constitutional republics intellectually and institutionally in an age of value pluralism as well as class conflict?" (p. 178). In the same passage, she glosses Rawls's influential reformulation of liberalism as an attempt "to counter his own version of the 'Weimar syndrome'" (p. 178). If one need not live in Weimar to have a "Weimar syndrome," in what sense is this a story about the intertwining of life and thought? Moreover, if Rawls "gives the most vivid, and to my mind, still unsurpassed, defense of the principles of political liberalism" (p. 184), why should American political theorists bother to read the work of German Jewish migrants? When one demands of Jewish texts that they yield a "universalizable kernel," one is liable to focus on aspects that confirm, rather than contest, reigning theoretical pieties.

Determined to relate a story about "the universal and the particular, then and now" (p. 185), Benhabib also misses Jewish sources that, although theoretically challenging, could actually strengthen her position within internal Jewish debates. In Chapter 5, she offers a powerful critique of the exaggerated political weight that Judith Butler accords to relational ethics in *Parting Ways: Jewishness and the Critique of Zionism*. Yet Benhabib shares Butler's belief that the political purchase of German Jewish texts derives, in part, from their ability to dissolve stubborn and hermetic forms of particularism. Benhabib credits Moritz Goldstein with this insight: "au fond, all cultures are hybrid; it is only nationalist ideology that tries to freeze the living and self-contradictory flow that constitutes cultures by hierarchically organizing them into an official center, leaving an unofficial, homeless marginality to the so-called others" (p. 18). Again, my point is not to challenge Benhabib's interpretation of Goldstein's influential essay, "German-Jewish Parnassus." Rather, the question is whether Benhabib's structuring oppositions (universal/particular, integral/hybrid) prove useful for navigating the most pressing political controversies in the Jewish world today, those surrounding Zionism and the State of Israel.

Benhabib concludes Chapter 5 by endorsing a confederal solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, following Arendt who "first proposed it in the 1940s" (p. 99). Yet there is a long history of federal, confederal, and autonomist proposals within the mainstream of Zionism itself (e.g., Ben Gurion and Jabotinsky) dating to the 1920s and 1930s. As historians (see Dmitry Shumsky, *Beyond the Nation-State*, 2018) have shown, alternatives to the nation-state proliferated in Eastern Europe, advanced by thinkers who identified as staunch Jewish nationalists. In other words, federalism is not the exclusive purview of Jews who celebrate "the radical hybridity of cultural identity and achievement" (p. 18). This diasporic history is missing from Benhabib's narrative, perhaps because it confounds the very oppositions (e.g., universal/particular) on which her analysis turns.

Indeed, expanding outward from the "universalizable kernel" forces us to confront the prospect that a "new modality of political togetherness beyond the murderous politics of nation-statism" (p. 100) may come from within nationalism itself. Such a prospect remains almost inconceivable within Benhabib's German Jewish universalist frame. Although the embrace of unreconstructed particularism may prove discomfiting for Western liberals, it would arguably provide greater political traction (in the Levantine context, at least) than rote invocations of "the multiplicity within each of us" (p. 32). Benhabib offers a powerful testament to the political agency of migrants and refugees. Yet the excisions and elisions required to extract universal principles from the concrete realia of Jewish lives can help explain why this brand of (Jewish) liberalism appears increasingly anachronistic, powerless against the chauvinist, undemocratic currents dominating Jewish politics today.

On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis. By Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. 304p. $99.95 cloth, $26.95 paper.

The End of Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South. By Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018. 392p. $104.95 cloth, $28.95 paper.

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— Jimmy Casas Klausen, *Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro*

On a flight from South to North America, I decided to watch *Beatriz at Dinner* (dir. Miguel Arteta, 2017), a film about Beatriz (Salma Hayek), a massage therapist who ends up attending her wealthy client's dinner party after her car breaks down. The center of attention at the dinner is a Trumpian real estate developer (John Lithgow), who brashly regales the gathering with his disdain for bleeding-heart liberal types. Consequently, worlds collide: Beatriz, originally from Mexico, is driven to heal those sickened and wounded by contemporary North American ways of living, whereas he destroys lifeways, including those south of the border, so as to build profitable monuments to his outsized ego. Hardly a subtle study, the film discredits its own criticisms of the encounters between North and South by risking caricature.

While reading *The End of Cognitive Empire* and *On Decoloniality*, I frequently recalled *Beatriz at Dinner*, because both of these books risk discrediting their common project: exposing and displacing the entrenched dominance of Global North ways of thinking so as to encourage other ways of knowing that would reinvigorate the various political struggles across the Global South (including, the books rightfully insist, Souths in the North). To say that they advance a project in common does not mean that there are not significant differences

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between them, however. Indeed, each positions itself against the other. In the end, however, they both mar their potentially fruitful diagnoses by caricatural quasi-structuralist binary oppositions.

