

Chapter 2

Facing the Three Ds: Decolonial Thinking, Disasters, Development – The Case of the Bahamas

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the author provides a unique set of insights concerning the policy of urban dynamics that is part of a complex process. The focus is on how disasters and development are understood and experienced through the lens of decolonial thinking based on a discussion of the displaced issue in a complex global socio-economic context of the city. Because the third world is associated with development needs to be reformulated in terms of dialogues from different enunciation loci, it becomes pertinent to consider the decolonial epistemic perspective in a space that constantly faces disasters that jeopardize its development in the framework of the effects on the environmental landscape and local development initiatives of Hurricane Dorian. Based on an informative discussion of an institutional level analysis, the author concludes with important insights about the case of Haitians in the Bahamas to demonstrate some interesting implications for (mis)management through NGOs.

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INTRODUCTION

A key challenge in migration studies today is to perform a mapping of regions of vulnerability in different parts of the world because in recent years, poverty has moved to the center of international development policy, because development itself has not been able to provide answers to human suffering and disadvantages, or to fulfil its broad promise to improve the situation of poor people. As industrial development, or technological progress, or cooperative economic activity, or business development are not notions that will automatically repair what is missing when people are poor.

Given the rise of new mobilities and the frequent discourse advocating borders, there is cause for concern. Globalization, ecological transition, regional planning, water problem, fight against global warming, and even current epidemics are all interrelated issues demanding more intellectual effort and new vigour to delve into a past tied to present histories. Yet, narratives of movement and disasters often move away from grounded approach in a broad historical perspective away from binary logics often dominated by border or not. As already mentioned in the introductory chapter, there is little systematic work on forms of displacement in a globality approach and its development potential as a whole for the environment.

It is with this question in mind that the attempt in this chapter is to apply a decolonial thinking conceptual framework (Mignolo 1993; Maldonado-Torres 2007, Antonio Benitez- Rojo 2013) to the field of geography, migration and memory studies (Figure 1). This grid illustrates an attempt to inscribe in a decolonial perspective how a different discourse can bring about a more constructive and proactive policy in critical times in Haitian history. This role could be enhanced if the diaspora is perceived of and approached as driver rather than spoiler of change. What Haiti needs more than the usual charity-driven approach to development is a paradigm shift through independent research: a shift that forces us to change how the Caribbean, and in particular Haiti is discussed in the academic circles. Benitez- Rojo explains that 'Caribbeanness is a system, full of noise and capacity and a non- linear system'. Yet, finding the right conceptual and methodological framework which accommodates multiple perspectives necessitates asking about the locus of enunciation from which the understanding subject perceives colonial situations. In other words, multi- locality is a way of re- mapping new geopolitics while applying pluriversality of knowledge to challenge conventional notions of history, geography, and economy. I am dealing with

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