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An Overview onto the Decolonisation of Political Science in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The paper reviews the ongoing discussion and debate on decolonizing political science and to establish how political science can be decolonized. The hegemony within the practice is argued to produce a society rigged with inequalities at different levels. It is highlighted that the impact of historical writers of political thought and theory on present day society cannot be underestimated. Education informs thought and behavior thus, the curricula is of significance in the decolonial debate so that many voices are heard and that ethnic diversity is embraced in the production of knowledge. Decolonising political science is not a once off project that can be done in a hurry but it is of significant importance for the epistemologies and ontologies that inform political science to be examined carefully. Decoloniality is the equalizer in the social justice theories however it is not openly discussed and very well understood. The paper also highlights the writers and scholars against the decolonial project and how their voices are important in the development of the political science decolonial agenda. Decolonising political science will give the balance and equilibrium needed to embrace other voices that have not been heard in the construction of political thought and practice in contemporary times.

Keywords: Curricula; Decoloniality; Political Thought; Social Justice

Introduction

This paper argues that spreading information, particularly in the history of political science and philosophy, requires a decolonized methodology in order to confront disparities in the world and in curricula. As a result, knowledge creation follows an ancient path that has survived coloniality in history as well as the continuity of political thought and theory. From the 15th century to present, the ability of the Global South to embrace themselves and their knowledge has been harmed by conquests, colonialism, and epistemicides, or the eradication of histories and knowledge. Aristotle (2000:25) advocated the designation of some as natural masters and others as natural slaves in the classical texts' articulation of the political and state profits as a symbol of the highest form of belonging. As a result, the classical acquired colonial position. Therefore this paper explores the development of political thought that informs curricula in the university as well as the entire world and its dynamics. On the other hand it introduces the philosophy of decoloniality, its travel theology as well as its eschatology.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

1. Establish the philosophy of Decoloniality.
2. Analyse the of impact colonialism to Political Theory.
3. Establish challenges behind decolonizing the curricula of political science.
4. Give recommendations to the ongoing decolonial debate.

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1.2 Research Methodology

The paper assesses the research issue using a philosophical design rather than a methodological design. The purpose of analytical philosophy and argumentation is to look at the deeply rooted, often rigid assumptions that drive a subject of study. Decoloniality is examined as a philosophy on top of being a theory as well as other philosophies that inform political thought are examined carefully. Data is then collected by an integrated literature review and survey highlighting ancient and contemporary texts in the political science canon. To study and debate themes such as the importance of logic and evidence in academic arguments, the technique employs argumentation tools derived from philosophical traditions, models, concepts, and theories (Cunningham, 2014). These are coupled as guidelines for understanding and understanding the source of accessible dialogue about a research subject.

Findings/Results

2.1 Introduction

As a means of achieving equal justice, global perspectives on politics, the economy, and society require a subaltern approach. Hence, it is suggested in this paper that an epistemic view from the subaltern side of the disparities in colonization and continuity throughout time is required. The world is currently being viewed through the lens of hegemonic Western literature and philosophy, which is disproportionate to the world at large because the world is not exclusively white and male, and there are other voices that need expression and consideration.

The distinction between western and non-western is itself a classification introduced by the legacy of colonization, with western material being viewed as universally civilized and nonwestern material being viewed as barbaric and animalistic, with the former being able to dominate and subordinate the latter. Thinkers like Gandhi, Fanon, and Césaire can be classified as western because they are associated with the replication of the very western empires that their writings are meant to oppose. (Mills, 2015).

2.2 Coloniality

Coloniality is a term coined to describe power dynamics that arose from and continue to exist beyond colonialism, as well as knowledge production (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:243). Decolonial thinkers and theorists define colonialism as the institutions of power and systems that continue to persist and are developed from colonialism. Decoloniality varies from postcolonial theory in that it considers coloniality to be a current reality rather than a product of the imagination. Therefore, decolonization's main political goal is to reveal coloniality whenever it is veiled. The end of colonial power paired and forced by epistemic expansion of colonial knowledge has not come with the attainment of independence and the abolition of legal colonialism and administrative apartheid.

For hundreds of years, the world has been divided by ethnic divisions imposed by colonization, and hence gender and class have been essential to global politics. It is not uncommon for the concept of race to be incorporated into a canon from the outside; in fact, a significant number of canonical thinkers set out explicitly or tacitly to establish the white race's supremacy. Students would not understand modernity if they were not made aware that it is characterized by European colonial and imperialistic expansionism, and that it is the same colonialism with

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its institutions that is justified and defended by thinkers who compose the contemporary canon of political theory.

