1. Introduction

Decolonial theory is a theory about the rise and decline of the western colonial world civilization and its impact on the globe. I define colonialism as *"a global system of economic, political, social and cultural institutions that the colonizer has created in order to rule the world in a colonial world civilization"* (see also paragraph 4.1.1 - Definition and paragraph 8.1.2 - The concept of civilization).

Decolonial theory as an explicit theory of liberation is only a few decades old. Since the start of colonialism there was always a decolonial response in the form of decolonial concepts. Decolonial theory has its origin in different parts of the world (see paragraph 2.2 - A global movement). It has produced valuable concepts in different disciplines of science. Many important contributions have been made to philosophy (epistemology) and social and cultural theory, but fewer on economic and political theory. These contributions are more or less independent from each other and have different basic concepts. There are contributions from Latin Abya Yala (Latin America), Africa, the US, Australia, Asia. Yet, in my view, as a theory it still has some serious limitations. First, decolonial theory as a theory of liberation should provide clear policies for changing the world, for decolonizing the world. Much of the critique is about biases in knowledge production. I think that we should move beyond that area into the terrain of what the practical implications of decolonial theory are for social movements and progressive governments.

Second, decolonial theory is an amalgamation of a scattered landscape of concepts that are not necessarily related to each other and might even contradict other decolonial concepts. Some decolonial theorists argue against capitalism and others for promoting innovative entrepreneurship. It is not clear how a critique of epistemology is related to changing political institutions.

In order to overcome these limitations, I propose to develop decolonial theory as a comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical framework. Western Enlightenment has produced two such frameworks: Liberalism and Marxism.

A comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical framework has the following characteristics:

1. It is comprehensive because it has produced concepts of how to look at the most important dimensions of a society: a world-view, economics, politics, social relations including relations with nature, and culture. There are other important aspects of a society, but these dimensions are essential to make a framework comprehensive.

2. It is coherent because its concepts don't contradict each other. They are consistent and logical.

3. It is integral because the concepts of the different dimensions are not just

lumped together but are related to each other from a basic concept. In Liberalism this is "individual freedom" and in Marxism "class struggle". In decolonial theory it is "mental slavery and decolonizing the mind (DTM)".

Decolonial theory is very young. It took Liberalism and Marxism hundreds of years to develop into comprehensive, coherent and integral frameworks. John Locke (1631-1704), the founder of Liberalism, published his political ideas on government in 1689, more than 330 years ago. Adam Smith, the founder of the economic theory of Liberalism published his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776, almost a century later. Basic socialist ideas were articulated in the French Revolution of 1789, more than 230 years ago. *The Communist Manifesto*, a founding document of the socialist movement, was published in 1848. "*Das Kapital*", by Karl Marx, the founder of Marxism, was published in 1867, more than 150 years ago. There is still a lot of work to be done in developing a comprehensive, coherent and integral framework for decolonial theory and practice.

A comprehensive, coherent and integral framework provides mankind with a worldview of how a civilization should be established and how societies in this civilization should be organized economically, socially, politically and culturally. Outside the West, different civilizations have developed comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical frameworks. One such example is the Islamic civilization.

In Islam the basic concept is Tahwid, the oneness of Allah. The concept is not just a declaration of faith that there is one God and one God only. It is also a statement of the kind of society that can be built: the Ummah. This is a community of believers that is united under the guidance of one God. The guidance is to be found in the Qur'an, a religious text revealed to the prophet Muhammad through the archangel Gabriel over a period of 23 years, beginning in the month of Ramadan and ending in 632, the year of his death. Apart from the Qur'an there is a collection of records - the Hadith - of what Muhammad said and did during his life. Together with the Qur'an they are the sources for Islamic law and moral guidance.

I define a world view as a philosophy of how mankind evolved to where it is now and how it might evolve in the future. The Islamic worldview is based on the belief that life and existence came into being as a result of the will, desire and design of Allah, the creator. But humans are endowed with reason, with which they can develop nature and society. Regarding nature, Islam holds that humans are the vicegerents of Allah on earth. All the resources of this world are at their disposal as a trust, not as a property. Regarding human society, the core concept on which a society is based upon justice. Justice is a moral category that denotes how a society should be organized on the basis of fairness and the more or less equal distribution of rights and duties.[1]

In Islamic economic theory, private ownership of means and production and the market are considered legitimate parts of an economic system, unlike in Marxism. Islam recognizes that there are differences between people that may lead to differences in their ability to earn and, hence, in the amount of wealth they may accumulate. But

the rich have the duty of giving to the poor and needy. The Islamic economic system should provide for a balanced structure of relationships in the community, as what the rich are giving is regarded as what the poor are entitled to. Unlike Liberal economic theory where greed (maximum profit) is the basis for operating an economic system, in Islam the economic system is based on the moral values of social justice.[2]

There are different parts in Islamic social theory that deal with different aspects of social relations. The social theory is not a description of social relations, but a guide to how social relations should be organized. An example is the concept of Ummah, the community of believers, regardless of race, ethnicity, nation, gender and other social characteristics. Members of the Ummah should relate to each other on the basis of solidarity. Regarding gender, there are different interpretations in Islamic theology. Some argue that gender inequality is part of Islamic theology. Asma Lamrabet holds that *"it is not Islam as a spiritual message that oppresses women, but rather its different interpretations and legal rulings founded by interpretative ideologies many centuries ago."[3]*

