Finding one's way in global social space

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1
Faraway, so close: the South

The terms "Global South" and "Global North" are the latest in a long series of conceptual distinctions that serve as attempts at world-interpretation and world-ordering. By now they are widely used without further explanation, in particular the term "Global South", showing that they have entered common language in global public debate. A recent bibliometric study showed that the use of the term "Global South" in the social sciences and humanities has been steadily increasing from 19 in 2004 to 248 in 2013 (Pagel et el. 2014; for general reflections on this rise, Hylland Eriksen 2015). There are now scholarly journals that carry the term in their title, such as *The Global South*, published by Indiana University Press and already in its tenth year, or the open access online journal *Bandung: Journal of the Global South*. Higher education institutions have started to honour the concept by institutionalizing it, such as through the Global South Unit at the London School of Economics and Political Science or the Global South Studies Center at the University of Cologne. If rapid diffusion is a measure, the apparently geographical distinction between South and North is a great success.

At the same time, this distinction is problematic in numerous respects. Indeed, the stream of publications in which the term "South" is used as a concept – or, some might prefer to say: in place of a concept – as if it had an evident and generally accepted referent keeps being accompanied by a debate about the very meaning and usefulness of the term, in which numerous and not at all consonant voices can be heard. To give just a few illustrations: Conceptually, the distinction between North and South has multiple – overlapping, but not identical – meanings. North/South may be taken to be a distinction between the rich and the poor, the dominant and the dominated, the centre and the periphery, the "advanced industrial societies" and the "developing" ones, among others. Empirically, the Global South is not identical with the Southern hemisphere, in which societies of the Global North, such as Australia, are located, and *viceversa*. Beyond the spatial appropriateness of the terms themselves, there are also important cases of societies that cannot easily be placed into these categories: is China, the second largest economy in the world, part of the Global South; or is Russia, highly dependent on exportation of raw materials, part of the Global North? Finally, and maybe most importantly, these concepts may also be just another misplaced attempt at conflating conceptual signification with bounded geographical space. This has always been problematic, one of the most widely discussed cases being the conflation of "Europe" and "modernity" (see Stråth and Wagner 2017). In the contemporary world, marked by unprecedented degrees of interconnectedness, often called "globalization", such attempt may be even less fruitful than at other moments.

Concept-formation is always open to objections. Given that the South/North distinction fails on so many counts, however, it may be more flawed than other, earlier attempts at world-ordering. On first reflection, one may just conclude that South and North are useless categories in the work at understanding the contemporary world within the social sciences and the humanities. This book, in turn, suggests that one should not arrive at such conclusion prematurely. Rather than decreeing uselessness, it is worthwhile to explore the uses to which these categories are actually put and to see whether they are useful for certain purposes. In the social sciences and the humanities, concepts are not meant to "map" empirical reality – even though confusion may easily arise when concepts use

geographical terms. Rather, they interpret experiences and suggest ways of acting in the light of experiences. The interesting question, therefore, is not whether a South exists, but from and to which experiences the coining and acceptance of this term speaks and what avenues of action it opens up. This book intends to contribute to answering this question.

Doing so, the contributors to this volume pursue two different avenues of investigation. Some of them stay close, at least to start with, to the recent conceptual transformation in ways of world-interpretation, as sketched at the outset. They explore the usefulness as well as the limits of the South/North distinction by looking at the varieties of ways in which it has been cast: by emphasizing its performative character (Cláudio Pinheiro on BRICS); by widening the historical context for specific world-regions (Jacob Dlamini on Southern Africa, Maxim Khmoyakov on Russia); and by elaborating elements of a political philosophy of planet and world (Gerard Rosich). In contrast, the other contributors approach the current debate from afar, to continue on the spatial metaphor. They identify and retrieve features that underlie this topical debate and are crucial for understanding it, but are normally not visible. Thus, they suggest: that that which was to be called the South is at the origins of political modernity, thus is constitutive of the North and of the very distinction (Lorena Fuster); that, going beyond opposing a Southern epistemology to the colonial imposition of Northern knowledge, world-interpretation is better advanced by displacements than by staying within locations (Aurea Mota); that South is a term for the place from which one is not but has to go to or intends to go to, South as exile and as a remedy for exile (Nathalie Karagiannis).[1]