Graduate students are increasingly urged to consider how political intellectuals have misinterpreted issues of class, such as gender and race. The near universal acceptance of canonical figures like Karl Marx has allowed the concept of dissecting the topic of class that underpins thinkers and theorists like Hobbes and Locke. Schmitt (2008) emphasized the friend-foe relationship in the delivery of peace, power, and good as well as dominions, oppressions, and penalties in an attempt to explicitly state and describe the political proper as the maneuvering and negotiating of power in 1932. The unpleasant aspects of conflict, hatred, and retribution, as well as power as dominance, have been naturalized and normalized by the subaltern in colonial divisions and the darker side of modernity politics.

Because of knowledge coloniality, society continues to reproduce unequal relations in global politics, business, and society. It results in lessons that ricochet from the classroom to the streets, necessitating confrontation, interrogation, and evening out. In terms of politics, the policies implemented sustain and preserve the colonial relationship between the state and its people, as well as foreign ties. The power matrices have altered, but the system remains the same, with the elite remaining elite and the inferior remaining quite inferior (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013)

Studying texts by non-white and female authors and thinkers offers an alternative to Eurocentric knowledge, pedagogies, and epistemologies, yet they have been suppressed due to colonial dominance. The suppression of these readings was a route to go in order to alter attitudes because textual evidence plays a positive function in a person's identity and how they see themselves. This strategy takes into account each historical event's unique peculiarities. It does not take a Eurocentric perspective, allowing for a more diverse assessment of current events. Rather than erasing differences, the cure is to decolonize the logic of coloniality that turned them into virtues. Wallerstein contends that these countries remain a part of the global economic world system, which relies on such injustices to function, without taking into account each country's individual level of development in the capitalist economy (Spivak, 2010).

2.3 What is decoloniality

Apart from being a theoretical perspective, decolonial philosophy is the method of thinking and acting by people in parts of the world who have experienced illumination as a darkening of the world and modernity as dehumanization. In other words, decoloniality is the philosophy of slavish and colonial fundamentalist victims who resist the want to be free using the same rationale as colonial fundamentalism.

It is precisely this goal of decolonization that prevents it from becoming a political craze, a fashionable intellectual trend, or a hate campaign. It does not, however, imply that it has been protected from intellectual assault based on the assumption that it is motivated by vengeance and hatred. As a travel theory, it faces the conundrum of seeking a global reach while beginning at a local level (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) Decoloniality is a deconstructionist endeavor aimed at liberating and reconstructing formerly colonized people's minds.

2.4 Decolonial Theoretic underpinnings and evolution

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Decoloniality's philosophical arguments have gone through fiery deliberations, in addition it has lost its innocence and temperament. There are a collection of theories that are misread and twisted, resulting in the creation of new theories, according to the traveling theory summary (Said 1983). Decoloniality as a liberation philosophy and theory has suffered the same fate and has not been spared the pitfalls of travel theology, which include distortion, appropriation, usurpation, resistance, and, most importantly, neglect. Nelson Maldonado Torres (2017:3) posits that decoloniality has undergone "benevolent neglect where it is energetically embraced as needing urgent action" in his outline of the Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality. Subsequently the theory suffers being constructively abandoned and tried and a failed wishful unrealistic prerogative.

The worst type of mutilation the theory has seen is the presentation and practice of hatred, which has sought to use decoloniality as an excuse, resulting in misunderstanding and misrepresentation, leading to desertion and early dismissal. Though decolonization appears to be occurring in South African Higher Education as well as the rest of the global south, it has not been adequately implemented, causing the theory to be dramatized without significant reform, and the result has been false activism. Hereafter decoloniality has been stigmatized and abandoned as allies and cadres return to past colonial ideas, the same essence from which the theory attempts to liberate minds.

2.5 What is not decoloniality

Decoloniality is a philosophy that tries to free subalterns from colonial underpinnings; it is not a militant philosophy that aims to project nativism, racism, tribalism, or xenophobia; it is also not anarchy and primeval chaos, nor simplistic hatred and revenge. This major goal of this textual deliberation is to show decoloniality as a means of liberating and giving voice to indigenous peoples who have been subjected to colonialism and have no method of freeing themselves or treating themselves in a manner deserving of their identity (Noxolo, 2006).