On Decoloniality is divided into two parts, the first by Catherine Walsh, the second by Walter Mignolo, with a coauthored introduction and afterword. Though they insist that the division of labor is not praxis first and then theory, Walsh has built her career in close contact with social struggles—Boricuas in the United States, Afro-Colombian women, indigenous Andeans, and Afro-descendants in Ecuador—whereas Mignolo has for decades interrogated coloniality as a structure of ideas. Walsh's focus is "the decolonial *how* and the decolonial *for*" (p. 9, italics in the original); that is, the ways in which and the ends for which certain, usually minority, groups have resisted the modes of colonial domination that persist in and pervade late modern global society organized as formally sovereign states. Walsh, Mignolo, and other decolonial thinkers argue that modernity and coloniality are coextensive and co-constitutive. Thus this "colonial matrix of power" (CMP) reigns despite the nineteenth-century independence struggles against Iberian overrule in the Americas and the wave of formal decolonization after World War II.

In Walsh's words, then, *de*coloniality "is a form of struggle and survival, an epistemic and existence-based response and practice—most especially by colonized and racialized subjects—*against* the colonial matrix of power in all of its dimensions, and *for* the possibilities of an otherwise" (p. 17, italics in the original). More than resistance, these collective praxes are modes of "re-existence" (p. 18), a term coined by Adolfo Albán that Mignolo also uses (as does Santos) and that prioritizes the affirmative, creative moment of resistance against its negative, reactive connotations. The "decolonial insurgencies" (pp. 33–34) that Walsh documents, describes, and analyzes are embodied and literally grounded struggles for the re-existence of living persons and land against gendered and racialized exploitation and extractivism. She details her participation in the collective effort to create an intercultural, plurinational political framework in Ecuador and also a decolonially insurgent university, Amawtay Wasi, that would practice a radical pedagogy that valorized indigenous Andean ways of knowing. Both projects were compromised by entanglements with the Ecuadorian state, and Walsh closes her half of the book with critical reflections on the dangers facing decolonial praxis.

Whereas Walsh's half of *On Decoloniality* offers analysis grounded in concrete references, Mignolo's veers toward abstract and unreferenced critique. His intentions are clear enough: to differentiate decoloniality from decolonization; to sketch the links among modernity, coloniality, and decoloniality; to show that the CMP depends on an exclusionary concept of the human; and to reveal coloniality's epistemic effects. The target of decoloniality is epistemic transformation—changing Eurocentric ways of knowing and acting—not, as in decolonization, the mere capture of state apparatuses. Modernity was conceived in Europe *over* the Americas and the rest of the world and thus depends on coloniality, to which the necessary response by oppressed peoples is decoloniality. Hence, "modernity/coloniality/decoloniality...are simultaneously, since the sixteenth century, divided and united" (p. 139). The CMP works through exclusions on the basis of race and gender and the alienation of humans from nature. I want to focus here on that last intention, not only because it absorbs all the others but also because, in revealing modernity as epistemic coloniality, Mignolo makes his most problematic moves.

Although many European critical theories have developed what Mignolo calls "Eurocentric critiques of Eurocentrism," "decolonial critiques of Eurocentrism" promote the refusal of "North Atlantic fictions as the only way" (p. 3). The key words here are "fictions" and "only," because Mignolo argues that modernity/coloniality is ultimately a "rhetoric" imposed from Europe universally on the rest of the world "to convince the population that such-and-such a decision or public policy is for the betterment...of everyone" (p. 143). The discrete rhetorics or domains of discourse correspond to "different levels of management and control" that function through the multiple fictions enunciated, whereas the discourse or rhetoric of modernity as a whole is the broader level of enunciation (p. 143). Taken plurally, the enunciated fictions comprise the "contents" of knowledge, the multiple kinds of knowledge; the enunciation consists of the epistemic "terms" that make knowledge count as knowledge, as Western rationality (p. 144). Mignolo illustrates this abstract distinction by analogy to a puppeteer enchanting an audience: "Coloniality of knowledge is enacted in that zone in which what you see and hear from the puppets that enchant you distracts you from the tricks and designs of the enunciator. Decoloniality of knowledge demands changing the *terms* of the conversations and making visible the tricks and designs of the puppeteer" (pp. 144–45, italics in the original).

In other words, coloniality produced a set of illusions, "a powerful fiction," that it imposed on the world as modernity, the one universal rationality for all who would be human (p. 196). Modernity in turn works to "hide or disguise" coloniality (p. 141). Decoloniality therefore involves the piercing of the illusions to which we have been captive and the revelation that they are trickery. Modernity/coloniality is the ideology that oppresses; thus a critique of it, through decoloniality, points the way to liberation. This is classic ideology critique. But it is also a caricature that risks discrediting decolonial theory because a classic

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ideology critique depends on a notion of material reality behind the illusion and also must account for what makes critique possible; that is, what conditions the possibility for some to see through the illusion. What Mignolo offers is a quasi-conspiratorial view of a world divided into the few "controlling and managing" and the many "being managed and controlled" (p. 139); a subset of the latter are those who have managed to retain "devalued and demonized" praxes of living and knowledges (p. 173). That subset grounds decoloniality's standpoint of critique.