This short introductory chapter will follow the contributors on this dual trajectory, looking at the distinction between South and North from close and from afar. In the first part, the current use of Global South and Global North is investigated by looking contextually (2) at its *conceptual* implications, by testing in how far it supports (3) a *critical* analysis of our present time, and by exploring and questioning (4) the *claims* that are often associated with its use. In the second part, the South is seen in longer and wider perspective. The argument about (5) the co-originality of the South and political modernity is mirrored in a reflection about the possible *end of the South* in our time. In the time in-between, which is and will always be our time, the place of the South has never been stable: with changing socio-political constellations, the South kept being restructured; however, the South also turned out to be (6) a *moving target*, escaping from any fixation. Thus, in conclusion, we will find that (7) the South is *ubiquitous*, but also *always elsewhere*.

2
The disappearance of the other North

As a conceptually driven attempt at world-ordering, the distinction of Global South and Global North is an updating of the distinction between a First, Second and Third World after the implosion of the Second World. The three-world distinction was arguably the first one in a long time in which the globe was provided with a comprehensive conceptual mapping, only proceded by the distinction between the Old World and the New World that emerged in the early sixteenth century at the moment when more geographical sense was made of the so-called discoveries. Other distinctions were also intended to signal the most significant boundary, often in binary terms, such as between "Hellenes" and "barbarians" or between "Orient" and "Occident". But they were less comprehensive given that they either acknowledged areas of the globe that were not covered or such a lack of knowledge about the other that any conceptual use was impeded. The term Third World, in contrast, first coined in 1952 by Alfred Sauvy with broader connotations (see Pinheiro in

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1 Most of the contributors address more than one of the aspects mentioned. Their names are here given as an indication for the key appearance of these themes. Overall, the volume may be seen as a self-exercise by the contributors at finding their ways in global social space (paraphrasing Boltanski and Thévenot 1983), an exercise that has become more difficult not only owing to recent social change but also to the authors' own contradictory spatio-temporal locations (to paraphrase Wright 1978).

this volume), acquired a clear conceptual meaning when it was connected with theories of economic development in the course of the following two decades. When the term "South" first emerged in a global-institutional sense in the report of the Brandt Commission in 1980, headed by the former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, it was used in exactly the same sense: the South was composed of countries that failed to base their economies on high added-value manufactured products and, thus, to overcome widespread poverty. For global justice and security, they should benefit from resource transfers from the North. In line with's Brandt's earlier foreign policy, the report eliminated what for three decades had been seen as the most significant distinction, the one between Western democratic capitalism and Soviet socialism, between First and Second World. Brandt's credo in "peaceful co-existence" did not foresee the disappearance of Soviet socialism, but was based on the expectation that the gap between the two underlying world-views would shrink, not least due to functional requirements to which he added politico-moral demands.

When Soviet socialism collapsed a decade later, the ground had therefore already been prepared for a new comprehensive conceptual distinction, now a binary one. But it is necessary to review the use of the earlier triple distinction to understand the variety of meanings that can be associated with the new set of counter-concepts, Global South and Global North. Conceptually, the three-worlds image was based on an economic view of society with industrialism at its centre, in the First World seen as advanced predominantly by market exchange and embedded within moderately democratic politics and in the Second World steered by a state apparatus acting in the name of the working-class. Importantly, there was a clear view of progress, namely steadily better satisfaction of needs due to industrialization, only disagreement as to how such progress was to be brought about. The Third World related to the First and to the Second Worlds in equally asymmetric ways. In current terminology, the South had two Norths to which it was oriented. The question then is what changes when one of those Norths disappears.

