration "which abstracts away from the prac-
tical connections between person and person" is inadequate in that it overlooks the
intercorporeal source of ethical agency (Watsuji 1996: 9). Watsuji's two-fold account
of socio-epistemology also provides a novel perspective on the relationship between
human and non-humans, and the environment. Until recently such relationships have
simply been ignored. However, the recent announcement of the arrival of the An-
thropocene geological age (see Delanty 2017). For an example of the application of
Watsujian perspective on environmental concerns see Droz 2019), has sparked con-
siderable interest in human beings' relationship with the environment. Watsuji's ac-

count of socio-epistemology, with its emphasis on the relational aspects of self and society, stresses the need not to understand nature as being opposed to culture, but as the intertwined state between physical natural phenomena and humanity.

[9] In respect of the practical activity of cosmopolitanism, it is important to note that though Watsuji drew on his Buddhist, Confucius, and Shinto heritage, he was also highly engaged with Western philosophical works. A prominent example of this later engagement was his work with Heidegger's Being and Time. Furthermore, as will be made clear later in the paper, though Watsuji did not include a perspective in respect of societal power or critique in his work, the synthesis of Delanty, Mignolo and Watsuji does provide such a perspective.

[10] The translation from Japanese to English of the concept ningen sonzai as human existence does not adequately cover the precise meaning that Watsuji meant to convey. Watsuji is attempting to go beyond the ontic description of the fact of a self in relation and to radically reconsider existence (sonzai) as fundamentally linked to relational ningen. Ningen, is something that is often discussed in the literature on Watsuji, and it means self, other, a person, and people (plural). However, it is important to stress that for Watsuji the character for gen or aida, highlights that ningen is "between/amongst people". Sonzai can be translated as existence. However, Watsuji goes to great lengths to distinguish sonzai from Sein, pointing out how sonzai emphasizes being in relationships both spatially and temporally.

[11] This as Krueger observes, provides "the material scaffolding both structuring the lived space of betweenness (i.e., by making aspects of one's 'inner' subjectivity available for direct perception), as well as motivating the back-and-forth dialectic" (2014: 62-63).

[12] Of course, as was rightly pointed out by one of the anonymous reviewers Honneth's work spans a wide range of theoretical and practical concerns and cannot be reduced to this idea. However, the point is to develop Delanty's work, and what he draws from Honneth. However, as will be developed later in the paper, the application of the synthesis, especially Watsuji's concept of aidagara to critical theory, does provide a significant challenge to Honneth's defence of political liberalism.

[13] The influence of Levinas's thought on Enrique Dussel and then subsequently on Mignolo can be traced back to 1973. Previously, Levinas had stated that "among the millions of human beings who encountered misery and death, the Jews alone experienced a total dereliction" (Levinas 1990). But during a meeting in 1973 Dussel challenged this claim: "What about the fifteen million Indians slaughtered during the conquest of America, and the thirteen million Africans who were made slaves? Aren't they the 'other' you are speaking about? What about all of us who are not Semitic?" (Dussel 1999). The story told is that Levinas's reply was that it was for theorists like Dussel to consider. Dussel writes: "The real overcoming of the [ontological and dialectical] tradition [...] is found in the philosophy of Levinas. Our overcoming will consist in re-thinking the discourse from Latin America" (Dussel 1973). Dussel then develops a de-colonised "other" through which to infuse liberation philosophy with Levinassian depth (Dussel 1973: 161). Whilst this may appear to be a moment of liberation of the "Latin American" mind from the restrictions of the European mind, one could also see it as a missed opportunity to break-out of accounts of social theory built on totalities or diametric dualities

[14] See also Clive Barnett's work on the focus of theory being the identification of injustice rather than ideals (Barnett 2017).

[15] I would not wish this to give the impression that I in some way wish to detract from the intellectual and practical accomplishments of Mignolo. This would be far from the case. From my perspective Mignolo acts as a curator, in the sense of a precise technical term, in bringing together substantial ideas to protect and develop them as a unified a vision. It is in this role, that is in the bringing together of diverse ideas, that is the interest of this paper. Also, see Wood (2017: 53) in which he argues that in re-

spect of epistemic decolonial projects Mignolo's work could be described as providing a metanarrative account.

¹⁶ Though this paper is concerned with the critical cosmopolitan project of Mignolo it is important to note that he is also concerned with re-imagining the global economic system.

¹⁷ Caruth argues that "Through the notion of trauma […] we can understand that a rethinking of reference is aimed not at eliminating history but at resituating it in our understanding, that is, at precisely permitting *history* to rise where *immediate understanding* may not" (Caruth 2015 [1996]: 11). In Africa, concern has been expressed at the use of Western models of self in the field of trauma counselling. Gilbert reminds us of the fact that each culture provides its members with a conceptual framework for making sense of illness and emotional distress (Gilbert 2006). However, the theoretical assumptions that underpin counselling interventions are based on models of human nature and emotional distress that stem directly from the implicit cultural assumptions about the 'Self' within North American/European cultures.