The political and intellectual preoccupations of decoloniality are not confined to defining the modern reality as informed by the colonial past, but also to actively changing the world by restoring the human completeness. Decoloniality examines the human condition and experiences in pursuit of a whole man, in contrast to the hegemonic western political canon and philosophy, which capitalizes on alternative truths and has fought to degrade humanity over ages.

Decoloniality, far from being a form of retaliation, addresses the agony of dominance and oppression. It aims to defend the subaltern's epistemologies as a liberation ideology, yet it opposes hate and vengeance. Decoloniality's utopia and eschatology aims to re-humanize the planet and produce a new humanity that departs from the oppressed humans' model (Quijano, 2000).

2.6 Decolonisation and the curricula

Political theory is significant because it serves as an entry point for students of politics into the canon of "great thinkers" who are regarded as the founders of the political science profession around the world, a canon that is mostly white. Thence, a call to decolonize curriculum has been made, as well as a proposal to reconsider global positionality within contemporary frameworks. In actuality, decolonizing the curriculum necessitates an ongoing dialogue that cannot be assumed or legislated in advance. As a result, it necessitates an understanding that

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there are many different ways of thinking about and presenting social and political phenomena. (Saini and Begum, 2020:3).

Since European and especially British institutions have traditionally been entangled with the colonial mission, the university becomes a focal point in the decolonization process. Colonial administrators were educated in these same colleges, acting as models for colonial institutions of higher learning, subduing indigenous knowledge, and developing intellectual justification for colonial dominance. Their riches was often a consequence of colonial confiscation. (Bhambra et al, 2018, Pimblott, 2020).

Given that the major texts within the field are shaped by a canon of "Great White Thinkers" who were active in the colonization enterprise, political theory is ready for decolonization in all sub disciplines of the arts and social sciences. In Universities in the United Kingdom (UK) it has been argued that change in the curricula can address and remedy differences in attainment between "Black Minority Ethnic (BME) and White Students (Universities UK (UUK) and National Union of Students NUS (2019).

The British attitude toward colonialism is tainted and influenced by widespread ignorance; for example, a YouGov (2016) poll indicated that 43 percent of those of British heritage thought the British Empire was a wonderful occurrence, and 34 percent still wanted the British to have one. Subsequently universities may play an important role in questioning and correcting these beliefs while also educating students about British colonial history.

Even if students were required to study canon from North America and Europe, it is worth noting that some non-white philosophers whose works may be included, such as Frederick Douglass, Anna Julia Cooper, W.E.B Du Bois, Malcolm X, and Angela Davis, have had their works repressed. An all-white curriculum does not reflect the diversity of contemporary student body at institutions. There are several reasons why teaching just white ideas to ethnically diverse groups of students would be problematic. It is bad for the multicultural fraternity to read and understand texts that do not reflect their cultural identities because they would view themselves and their culture as unworthy (Mills, 1997).

Most modules in the political canon and theorization introduce students the founders of political thinking which include Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Mill, Marx and Rawls. Choat (2020) concedes that "(T)he domination of this canon by white and mostly Europeans reflects and rests upon a wider set of exclusions ultimately rooted in the history and development of European societies as colonial, capitalist and patriarchal, white, property-owning, males tend to be the main authors and subjects of political theory because historically non-whites, the working classes and women have been excluded from the institutions in which political theory has been written and from participation in politics more generally".

Locke's justification of the Two Treaties of Government of the colonization of America, as well as his role in the crafting of the Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, with a clause that "every freeman of Carolina had to have absolute power and jurisdiction over his Negro slaves," are two specific examples (Locke 2003:230). Montesquieu claimed that individuals from the south had too much access to the hot temperature and abundant resources, to the point where "the majority of the peoples on the coastlines of Africa are savages or barbarians without industry or arts." (Montesquieu 1989:354).

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Kant's elaborate and detailed theories of race, including his contentions and that 'humanity has its highest degree of perfection in the white race and the Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous' (Kant, 2012;576;2011;58) and John Stuart Mills "exclusion from his liberty principle of those backward states of society in which race itself may be considered as in its nonage and hence for who a vigorous despotism is in itself the best mode of government to render them capable of a higher civilization" (Mills, 1993:78-79, 415. Consequently students studying politics will be unable to distinguish between races if the canon of great political writers is not challenged and positioned correctly to place other races that are not white as independent of all claims made by the ancient but current reality of the political canon in circulation in universities.