The conceptual consequences are ambiguous. The co-existence of democratic capitalism and state socialism meant a limited plurality of viable modes of socio-political organisation. The disappearance of one of those modes can be seen as entailing the evidence that only one of those was truly viable in the long run. This conclusion was readily drawn by evolutionary thinkers in the social sciences who thought to identify in these processes the selection of the functionally superior model. But rather than the end of plurality, this transformation can also be seen as spelling the end of the limits of plurality. In this sense, the flourishing of the debate about "multiple modernities" (Shmuel N. Eisenstadt) after 1990 is closely connected to the fall of existing socialism. These varieties of modernity have either been seen as rooted in long-term civilizational legacies, under the heading of "multiple modernities", or they have been identified with projects for societal organization, not least in the face of a hegemonic model of liberal-capitalist modernity, then more typically described as "alternative modernities" (Dilip Gaonkar). In both these versions, the idea of a linear trajectory of societal development is abandoned. Following these approaches, the end of the other North entails the end of all possible North.

But can there be a South without a North? The reflections above sit uneasily with the rise of the term "Global South". To consider the latter's usefulness further, we need to add its critical and normative purposes to the conceptual ones.

3
Beyond globalization?

Critically, the proposed terminology objects against the idea of a "flattening" of the earth through processes of globalization and individualization, as sociological theories used to see it, or through the finally global diffusion of the universal principles of human rights and democracy, as political

theory and political science tended to put it. These scholarly discourses have had wide impact on public debate for some time. They have provided elements for a novel re-interpretation of the global socio-political constellation with very characteristic features. The theorem of globalization and individualization combined with the discourse on human rights and democracy in suggesting that there is – and: should be – little or nothing between the individual human being and the globe. Every social phenomenon that stands in-between tends, in sociological terms, to be annihilated by the ever more widespread use of new information and communication technology and, in political terms, to be considered as having freedom-limiting effects. Significantly, the notion of democracy, which presupposes a specific decision-making collectivity and thus appears to stand necessarily in an intermediate position between the individual and the globe, tends to be redefined. Rather than referring to a concrete, historically given collectivity, processes of democratic self-determination are, on the one side, related to social movements without institutional reference, and on the other side, projected to the global level as the coming cosmopolitan democracy. We can characterize this conceptual tendency as the erasure of meaningful space. In a second step, we can identify a similar tendency towards the erasure of historical time. The individual human beings in question are seen as free and equal, in particular as equally free. Thus, their life-histories and experiences are no longer seen as giving them a particular position in the world from which they speak and act. And political orders are seen as associations of such individuals who enter into a social contract with each other, devoid of any particular history (for more detail on the above see Wagner 2015).

This imagery provided significant orientation for much political action after the implosion of the Second World. And, arguably, it is against the hegemony of this imagery that the coining of the term "Global South" critically reacts. Rather than only one world, it appears to suggest, there are two worlds on the globe. Against the conceptual erasure of space, in particular, it proposes a dual spatiality. In the political and intellectual context of the late twentieth century, it was highly important to insist on the fact that something that one used to call social structures persisted even under the new conditions. The question, however, is how well the South/North distinction serves this purpose.

It is useful to recall the sites of debate. The heyday of globalization has been monitored and interpreted by the World Economic Forum since 1987, having been preceded by the European Management Forum since 1974, at the moment of the first serious economic crisis of the post-Second World War order. As a critical alternative, the World Social Forum started to meet in 2001, first in Porto Alegre, having been preceded by "encuentros" in Latin America since 1996. The two fora can be seen to embody – or: having for some time embodied – the major sites at which reflection about the current global socio-political constellation takes place, the one in deliberate contrast with the other. Can the one be seen as representing the North and the other the South? At a closer look, the alternative forum works with a critical conceptualization that is quite at odds with the two-world image. According to its principles, the participants in the World Social Forum "are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism". Thus, the starting assumption rather is that a single world has already been created under the auspices of capital. The answer to this challenge, so the principles continue, is the commitment "to building a planetary society ..." (*World Social Forum Charter of Principles*, available at: https://fsm2016.org). Thus, the social structures that are identified are planetary structures of domination that have to be overcome by building "another world" that, or so it appears, has similarly a planetary dimension. If the forum were to present the Global South, this would be nothing but the other half of the Global North, coinhabiting not only the same planet, but also the same world (for a nuanced discussion of "world" and "planet" see Rosich, in this volume).

