Design for/by "The Global South"

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this essay is to contribute to the development of a paradigmatic shift in how design is understood, transformed and practiced in the Global South. It does this by establishing the case for building a strong contextual relation between design, colonialism, and the mobilised counter-agency of decoloniality. Thereafter, design for/by the Global South is presented within a critical epistemological reframing subordinate to a situated imperative of the 'Sustainment'.

Introduction

…colonialism as a disease–it spreads from one people

to the next and from one continent to the next, leaving

behind a steady trail of violence and destruction.

Laila Lalami[1]

Several decades ago, one of the most common tropes in the opening of a cultural studies book was an exercise of 'mapping the field.' This essay inverts this method: even if desired, there is virtually as yet no field to map. In fact, the actual *raison d'etre* of what follows is to contribute to the formation of the field, and in so doing invite colleagues to join in this task.

Without reservation, design for/by the Global South (hereafter 'the South') is an important field of study, practice, theory and praxis to constitute from its existing scatterings.

Introductory Assumptions

Current 'custom and practice' of design(ing) in the South is very largely based on perspectives received from the North (Northern thinking has of course been decoupled from a Northern geography and become globalized). Design for/by the South cannot be totally free from such thinking, but needs to challenge, contest and adopt it consciously, critically and selectively. Clearly, a fraternity of Southern design thinkers is nascent. As yet, not only is there no unified community to appeal to, but these peoples of the South are a plural collective. It follows that a design ethos of the South needs to reflect cultures and beings in and of internal and external difference. This remark on difference is the first of six statements of position.

Statement two is that in the creation of this task there is no absolute collective subject, no 'we,' available to be appealed to. At the most general, what this implies is that *humanity* is a species classification of the North, whereas our species has designated its mode of being in many different ways (as is evident in the histories of indigenous peoples of the North and South).

Statement three recognizes that the impact of modernity (socioculturally and environmentally) broke the different worlds of habitation of *Homo sapiens*; consequently, the peoples of the South continue to dwell in ruins of their *oikos*.[2] The process of rendering people homeless at this most fundamental worldly level continues apace. In this respect, colonialism does not just create ruins but instigates a condition of ongoing ruination (Stoler 2013). Consequently, both danger and 'the wasteland' grow. In the face of this situation, acting in time – that is, acting in the medium of time with a sense of urgency – is essential. This action elucidates statement three.

Statement four is that life everywhere is now lived, whether this is known or not, in the company of an unprecedented problem: the event referred to as defuturing. This is the animatory force exercised by a global population who, by degree, has created totally unsustainable conditions, that for all the rhetoric and images of environmentalism are still not seen – because, at the most fundamental level, the problem rests in the anthropocentric essence of the being of the human species.

Statement five refers to the recognition that there is a huge and growing disjuncture between the actual complexity in which we are enmeshed (the ontic), and by our actions add to, and the means by which that complexity is sought to be understood (metaphysics).

Finally, statement six focuses on the issue of knowing in relation to the future, for while the future is unknown, it is only partly so. This is because it contains so much that has been thrown into it. Climate change, long-life nuclear waste, inequities and festering conflicts – the list is long. Certainly, colonialism is on the list, for its consequences travel toward everyone, everywhere. The ongoing agency of the afterlife of colonialism is just part of the obstacle course that demands to be navigated. To know this is to know not only that our species has no assured future but that the extent of our finite duration is in large part dependent upon overcoming the propensity to defuture. Put simply, depending on the nature of our actions, we as a species make time for ourselves or we take it away.

One last contextual observation: some 253 million years ago, over 90% of all living matter on planet Earth was destroyed. Our species is a product of life left over after this moment. It is thus with some irony that there is now talk within science, based on the rapid rate of the loss of biodiversity, that the sixth extinction event has commenced – this as a result of the sum of our own defuturing actions, which is to say we are the breakers of our very conditions of dependence.

Our encounter with design is not going to be immediate. Rather, it will be arrived at by how it has been contextually overdetermined (Part 1) and epistemologically framed (Part 2).

Part 1. Design for/by the South Situated

What now follows is a review of some of the major historico-conceptual forces that directed the (de)formation of the South (development) and then some of the counter-concepts of futural redirection under the heading of the borderland.

Development and the 'Global South'

As far as the United Nations is concerned. 'the term "South" or "Global South" refers to developing countries, which are located primarily in the Southern Hemisphere.' While the South contains a vast number of marginal zones, cities with huge informal sectors, urban and rural areas of absolute sociocultural and economic neglect, a great deal of poverty and injustice, it has also ceased to be fixed in geographic space. The dispossessed underclasses of the North are increasingly displaced peoples of the South who have arrived there as refugees.

The South is not an innocuous description. Moreover, the classification of nations of the South as 'developing countries' (and thus currently 'underdeveloped') is a designation from elsewhere that perceives lacks – based on norms from nations of the 'North,' norms of highly productive and advanced industrialization, including of agriculture, well-established and regulated financial institutions, modern cities with a well-functioning urban infrastructure, good educational and cultural institutions, a high consumption-based standard of living across classes and supported by a substantial middle class (Escobar [1995], 2012). It follows that the 'South' is itself a designation of the 'North.'

Historically, this situation was set in two moments. The first established the conditions that enable the coming of the second.

Moment one was created by centuries of colonial conquest and occupation of the South by nations of the North. Here is a history of genocide, brutally enforced subservience and exploitation of natural and human capital. Effectively, this age of violence destroyed the ways of life, systems of value, knowledge, cultures and the chosen futures of indigenous populations. It 'allowed' such people to be deemed as 'primitive' and less than human.

It should be noted that the concept of the primitive, a product of anthropology, was subsequently discredited by the discipline over 50 years ago (Levi-Strauss 1962, 101–03). Yet views like those of Samuel Huntington continued to be expressed[3] '…universal civilization is emerging much to the horror of various anthropologists and others who view with dismay the disappearance of primitive peoples' (2003, 57). As for 'undeveloped,' as André Gunder Frank (1972) pointed out in the early 1970s, is totally different condition from developed nations deciding 'the rest' were 'in need of being developed' in their image (and thereby designed into a relation of dependence). This view marks moment two and the recognition of 'primitive people' being a resource to exploit. Its contemporary form dominantly came from the USA immediately after World War Two. It was encapsulated in 'modernization theory,' which became the theoretical foundation of the United Nations development agenda at the very moment of the institution's creation (at the birth of the Cold War). This thinking is evident in the work of perhaps it most notorious theorist: W.W. Rostow (1952).

Out of capital-led development theory, a structuring of the geopolitical world took place in the form of the First World (developed); Second World (the communist bloc); Third World (the underdeveloped); and Fourth World (dysfunctional and abandoned nations without developmental potential).

Modernity and Colonialism

The forces that created and unleashed modernity, and the forms that it took, unsettled 'the world' in ways that still have not ceased. Modernity had directional consequences beyond any measure. Environmental and enthnocultural damage was done on a vast scale, and with devastating and everlasting consequences – especially for indigenous populations and the

planet's ecological wellbeing. Some of this damage was visible, but much was not and only became apparent over time. The universal, but differentially experienced, contemporary ontological condition of unsettlement, the inequity of the global economic order, and so many of the world's geopolitical problems are directly connected to this history.

As we shall see, modernity is in fact indivisible from the dialectic of sustainment. This is, what was asserted as progress travelled in the company of regress. Creation, in this dialectic, cannot be divided from destruction, yet so often goes unacknowledged and unseen.

As for the modernized, as Zygmunt Bauman remarks: 'Forms of modern life may differ in quite a few respects, but what unites them is precisely their fragility, temporariness, vulnerability, and inclination to constant change' (2012, viii). Nothing is fixed, nothing is solid and movement is constant – a process wonderfully evoked by the famous line by Marx: 'All that is Solid Melts into Air' (Marx and Engels 1973, 83)

Claims that modernity brought universal progress are purely Eurocentric, and are blind to its ambiguities and contradictions. Modernity, as we shall see, did not merely unsettle the world and many of its peoples, but in many ways devastated it.

Rather than the debate on modernity fading into the past, it is gaining a new critical momentum from two sources: the decolonial and border thinking of non-Western voices undercutting assertions of the arrival of postcolonialism and the postmodern, and the increasing recognition that modernity has been deeply implicated in the amplification of unsustainable forms of human conduct (including towards those of our species who define(d) their mode of being within another cosmology or were classified by colonizers as nonhuman). Writ large, in its material expression, modernity did not just take the future away from the peoples it damaged and exploited, but also set a process in motion that negated the future and established conditions that defutured the lives of the newly born and the unborn.

To understand the current and contradictory forms of the afterlife of modernity (globalization enacted at the end of a world order) its formation must be sketched.

The Rise and Sources of Western Modernity.   Modernity did not have one beginning, one origin. It 'came out' of various moments, cultures and projects, and thus acquired a variety of different, but compounding, forms. It was an assemblage.

Its political background was prefigured by the fall of the Roman Empire at end of the fifth century, when the West fragmented and partly reverted to tribalism. At the same time, a 'Byzantine Empire' grew in both power and territory. However, it was unable to control those areas of the West it occupied. By the ninth century, these territories were contested by Charlemagne – the Germanic King of the Franks and leader of the new Roman Empire whose project was the Christianization of Europe. He opened the way by force of arms to a revival of art, religion and culture through the medium of the Catholic Church.

Charlemagne encouraged the formation of a common European identity based on exclusion, which is most overtly seen in his driving of Muslims out of Spain. The spirit of this mission outlasted Charlemagne. On November 27, 1095, Pope Urban II made a speech that prompted the first Crusade.[4] It called for the Christians of Europe to wage war against Muslims in order to reclaim the 'Holy Land' at 'the will of God.' This call did not fully reveal Charlemagne's motives, which centered on the objective of unifying the Catholic Church and increasing its political power in Europe.

Clearly, events sparked by the Crusades – not least the rise of the Ottoman Empire and its entry into Europe in the fourteenth century – have not totally faded and been lost in a

forgotten history. Rather, their aftermath and memory retain active agency in present events in the Middle East and beyond. More than this, the extension of European power in the Mediterranean had significant economic benefits for its trading nations that in turn acted to dramatically improve the means of communication with nations of the Near and Middle East (as they were construed by Western geography).

These new political configurations and territorial movements enabled the arrival of a particular 'ecology of mind' wherein ideas and knowledge travelled to Europe from, especially, the Arab world, Greece and India. Translation houses, in particular those of Baghdad, were especially important in mediating and facilitating a passage of scientific knowledge and philosophical ideas to Europe.

This transfer of knowledge played a major part in the formation of modernity as it prefigured the Renaissance, which itself was a project that folded into the European Enlightenment, and that in turn was a key determinate in the further development of Western modernity.

There are two crucial observations that merge in the extremely complex history to be briefly sketched. The first entails recognizing this history as an appropriative event that tells us a good deal about the geographic relational dimension of appropriation itself. The second involves recognizing that at its founding moment, modernity also established its 'darker side,' which was European colonialism. Modernity and colonialism are indivisible.