In the final analysis, it strikes me that decolonial theory qua unreconstructed ideology critique lacks a theory of power. Mignolo offers his diagnosis of the organization of power (enunciated, enunciation) and its positionings (controllers, controlled): "He who has the privilege of naming and implanting His naming is able to manage knowledge, understanding, and subjectivity" (p. 139). Yet I finished Mignolo's half of the book with no sense of how such privilege becomes authority; in short, how power is generated, how dominance and hegemony are achieved, how sovereignty backs its claims, how forces interact and conflict, how subjects of power are produced, and how resistances persist and surge despite being marked by the ruses of power.

Despite Boaventura de Sousa Santos's criticism of decolonial scholarship as "reductionist" (p. 26), his book runs into similar problems: it flirts with caricature in similarly discrediting ways as *On Decoloniality*. Santos's analysis too depends on obvious positionings. Indeed, "the epistemologies of the South," he claims, "operate by *polarizing* the contrast between oppressors and oppressed" (p. 252; emphasis added), but this ignores the complicities and ambivalences by which one becomes a subject of domination rather than a mere object. If Mignolo lacks a theory of power, Santos lacks a theory of the subject. Moreover, in his zeal to distance himself from oppressive ways of knowing associated with the European tradition, he makes caricatured claims—for example, that the epistemologies of the North have not paid attention to the senses (p. 165), when in fact Hobbes, Locke, and Condillac authored influential sensationist theories of knowledge; nor to the body (p. 88), which in fact feminist, queer, trans, race, and postsecular theorists have treated innovatively. Inversely, Santos promotes gushingly a "deep experience of the senses" (Chapter 8) and asserts—descriptively or prescriptively?—that "the epistemologies of the South are interested in three types of bodies": dying, suffering, and rejoicing (p. 90).

Despite such exaggerated oppositions, Santos does offer a core, potentially useful, distinction between kinds of exclusion: "The epistemologies of the North are premised upon an abyssal line separating metropolitan societies and forms of sociability from colonial societies and forms of sociability, in the terms of which whatever is valid, normal, or ethical on the metropolitan side of the line does not apply on the colonial side of the line" (p. 6). Consequently, dominations and inequalities *within* metropolitan society produce non-abyssal exclusions, whereas those *between* the metropolitan and colonial worlds produce abyssal exclusions (pp. 20–21). Santos limits his focus to the latter: "The epistemologies of the South concern the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experience of resistance of all those social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression, and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy." Such epistemologies aim "to allow the oppressed social groups to represent the world as their own and in their own terms, for only thus will they be able to change it according to their aspirations" (p. 1). Other ways of knowing would, again, enable an alternative politics of liberation, because what is needed is "an alternative thinking of alternatives," not the mere multiplication of alternatives (p. 6). Such a project is necessarily intellectually "rearguard" rather than vanguard (p. ix), because epistemologies of the South follow from and develop out of struggle rather than lead them with dogma. The book systematically develops these insights: in the first section by approaching what grounds other ways of knowing, in the second by sketching the methodologies of research appropriate to epistemologies of the South, and in the last by speculating how learning and pedagogy would need to be transformed to accommodate epistemologies of the South.

Santos's project is ambitious—but fatally programmatic. It taxonomizes and maps entire fields of research on social/political struggles against "abyssal" exclusions. Yet it is often rarely clear whether he is writing descriptively, thus ordering fields of research that already exist or, more likely, trying to coax them into being. But if it is the latter, then Santos's prescriptive tone may prove grating to researchers and activists. In sum, the status of the objects of Santos's mapping and taxonomies is ultimately not clear because, although he writes in the declarative, he provides few concrete indices that would help his readers connect his architectonic vision to a recognizable world. Santos is a seasoned researcher of social struggles in Brazil, Mozambique, and elsewhere, and the book is at its most useful when he gives concrete details and scholarly support. Yet it is least convincing when he soars at a high level of abstraction and cites no one but himself. Epistemologies of the South, Santos claims, "aim at a bottom-up subaltern cosmopolitanism" (p. 8). The book, however, in effect offers a top-down global overview of them.

In sum, while the project of countering the hegemony of Global North ways of knowing is crucial, and whereas Walsh's contribution explores the problems and promise in doing so, Mignolo and Santos discredit the project with exaggerated and abstract oppositions and thus pay

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insufficient attention to the contradictory nuances and ambivalences of power and subjection.