In such understanding there is little room for a "South" as being involved in a process of world-making (Karagiannis and Wagner 2007) nor for one that truly has a significant spatial meaning. If it is the case that neo-liberal global capitalism imposes itself in a homogenizing way across the planet,

then it will destroy any South that may have existed and, broadly following Marx's critical attitude, resistance to it will rebuild a world after the complete erasure of meaningful space (for a critique of such view of history see Chakrabarty 2000). And indeed, in recent debates about the Global South one can recognize that the link to a concrete spatiality becomes more and more tenuous – and this now no longer merely for reasons of the very imperfect geographical mapping, mentioned at the outset, but also because of the difficulty of matching spatial reference with a critique of domination (see recently Trefzer et al. 2014).

4
The South as an alternative

Obviously, one does not have to follow this particular approach to the critique of domination. But the preceding reflections underline the necessity to reflect carefully on the link between spatiality and conceptuality. When emphasizing the economic aspect in terms of a critique of capitalism, the supposed South is nothing but a mirror image of the North, it has no features of its own (unlike the mirror image created by William Kentridge, discussed by Nathalie Karagiannis in this volume). In contrast, when the focus in understanding the emergence of the Global South have been particular claims for Southern knowledge, they have regularly been associated with some notion of otherness of the South, an otherness, furthermore, that can be considered as an alternative to the North. It will suffice here to discuss three contributions to this debate as examples each for one approach to the question: Raewyn Connell's *Southern Theory* (2007); Boaventura de Sousa Santos's epistemologies of the South (see most recently the collection Santos 2014); and Jean and John Comaroff's *Theory from the South* (2012).[2]

Southern Theory is a work in retrieval. Against the background of a contextual analysis of the rise of European social theory, Raewyn Connell rediscovers authors from other continents whose works have been eclipsed by the dominance of "Northern" theory. Underlining the socio-theoretical nature of these works, she provides a corrective to the implicitly – and sometimes explicitly – still dominant view that "Northern" theory prevailed because it offered superior conceptualizations and explanations of social relations and their transformations. What she cannot fully do is to reconnect the theoretical work from the South with the one in the North and to confront the two with each other (see Aurea Mota in this volume). This is indeed a huge task for two main reasons: First, even though the world-regional strands of theorizing did not develop in complete isolation from each other, they evolved in rather pronounced separation, the only exception being the closer relation between Latin American and European theorizing. Thus, conceptual connections would need to be carefully constructed through analyses of contextual specificities. Secondly, the greater continuity from nineteenth-century European social theorizing to late-twentieth-century "Western" social theory created an asymmetrical relation to the various strands of Southern theory that can hardly be undone. For these reasons, the retrieval makes a strong case for recognizing greater plurality of world-interpretations and serves as an inspiration for overcoming blind spots of Northern theory, but it cannot provide the contours of an alternative to the latter.

Theory from the South has a rather different agenda. Focusing on the present, its analyses are set in a context of a high degree of world-regional interconnectedness. Where Connell's starting assumption is one of differences in experiences that lead to varieties of forms of knowledge, Jean and John Comaroff presuppose a degree of similiarity between world-regions that permits transfers of knowledge and insights. This is a standard assumption of theory from the North, a key example being the sociology of modernization and development during the 1950s and 1960s. The originality of the book lies in the inversion of the perspective: rather than African societies evolving towards

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2   The authors of these works are kindly asked to excuse the somewhat schematic presentation of their reasonings for present purposes.

Europe and North America, the Comaroffs see the North following the recent social transformations of the South. Furthermore, there is also what we may call a perversion of the traditional Northern perspective: rather than things getting better over time, indeed through processes of modernization and development, the Comaroffs see them as getting worse as the North keeps following the South. What has changed is the vantage point from which global social change can best be observed and analyzed and the direction of such change, but the change itself keeps being considered as global and rather unidirectional.