Thus, confronting racism includes revealing racism in works by Locke, Kant, and Mills, as well as introducing undergraduates to non-white and non-European philosophers who challenge present learning's eurocentrism. However, because the subject of disagreement is often expressly concerned with western political ideas, this approach may attract opposition. Therefore, the assumption that students in European universities should only study European and not their own western tradition is unsustainable. People in the globe have uneven knowledge and comprehension. All subjects and the one in question is defined and perceived from a western perspective, which is problematic since it leaves out essential aspects, resulting in the "us versus them" mentality. The point being made here is that development cannot be unilateral.

3.1 Discussions

The university's decolonization is an attempt to address racialized disparities. Failure to decolonize is problematic for several reasons: it fails to recognize the importance of race in the modern world; it ignores the importance of race and the context of colonialism in the works of traditionally canonical thinkers; it incorrectly and insultingly implies that people of color have contributed little to political thought; and it fails to reflect the diversity of the world. It should be highlighted, however, that evaluating curriculum change is difficult to quantify.

Epistemic integrity is a goal of decoloniality. "First, the understanding of the world far exceeds the western understanding of the world, second, there is no global social justice without global social justice, third, the emancipatory transformation of the world may follow grammars and scripts other than those developed by western-centric critical theory, such diversity should be celebrated," Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014:vii) asserts emphatically.

The reality of the core and the peripheral is that the core has dominated every part of global life with its philosophies, thereby posing a vast array of fictitious difficulties with its diversionary techniques and nuances. The center's concept appears to be that of a system designed to entertain, and the witticisms are as remarkable as games of logical sleight of hand. The cries of the oppressed is often muted by word juggling themed language ideologies. As a result, the unpleasant experiences of the periphery are not well understood, and as a result, they are hushed. "Phenomenological ontology, a good chunk of analytical philosophy, and certain dogmatic Marxisms are luxuries or fireworks displays," according to Dussel (1985: 177). They are not themes of philosophical liberation.

Therefore elements of knowledge production, as well as what knowledge is and how it is produced, must be examined. The educational process will be flawed if the entire world

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continues to see knowledge as a heritage only belonging to great minds, whether white or non-white. Consequentially, the world not only denies itself access to knowledge created by those who are not deemed respectable, but also perpetuates power structures that mute, erase, and oppress.

Decolonial philosophy, on the other hand, results in a more marked and drastic shift that is more intimately linked to protest and direct clashes with existing practice. Decolonial theory focuses on an epistemological challenge to colonialism thought, with a focus on dramatic delinking from origins of European imperialism, but it is continuously re-staged and re-routed by the neoliberal educational system's continuous and deepening disparities. (Mignolo, 2010).

Silvia Revera Cusicanqui (2012) describes the “political economy” of knowledge through which decolonial theory gets circulated in Western academic spaces in a logo centric and nominalist version that fails to challenge the colonialist routes and continuing inequalities of those very spaces. She goes on to describe processes through which theories and concepts that began with indigenous scholars get repackaged and disconnected from the struggles and concrete experiences in which they were originally grounded became instructed to academic careers that flow through cycles of academic privilege that are embedded in mutual citation practices, visiting lectureships and the circulation of international student and their fees primarily from the global south to institutions in the global north.

Ideologies that are not necessarily political but shape the mind, drive education, and guide state behavior on a global scale dominate politics. As a result, social challenges and inequities will endure as long as subalterns perceive themselves as inferiors in their relations with other individuals and governments. Politics is a hybrid system governed by a number of ideas and powerful influences (Noxolo, 2012)

Although it may be argued that political modules should include talks on race, this is impossible or only achievable arbitrarily and anachronistically, given that race was not a key issue among political thinkers. However, such a claim cannot hold up to scrutiny, notwithstanding the fact that it has yet to make its way into college textbooks. There is however a growing amount of writing that shows how racial prejudices shaped the major political canon's beliefs and arguments. (Losurdo, 2014; Mills, 2017).

Those desiring to participate in the decolonization of university curricula confront a number of obstacles, including short-term contracts that are unstable, and talking about decoloniality affects their job security, making participation dangerous and provoking pushback from inside their institutions. (Begum and Saini, 2019).

3.2 Challenges in the Decolonising Curricula

The first flaw in decolonizing the curriculum was in the structure of modules, where it was discovered that they sanctify the classics while portraying other non-white thinkers as departures from the existing quo. Stuurman (2000) denotes that “while many changes may have been gestured towards a democratization of the canon bringing in forgotten and suppressed voices they did not deconstruct or unsettle the canon itself and hence arguably left in place the idea that political thinking is the province of great white men”.