One of the most important sources of appropriation of knowledge by Western nations was Arabic literature on Islamic science (Hill 1993; Huff 1993; Kennedy 1983; Morelon and Roshid 1996; Saliba 2007). This knowledge was itself partly prefigured by that of ancient Africa (Diop 1974). Another major source was China.[5] These two major sources played an important role in the development of Western scientific thought – although this has been mostly unacknowledged until the present, and is still not widely known, notwithstanding acknowledgement of contribution made to mathematics. However, what is far less recognized is the contribution of Arabic and Chinese knowledge to agriculture, alchemy (as the precursor of chemistry), astronomy, cartography, cosmology, hydrology, mechanics (including clocks), medicine, ophthalmology, optics and physics. Crucially, what this history exposes is that the very notion of what it was to be enlightened can be contested.

Just to take one instance, Samer Akkach writes on the work of Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi (1641–1731) of Damascus, a contemporary of Leibniz and other European Enlightenment scientists and artists (Akkach 2007, 2010). Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi was a philosopher and poet who has been claimed as a key figure of the Islamic Enlightenment. Reading his published and unpublished works, Akkach shows him to have made substantial contributions to social, religious and intellectual debates of the day, as well as having a significant influence on the intellectual development of Islam and its relationship with science.

During the Western Enlightenment, there was an overt concealment of sources due to an academic rule that if you did not speak the language then you did not reference the source (even mediated by translation). It follows that a great deal of knowledge went into the public domain with its sources unacknowledged.[6] Moreover, in a colonial context even when sources were given, they need to be treated with suspicion. As Ann Laura Stoler points out, colonial archives can 'impede the task' of making sense of colonial history, since they are often sanitized official accounts produced by authors acting for or in the interest of the ruling order (Stoler 2016). There is no claim that this is always the case, but what is asserted

is that in many cases there is no way to discern and verify what is true. History is never neutral – it is always written from a position.

Contextually, Western modernity was indivisible from its global expansion, in particular via the 'discovery' in the sixteenth century of the 'New World.' More than any other, this event marked the European project of global colonization; and it firmly bonded modernity to colonialism. As Walter Mignolo makes absolutely clear: '…there is no modernity without coloniality and that coloniality is constitutive of, and not a derivative of modernity.' Moreover, the colonization of the 'New World' denoted the arrival of a 'blueprint for the European organization of space' (Mignolo 2011). One can add that it also constituted a particular temporality wherein an imposed order of everyday life removed past histories from present identities, and in so doing erased popular memories. History thereafter began with the moment of colonization. The celebration of a colonial past in so many former colonies stands testament to this view.

As a project framed by the Western Enlightenment, modernity extended its contradiction and complexity. Specifically, modernity (in its plural forms) was projected with the claim of emancipation, as expressed by Immanuel Kant (1724–1804): 'Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage' (in Beck, 1963, 3). Consequently, Kant presented 'free man' as an individuated self-directed subject who is empowered to courageously deploy reason.

Here, then, is the basis of a double movement producing the contradiction – 'free *men*' exercising a new-found ability to take power (in numerous ways), but at the same time deploying this power to subjugate those of the 'non-Enlightened world.'

Industrializing modernity, empowered by the Enlightenment and its gamut of technical and scientific knowledge, political philosophy, economic theories, legal structures, and new civil institutions, furnished European nations with the ability to impose their will on the world at large and in so doing divide it into modern empires. All of this arrived in the name of universalizing 'humanism' and the advance of civilization.

From the birth of modernity in the early Renaissance to its geopolitical hegemony in the nineteenth century, to its economic and warring violence of the twentieth, and now to its cognitive extension in the twenty-first century, what modernity has meant for vast numbers of people has been a process of endless destruction. Lives, environments, cultures, communities, knowledge and modes of being in difference have all been lost.

Whatever can be claimed as modernity's attainments, the price paid for them – not least the cost of the material creation of the Anthropocene as it established the locus of defuturing – has no measure. There is simply no way to draw up an account for what has been lost and the opening into extinction that has been formed.

Globalization

Globalism, as it prefigured globalization (as seen in commodity culture, the structuring of the international labor market, and global supply chains and markets) was a pragmatic extension of modernity stripped of all its liberatory and quasi-idealist traces. *De facto* globalization has been the operational terrain of hegemonic capitalism that was not post (as in, after) modernity, but a mutant form that emerged out of the failure of the total realization of modernity's 'grand' ambitions.[7] The humanist attempt to create a human(ity) within a single modern ethos failed, and was displaced by the attempted construction of the universal market and universal consumer. Against this backdrop, the old-world order was fragmenting

in the wake of a weakening Europe, the breakup of the Soviet Union, the decline of the American Empire, the rise of the economic power of China and Asia, and the emergence of asymmetrical forms of global conflict. Added to this is the still-deepening planetary environmental crises (climate change being the most complex and dramatic manifestation).

All these event have combined to produce conditions that fuel psychosocial and spatial forms of global unsettlement – this is overtly seen in the extant global refugee 'community' (being largest in recorded history[8]). What is also arriving, but is less visible and uneven, is a new universal nihilistic psychology wherein minds are becoming unsettled by fears (actual and imagined) arising from economic and physical insecurity, inequity, proximity to conflict, and the consequences of rapid technological change. Hereafter, everyday life and a sense of the future exist in a state of constant uncertainty.

Uncertainty rules the lives of millions of people living in extremely precarious conditions of survival in the South, where abject poverty, violence and/or the threat of imminent environmental disaster does allow the horizon of the future to be seen beyond the end of the next day. To fear the dangers of a longer-term future is a marker of privilege of the perspective of the North, of having time to contemplate life beyond the immediate concerns of survival.

As suggested above, the reality of unsettlement arrives in myriad forms. It may come from living in a region of the world where the availability of water is declining, resulting in the agricultural system collapsing, or, in contrast, residing in a town that gets seriously flooded every year, where property is unsalable and impossible to insure. Perhaps it is living in a country amid physical destruction where asymmetrical war has been waged for the past five, ten, twenty or more years. It might be the life of a fishing community without any fish to catch, or living behind a fence built along the nation's border or around the camp in which you have been placed. Then there is the insecurity of those who have seen their occupation, local economy or national economy disappear. Nobody is outside this situation, so, whether we know it or not, we are all, by degree, unsettled.

The current geopolitical reconfiguration of the world exposes the faltering of globalization as a global economic system along with the end of the world order. New plural power blocs emerge, but not with any sense of permanence – the rise and fall of Brazil is a case in point. The emergent configuration is one of zones of inclusion (mega-regions) and of exclusion (abandoned nations and regions). The zones of inclusion, some 40 mega-regions, already represent 60% of all global economic activity.

Even in what is perhaps the dawn of its afterlife, as Jean-Luc Nancy (2007, 4) tells us, globalization is an agglomeration that invades and erodes all of what used to be thought of as *globe*; so understood, globalization is the suppression of all world-forming of the world. It is a figure of sought control at the end of the world – a facilitator of monocultural consumerist culture and a force of geospatial disruption, globalization advanced by acts of destruction.[9] It is a taking, not a giving. It is an erasure of those worlds that constitute 'the world' of which we are all a part, and not merely observers.

Globalization remains a negation of national sovereignty, while also being an agent of the formation of post-nation, autonomous subregions of economic privilege. More than this, it is a diminishment of being-in-the-world as self-constituted difference. As such, it fuses with both technocentric uncaring and the abandonment of economically excluded populations (the 'they' who are rendered 'dysfunctional').

World

Planet Earth as a mass of matter in the universe is some 4.54 billion year old. Not only has it passed through dramatic transformations, but it continues to be in process: it is not stable, but dynamic. Whereas the planet is mass and matter, 'world' is an idea, of which there are varied cultural constructions. Yet planet 'Earth' and 'worlds' ever interact in that mutual play of perception wherein we see what we know and know what we see.

So, although Planet Earth is unambiguously the name given to the astrophysical body we all inhabit, 'world' is far less secure in its linguistic designation – it means many things on varied levels to different cultures. There is, for example, 'the world' as it has been materially and conceptually constructed by 'us' in difference, the varied existential worlds that we as a species create and inhabit (the worlds of …), and there is 'world-within-the-world' of 'our' creation (the materiality of the epoch of our being – the Anthropocene). Likewise, familiar worlds come into view in unfamiliar ways, and vice versa via visual and audio representation. As Martin Heidegger (1995, 292) points out:

> By the term 'world,' and here perhaps more strongly than anywhere else, we initially try to seek something that is present at hand in itself and ascertainable, something that we can always appeal to. We must appreciate from the very beginning that this is not how things are, even though we are tempted to make just this mistake. Or to put it another way: philosophical knowledge of the essence of the world is not and can never be an awareness of something present at hand. It is rather a comprehending disclosure of something in a specifically determined and directed questioning, which as a questioning never allows what is questioned to become something present at hand.

It follows that repositioning the way the world is viewed, and how 'we' are positioned within it, is an essential opening into gaining a disposition of change. Once this is focused on fully recognizing the global condition of structural unsustainability of the worlds in which 'we' dwell – intellectually, mentally, emotionally and in some ways physically – 'our' view of the worlds in which we exist changes (be it toward a nihilist or activist mode of being in this world).

'World' actually arrives as an objectification of 'what is' refracted via knowledge, experience and understanding. But we dwell in this objectified 'world' as being among beings (including the being of things with which we share environments – as both we and they are actors and elements within them). For us, this can only ever be knowable via mediated forms. All worldly forms, elements and sensory experiences of 'the world-within-the-world' of our making arrive before us as the named, imaged, represented and questioned – this by the interpretive screen that exists between us and all that is. As Jean-Luc Nancy, like other thinkers before him, has made very clear, the sensory, sense and the sensible are inextricably interconnected (Nancy 1997, 1–4).

Linking back to the colonial underside of Western modernity, and its globalizing afterlife, what arrives continues to strive to bridge/override and ultimately erase the worlds of encountered others.

For 'the global rest,' modernity established life as the rule of power under the aegis of 'a state of exception' as 'the normal state of being-in-the-world' (Maldonado-Torres, 2008, 215). In a global sense, there has never been a single and reachable common world. Put another way: there can be no common life-world in a world of difference. Moreover, the world we know never remains the same. Thus, in a lived, everyday 'sense of the world,' the world into which we are born is never the same as the world in which we die.

In all cases, those worldly transformative events that constitute the 'world-within-the-world' play a very large part in transforming our own being-in-the-world. The relations between us, our becoming and the becoming of the world of our everyday existence are always circular. Realizing these relations of indivisible transformation absolutely changes comprehension of the way design, designed environments and 'we' function to constitute those 'worlds-within-the-world' as event (in space–time). More than this, and in difference, 'the world' we humans share with other beings is always relational. As Friedrich Nietzsche put it: 'The World is at first relationally and affectively present: it affects us and we act in and through it' (cited by Warren, 1998, 177). Being-in-the-world is always a being-in-difference, notwithstanding modernity and globalization striving to negate this (Heidegger 1995, 349).

Knowing 'the world' as ours and difference, and seeing worlds via multiple perspectives (as they emanate from how *we* know and name a world and how it has been made known and named for us [349]) brings regimes of difference before us.

As Western modernity expanded its global reach, the scale of its colonial underside destroyed and deformed worlds like no other historical agency. For hundreds of millions of people, modernity was a violent shattering. It changed time and the nature and perception of so much that was known to them. The trauma of this moment, despite for some cultures happening over 500 years ago, continues. Without question, the pain, sociocultural disruption and environmental impacts of colonizing events have deeply marked the worlds of existence of so many peoples. In doing so, it set the stage for many contemporary geopolitical problems and crises.