Epistemologies of the South makes a much stronger claim. In contrast to the Comaroffs, the difference between North and South lies for Boaventura de Sousa Santos not in that which can be observed but in the ways of observing and interpreting. In earlier works, which made do without spatial connotations, he had distinguished between knowledge for domination and knowledge for emancipation. These were two basic epistemologies, both of which were at work in the North, the former dominant in the service of power and the latter expressing resistance against domination. Associating now such epistemological reasoning with a history of capitalism and colonialism, the knowledge for domination comes to be seen as predominantly located in the North and the knowledge for emancipation as prevailing in the South. This spatialization of epistemology goes along with a second shift: While knowledge for emancipation had earlier been seen as one epistemological approach, Southern epistemologies are now based in the plurality of experiences of oppression and resistance, thus occurring themselves in a plural form. In this latter sense, Santos connects more closely with Connell and envisages varieties of alternatives emerging from the South, and importantly: positive alternatives, not merely an inversion of direction of a linear history.

As different as these proposals for Southern theories or epistemologies are, they all have in common that they link the generation of knowledge back to experiences made. Saying this, they do not oppose experience to theorization. They rather suggest that what they call Northern theories or epistemologies are the historical crystallizations of specific experiences, made at the neglect or suppression of other experiences. As a consequence, false claims to universality or generalizability are made that can be challenged by theorizing in the light of different experiences. But to be effective, such challenge needs to overcome exactly those claims to universality or generalizability that insulate Northern theory from any impact of new experiences. While this move is to be strongly appreciated, a major questions remains: All three proposals for re-opening practices of knowledge generation in the social sciences had already been made before within the North, so to say, but without attaching spatial significance to them. The question thus is: what is so specific about Southern experiences that new theories and epistemologies arise from them? And in what sense are those experiences truly Southern; in what way does the concept "South" link these multiple and different experiences to each other?

5
Origins and end of the South

As stated at the outset, the current distinction between South and North can be seen as the latest of a comprehensive conceptual mapping in view of world-ordering, with the distinction of the New World from the Old World in the early sixteenth century as the first one. In the preceding section, furthermore, we have seen how claims for Southern knowledge were inscribed into the history of European global domination that started with the moment of "discovery" of the so-called New World. This domination is characerized with different terms such as colonialism, capitalism, imperialism, often without making clear distinctions, which is not a minor problem. But before touching on this issue, it is important to underline that the South is thus given a history, and significantly a history that is different from other histories. Thus, it is possible to relate conceptuality to historicity, and to delineate a certain trajectory of the South.

For a long time, the crucial debate about "the rise of Europe", the onset of modernity, and the beginning of a basically linear process of modernization was focused on the world-historical transformations around the year 1800, namely the cumulated effects of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution. The period that historians of Europe call "early modern times" only stood in the background; it had little significance of its own. What happened between 1500 and 1800 was "early" because it gained meaning only as events in preparation of modernity. Furthermore, these centuries were analyzed in terms of largely endogeneous European developments, sparked by the Renaissance. The rest of the world had only a minor role in the rise of European modernity (see Jacob Dlamini, in this volume, bringing historical social structures in Africa into world-history and into sociological theory). Ironically, however, it is exactly this account in which Europe is isolated from the rest of the world and, subsequently, imposes itself on it, that lent itself to the elaboration of postcolonial and decolonial theories that reason against the background of a caricature of European modernity.

The more recent focus on the period between 1500 and 1800 allows to alter the picture. It helps recognizing that European self-understanding was transformed as a consequence of the encounter with the unknown others in America, with human beings whom one did not expect and about whom one did not know anything, not even whether they are human. That way of thinking that is often called the European political philosophy of modernity, elaborated by scholars such as Las Casas (often forgotten in standard accounts), Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant, drew its main questions and conceptual inspirations from the encounter with the New World other (Dussel 2003). It is in this sense that the South is most fruitfully seen to constitute itself during this period (Lorena Fuster, in this volume). As a consequence, this moment also sees the origins of the distinction between South and North. We cannot understand the history of the North and Northern epistemologies without its origins in the South and in the encounter with the South.[3]

While highly asymmetrical in many respects, the moment of origins is an encounter that is faced in the absence of adequate tools for cognition and recognition by both sides. Fundamental questions are without an answer but in need of an answer, most clearly acknowledged in the Valladolid-Salamanca debates of 1550-51. Even though the debate remained without conclusion, further practice denied native Americans equal treatment as full human beings. This was an orientation that prevailed, with considerable variety, during all of the colonial period until the late twentieth century. It justified the denial of the right to self-determination to the Southerners, and it justified the domination of the North over the South. In the Marxian tradition, reification is the term used for the process in which relations between human beings transform into relations between things. The North/South relation is a case of what one may call unilateral reification: the dominated others are considered as if they were things, but not the same is true the other way round. Keeping the reciprocal uncertainty of the first encounter in mind, we may apply to the relation between North and South what Axel Honneth (2005) said in more general terms: Reification is the forgetfulness of the original act of recognition.

