

Editorial

THE ESSAYS in this dossier are the result of the course “Interreligious and intercultural dialogue from a decolonial perspective”, which took place between May and June 2017 at the CEIICH in the UNAM. In this course, I proposed to link a decolonial theoretical perspective to the topic of “intercultural dialogue” and, beyond, to “interreligious dialogue”; anyhow, this last topic turned out to be the point of departure to explore more profound dialogues, linked not only to religious phenomena but to sacred traditions and spiritualities. During the course, emphasis was put on this last aspect due to the fact that the topic of “the Divine” (in its different expressions), although central to decoloniality, has been poorly studied. Moreover, it has been marginalized within secularized social sciences—and this not just in Mexico, but in most occidentalized universities throughout the globe. This vacuum towards the study of “the Divine”—and, beyond, its limitation through a concept of culture (which is, at the same time, associated to the colonized and to the “other” of modernity)—led the participants of this volume to research deeper than which philosopher Enrique Dussel has described as the “spaces denied and oppressed by modernity”.

Within this context, most of the essays in this volume take on decoloniality departing from phenomena linked to “the Divine”; those essays which do not relate to it, explain other topics departing from the lens of decolonial thought and critical intercultural dialogue. The dossier articulates a perspective which proposes new research questions toward the ways knowledge is produced. Further, it firmly questions the absence of the topic of “the Divine” in the social sciences as well as its study from the sole lens of “culture”—or its conceptualization from universalist approaches toward “religion”. At the same time, the essays open a reflection about the disciplinary division in modern social sciences. The essays put forward a series of questions around epistemic production and eurocentrism in the social sciences because there cannot exist an intercultural dialogue which denies the sacred link(s) the participants of these dialogues carry with them.

The essays address different topics from a decolonial perspective. In the opening essay, “The margins of interreligious dialogues. Spirituality in the zone of non-being”, Gabriela González Ortuño presents a research panorama from the perspective of those spiritualities located in the “zone of non-being” and

addresses the topic of the borders between those who can and those who cannot participate in interreligious dialogues. In the following essay, Vittoria Aino explains the case of the *nuntajykiwi* (popolucas of the Sierra) of Santa Rosa Loma Larga (Veracruz), arguing that their forms of spirituality are analyzed and deformed through the naturalization of the concept “religion”. The author describes a situation which creates asymmetries in the field of communitarian interreligious relations and, also, within the legislation which regulates the religious field in Mexico. The third essay, of my authorship, questions epistemic production and the impact of those social sciences which apply universalist and eurocentric definitions to social reality; moreover, it proposes an intercultural critical dialogue between modern social sciences and forms of knowledge linked to “the Divine”.

At this point, where Enrique Dussel’s concept of Transmodernity must be explored in depth (as the majority of the articles in the dossier dialogues with this perspective in one way or the other), Abdiel Rodríguez Reyes’s contribution “An approach to Enrique Dussel’s project of Transmodernity” explains the philosophical context in which the term Transmodernity appeared. Moreover, the author explains the terms “modernity” and “exteriority” in Dussel’s work, thus explaining the political project of a transformation in the sense of a “transmodern pluriverse”. Having engaged in this topic, the dossier continues with two essays about Islam in Mexico. In “Beyond the *Islamic World*: a decolonial anthropological reflection towards an analysis of islam in Mexico”, Cynthia Hernández González elaborates a critique toward anthropological scholarship on the topic of *being* Muslim in Mexico. The author proposes a critical perspective toward colonial history and coloniality in both Latin America and the Muslim World with the aim not to reproduce an esencialization of Muslims which is dominant in the monolithic discourse of hegemonic social sciences in the Global North. In the second essay on Islam, “Methodological observations. A decolonial approach towards an analysis of women and Islam in Mexico”, Ruth Jatziri García Linares analyzes the way in which decolonial thought can help to develop a critical view toward hegemonic discourses about Islam and Muslim women. The author describes her own fieldwork at the Northern Islamic Center (Centro Islámico del Norte) in the city of Monterrey, showing the understanding of a universal Islam which is, at the same time, a situated Islam. Both articles contribute to work on a possible South–South dialogue between Latin America and the Muslim World which must not be filtered by eurocentric thought.

In the last part, the critical perspective expressed in the previous articles extends to other topics which are also prey of hegemonic discourses. An example is the topic of international migration. In her article “Space, time and racism from a decolonial perspective: an outline to decolonize research on internation-

al migration”, Erika Herrera Rosales shows the asymmetry between different spaces and temporalities, which is determined by “the color line”. Here, the author explains how racism structures international mobility and annulates racialized zones, impeding thus the creation of dialogue situations with these zones. It is about spaces and temporalities which have been systematically invisibilized in contexts of global mobility, throughout colonial history and by coloniality. Further, another topic of interest and importance is human rights. In his article “Critical intercultural dialogue as a way to decolonize the hegemonic rationality of human rights”, Matías Pérez Volonterio analyzes the possibility of untangling the power logic which presents eurocentered rationality as the only one possible to legitimate human rights. In doing so, the author stresses the importance of active participation of those cosmovisions and rationalities, which are founded in “other” forms of logic and belief systems, in the debate about human rights. To end the dossier, Erik Serna Luna’s article “*Mandinga é fundamento. Capoeira’s intercultural and interreligious sociogenesis*” elaborates a decolonial reflection about *Capoeira*, showing that this afrobrasilian art is the result of a process which is rooted in the *sociogenesis* of the experience of the african diaspora which was enslaved and violently transported to Brasil. The author describes different forms of knowledge which emerged through intercultural and interreligious processes in the context of resistance and self-preservation during periods of colonial domination.

This dossier does not just aim to articulate a critique toward spatial-temporal constructions of power, but also to propose new ways to explore and explain such phenomena and create new possibilities for dialogue situations. The essays contained here articulate a research perspective which takes seriously Dussel’s concept of Transmodernity, thus exploring ways to envision dialogues with “those spaces denied and oppressed by modern civilization” —a process which takes into account, necessarily, those religions, sacred traditions and spiritualities which are an integral part of the existence of colonized, racialized and exploited communities. In other words: it is not from a secular perspective and the imposition of eurocentric, occidental thinking that a dialogue with that which has been denied and oppressed by modernity can emerge, but rather from the affirmation of ways of thinking, forms of knowledge and practices which are linked to spirituality and, therefore, permeated by it while articulating social and gender relations, as well as interactions with nature. ■

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