¹⁸ Whilst in the past he had not confronted the issue of Eurocentrism in his May 2014 paper he directly addressed this issue, or the perception of, which he acknowledges is a serious hindrance to the development of a cosmopolitan social science.

¹⁹ Of course, Poster was commenting on postmodernism, though the sentiment may be recognised by Mignolo.

²⁰ Both Dussel and Quijano have developed their concepts of transmodernity and of the coloniality of power, respectively, with a strong linkage to questions of knowledge and questions of reason. Quijano writes that the concept "coloniality of power" implies "the hegemony of Eurocentrism as epistemological perspective" (quoted in Mignolo 2000: 54). But it should be noted that, in contrast, although critical of modernity, Dussel (1993) proposes the concept of "transmodernity" to allow for what might be, in a Hegelian way, a sublation of modernity, rather than its sheer dissolution.

²¹ Theoretically, this renders even the most anti-Western postmodernists still complicit with the temporal concepts of colonialism and its effects on the other.

²² Recalling the link between "world disclosure" and immanent transcendence.

²³ Mignolo's aesthesis project argues that if aesthetics is indeed modern/colonial, has produced a normativity that has colonized the senses and in doing so it has excluded localised practices of art. As an alternative account decolonial aesthe-Sis as an option for critique and artistic practices that aim to decolonize the senses see Vazquez, Mignolo 2013.

²⁴ The response from the critical theorist would be to argue that the history of critical theory has been one of countering the obscenities of European praxis. This would be true to the extent that critical theory has come to dominate social theory. However, with the emphasis on Europe, such attention has failed miserably to account for racism and has similarly failed to open the theoretical mind to the effects of colonialization, war, poverty, and institutionalised violence on the psyche of democracy. In this sense critical theory has no foothold in reality. Whilst it would be true to say that critical theory was and has always considered itself an unending narrative, it would also be correct to state that it has failed to provide a site of theory capable of global conversations and not considering itself an exception to human consciousness.

²⁵ This charge could also be levelled at the project of critical theory. However, see Allen 2016.

²⁶ And yet, though Watsuji does draw on his Buddhist heritage to develop his work, a further complication emerges in his conflation of emptiness, developed from Mahāyāna Buddhism and the Zen Buddhist concept of Nothingness, derived from Daoism though heavily influenced by Hegelian dialectics.

²⁷ There is not the space to provide a detailed account of Emptiness, let alone an account of Watsuji's use of the concept. Emptiness is introduced to provide a concep-

tual means to navigate space critically-that is without partiality of historical dominance or as a consequence of a rejection of that dominance through the presentation of a new totality. Derived from the contribution of thinkers such as the second century (CE) Nāgārjuna; see (Priest 2013; Priest, Garfield 2002), the concept of emptiness appears in Watsuji's scheme as a double negation that characterizes the structure of being human: "On the one hand, the standpoint of the acting 'individual' comes to be established only in some way as a negation of the totality of ningen […] On the other hand, the totality of ningen comes to be established as the negation of individuality […] These two negations constitute the dual character of a human being" (Watsuji 1996: 22).

[28] The reader will recall this quotation from his work: "we cannot first presuppose individuals, and then explain the establishment of social relationships among them. Nor can we presuppose society and from there explain the occurrence of individuals. Neither the one nor the other has 'precedence'" (Watsuji 1996 [1938]: 102).

[29] I wish to thank Joel for providing an advance copy of his excellent study.

[30] This requires a paper in itself. However, I believe that an example may provide an insight into this claim. Hopefully all of us have been in love or have children. It is a very special moment when we look in the eyes of our children or lovers and see absolute infinity, uncontrollable and undefinable within them. And, hopefully you have experienced of the point where it reaches back into oneself to reveal infinity within ourselves.

[31] See Parkes for a substantial rebuttal of claims of Watsuji's and the Kyoto School propagation of fascist support for the Japanese government during the 1st half of the 20th century 1997; 2009.

[32] See note 26 above.

[33] To recall that Ningen means self, other, a person, and people (plural). However, it is important to stress that for Watsuji the character for gen or aida, highlights that ningen is "between/amongst people".

[34] In the Analects, Confucius never formally defined Ren. It has been translated as benevolence, love, altruism, kindness, charity, compassion, magnanimity, humaneness.

[35] However, it is important to note that such a critical project was not Watsuji's aim. His concern, as noted above, was to investigate the ethical systems of society.

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