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3   An observation of a different kind needs to be added: Recent debates tend to deny or overlook that a great variety of South/North constellations – of colonial constellations, we may say – were forming between the sixteenth and the twentieth century and that it is this variety that makes it difficult to conceive of a single South opposed to a homogeneous North. If we consider for a moment the so-called Brandt line, the implicitly most often used way to geographically define South and North, two main outlyers are immediately visible. The more recent one is Russia whose association with BRICS locates it today sometimes in the South, but which has placed itself historically much more clearly in the North, indeed in its own context of colonization (Maxim Khomyakov in this volume). And the much more familiar one is Australia, geographically clearly in the South, a society emerging from colonization, and nevertheless unequivocally seen as part of the North. Comparing Australia with colonized or so-called settler societies in Africa, America and South Asia, its condition for becoming Northern is arguably the near extinction of the indigenous population. This is what is has in common with North America, which becomes Northern for the same reason (for a related comparative reasoning, in different conceptual terms, see already Hartz 1964).

If reification is forgetfulness, what happens when one remembers, or better: when one is reminded? The anti-colonial struggle has been highly successful, even though it has taken a long time and caused many victims. Most of the territories that were governed at some time between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries by Northern powers have gained independence. Within those territories, the relation between descendents of settlers, of indigenous peoples and of slaves is mostly governed by formal equal freedom. This has been a struggle that has moved close to its final point only very recently. The end of apartheid in South Africa marks the moment at which any domination of one category of persons over another one has become utterly unjustifiable (which is not to say that it does not exist any longer at all). Elsewhere I have referred to this moment as the moment of the end of formal domination (Wagner 2016). As we have seen before, however, the concept of the South has mostly been used as an "asymmetrical counter-concept" (Koselleck 1979) that helped to grasp the relation of domination between North and South. The end of formal domination between North and South then will necessarily have consequences for the persuasiveness of a concept that is built on the notion of such domination.

Thus, one may have reason to assume that the South will turn out to be an only temporarily significant concept for world-ordering. The moment of its explicit emergence already contains the signs of its imminent demise. The Global South was needed to express and criticize the restrictedness of "Northern" world-interpretations and to underline the transformative potential of the "Southern" alternatives, but also the latter's lack of actual power of transformation. Currently, the rise of BRICS (as discussed by Cláudio Pinheiro) is part of a new interpretation that draws on the tradition of "the South" but radically alters it. In the centre of this re-interpretation, the BRICS alliance includes key societies of the former South, but also former embodiments of Northern world-interpretations. Furthermore, BRICS refers to states of considerable power, and the BRICS discourse is no longer one of dependence and powerlessness. One may say that, despite topical doubts, that BRICS is more powerful than any former "South", but at the same time considerably less "Southern".

6
The South as a moving target

Nevertheless it is unlikely that the South will disappear even in the case of a further rise of BRICS and the emergence of what is now called multi-polar world-politics. What is currently referred to as the Global South and what Southern theories and epistemologies claim does not exhaust the meaning of the South. In a first step we can approach the broader significance of the term by looking at a case that still stays close to issues of global politics.

During the immediate aftermath of decolonization, the European Economic Community, the predecessor of the European Union, acknowledged its historical responsibility towards the former colonies and made this debt and duty the underlying rationale for its development policy. Already during the 1980s, however, the policy orientation changed, and the responsibility of each society for its own fate under conditions of market exchange was increasingly emphasized (Karagiannis 2004). With the formation of the European Union, the particular nature of the relation between Europe and its former colonies was further de-emphasized. The EU as a new actor positioned itself more neutrally, devoid of any historical burden, in the field of global politics and global commerce. This shift can be analysed as a move from a paternalistic self-understanding as promotor of modernization and development abroad, consonant with the domestic Keynesian democratic welfare-state, towards a view of oneself as a market actor guided by self-interest, consonant with the enterprise culture of neo-liberalism. Furthermore, though, it has consequences for what one means by South.