Borderlands and Border Thinking

Borderlands are strategically occupied spaces (geographic and/or conceptual) of division between a colonial power able to exercise economic, military, political, cultural and epistemological power; and neocolonial people outside or inside the colonizing power's border/sphere of influence. As such, these spaces constitute a particular place and perspective of observation, mode of being-in-the-world, and specific ontology.

Put starkly: central to the occupation of a borderland is another and emergent way of thinking (border thinking) that is aware of the Eurocentric ground of all forms of imposed thought upon others – at one extreme as overt acts of coercion (be they military, political or economical), and at the other as forms epistemological colonization. In most cases, the discourses of imposition will have arrived and been couched in the language and spirit of 'development.' Equally, the agents of imposition may or may not have been conscious of the implications of their actions, whether in the form of military intervention, aid, humanitarian causes, technical assistance, goodwill or education. While arriving with a claim of futural development, dominantly the historical consequence of what is softly or harshly imposed will arrive as some form of defuturing impact, and be in the immediate or long-term interests of the colonial power, capital or their surrogates.

From the perspective of design, the borderland can be viewed as an intermediate space of thought and action based upon political and pragmatic acts of appropriation and bricolage. The borderland constitutes conditions of exchange in a dispositional space of betweenness wherein alienation and hypercritical reflection meet. It may also be materialized as an intercultural zone of encounter and discussion where information is exchanged, lifeworlds are translated, solidarity is built and friendships forged.[10]

Borderlands do not and will not arrive organically. They have to be politically formed and thereafter designed, built and occupied. Thus, border thinking must be brought to specific conjunctures. It cannot arrive of and by itself, but requires an ontological occupation of a position on the outside of the inside of one's locus and mode of being-in-the-world. This is to say, you cannot completely delink from the historicity of who, what and where you are, but a condition of induced criticality can make such placement present. Total separation and objective observation are not possible. Niklas Luhmann registers the problematic of observation itself: what is seen from any social system is always viewed from the inside and demands to be observed from a stance of 'the observation of observation' (1989, 22–27).

Borderlands rest upon border thinking, which implies working to create a rupture with the Eurocentric thought. The rupture is not a total break or rejection; rather, it is selective appropriation based upon (i) comprehension of the foundation upon which 'modern and postmodern epistemology, hermeneutics and sensibility' stand (ii) conjunctural recognition of what needs to be thought, understood and engaged, which, in the subaltern margins of colonization, would be in relation to locally constituted/indigenous knowledge (substantial or partial). Border thinking also requires another shift of position. As Walter Mignolo explains:

> Briefly, border thinking requires a shift in the geography of reasoning, a geopolitical conception of knowing, understanding and believing, a delinking from the assumption of modern and postmodern epistemology, hermeneutics and sensibility. (Mignolo 2011)

Mignolo also knows well that how and what 'we' think is indivisible from where we think. The 'I/we' is always ontologically grounded in a particular ecology of mind, epistemological milieu, and changing sociopolitical and cultural environment.

All this is to indicate that border thinking is intrinsically deconstructive. Depending upon critical acts of inquiry, interrogation and disclosure that demands confronting and questioning what appears to be the known, and the challenging of authentic and appropriate ways of knowing upon which action is based. This means border thinking has to break out of disciplinary boundaries, cross intellectual territories and embrace heterodoxy. It implies recognizing that the geometry of the structures of global power are not stable, that unsettlement is a growing condition of 'humanity,' the result of structural unsustainability (cf. the multiple and complex effects of human-induced global warming, such as sea-level rises and failures of major agricultural systems, leading to displacement and mass movements of people; added to this, the abandonment of economically disadvantaged populations, and the conflict this will prompt). It is becoming increasingly clear that in geopolitical terms the form, function and sense of borders are changing – they are bleeding. Stephen Graham presents a clear view of this.

> In our time, nation-states are moving away from their role as guarantors of a community of citizens within a territorial unit, charged with policing links between 'inside' and 'outside.' Instead, these states are becoming internationally organised systems geared toward trying to separate people and circulation demands risky or malign from those deemed risk-free or worthy of protection. (Graham 2011, 89)

As for design, border thinking provides an essential way of thinking and a critical agenda for the formation of borderlands as a locus of reconstituted designing.

Care

Viewed from the perspective of care, design is dominantly paradoxical. Things are designed with care, but performatively they are uncaring. Nuclear weapons are an extreme example, but any technology, product or system created where harm is done to the mind, body, biota or environment can be deemed to be uncaring, and as such defuturing, irrespective of how much instrumental care was invested in their creation. Polluting technologies, bodybuilding steroids, violent video games, gambling machines, coal-burning power stations, factory farming of animals; such uncaring things are myriad in number and form. They occupy and characterize a significant dimension of the defuturing materiality and immateriality of the Anthropocene.

Seen from 'the South,' its lived reality was replete with designed uncaring evident in the means of destruction and subordination of native peoples right up to the present – this by designed uncaring labor processes and the marketing of commodities discredited in the North. Such uncaring is dominantly to sustain unsustainable industries – cigarette production targeted at the world's poorest nations is an obvious example.

Care so presented is obviously not being viewed in humanistic psycho-emotional terms, but rather as the material, qualitative, ontological characteristic of something brought into being by design. Understood in this way, care arrives as a major issue and object of engagement of 'design for/by the South' accompanied by a fundamental question: 'What should be designed, and how?' Answering this question is central to creating the agenda of 'design for/by the South' itself. This requires a more adequate and wider understanding of care as ontological. To do this, two quite different ways of presenting the same imperative will be put forward. The already established and more abstracted one comes from Martin Heidegger. The second, more contemporary and situated version, is attributable to Bernard Stiegler.

For Heidegger, care was essential to our being at the most fundamental level: 'we' cannot be without care. He makes this evident in *Being and Time,* where care occupies a great deal of Division One of the book (chapters II–V). For the sake of economy, an abridged version of this material by the eminent Heidegger scholar Joan Stambaugh will be referenced here.[11]

But before considering a little of what Heidegger has to say, it is important to reiterate that while his views on care (and his views more generally) would be dominantly understood as Eurocentric, this does not preclude appropriation into the borderland. It is also worth remembering that Heidegger's later work was influenced by Daoism and Buddhism (May 1989; Parkes 1987), which complicates the characterization of his work as totally encased in German Nationalism, the most extreme form of Eurocentrism.

So to care: our starting point is to understand the way Heidegger uses the term dasein[12] in relation to care. What he makes clear is that our/dasein's 'being-in-the-world' is by virtue of care, which means it is ontologically elemental to the being of dasein. Likewise: "Da-sein" folds into a collective (the they) and its world, as such care becomes a foundational condition of being itself as it is taken care of (Heidegger 1999, 184–85). Of this relation Heidegger concludes: "being-in-the-world is essentially care", which he goes on to say is "being together-with things at hand … as taking care of them." Effectively care so understood is structural and as such returns to beings as things taken care of by them care for their users (be it material or immaterial). The agency of care in beings, and in things of the world, constitutes what he named as the "care-structure" (Heidegger 1999, 192–92).

The indivisible relation between dasein and care is conjoined with angst to establish our being as 'being ahead of itself'. What this means is that dasein acts concern-fully

towards the 'what might be' as well as what is immediately present. Doing this is a characteristic of dasein ontological being-in-care, rather care as a cognitively directed action. Thus while bonded to angst care is directive of action it goes ahead of thought (Heidegger 1999, 192).

There is, it should be said, a problem translation of care from German to English, for there is meaning in common and significant inflected difference care. English usage is softer (lament, to take care of, the care for, to feel concern for (OED)), whereas the German *sorge* has a harder edge (sorrow, uneasiness, anxiety, alarm as well as to take care of (Langenscheidt Standard German Dictionary – 1993 edition) in other discourses. Thus how Heidegger understands to term (especially as a response to a sensed danger, a felt worry or arrived anxiety (Heidegger 1999, 196)) is not idiosyncratic in German as it may appear in English.

Unequivocally, for Heidegger "being–in-the-world" has the character of being of care", so it is not possible to be in the world without it. Lets be clear, this does not equate with 'being cared for, acts of care, or the feeling of care. To restate, for Heidegger, care is ontically present in being and as such is purely structural: it is how 'we' are in order to be. So understood, it is what enables us to be what "one can be" (Heidegger 1999, 197). But more than this, care, equiprimordially (the being together of being and care) is what enable(s)d being with care to take care of its world (Heidegger 1999, 198).

Now, we move to Bernard Stiegler's more grounded, contemporary picture of the uncaring aspect of digital technology. He introduces this via a notion of accumulated 'psycho-power' that commenced with radio, progressed to television and then arrived in digital technologies in the 1990s. All these technologies have converged and spread across the entire planet, and Stiegler directly connects this to the arrival and increased prevalence of 'attention deficit disorder.' His argument does not define this condition in terms of particular cognitive acts, such as reading, but in the consequences the condition has for our being-in-the-world. He says that the giving of attention

> is the mental faculty of concentrating on an object – that is, of giving oneself to an object – and is also the social faculty of taking care of this object – as of another, or as the representative of another, as the object of another.

He states: 'This is why the destruction of attention is both the destruction of the psychic apparatus and the destruction of the social apparatus (formed by collective individuation)' (Stiegler 2012, 104).

What Stiegler points to is not just one uncaring aspect of a designed technology, but a wider and emergent milieu in which the romance with digital technology persists as a state of being blind to what it is and does. As Larry Rosen, a prominent research psychologist, and now an Emeritus Professor of the psychology of technology, details at length in his book *i Disorder* (Rosen 2013), digital technology is creating a whole range of mental disorders.[13]

Linking Heidegger, Stiegler and Rosen, what becomes clear is that digital technology does not evoke care: the 'user's' relation to it is mostly one of abandonment and thus devoid of anxiety. It follows that its ontological designing goes unquestioned.

Worlds-in-Being: Cosmologies, Human and their Others

We are all grounded in a particular cosmology whereby a world exists meaningfully for us as a result of our constituted relation to knowledge, beliefs, interpretations of the forms and practices of everyday life that underpin our culture, our provided explanations of our origins and the nature of the universe, as well as our understanding of our 'self.'

The ontological constructivism of our cosmology tells us what we are at its most primordial level. It constitutes the designation of the nature of our being. The 'human' has been made the globally dominant representative of our species. Yet there still are small numbers, of the once many, members of our species with cosmologies other than our own. Which is to say that their sense of themselves and of the world in which they dwell differs from 'our' own. However, while hegemonic humanism classified these people (as humans), they have another view of themselves.[14]

The ascendance of the human to dominance was not by any process of evolution, but rather via modernity: it was deeply implicated in the universalization of the human (the cosmological veneer covering the animal that we all are[15]).

It is now becoming evident that this nonevolutionary transcendence to becoming 'human' is open to regression into the inhuman (crudely illustrated in the unbroken history of genocide). Now, with the arrival of an age of the naturalization of the artificial (including hyper-instrumentalism, the fusion of technology and cognition, together with 'the industrialization of memory' [Stiegler, 2009]), the humanitarian fabrication of the human is becoming technologically undone. The human can no longer be seen as futurally secure, as evidenced by the expanding discourse of the post-human, trans-human and inter-human. In worlds where human actions constantly break the conditions upon which human beings depend (evident in the litany of disasters of ecological, environmental and social destruction) 'we' are becoming broken beings. To refract this through an understanding of ontological design: in a world that is broken by the actions of people, people thereby become part of the broken.

