

What Good Is A Country

2010-2014 I was based in Bergen, Norway with a studio in cs55. This work developed out of conversations with four language class colleagues. Their journey to Norway, as mine, began with an understanding for the need for a cultural shift. We would meet to talk about our own journeys, about the space of change, what might sustain us through adaptation and struggle to belong. We played football, boules, discussed the problems of the world, shared food and felt the sheer effort to find a balance in a new place.

This paper was recommended by one of the group.

‘Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and De-Colonial Freedom’

Walter D. Mignolo

Abstract

Once upon a time scholars assumed that the knowing subject in the disciplines is transparent, disincorporated from the known and untouched by the geopolitical configuration of the world in which people are racially ranked and regions are racially configured. From a detached and neutral point of observation (that Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez describes as the hubris of the zero point), the knowing subject maps the world and its problems, classifies people and projects into what is good for them. Today that assumption is no longer tenable, although there are still many believers. At stake is indeed the question of racism and epistemology. And once upon a time scholars assumed that if you ‘come’ from Latin America you have to ‘talk about’ Latin America; that in such a case you have to be a token of your culture. Such expectation will not arise if the author ‘comes’ from Germany, France, England or the US. As we know: the first world has knowledge, the third world has culture; Native Americans have wisdom, Anglo Americans have science. The need for political and epistemic de-linking here comes to the fore, as well as decolonializing and de-colonial knowledges, necessary steps for imagining and building democratic, just, and non- imperial/ colonial societies.

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