


# Chapter 15

## Postcolonialism and New Places of Enunciation

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Postcolonial studies emerge as an interdisciplinary perspective that examines power relations, cultural dynamics, and the enduring legacies of colonialism in the humanities, challenging hegemonic narratives and expanding the debate to include marginalized voices from the “rest of the world.” This article investigates the persistence of cognitive colonization between the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America, drawing on the Zapatista concept of the long night of 500 years to reveal how knowledge from the Global South remains subjugated to European theoretical frameworks. The coloniality of knowledge reinforces epistemic hierarchies that silence epistemes, while scholars propose epistemologies of the South and an ecology of knowledges as alternatives. The analysis also explores the intersections between gender and coloniality, emphasizing how decolonial feminism confronts the exclusion of women. Building on Sérgio Costa’s work, we discuss the contributions of postcolonial studies to sociology by deconstructing the West/Rest dichotomy and advocating for hybrid enunciative positions.*

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## INTRODUCTION: COGNITIVE COLONIZATION - THE SINGLE-STORY NARRATIVE

*“...No morirá la flor de la palabra. Podrá morir el rostro oculto de quien la nombra hoy, pero la palabra que vino desde el fondo de la historia y de la tierra ya no podrá ser arrancada por la soberbia del poder.*

*...Techo, tierra, trabajo, pan, salud, educación, independencia, democracia, libertad, justicia y paz. Estas fueron nuestras banderas en la madrugada de 1994. Estas fueron nuestras demandas en la larga noche de los 500 años. Estas son, hoy, nuestras exigencias.*

*...Nuestra sangre y la palabra nuestra encendieron un fuego pequeñito en la montaña y lo caminamos rumbo a la casa del poder y del dinero. Hermanos y hermanas de otras razas y otras lenguas, de otro color y mismo corazón, protegieron nuestra luz y en ella bebieron sus respectivos fuegos.”*

*– Manifiesto Zapatista<sup>3</sup>, Cuarta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona, 1996<sup>4</sup>.*

Five centuries after Iberian caravels crossed the Atlantic, epistemic currents continue to flow predominantly northward. This chapter examines how the colonial histories of Portugal and Spain manifest today in academic knowledge economies—where Latin American thought remains raw material to be refined through European theoretical frameworks. From the Zapatista cry against *la larga noche de los 500 años* (the long night of 500 years) to Boaventura de Sousa Santos' call for “epistemologies of the South,” we trace both the persistence of this cognitive colonialism and the emerging counter currents that might finally decolonize Ibero-Latin American intellectual exchange.

The field of knowledge production, particularly in recent years, has increasingly focused on understanding and overcoming the mechanisms through which the Humanities and especially the Social Sciences symbolically and cognitively reproduce the colonizing relationship established by the West—with particular emphasis on the role of the Iberian Peninsula—with the rest of the world. Facing this cognitive colonization, a fundamental construction of the modern world through what Quijano (1989) termed the “coloniality of power,” academia has witnessed in recent years—particularly among scholars from the Global South—the emergence of critical debates challenging the modern/colonial imaginary. These discussions proceed from the premise that this world-system emerged from

a complex articulation of forces - of voices heard or erased, of memories preserved or fractured, of histories told from a single perspective that suppressed alternative memories, and of narratives that have been and continue to be constructed through the double consciousness generated by colonial awareness (Mignolo, 2005, p.89).

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