Reframing by Sustainment

Sustainment (*The Sustainment*) is not 'sustainability,' with its propensity to sustain the unsustainable, as 'business as usual,' for the globalizing 'North.' As such, it cannot be reduced to just the solution to environmental/climatic problems. Rather, Sustainment is a vital intellectual, political and pragmatic project of discovery marking a vital turn of 'humanity.' It acknowledges that in order 'to be sustained' another kind of earthly habitation and understanding is required. Such an understanding recognizes that not only a dramatic reduction in damage to environments and ecologies be made, but equally and indivisibly it is vital to address global equity (because uneven global 'development' together with both excess and poverty defuture beings and being), peace (because conflict defutures beings and being) and social ecologies (repairing the breakdown of 'community' as it defutures beings and being is essential, as is redressing gender, class and ethnic injustice). The Sustainment cannot be evoked as if it already exists with agency. Rather, it is a mode of understanding that drives a desire to make it a project in time (where time is understood as a medium, a recognition of a 'state of emergency' to respond to, and as that which stretches out before us).

By implication, Sustainment (i) extends to every dimension of our species' environmental, economic, social, cultural and psychological existence, and (ii) exists as the counterdirection to the ever-increasing condition of unsustainability as a force of extinction of all we are and the forms of life as we know it. Sustainment so understood has to be a decolonial project more than equal to 'the Enlightenment.' For this to be realized, there is an imperative to understand that dominantly our species is intrinsically anthropocentric – everything folds back into human self-interest. No matter the concerns, they are underscored by values of and for the concerned self (and its survival). Thus, if humans are to become futural, their

intrinsic anthropocentrism has to be taken responsibility for (it cannot simply be discarded; it is too deeply inscribed as constitutive of what we are).

The advancement of Sustainment is the gathering of affirmative futures (understood as a 'making of time' directed against the negation of all that defutures). It depends upon establishing an incremental non-Eurocentric process of thought and action directed toward praxis that is devoid of idealism and associated utopias. More than this, this action has to find ways to counter 'our' existing species' propensity of autodestructive acquisitiveness. Finally, as a foundation of commonality, the Sustainment requires recognizing that our species' futural 'being-in-the-world' depends upon acceptance of being-in-difference.

Part 2. The Epistemological Frame and its Reframing

Now, we move to questions of the constitution, occupation, and liberation of knowledge and thought.

Knowledge and Knowing

The future of the 'South' cannot be divided from the nature of the knowledge, understanding and 'common' sense Southern thought creates or adopts now and in coming decades. Jean Françios Lyotard, in his influential *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, claims that knowledge that cannot be translated into information 'will be abandoned' and cease to be 'an end in itself' (1984: 4–5). Counter to this view, while the 'South' cannot disengage from the form and function of knowledge constituted in the North, it can and must create knowledge in its own situated borderland context. What this means, as already mentioned, is a synthesizing project drawing from selective appropriations from the North/Western tradition and a recovery/invention from its precolonial past and critically reflected colonial experience. Such knowledge can but be a contingent truth – thus, in its uncertainty, it is taken to be a true basis for critically situated, modifiable and then efficacious action. Here, as an affirmative operative consequence of situated critical analysis, contingent 'truth' overrides the need to resolve a relation between an empirical and relative truth.

So positioned, knowledge is understood as located – which is to say it cannot be independent from a discourse/practice or place wherein 'the known' is encountered or established. Knowing never escapes its determination by unknowing. This remark takes us to the questions: 'Who is it that knows?' and 'What is the status of knowledge based on visual observation?'

Observation is not a passive relation between sight and cognition, but is normally an act of fabrication from an unexamined point of view (*habitus*). To gain a more adequate view of the seen (a demand of critical circumstances) it requires, as will be remembered, what Niklas Luhmann calls the 'observation of observation' (1989, 22–27), where what is being recognized is never seen from a position external to the seen. The seen is always inducted to the world we know as the known or the unknown. It is only by understanding this dynamic, as it is grounded in and animated by a specific epistemology (irrespective of whether it is acknowledged and grasped) that 'the seen' (as the observed) can be brought to critical sight. These comments return 'us' back to the North/South problematic because the predominant 'point of view' (that this figure of speech illustrates) is ocularcentric. Effectively, vision, from Plato onward, is given a privileged epistemological position from which to gain knowledge. As

such, it is central to Western metaphysics (Levin, 1988, 1993). Correspondingly, the significance of sound and touch are neglected.

Now, what of knowing from the South? While this question invites a comprehensive inquiry of the organic epistemological foundations of indigenous peoples, and thus a considerable research project (on which some work has commenced) there are a number of tentative pointers to rehearse. These go in two directions: the locus of knowledge that, for example, reconfigures the mind/spirit relation in terms of disembodied totemic forms together with an increased significance given to the spiritually empirical senses (Luyaluk 2016, 497–523). But then there is a far more environmentally integrated mode of being-in-the-world of many indigenous peoples that required gaining knowledge from all the senses. The hunter, for instance, gains and deploys knowledge from sight, sound, touch and smell as he/she stalks an animal.[16]

Walter Mignolo (211, 80) makes the point that 'I am where I think' – which is a reiteration of knowledge being specific to geocultural and geopolitical placement. But one can equally say 'you know where you are' – meaning that knowledge is environmentally derived and grounded (be it of the forest, desert, jungle, pampas or the home, factory, university or hospital). What is suggested here is that what is made present epistemologically is not only formative of a way of knowing, but equally the world of the known. This is just as true for a hunter in a jungle as it was for Leibniz when he famously remarked that 'nothing is without reason' (this does not mean everything has reason, but rather that reason, as it is embedded in a mode of cognition, frames the manner of knowing, or not knowing, of all that is encountered). Notwithstanding reason's centrality to Enlightenment thought and its epistemological power within the project of modernity, it is now losing traction. This is due to the loss of value of its anchoring values – logical argument, independent thought, critical inquiry, but above all truth. It follows that in the dominantly Western emergent 'post-truth' age of abandoned values, the decline of reason is inseparable from the unceasing rise of nilhism.

Knowledge on the Line

The borderland as division is the zero point, the meridian mark, the rip, the tear (*kennzeichnung der reisse*), the break, the mark, the betweenness dividing the legal and illegal, the formal and informal, the 'North' and the 'South' as well as the place occupied by the South's diaspora as a psycho-geography. As such, it is the actual and the impossible locus of a heterotopia, wherein the visible passes to the invisible, dominant values become devalued, the objectified to the dissolved, and domination to subordination.

Cutting into such thinking, we find Ernst Jünger writing in 1950: 'the zero line, where the fulfilment reaches the end, is ultimately the least visible of all' (Jünger [1955] 2003), thus marking nihilism (as understood by Nietzsche) as a distinguishing point, where 'humanity's princely appearance is missing.' For Junger, on one side of the line, as seen and unseen, felt and lived, was the condition of lost higher values, and on the other, the prospect of a new basic value (Heidegger 1955, 121). The underlying proposition of this thinking was that to overcome nihilism it first had to be made visible, to expose those beings whose agency had been evacuated, and then, even more significantly, recognizing the nihilism of the entire planet – seen by Nietzsche as the means by which 'the wasteland grows.' Heidegger elaborates this: 'the devastation is growing wider. Devastation is more than destruction. Destruction sweeps aside all that has grown up or been up so far; but devastation blocks all future growth and prevents all building' (Heidegger 1968, 29).

Colonialism created a wasteland; it devastated entire cultures and established nihilism as a normative condition of existence. While other modes of being-in-the-world were, and are, created, there is no recovery from devastation. In this respect, while a colonial power can cease to occupy the land it colonized, and while a certain condition of normality can be created, what is established does not denote a point beyond devastation. The term 'post-co-lonialism' is illusory. There is no moment beyond colonialism. The withdrawal of a colonial power does not mean the end of colonialism, but rather a redrawing of the line, and its return in a new post-national guise (as a technological occupation of ontologies and as the epis-temologically co-opted). It arrives through a reformatted 'colonial matrix' and 'subaltern cosmopolitanism' (Mignolo 2011; de Sousa Santos 2014). Such neocolonialism maintains the invisibility of being(s) on 'the wrong side of the line' via the exclusionary agency of Eurocentric (Western) metaphysics.

To be on the wrong side of the line is to be marginal. Within this condition of constantly changing marginality are to be found the growing numbers of the abject, designated as informal communities, illegal migrant workers, the displaced and abandoned seeking refuge, the exploited workforce of sweatshops, modern slaves, the instrumentally dehumanized, the criminal classes of extreme poverty, and the untreated physically and mentally ill. These are the world's unseen, unheard, the 'they' who are unfeelingly ignored, neoliberal capital's human waste, and the 'co-lateral' of global geopolitical and environ-climatic violence. Such people have no unifying mass: as individuated victims and dislocated collectives (people such as boat people, asylum seekers, camp dwellers, and equally the indigenous fringe dweller), are absent from the semiosphere. Their invisibility cannot be made visible of itself – the truly invisible has no agency. For example, the subject of camp, the forgotten being of an immigration detention center, is stripped of all identity when assigned and thereafter referred to as a number (as their only mode of address). Their existence is reduced to bare life within a biopolitical regime of managed bodies of erased difference.

Globally, the line is now being forcefully redrawn. Borders that until recently seemed to be porous are now ridged. Life everywhere is now to be forced to live on one side of the line or the other of a visible or invisible border. The camera eye, the constant encroachment of the law and regulatory regimes, the criminalization of movement, the heightened profile of border protection, all denote a constant increase in the striated space of a transmogrifying wasteland. Yet the borderland responds as an otherwise modality of situated, active and undeclared resistance.

Four Perspectives on Thinking/Unthinking

The four perspectives selected – Eurocentrism, instrumentalism, romanticism and relation-ality – are all major examples of a general and prevalent condition of unthinking that inhabits many of the formal domains of knowledge.

Eurocentrism (revisited) was born out of the intellectual imperialism of Western moder-nity. Dealing with this situation calls for a process made out of a new relationship between epistemology, politics and subjectivity in time. In so saying, what is being recognized is that there is not simple overcoming, but rather the need for an acknowledgement that discomforts together with an unavoidably slow-to-build contra project (as posed by Sustainment).

The project of modernity was universal: the notion of the universal being a Eurocentric emanation, projection and claim. Here, the designation of the universal vies with another understanding: the project of its creation as hegemonic modernity. Not for the first time the universal is a product of the centre.[17] Thus, the universal always comes from somewhere, and is therefore always ethnocentric.

Sartre, as a particular example of the voice of Western metaphysics, writes of the 'singular universal/universal singular' – what he means by this is that 'each person is shaped by, and is an expression, of universal history and their epoch; at the same time, each person contributes to the history of which they are part' (as cited in Crittenden 2009, 3). Now, while all members of our species have a historicity they are not an expression of a universal history, for history is a narrative and there is no position from which a universal narrative can be written. It follows that the assertion of a Eurocentrically authored universal history is not universal, but rather an expression of the place of its emanation. As for Sartre's concept of the singular, as the singularity of experience, there is no necessary correlation between the situated event of an individual's being and the general historicity of wider events. Which is not to say that individuals do not impact on wider events.