During the colonial period, the South was closely connected with Europe. This is visible, for instance, in the fact that integration of metropole and colonies on equal terms was considered in Portugal and France at the moment of decolonization, even though this proposal never came close to realization except for small territories. The immediate post-colonial arrangement was a relation between formally equal states with the former colonizer assuming debt and respnsibility towards the former colonies. The more Europe started to consider itself as a unit, rather than an alliance of nation-states, however, the more distance was taken from the South. The acceleration of European integration after the Maastricht Treaty also was an attempt to finally shed the moral debt towards the former colonies entirely. The South was from now on clearly seen as outside Europe in territorial terms; it became a Global South allegedly without particular historical relation to Europe.

By now one recognizes, though, that the establishment of a boundary of moral responsibility did not succeed. The South re-emerged within the territory of Europe: through urban protest by descendants of immigrants from the former colonies; through refugees; and through the widening of politico-economic heterogeneity in the current Euro-crisis creating an intra-European South.[4] These recent developments can be seen as an act of intended domination of the North over the South, which significantly tried to fix the South in space. However, that which was to be dominated escapes from control; it cannot be fixed in space, rather becomes a moving target.

7
The South is elsewhere: space, direction and movement

Thus, it may be wrong to ask *where* the South is. Looking for the South may not – or at least, not necessarily – entail looking for a geographical space, it may mean asking for directions (Karagiannis 2016). North and South are categories of direction as much as of space, thus lend themselves to analysis of both place and movement. A comprehensive analysis of the rise of the distinction between South and North as social categories, therefore, needs to widen the perspective and consider movement and direction beyond location in space.

A first observation concerns the change of connotations compared with preceding related terms. Terms such as "modern" and "traditional" or "developed" and "developing" emphasized social change over time. "North" and "South", in turn, privilege space over time. This has several consequences. The apparent symmetry of spatial terms, on the one hand, eliminates some of the evaluative intentions: the North is not as such "advanced" over the South; but neither do the terms North and South contain a hint of domination, in contrast to the centre/periphery distinction, for instance. On the other hand, the abolition of evident asymmetry allows for novel uses: the South can become a site of conceptual superiority and innovativeness or greater adequacy, in terms such as Southern theory or epistemology of the South. As seen above, however, the case for linking geographical space closely to conceptual claims cannot entirely convince. As Aurea Mota (in this volume) argues, the advance of knowledge may arise from displacement between spaces rather than from location in space.

As corporeal human beings can only be in one space at a time, any such displacement is always both a movement in space and in time. The conflation of temporality and spatiality has a long history in socio-political thought. "In the beginning all the world was America", as John Locke famously and erroneously claimed, referring to presumed life before the social contract (see Jacob Dlamini, in this volume). A key example is the conceptual relation between individual and community, guided by the notion that individualization is a dominant historical trend and that culturally strongly integrated communities are a phenomenon either of the past or of a different

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4   The latter has been reflected in attempts at looking at Southern Europe in terms of versions of Southern theory, see Dainotto 2011; Cassano 2012.

space. Claiming to state the inevitable, this assumption has often also led to nostalgic longings for a past place or utopian expectations of a future place. Significantly, disputes over these interpretations show normative ambiguity: individualization is supposed to increase freedom and possibilities for self-realization, but it also leads to conformism, anomie and disorder.

While not without validity, most such conceptualizations suffer from two problems: they work with some teleological notion of social change (for a forceful critique, see Sewell 2005), and they conceptualize social change as an aggregate of supposed experiences that are not actually researched and reflected upon. Looking at the latter by other means, from poetry, philosophy and psychoanalysis, one recognizes in the condition of exile a loss of one's space and a movement towards another space that create a quest for a return that cannot happen as such, because it would entail a move back both in space and in time. The South, as Nathalie Karagiannis (in this volume) shows, is indeed imagined as a return from such exile. It provides direction at a time when the coordinates of global social space have been upset so that to find one's way has become difficult.

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