Hobbes and the Two Faces of Ethics. By Arash Abizadeh. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 298p. $99.99 cloth.
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— Ioannis Evrigenis, *Tufts University*

The relationship between natural law and the juridical obligations that arise from contracts lies at the heart of Arash Abizadeh's challenging and rewarding new book, *Hobbes and the Two Faces of Ethics*. Abizadeh sees the seventeenth century as a "watershed in the history of European ethics—a moment in which a eudaimonistic model rooted in ancient Greece began to give way to a distinctly modern, juridical model of morality" (p. 1). In that shift, Hobbes played an important role by considering the relationship between "reasons of the good" and "reasons of the right" (p. 5). According to Abizadeh, the former are attributable to us, but only the latter make us accountable to others. By virtue of mutually recognized signs of our will, "others have a standing to demand our conformity ... to condemn and sanction failures by demanding excuses, justification, or acknowledgment of a wrong and hence apology, compensation, or redress" (p. 6). For Abizadeh, although Hobbes did not abandon the reasons of the good, he nevertheless denied "that juridical obligations derive from or reduce to natural ones but also that the common good is constitutive of one's own good" (p. 7). Abizadeh argues that Hobbes recognized the potential conflict between an individual's good and the common good, as well as the potential conflict between the two sets of reasons. To solve these conflicts he focused on peace as the prerequisite for any other good and "built prudential constraints into the content of juridical obligations" (p. 7).

In Chapters 1 and 2, Abizadeh uses precise distinctions from recent work in ethics and metaethics to examine a number of philosophical interpretations of Hobbes's political theory that have trouble reconciling its normative and juridical aspects. He prefaces these examinations with a persuasive methodological statement as to why this procedure makes sense and holds promise. Although his application of highly technical philosophical concepts and categories is often taxing, it ultimately pays off by revealing some of the ways in which attempts to explain away the normative basis of Hobbes's theory are ultimately misguided. In Chapter 3, Abizadeh argues that instrumental and prudential considerations are irreducibly normative. In Chapter 4, he examines the complications resulting from Hobbes's rejection of a *summum bonum* and his subsequent focus on the instrumental nature of goods. Particularly noteworthy here is Abizadeh's attention to the difference between considering something good and calling it that, in what he terms "prescriptively subversive" and "prescriptively self-fulfilling" circumstances (pp. 164–79). In Chapter 5, he develops the distinction between reasons of the good and reasons of the right, which he considers "distinct and mutually irreducible dimensions of normativity" (p. 179). In Chapter 6, Abizadeh argues that, even though Hobbes's normative philosophy "fails to include genuinely moral obligations in the impartialist sense," it nevertheless includes them "in the accountability sense" (p. 223). He thus sees natural law as the province of reasons of the good and argues that the "apparent puzzle" of the uneasy relationship between natural right and natural law "is an artefact of the failure to discern the two dimensions of normativity in Hobbes's ethics" (p. 244). Abizadeh argues in Chapter 7 that these two dimensions of normativity are based on Hobbes's distinction between rational agents and persons, which centers on the fact that the latter are also recognized as such by others, which makes it possible to hold them accountable. In the conclusion, he maintains that Hobbes does not see normative properties as "real," but rather as "the object of truth-apt, epistemically objective propositions" (p. 263).

Although it is useful to think about the differences between reasons of the good and reasons of the right, I think that Abizadeh goes too far when he argues that reasons of the right "neither reduce to nor are derived from reasons of the good" (p. 228). As he knows, Hobbes argued that God's right to reign derives from His omnipotence and that breaches of the laws of nature are followed by natural punishments not arbitrarily, but naturally. He also counseled those who had trouble keeping up with his analysis of natural law to think of the Golden Rule instead and put themselves in other people's shoes. This advice seems as "impartialist" as Rawls's "original position" and is but one example of the ways in which natural law and juridical obligations are intertwined. Beyond their specific juridical stipulations, contracts are devices intended to engender trust among the parties and render compliance safe and reliable. Natural law informs one's attitude toward one's juridical obligations to an extent that makes it hard to agree with Abizadeh when he concludes that reasons of the right are not derived from reasons of the good.

Abizadeh's account offers valuable insight into the significance of natural law for the individual in Hobbes's theory, but it often does so at the expense of the bigger picture, where natural law plays an arguably larger role. That role begins with Hobbes's account of the state of nature. Abizadeh argues that the purpose of the state of nature "is to articulate the rational motivation, limits, positive content, and normative grounds of conventional obligations" (p. 230). Yet, even though Hobbes's story of the transition from the state of nature to the commonwealth has the feel of a linear history of how societies emerged, Hobbes was quite clear that its purpose was to deter people who lived in commonwealths from the temptation to do things that would land them in the state

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