Viewing Eurocentrism against this backdrop, it can be understood as 'a designing directional event' that created a particular modality of collective subjectivity that acted (and continues to act) from its located human centered historically, as underpinned by the application of the epistemological resources and imagination drawn out of a Western ecology of mind.[18]

In coming into global dominance, Eurocentric interests (notwithstanding internal inequalities) became imposed upon our own species, and others, who were external to the gaining from its benefits (for example, those people colonized by Western nations).

To grasp and bring the relational complexity of such a dynamic of cause and effect into its appropriate profile requires a recasting of how to think and confront Western modernity that once again recognizes that, dominantly, Eurocentric modernity created two subject positions: the colonizer and the colonized. How these subject positions can be thought of and engaged remains a central problem when seeking to understand the form and agency of global(izing) capital.

One now asks: how can 'Southern theory' establish a new epistemology that is able to comprehend the formation of the relational matrix that is now globally unfolding: the defuturing of geopolitical violence, environmental and psychosocial destruction, global inequity and the fragmentation of 'our' species (in contrast to embracing a proliferation of its difference)? The very nature of extant disciplines/divisions of knowledge (while not able to be totally transcended) obstruct the realization of this task – as does the lack of a new political imaginary (recognizing the paralyzing redundancy of current politics and political philosophy and institutions to face, and find appropriate responses to, the defuturing momentum of the age).

Design for/by the South cannot avoid dealing with Eurocentric thought, its directive force of knowing, visibility and detectable invisibility, plus the huge problems it has created. This undertaking is central to sufficiently disarticulate design in the South from design in the North, so that a relation of critical appropriation becomes possible. Again, this is not a matter of an impossible discarding of all Eurocentric thought, but rather selectively appropriating and thereafter redirecting its value. However, this in turn requires coming to terms with the

global projection, degeneration and dissemination of Western metaphysics as instrumentalism (embodied in and as technology). While it is easy to present such observations, actually enacting and living by them is another matter!

Disciplines form and act to discipline the boundaries of epistemological orders. As structures of containment and ontological attachment they are obstacles to dialogue, thus blocking the production of relationally empowered knowledge that can engage the conjunctural complexity of the current age. The comfort of attachment that many academics feel towards their discipline (and their efforts to advance its status) is now well out of step with the kind of thinking that contemporary conditions present to be understood and engaged. This is obviously not to say that specialist knowledge is no longer of any use, but rather suggests that this knowledge must be subordinated to the relational.

Techno-instrumentalism. The problems of both technology and instrumentalism are underplayed in general[19] and in particular in thinking of the 'South.' For example, they are not engaged at all by an important text like *Epistemologies of the South* (de Sousa Santos 2014). Moreover, recalling remarks made on disciplines, so much of the argument presented was formed and limited by the author's attachment to sociology.

Technological transfer and instrumental reason have been massively powerful means by which to transport the designing power of the epistemological foundations of applied Western thought to the South. Both were major instruments in the introduction of economic modernity as elemental to the rewards and woes gained from development. Moreover, the undergirding of Western metaphysics by classical 'productivism,'[20], and as carried by the concrete forms of science and technology), directly undermined cosmologies of nonmaterialist understandings of causality. As such, other imaginaries of how the world could (non-operationally) be, and other regimes of truth, are all foreclosed (de Sousa Santos, 2014, 174). Effectively, the longstanding notion that science and reason displaced myth has come undone, with reason and its narratives becoming exposed as objects of faith.[21]

In general, and in the context of the South, techno-scientific thought is posed as the opposite of the nonscientific (especially magic). However, the difference is not quite so stark. Modern science arrives with magical claims: the bringing of the dead back to life, the creation of the miracle cure, the unlocking of the secrets of the brain, the development of magical materials, the revealing of mysteries of the universe. Here is a language that spans practices of the ancient and the modern, wherein belief and truth merge.

Crucially, within a borderland exchange between contemporary and indigenous knowledge, the continuum of a history of technology (for all cultures have a technology) begs recognition. This is in contrast to the mobilization of modern and advanced technology that dismisses, and in the past has discredited, traditional and ancient technologies.

Romanticism poses a danger for 'design for/by the South.' Romanticism is not a quality of, or relation to, things – material, immaterial, or spatial. Neither is it a psychological condition. And it is not directly opposed to reason. Rather, in accord with Schmitt's powerful argument, it is the quality of a particular kind of subject/human being (Schmitt 1986).

Characterized briefly, this can be seen at its most basic where a design sensibility subscribes to idealized views of indigenous people whereby their material and intangible culture and 'naturalized' way of life is celebrated (and marketed, often with the greatest benefit to agents and dealers) while their actual social, economic and biophysical circumstances are overlooked. And then there is the more ontologically entrenched subject position of the

romantic who creates an intellectually elaborated view of the world by bringing a 'reality out of themselves' (Schmitt 1986, 64). What this does is to create a constructivist image of the South, presented as authoritative, and projected and read (including by themselves and by others) as if it were actually representing reality. Stemming from recoil to Enlightenment rationality, this inscribed sensibility fuses with those activists who believe they are purveyors of counterhegemonic transformations.

The romantic subject appears across a broad band of creative practices claiming to be a radical and countercultural intellectual (or architect and designer). From this stance, architecture and design are presented as if they have independent transformative capability and political agency.[22]

Relationality and the Complex. Our species has generated a particular kind of double bind. It has attempted to gain knowledge of its ensnarement in the complexity of the world of its existence while at the same time employing the knowledge gained to add to this condition. Here, then, is the layering, and transformative engagement with, the materiality and immateriality constituting the Anthropocene, as it is now a primary determinate of the biophysical world upon which all planetary life depends. There have been two fundamental consequences: the greater the knowledge gained, the greater the complexity exposed – thus, 'what is to be known' expands exponentially to acquired knowledge. This creates the second consequence: a growing disjuncture between *how and what our species knows and understands* and the actual complexity (of the ontic) of the species' conditions of existence.

Effectively, the perceptual connection between knowledge and finitude was broken once an ecology of mind entered smooth space (that is, escaped its local containment). Thereafter, no mechanism of disciplinary constraint, transformation, assemblage or mutation could be formed to contain bounded knowledge. However, knowledge's limit *de facto* rests with the finitude of the entity that knows; thus, in 'our' knowing and unknowing our limit is the limit.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos defines an 'ecology of knowledge' as 'a broader dialogue with other knowledge' (2014, 189). This is not an adequate definition of the complexity of the relational connections between domains of knowledge as they transcend cultural, disciplinary, formal and informal interactions. Effectively, ecologies of knowledge rupture the hegemony of the order of disciplines and fuse with Gregory Bateson's notion of 'ecology of mind' – the movement of knowledge between nodes (the singular mind) across time and distance within the 'collective mind' to which all thinking is articulated (Bateson 1973). Moreover, while an ecology of mind has a dynamic based upon processes of exchange generative of growth, it also enfolds, like all ecologies, decay and loss. Finally, it does not function in a condition of autopoiesis – it is not a self-replicating system (Maturana and Varela 1989). It depends on something external to feed it – the 'to be known.'

The Power of Misunderstanding

There is no privileged position of immunity from which to speak of misunderstanding. In contrast to that absence that is unthinking, misunderstanding is ever present and elemental to our modes of communication. In so many ways 'we' communicate by the misunderstood and attempted correction. There are two particular linked domains of this problematic of communication (from many) articulated to design for/by the South that invite address: culture and translation.

Culture: Long before Raymond Williams famously pointed out the complexity of culture in *Keywords* (1985), he had already made the point in an earlier work. Culture was one of the four keywords he commented on in introducing his account of *Culture and Society 1780–1950* (1958). The actual nature of culture itself works against the possibility of a reductive or stable meaning, for the meaning of culture cannot be abstracted from the way a specific culture understands and posits its mode of meaningfully being-in-the-world. And while the anthropological view of culture is of an activity of beings producing a world, and self-meaning, the arrival of negation within cultural production is underplayed. This negative dynamic can, for example, be seen in the ontological designing consequences of design, artifice and technology: which have, with ever-greater force and speed, shifted the agency of anthropos from a propensity of futuring to one of defuturing. So framed, cultural production is now circular: induction into the world made meaningful contributes to modes of meaningfully being-in-the-world, as a lived activity of making a meaningful world of being that is now equally an unmaking.

No matter the claims to a universal meaning (or history), the plurality and ever-changing character of culture defies definitive truth claims (or the singularity of truth). Thus, there is no normative position able to speak, order and register a relative schema of cultural difference in flux. If placed in the unanchored telluric 'complexity of complexity,' we see that Raymond Williams undid himself insofar as his recognition of the complexity of culture was unable to accommodate its actual complexity. Whatever the thought of culture reifies it is always overtaken by the redundancy and palingenesia inherent in its continual unmaking and making.

Cosmologies, symbolic orders (linguistic, visual, auditory, gestural), ritual, beliefs, everyday life, commodities, artifice, kinship, individuation and commonalities all combine in a soup of relational complexity of uncontainable differences that, in total, is beyond observation. Not only does this complexity manifest many ways of being-in-the-world, as worlds are made present in difference, but it also constitutes different forms of being. Notwithstanding the efforts of modernity/globalization to impose commonality, and forms of cosmopolitanism to accommodate it, the dynamic that drives the production of cultural difference continues to create multiplicities unabated.

Responses to variations in environmental/climatic conditions, and proximity to natural resources, dramatically influenced socioanthropological formations of ethnocultural difference among our species. These differences have always been deeply implicated in the creation of affirmative and negative modes of 'our' being, as evident in the acquisition, imbalances and exercise of power by beings for or against other beings. Histories of war, colonialism and relations within the elements of all the economic modes of production are all markers able to be read through this lens. Against this backdrop, as acknowledged, technology has always been an ontologically directive agent of 'our' evolutionary change. Our species has always been technological, and *techne* has always been present in the environments into which we are born.[23] However, significant biophysical, cognitive and psychosocial transformations are now underway, indicating that some of our species will become, by dint of choice or circumstances, fully technological hybrids (beyond cyborgs) and become totally post-humans (Herbrechter 2013, 179–194). Rather than this being viewed monodirectionally as the endpoint of the species, it is far more likely to be a widening of its biological and cultural difference, including between the peoples of the global North and the South. Such

developments will likely spark new geopolitical tension, add new challenges to national sovereignty, increase the imposition of 'states of exception' and further dilute the already weakened claims of democratic politics. Correspondingly, an increase in displaced and abandoned people, subject to biopolitical control, is assured. One views the negation of the identity of these people (the first act of which being the erasure of their name and its replacement by a number) as ethnocide – already, there are huge numbers of people around the world (in detention centers, camps and prisons) who have suffered this condition of absolute loss.

While 'the abandoned' are the extreme example of loss, the impact of the convergence of neoliberal economics, globalization, hyperconsumerism and digital technologies are producing certain kinds of passive, docile and compliant subjects who manifest nihilism as an enclosed acceptance of fascinated engagement without a shred of alienation, resistance or political discomfort. In contrast, there is an Other for whom a destructive form of politics arrives, whereby the continually social disadvantage and alienation develops a deep contempt and latent hostility toward those they blame for their plight, be they of another race, gender, sexual persuasion or class. In another, but linked form, nihilism is evident as a disposition and fatalistic state of resignation that expresses a total lack of agency in the(ir) world. This economic scenario is not new, but in so many ways is an extension of the European liberal tradition of 'free trade' (on their terms), as underpinned by imperial power, the often accompanying violence and humiliation of colonial rule, and exploitation of natural and 'human' capital.