Despite the compelling philosophical, ethical, and pedagogical arguments in favor of curriculum decolonization, efforts to do so have run into a number of roadblocks. Because of a

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lack of supporting materials and inadequate current content, political theory teachers are frequently forced to work with an almost all white canon. Thus the initiative will not be fully realized without institutional and societal engagement.

The technique to be used in the decoloniality project is unclear in terms of how non-European philosophers and authors can be included. The third flaw, despite the inclusion of women and non-white intellectuals, is a lack of contact with thinking outside the white bracket. Another issue is geographic classification, such as how to determine what constitutes Chinese, African, or Latino, and who to include or exclude (Choat, 2020).

3.3 Recommendations

For decolonizing the study of politics, a number of strategies have been proposed, including expanding the scope of syllabi to include a diverse range of countries, theorists and thinkers including more writers of color on reading lists, acknowledging and interrogating the legacy of colonialism in global institutions, bilateral relations, and domineering theories and concepts, and recognizing alternative theories and concepts.

The most significant critical instruments for confronting coloniality in and outside the westernized academia are diversified literacy, intercultural translation, and pluriversality. Nonwestern information is transferred and carried by live beings, hence expelling and excluding these sources of information is genocidal because it also involves the eradication of human identity and sensibility.

Although the majority of Europe's primary population is white, the world population is not mostly white. There are people of various races. Other ethnic groups, however, make up a small but considerable percentage of university students. As a result, it may be argued that university curricula should be inclusive of all major to small racial and ethnic groups, rather than being solely white. Taylor 1994 argues that "Since the 1980s, it has been argued that multicultural societies necessitate multicultural education, and that presenting particular cultures as unworthy of study harms students from those cultures by offering them a distorted image of themselves".

Decoloniality must address state plunder and prolonged occupation of indigenous lands, as well as current neocolonial ties between the Global North and South, oppression, and discrimination of former colonial subjects and their descendants. Although decolonization can take numerous forms and go through several stages, profound and far-reaching decolonization can take many distinct shapes.

Universities now have the capacity to be revolutionary, and they remain critical hubs for knowledge production and validation. A proposal to decolonize political theory is to ensure that both colonialism and its legacy are addressed through considerable engagement of discussion of colonial control. Neocolonialism legitimized and allowed racism, which was fueled by reading lists that were solely composed of white authors. The student ability to comprehend is altered if the perspective of political theory, as well as white political theorists dominate the canon, by ignoring the racial idea. The false perception that only white European thinkers have and can make a permanent contribution to political ideas, and that only their knowledge is acceptable, is naturalized (Grosfoguel, 2013).

Conclusion

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The curriculum does not identify with the contemporary multicultural society in existence in the world. Thereby making political theories and thought irrelevant to the present society and come in as a conflicting study of what is being witnessed in contemporary times. However there is more reason to pedagogically and pragmatically diversify curricula. If other students that are not white read political theory they will insistently conclude that it is a study not suitable for them because they cannot identify with its precepts. There are solid epistemological, political pedagogical, normative reasons for decolonizing the curriculum, which is not sheer diversification of introducing non-white canons but also to insist on a foregrounding colonialism at which contemporary times can embrace (Maldonado-Torres et al, 2018). Even when they share post-colonial or unequal identities, each is an analysis of the world's most egregious disparities, and none is fully immune from appropriation by those who profit from them. If decolonial ideology is extended outside genuine disputes over colonial experience, it runs the risk of becoming diluted and domesticated.

Decoloniality is a theory that encompasses a family of theories, paradigms, and liberator ideologies, as well as a philosophy. Philosophy, in its intellectual and political engagement, is a value investment in opposition to the global north's epistemic dominance, which the south is continually engaged in (Boaventura De Sousa, 2014). Only global north epistemologies have had power and dominance since then, but this has been a reason for cognitive and hermeneutic justice in the global academy. Epistemologies from the Global South are being erased and marginalized to the point of reductionist superstition, and tokenized ornaments at the Westernized Eurocentric University. Calls for the decolonization of the curriculum have received a lot of attention in the United Kingdom. Universities have become a new battlefield for culture war in the aftermath of the Brexit referendum, with right-wing idealists denouncing calls for re-racializing knowledge (Williams 2017; Turner, 2017) and demanding that white intellectuals be replaced in the curriculum.

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