The extension of the power of the North over the South continues in numerous guises: development and aid programs (linked to extending commercial interests), the 'protection of freedom' from nations to which terms like 'the axis of evil' are applied, the bringing of democracy, technical assistance, and the selling of arms and supply of military advice and intelligence.

Translation is complex, highly changed politically, never neutral, and with an agency woven into the entire history of colonialism. While the focus on translation is dominantly directed at the word, cultural translation of the image, wherein all expressive forms converge at a site of engaged signification, needs acknowledgement as an object of active and constant encounter. Effective translation requires an appeal to knowledge drawn from the cultural contexts of cultural production and reception from which the object to be translated emanated, or into which it arrives. In this sense, meaning is always absent from the 'that to be translated.'

As many commentators have pointed out, language is the carrier of different sensibilities, worldviews, perceptions of selfhood, value and beliefs; it is powerfully expressed by Hall and Ames that 'every act of translation is an act of interpretation' (1987, 3). The possibility/impossibility translation completely depends on traversing this problematic. 'Making sense' is not a uniform act of production; thus, on writing on the Chinese language, Hall and Ames remark that Chinese is 'productively vague,' which forces them 'to stress that the appearance of any given term in a text introduces 'with varying degrees of emphasis, a vast, seamless, range of meanings' (Hall and Ames 1995, 226). Such vagueness is not just bound in the text. It follows that any adopted position of interpretation is intrinsically political (be it consciously seen and adopted or not). To understand this is to grasp that it is simply not possible to make claims like 'Translation allows for mutual intelligibility among culturally

diverse social experiences of the world' (de Sousa Santos 2014, 217), because there is always an inherent bias of the translator that can be towards understanding or misunderstanding, and that bias is always politically inflected.

Not only has translation of textual material from the global North had an enormous impact on the formation of modernizing social, cultural, political and economic life in the South, but it has significantly structured how the North is viewed as the model of development to emulate; the dominant locus of geopolitical power; and the repository of modern knowledge, the acquisition of which is deemed essential for the advancement of the nations of the South. So framed, technical, scientific, economic, political and cultural texts that arrive from the North, in many cases over several centuries, have acted, and continue to act, as instruments of epistemological colonialism (Kalantidou and Fry 2014, 12–36).

The borderlands names the space in which the authority and appropriateness of the historical and contemporary agency of this material can be contested, interrogated and selectively appropriated from a contemporary critical position.

Part 3. Design Resituated

Now to Design

Design almost totally directs the form and content of the environment in which we live. It pervades our lives, constitutes a world within the world, and impacts how we view, understand, use and extend this world. We are in fact the producers and product of the materiality and immateriality of this world now named Anthropocene. Specifically, our ontology, physiology, and psychology significantly arrive out of our being in this designed world. What we do, how we live, how we appear, our habits, tastes and health, plus the way we perceive the 'natural' world, are all in so many ways prefigured and shaped by the mediatory forms of this designed world.

To reflect upon this world's complexity is to realize that what is taught about design, by design education, is totally inadequate. Effectively, it bypasses the complexity of the designed, the consequences of designing, especially its ongoing ontological design agency. In its instrumentalism, design education fails to educate designers about the designed world in which they themselves have in so many ways been designed by and will design. This is a serious flaw in general and an aberration in the Global South. For, effectively, design (in all its forms) provides a key conduit for the world of the North to be projected at and upon the South as the form of the future to desire and to work toward. In this respect, design was not only an agent of modernity, but continues as a servant of late modernity. The point here is clearly not that nothing should arrive from the North, but rather that what does again must be of true advantage to the South, as identified by a process of rigorous critical selection. The basis of this evaluative process is the creation of a just, appropriate, and socially and economically viable form of a Southern future that can be materially realized.

Such a future centers on the creation of a recognition (by design) that the seeming utopia of unrestrained consumerism, a promise from the North, is in reality the harbinger of a defuturing nightmare in glittering lights. As such, it is unrealizable, unsustainable and a means to further the inequity that is at the very core of the North/South divide in its geographic, nationally internal and diasporic forms.

So contextualized, design invites being rethought and remade from three perspectives: the imperative of redirection; the undoing and recreation of design education; and design discovery, recovery and efficacy. Now, the exposition of these views must be understood as

propositional. As such, they assert the need for exploration, debate and development. Thus, they do not come with the claim of being solutions. Any expectation that a design response to the problems of the Global South can simply be rolled out is frankly ridiculous.

To reiterate, the spirit and ambition of this paper is simply to contribute to a starting point that prompts and allows a dialogue, activism and productive work by a self-selected change community to grow over time – for the scale of change envisaged will take time.

Design in the South as Design in the Borderlands

The agenda of design in, by and for the South is enormous and indivisible from social, political, economic and cultural action. It includes design to address issues with adequate housing, education, poverty, social justice, employment, sustainable industries, universal public utilities, effective governance, universal healthcare of uniform quality, reconciliation with indigenous peoples, the reintegration of resistance fighters (formal and informal) into the civilian population, and the reestablishment of viable communities, as well as design against environmental destruction and uncontrolled and dysfunctional rapid urbanization.

Such a context, and its agenda, begs another way of thinking about design, a new method and language of engagement able to redefine design problems, and a new kind of practice of designing. Thus, in so many ways, the problems and prospects of the South require that design itself be remade. Key to this remaking is breaking away from the imposition and worldly *enframing* of design as it continually arrives as an assemblage of the modern (*de facto,* the unification of all and everything designed by the materiality of modern ideology). Again, such action does not mean total rejection – this would be unrealistic. Rather, it once more implies the development of cultures of critical selection and local innovation based on local imperatives, needs and capabilities.

Essential for the formation and advancement of another way of thinking about design and the creation of new design practices is the establishment of an acute awareness of Eurocentrism, together with a sound understanding of border thinking, structures of epistemological colonialization and a solid grasp of defuturing. Without this intellectual armory the actual ability to comprehend the fundamental problems to be solved will be significantly limited.

Eurocentrism is not merely a perceptual bias, but is a directive mode of consciousness that determines a worldview and a myriad of practices informing not just how the world is seen, but, more particularly, the nature of the actions that prefigure visions and forms to be realized by and as design. Effectively, the ontological designing of Eurocentrism inculcates values, a regime of judgment and tastes that need to be made present, evaluated and in many cases rejected for the very possibility of design for/by the South to be possible.

What is carried by all that Eurocentrism prefiguratively projects is a condition of impossibility: the South cannot become the North. To fully realize this 'fact of life' is to recognize that a substantial rejection of all that Eurocentrism brings as a monocultural worldview is not a matter of choice, but one of necessity, if a 'radically different' mode and 'horizon' to view of being-in-the-world is going to be created (de Sousa Santos 2014, 220). Such a disposition toward Eurocentrism is a global phenomenon, as is evident in a worldwide presence of anti-imperial Southern voices (de Sousa Santos, 2014, 223).

To reiterate design itself requires liberation from the ongoing Eurocentric project of the epistemological colonization of the minds and cultural practices of the South. The very

history of design stands upon a Eurocentrically constructed foundation (Fry, 2015, 97–101). Now, while the presence and agency of this history cannot be overlooked, neither can the local indigenous history and its colonial ethnocidal displacement. It is in this space of imposed creation and local displacement that the borderland can be constituted.

Ontological Design and Question of Redirection

Ontological design at its most general is a way of understanding the dynamic designing relations between the world, things and human beings. As such, it is significant to all disciplines, as well as having a very particular significance for/to the global South.

Ontological design is increasingly relevant to the global debate on the nature of the human and the post-human, because technology is transforming us, in our difference, into another mode of being. 'We,' as a species, are being differentially enabled, disabled, augmented and abondoned by technology. By implication, our ontology is being changed by (its) design without direction. Thus, a technologically designed world has been created without any clear sense of what it is bringing into being.[24]

Now to say a little (more) about ontological design; but first, a brief caveat on the ontic, the ontological and design. The ontic names 'all that is in being;' the ontological is the being of all that is in being.' Thus, ontological design is the 'designing of the being of something brought into being' by design or 'of itself' (which is to say all that is designed goes on designing).

Design, as we shall see, besides being a specific discourse, a designated phenomenal form and a diverse practice employed by various professions, is cognitive and material action that, by degree, our species in all its forms displays. Anthropologically, human beings have always acted prefiguratively – basically, what this means is that ideas go ahead of and direct (or redirect) action. This was true in the very first making of things. It has always been true of all craft practices. And it is true in all professional design practices. Ontologically, it crucial to understand not just that what 'we' design goes on designing, but that 'the world we design designs us.' We and design exist in a never-ending hermeneutic circling.

So characterized, the world of the South has in large part been an ontological designing consequence of the Eurocentric world of the North. Thus, design was deeply embedded in the structures of colonial imposition. For example, as we shall see, the colonial city was not merely an expressive form of colonial power, but equally an ontologically designing operational system of order.

History, a City, the Parergon and the Futural

On July 13, 1573, King Felipe II of Spain promulgated 148 ordinances for the discovery, the population and the pacification of the Indies in the Americas.[25] These have become known as the 'Law of the Indies' and can be read as a clear and powerful example of ontological design applied to the colonial city and its people. These Laws totally directed the built form of the city, its urban planning and the conduct of its population, including every aspect of their everyday life. Thus, the Laws, as will be seen, acted as a *parergon* – which is to say they framed the operational principles of the city from the inside and the outside over time (Derrida 1987, 54).[26] The ontological designing was without limit.

The ordinances were prefaced by a statement by King Felipe:

> To the Viceroys, presidents, audiencias and governors of our new Indies and to all those others concerned let it be known: That in order that the discoveries and new settlements and pacification of the land and provinces that are to be discovered, settled, and pacified in the Indies be done with greater facility and in accordance with the service to God Our Lord, and for the welfare of the natives, among other things, we have prepared the following ordinances.[27]

Contextually placed in the history of the colonization of the Americas, as it commenced in 1492 with the arrival of Columbus, the Laws were part of the move away from genocide to the subordination of indigenous people as having use value within the regime of economic exploitation. This move therefore marked a perceptual shift from seeing the native peoples as godless animals to creating them as God-fearing, brute labor power. A sense of the tone of the Laws, and a flavor of their urban and life-directive designing force, can be seen in the following six example Ordinances:

> Number 3. Having made, within the confines of the province, a discovery by land, pacified it, [and] subjected it to our obedience, find an appropriate site to be settled by Spaniards – and if not, [arrange] for the vassal Indians so they be secure.

> Number 33. Having populated and settled the newly discovered area, pacified it, and subjected it to our mandate, efforts should be made to discover and populate adjacent areas that are being discovered for the first time.

> Number 36. And that they should be populated by Indians and natives to whom we can preach the gospels since this is the principal objective for which we mandate that these discoveries and settlements be made.

> Number 39. The site and position of the towns should be selected in places where water is nearby and where it would be possible to demolish neighboring towns and properties in order to take advantage of the materials that are essential for building; and, [these sites and positions should be suitable] also for farming, cultivation, and pasturation, so as to avoid excessive work and cost, since any of the above would be costly if they were far.

> Number 89. The persons who were placed in charge of populating a town with Spaniards should see to it that, within a specified term, assigned for its establishment, it should have at least thirty neighbors, each one with his own house, ten cows, four oxen or two oxen and two young bulls and a mare, and it should have [also] a clergyman who can administer sacraments and provide the ornaments to the church as well as the necessary implements for the divine service; if this is not accomplished, he should lose everything already built or formed and he will incur a fine of a thousand gold pesos.

> Number 90. The aforesaid stipulations and territory should be divided as follows:

> Separate first the land that is needed for the house plots [solares] of the town, then allocate sufficient public land and grounds for pasture where the cattle that the neighbors are expected to bring with them can obtain abundant feed, plus another portion for the natives of the area.

> The rest of the grounds and territory should be divided into four parts: one is for the person in charge of building the town, the other three should be subdivided into thirty lots for the thirty neighbors of the town.

The Laws imposed order underpinned by an ethnocentrically constituted discourse of reason. In this respect, the form of the city was an expression of, and directed by, the perverse and reductive logic of a Eurocentric mind predicted upon a cruel regime of divide and rule utilizing '*la clase de comprador*' of 'vassal Indians.' The Laws established an ontologically designing regime, a historical trajectory that was futural; they established conditions that effectively directed a form of the future and as such still have discernible traces in the present.

The Laws of the Indies were not aberrant, but representative of a wider ordering of space, time, work and everyday life in the designing and formation of colonized ontologies in general. Dialectically, their intent to create was equally an act of destruction, an erasure of indigenous knowledge, practices, values, ways of life and cosmologies extant prior to colonization. Such action was not based upon any degree of recognition of what was being destroyed, but rather on the assumption that all that was indigenous was worthless.

Notwithstanding unevenly distributed traces of precolonial cultures of Latin America, there is an unfillable void that has been sought to be covered over in various ways. In one modality, there is the elevation of residual indigenous aesthetic forms, historically ruptured from their referential ground. Deployed as celebratory markers of cultural heritage, they can equally be read as signs of its loss. In another modality, loss arrives in silence via a simulacrum based on celebration of a colonial past devoid of the real horror of colonization. Again, aesthetic forms (most notably in festivals all over Latin America) are a covering over of history, a constructed zero point, via the mobilization of historical appearances.

There is no simple or single reading of these modalities of concealment. Affirmatively, they can be taken as historical accretions of actions in order to cope with loss, to intergenerationally redeem and assimilate transgressors, and to constitute a mestizo culture and identity. But equally, they can be seen as significations of pain and sadness. Of course, there is no cultural stasis, and whatever the dynamic of local change it is now indivisible from the arrival and formation of desires delivered by commodity culture, as it functions within the structures of the globalized economy.

Design and the South: Things, Care and Repair

The central issue and project for design of/by and for the South is another kind of ontological designing – one based on the creation of structures of care able to constitute Sustainment.

Responding to this imperative means identifying, and finding ways to counter whenever possible, all those forces – material, economic, social, political, cultural and psychological – that defuture. This can only be done by bringing 'things' (material and immaterial) into being that care in the sense outlined above. Here is a massive and long-running task for designers yet to be created. More than this, it presents designers in the South with an enormous challenge of imagination.

Remembering that 'things' are not merely reducible to objects, one asks: what 'things' does the South lack, and now need to be created in order to sustain itself? One obvious answer that begs to be elaborated on is the creation of things that care. But this cannot be done with design as it is in its compromised, colonized and contaminated form. So said, it is nevertheless possible to identify a few starting points that focus on care as an ontological structure of being, and as inscriptive practice, that while not rejecting its emotional characterization (caring about and for) invites characterization as a praxeological, rather than axiological, domain (de Sousa Santos 2014, 213).

Care One: Designer Care

How can a designer be designed to be a provider of care via the designing of things that ontologically care? The answer to this question requires acknowledgment of the fact that a new kind of designer depends upon the arrival of a transformed habitus. What this means is remaking the assumed and taken-for-granted thinking that underscores what a designer

believes they are, what they are doing, and how. Thus, the habitus is a prefigurative force that determines what is to be learnt, and what to design, by what means and why. All this is to say that habitus is the underlying structure of everything the designer knows and designs. Crucially, to recognize the significance of the habitus is to realize the extent and power of informal knowledge. One now asks, from the perspective just outlined, where does the creation of a new kind of designer start?

It is not with designing, but with the provision of a comprehensive understanding of design's implication in the state of the world and the worlds within it. To gain this understanding means fully grasping the scale and impact of design as an ontological force of and in the world in its making and unmaking. So framed, design always has profound political consequence (not least in the shaping of people's lives and the environment upon which they depend).

Acquiring such knowledge leads the proto-designer to learn how to read what is brought into being by design – design as it now appears for such a designer as an anthropocentrically aware exercise of responsibility accountable to Sustainment. Thereafter, what design serves is the creation of a future with a future. It is from such an induction into design that the possibility of ontologically designing 'things' (social, material, organizational, cultural and so on) that care can be broached and a path of discovery opened. Discovery here is not merely about what and how to design, but about the transformed role of the designer (where options include the designer as organizer, strategist, political activist, entrepreneur, maker, innovator or educator).

The acquisition of such a habitus is about learning how to deal with an ever-unfolding complexity at a higher order. It is about design professionals working to counter the constantly increasing technocentric instrumentalism and aesthetically indulgent drift of design in the unsustainable status quo. It is also about adopting a mode of design directed at ontologically designing care to advance decoloniality as a key element of Sustainment. The implication is a new paradigm of design education.

While a good deal of what has been outlined here has been presented conceptually, by far the most effective method of delivery and discovery would be centered on 'situated problem definition and engagement' and self-selected projects. Whatever skills such activity requires are gained on a 'need to learn' basis. In this setting, habitus and 'techne' fuse.

Design Education as an Education in Design

Currently, most design education is about how to design, rather than being about what design is and what it does in a worldly sense. Design education needs to be both and constituted in a praxeological form. The question is how to do this.

Bluntly, designers are not adequately educated about the nature of design, its presence in the world and its futural consequences. One can even go as far as saying that in a real sense, design education is not an education about design. It is superficial, a great deal of what is being taught is redundant (it is about the past of designing, not its future) and, notwithstanding exceptions, is delivered mostly by educators who themselves have not been adequately educated. Specifically, designers are taught how to bring things into being *without* an understanding of the way in which what they have designed has ontologically prefigurative agency.

This is, designers have little understanding of the consequences of what they design and how its designing will continue in time. Gaining such an understanding is no mere academic

or instrumental exercise. Rather, it is about gaining the ability to establish well-informed, 'realistic' scenarios that can be subjected to critical judgment in order to make decisions on (re)directing the perception, operative use and symbolic value/meaning of what is being designed. This adds up to the creation of a sensibility that can produce a series of refined probabilities on which to make fundamental ethically contingent design decisions, recognizing that the discovery of truth is neither option nor possibility.

The establishment of such a new designing sensibility means unlearning (the mischaracterization of) design as a particular valorized mode of creative aesthetic expression brought into being by a 'creative' (the culturally populist way design is presented) who is focused on the primacy of 'the object' while meeting the needs of a client who, in most cases, has *de facto* made the most important design decision on what has to be designed.

What should already be apparent is that 'design' has to be destroyed in order to be remade. Thus, the object of design practice and the epistemological basis and pedagogic foundation of design education need to be changed (but differently) in the North and the South. As argued, the very *habitus* of the designer has to radically change. What this most essentially means is that the taken-for-granted actions, values and tropes of design thinking require a total transformation to become futural (which is, as aforementioned, predicated upon Sustainment and care manifested in the conditional particularity of time and place). Alongside this is an essential advancement in how design is theorized, not as a commodified epistemology in itself (design thinking), but as a realm of inquiry directed at all forms of ontological prefiguration. Such thinking requires designers to critically and reflectively question the agency of prefigurative practices at large and then the propensity of things in the world-within-the-world as they impact upon and beyond it. There is a huge, and mostly unrecognized, need for new knowledge production (in contrast to the continual recirculation of the old with its so often redundant but economically bonded notion of design).

All this is to say that designers need to learn that the true importance of design lies in the fact that it has become one of those fundamental practices upon which the existence of our species rests. For this recognition to happen, there cannot be any avoidance of confronting 'our' being as anthropocentric, and while this disposition may not be transcended, it can be taken responsibility for. What makes this all the more challenging is that the differences in the modes of our species being-in-the-world are now increasing. At one extreme is the prospect of biotechnical hybrids, and at the other underclasses of the abandoned, especially in the world's poorest nations. Counter to the post-human, as a technological displacement of the human and its others, the South *could* provide leadership in the creation of a being more 'human' than the human via a focus on enhancement of 'care' (as outlined above) as the ground of an ontological (re)designing of being-in-the-world.

The elevation of design as a redirected creative practice begs consideration in general, and especially from the position of the 'state of the world' in the South. Dominantly, what gets overlooked in design education, and in the formation of the designer's ontology and design practice in general, is the fact that creation is indivisible from destruction (seen in the most overt and basic way in the unrestrained destruction coming from the extraction and (mis)use of natural resources). The key consideration of such redirective thinking (of design) is understood and referred to as 'the dialectic of sustainment.' What is learnt from this dialectic is not that destruction can be avoided, but that it be selective, justified and deemed the basis of a design ethics. Two fundamental and large questions follow (both with particular salience for the South). What has been, is being, and needs to be created? And what has been, and is being destroyed?

Notwithstanding the attention given to thinking, *the importance of understanding* begs to be elevated. For instance, 'modern science establishes the hierarchy of relevance of objects' (de Sousa Santos 2014, 141). However, the reduction of object to a rational schema in no way gathers and comprehends *the complexity that must be understood* when confronting the way fate brings objects together or how they become assembled culturally, by the idiosyncratic taxonomies, montages or simply the contents of one's life.[28]

Learning to understand is indivisible from comprehending relationships, both in particular and in general – this as the seer perceives them, rather just being taken as obviously evident in viewing what is immediately seen. Understanding the nature of exchange is a clear example of a learnt understanding transcending instructed knowledge. Science, economics and rhetoric are three discourses with specific theories and practices of exchange. But they do not illuminate a fundamental understanding of exchange presented by Georges Bataille's notion of general economy, as it makes clear that everything exists in a condition of exchange, albeit in different moments of time (1988, 27–44).

With reference to issues lodged in the South, as has been historically constituted by uneven economic and cultural exchange and ontologically designing forces, the reconfiguration of exchange by colonialism permeates the entire design agenda in numerous ways. This includes the relations between cultures and classes, the creation of economic and social inequity, the distribution of food, the management of natural resources, and the uneven provision of universal health services and access to uniformly high-quality education, public utilities and so on. Not only can such a listing continue, but an exploration of how it can inform the development of specific new design agendas needs to be seen as a project and process within the development of design for/by the South.

Reconfiguring material content and practices of exchange by design (in association with other transformative practices) is one major task to be learnt so as to advance the emancipation and Sustainment of the South. Inseparably, another is the identification of the obstacles and unsustainable conditions and practices that obstruct and defuture the possibility of affirmative futures. What this means is that much that has been, and is being, currently designed needs to be designed away. Here, learning how to identify what needs to be 'arrested' and then eliminated by design is crucial. Again, this is a huge, demanding and complex task of global relevance, and with a particular salience to conditions of the South. Creative elimination is a practice that has to become elemental to the designer's habitus.

In so many ways, the world of our existence has been broken. Some of the signs are obvious – visible conditions of destruction are evident everywhere. Conversely, much of what is broken goes unseen, its identification dependent on a knowledge of unsustainable practices and process (climate change and all that causes it being a clear example).

In the South, the city so often manifests the extremes of destruction. So much of its urban fabric can be seen to be broken, and marked by acts of destruction. At the same time, corruption, social dysfunction, unhealthy environment and broken lives evidence the less visible, or even hidden. Yet in contrast, and by necessity in many seemingly socially disadvantaged and materially impoverished environments, two very important conditions of repair flourish.

The first is the social cohesion of communities of disadvantage, where sharing and mutual assistance is a vital and reparative part of everyday life. Imbedded in such conditions of sociality is a potentiality to be realized as generalizable and futural. The challenge is how to do it. The second is the existence of a culture of repair. Poverty makes repair and innovation

essential. From this foundational situation, an ethos, capability and economy invites being created that elevate the status, desirability and availability of the repaired (across a wide range of artifacts and technologies) to the benefit of communities at large. Repair so viewed enfolds the retrofitted and the remade, where the aesthetic divide between the old and the new loses significance: a 10-year-old motorcycle can be remade as good as new, used clothes can be retailored and made fashionable again, used furniture can be refurbished – all this invites design and creativity.

So much of the world in which we all live cannot be changed; however, it can be redirected. The thing itself remains structurally the same, but it can be transformed in appearance, use and meaning. The importance of the context and practice of such action cannot be overestimated. Cities, industries, much infrastructure and many technologies cannot just be eliminated. But they cannot stay as they are. Already, there are practices available, or being developed, that respond to this need. Retrofitting, reverse engineering and metrofitting being examples; while repair is on the margins of economic activity, it has to be moved to the center.

Redirection is a massive undertaking that requires a great deal of planning, detailed programming and time (in many cases, decades). Essentially, what redirective practices acknowledge is the priority of dealing with what already exists. For instance, taking the case of the city, leveling and rebuilding is not a practical, economic or environmental option; the number of new buildings in ratio to old is usually going to be few, so redirection is viable. Again, while this task is vast and conceptually, socially, economically and environmentally complex, it opens a whole vista of opportunities for 'design for/by the South' to examine and develop.

The need to act-in-time, while already indicated, begs special emphasis. This means acting in the medium of time and with a sense of urgency. It requires seeing designed things in what Walter Benjamin called *Jetztzeit* – the everlasting passing of time of the continuous 'now' (Benjamin 1979, 255–266). This means seeing and understanding where a thing comes from (its designed antecedents) and where it is going (its prefigurative fate). This way of thinking about things is based on grasping that nothing remains fixed or finished but is in continual change – be it extremely slow or exceptionally rapid.

To restate: what in the end needs to be learnt from design education, in the context of design for/by the South? It is certainly not just learning how to design. Rather, it is learning how to sustain all the relationally connected elements of life in which we are all implicated so that 'we' can continue to be in time. This is a higher order of objective than emancipation from the North, although its realization would enfold this end.

Design Education and the Academy Revisited

In the company of the Enlightenment, the modern university became the epicenter of the production of modern knowledge, and as such played a major role in the creation of the modern world, increasing the reach and power of the North, the formation of the modern mind, the individuated and social subject, civil society and the state.

Preoccupied with the advance of reason and the sciences, the academy was an agent of modernity that made a very large contribution to establishing modern industrial production, society and its products, way of life and culture. Accompanying these developments were continued colonial conquests, increased exploitation of natural resources and of 'native' labor power. Not only did these actions increase inequity, but they also established what

are now understood to be the material conditions of unsustainability as normative. Moreover, the excesses of colonialism did not just render the nature of everyday life for colonized people as perpetual subjection, but it equally inflicted deep psychosocial and cultural damage. Few nations whose populations were exposed to the experience of such derogation have actually recovered. The damage and destruction wrought by colonialism has not ended, it continues to underscore many of the geopolitical problems of the contemporary world.

For all the claims of higher education as an affirmative force of civilization, its darker side was fully engaged in the advancement of that 'world-breaking' learning that gave impetus to the unsustainable. Some of the most destructive technologies ever devised were the result of research conducted at universities. Less dramatic, but still contributing to negation, is the university (in the North and its extension into the South) as a service provider to the labor market of inequity and the defuturing status quo.

Consider, while there have never been more people attending universities, the spirit of the modern university is dying and in many ways almost dead. University education continues to be totally instrumentalized. The key metric of the institution's success is not based upon levels of understanding or knowledge gained, or the resolution of the fundamental challenges that life on Earth faces, but on the needs 'of the market' and the number of graduates who gain employment. The pursuit of learning and the development of the 'cultural capital' of nations have been displaced by earning power and cash in hand.

Thinking in what form new, and transformed, universities of the South could (should) be is clearly a very major project requiring many minds and a lot of time. The areas that such a task might, for example, explore are the revision of the precolonial and colonial history; contra economic development that directly addresses uneven development; inequity; countering structurally unsustainable industries and hyperconsumption; exposing and eliminating epistemological colonialism; advancing regional cultural production; enhancing quality teacher training; developing counterhegemonic and situated/regional governance; promoting and supporting equitable social, technical and scientific innovation; and, linking all these areas, Sustainment as the futuring ethos directing that relational and redirective creative content underpinning all university education.

If the global undercurrent is any guide, the 'good' news is that a third epoch of the university is starting to emerge – a university based on production of knowledge able to deal with the worlds the modern university helped bring into being: the now broken world, the world made unsustainable, the world of hegemonic technology and design that, unbeknown to most, defutures.

Opening at the Conclusion

The measure and efficacy of what has been said is not a matter of assessing the extent to which it is right or wrong. Rather, it is how many informed others will engage, explore, debate, elaborate, refine and extend what has been said. Design for/by the South invites new formations, alliances and events. But above all, it invites activism in the form of a job to be done, the abandonment of defuturing practices, redirective projects to create, new kinds of research and education to be commenced, a design politics to promote and communicate. Let's see!

Notes

1. From the Introduction to the 2009 reprint of Tayeb Salih's seminal novel *Season of Migration to the North* first published in Beirut in 1966.
2. In this context, *oikos* is defined as 'ecological home.'
3. Famed for his remarks on the 'Clash of Civilization' (2003),
4. The Crusades lasted nearly two years, with the last (the ninth) ending in 1291.
5. At a different moment, there was a massive Chinese contribution to the assent of scientific knowledge, as Joseph Needham's immense multivolume, more than 50-year study of 'Science and Civilisation in China' comprehensively showed.
6. The work of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) is a case in point. A great deal of his mathematical knowledge was gained from a Jesuit missionary returning from many years in China (knowledge that laid the mathematical foundation of computing), but this source went uncited (Perkins 2008).
7. Postmodernity itself refers to a critique of modernity, rather than a moment after it. In contrast, postmodernism was an accompanying pluralistic culture that partially occupied the lacuna exposed when the temporal ambition of modernity, as a unified global order, was abandoned. Arriving at the same moment as the break-up of the old Eurocentric world order (with its geopolitical fragmentation, making the formation of a new world order, not withstanding rhetorical claims, impossible), globalization amplifies the exploitative character of modernity and projected consumerism globally as if it were a means of cultural unification. In reality, it was just another, and more virulent, form of cultural imperialism.
8. currently it is 60 million plus and growing.
9. While unable to create a universal culture, a great deal of cultural, psychic and environmental damage is done by consumerism, the structures it promotes and ways of life it enables. Likewise, in concentrating capital, corporations and advanced technologies into post-national mega-regions, it adds to the fragmentation of the global geospatial order, with corporatism overriding nationalistic and cosmopolitan modes of sociopolitical organization and ontologies.
10. This 'third space' needs to be distinguished from the more problematic third space of translation discussed by de Sousa Santos (2014, 217–19).
11. Stambaugh is the most recent translator of *Being and Time* (1966).
12. The term poses a problem of translation endlessly argued over. It appears in Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of *Being and Time* without a hyphen but in Stambaugh's with one. More significantly, its meaning is contested. The literal mean is Da (here)-sein (being), thus Dasein is literally translated in English as 'being here', however, Heidegger's use of the term is nuanced. It can mean, 'the being of the self as an entity', but equally as 'a mode of being-in-the-world'. What is implied in the latter is that it is not possible to be in the world without being situated. Hence, there is a circling back to 'being here.' There is no consensus. The form of the term in quotations matches that of the author/editor.
13. These disorders include technological anxiety, inverted care obsession, compulsive disorder, depression, attention deficit disorder, narcissism, antisocial disorder, schizo disorder, hypochondriasis, and body dysmorphic disorder.
14. This folds into the process wherein the anthropos (our primordial species being) evolved in difference, with the human becoming dominant and the creator of an anthropocentric ethos and operational material environment: the Anthropocene (wherein as one among many, the human became dominant and thereafter hegemonic).
15. Not only is that veneer which is our humanity very thin, it is easily removed: a clear example is those discourses of combat that transform the same into the other as enemy.
16. Traditional craft workers across cultures globally depend upon a mix of sensory knowledge – the blacksmith illustrates this point: sight, smell and sound are all in play when working and tempering ferrous metal. Certainly, in the North, such knowledge was given little status.
17. A thousand years ago, the Chou Empire of China placed itself at the middle point of all other nations and peoples as a center of civilization surrounded by the uncivilized.

18. 'Event' is a contested philosophical idea of some complexity – a discussion of which is beyond the remit of this essay. So said, colonialism as a 'designing directional event' refers to colonialism as a carrier of imposed epistemic conditions of dissonance, and equally as the instigator of an ontology prefigurative of everyday life. Both dimensions of such an event converge to form colonial(ized) subjects.

19. A number of exceptions have been noted and referenced in this text,

20. the notion of the world as constituted from structural elements (realized in atomic theory

21. As often happens, 'the best available explanation at the time' myth lives on, but in a contemporary mode of enunciation presented with reason (as a rhetorical trope).

22. A clear current example of such a position is evident in Nadir Z. Lahiji's (2016), collection of essays, *Can Architecture be an Emancipatory Process?*

23. Its has been estimated that *Homo sapiens* arrived 160,000 years ago, by which time, the archaeological evidence suggests, about 70 stone tools were in use, plus all the wood and bone utensils these tools were used to help make (Fry 2012).

24. This is a topic beyond the scope of this essay; however, it is one the reader needs to be aware of.

25. El Orden que se ha de Thener en Descubrir y Poblar,' transcripción de las Ordenanzas de descubrimiento, nuevo población y pacificación de las Indias dadas por Felipe II, el 13 de julio de 1573, en el Bosque de Segovia, según el original que se conserva en el Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla. Ministerio de la Vivienda, Madrid, 1973.

26. The concept of the *parergon* came from the Greeks, was revived by Kant, and was given contemporary salience by Derrida.

27. English translation of the "The City Planning Ordinances of the Laws of the Indies" by Axel Mundigo and Dora Crouch reprinted by The New City Town Planning Review, vol. 48, July 1977, pp 247–268 with permission from the Ministerio de la Vivienda, Madrid).

28. One of the most celebrated of idiosyncratic taxonomies is of the 'certain Chinese encyclopaedia' of which Borges wrote, as famously cited by Foucault in the Preface to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 1973).

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