In the political theory of Islam an Islamic state is based on Islamic law, which in itself is based on the Qur'an and the Hadith. There is no separation of religion and politics as in secular states. On the contrary, politics is based on theology. Political institutions function on the basis of developing a religious community and serving this community in every aspect of life (economics, social relation, culture etc).[4] The relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in a Muslim society are structured according to the principles of the Constitution of Medina. The Constitution was drawn up in 622 in Medina after the prophet Muhammad arrived following his migration from Mecca. Non-Muslims were guaranteed the same political and cultural rights as Muslims. They have autonomy and freedom of religion. This is not a nation-state, but a pluriversal state.

In contrast to Liberal cultural theory in which individualism and materialism form the basis of Westernized culture, Islamic cultural theory is based on the notion that Allah has ordained human beings to live a life of moral conduct that combines individual growth with social responsibility. Humans are encouraged to develop culture and science within the context of the guidance of the Qur'an and Hadith.[5]

I have given this brief description of the main points of the Islamic theoretical framework as an example of a comprehensive, coherent and integral framework from a non-Western civilization. There is a basic concept, Tawhid, on which a comprehensive system is erected for economic, social, political and cultural theory. This system is coherent. The different theories are interconnected and form a logical unity.

There are many different views within this framework, even on the main points that I just mentioned. There are critiques of Islamic theology that challenge the basic assumptions of the framework and point to the divergence of theory and practice of Islam. But on the whole, the purpose of my summary is to give an example of what other comprehensive, coherent and integral frameworks outside the west look like.

In African philosophy the concept of Ubuntu - *I am, because we are* - explains how individuals and society are interconnected. It might become the foundation of

economic, social, political and cultural theories that are not grounded in individualism or class struggle, but in the notion of interconnected social relations.

In the indigenous cultures of Latin Abya Yala the concept of *Buen Vivir* (Good Life) expresses a harmonious relation between humans on the one hand and humans and nature on the other. A good life can only be achieved with others through the practice of solidarity and working together. A society should be based on the nurturing of a tender, harmonious and vigorous life for humans and nature (Pacha Mama, Mother Earth).

In Chinese Confucian philosophy, a society should be based on humanity (humaneness), duties and responsibilities of the members of the society and rituals and procedures.

In Hinduism and Buddhism, Dharma is a key concept. Although there is a variety of meanings attached to the term there are some general notions that give us an idea of this concept. There is the notion that people can achieve a happy life and save themselves from degradation and suffering if they follow moral laws like austerity, purity, compassion and truthfulness combined with spiritual discipline.

In the Eurocentric knowledge system, all non-Western knowledge has largely been discarded as backward and irrelevant for modern societies. I assert that outside the West, comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical frameworks have existed and assert their relevance today in the critique of Eurocentrism. In my view a comprehensive, coherent and integral decolonial theoretical framework should draw from those knowledge systems. This study is an attempt in that direction.

The basic concept that I use in developing a decolonial framework is the concept of mental slavery and Decolonizing The Mind. This concept maintains that Western knowledge production was founded on the manipulation of the mind (the colonization of the mind) into accepting Western superiority and non-Western inferiority. The greatest challenge of the future is decolonizing the mind which consists of three dimensions:

1. The critique of the Western colonization of the mind and thus Eurocentric knowledge production.
2. The development of an alternative comprehensive, coherent and integral knowledge production.
3. The translation of this new knowledge into viable policies to build a new pluriversal world civilization.

This study is just one of the many contributions to this endeavour. In every continent there are thinkers who are engaged in the same struggle to decolonize the mind. Eventually a decolonial comprehensive, coherent and integral theoretical framework will be the result of a collective effort by many thinkers across the globe.

I use the following approach in developing my contribution to this framework: I start with trying to understand why the decolonial movement started some decades ago (chapter two). It makes the link between the fall of the West and the rise of the rest. It

also points to the collapse of the socialist bloc and the demise of Marxism as a theory of liberation. And it connects the rise of decolonial theory to the crisis of Western civilization.

DTM is a critique of Eurocentrism and the European Enlightenment. In order to develop this critique, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the two major schools from the European Enlightenment: Liberalism and Marxism. In chapter three, I outline their world-view and their economic, social, political and cultural theory. This chapter is crucial because an in-depth understanding of their theories is needed to move to the next important step: the development of an alternative philosophy of liberation based on the concept of DTM.

The basic concept of a comprehensive, coherent and integral decolonial framework, in my view, is the concept of mental slavery: the process of the colonization of the mind. It distinguishes between two layers in this process: the basic and deepest layer of the production of knowledge on the one hand and the layer of the mechanisms of mental slavery. Chapter four deals with these issues.

From chapter five up to and including chapter twelve I use the following methodology in developing the building blocks for a DTM framework. I look at the basic concepts in the following disciplines:

- Philosophy, notably epistemology (the theory of knowledge) (chapter five).
- A DTM theory of racism. Strictly spoken, the study of racism is not a discipline but part of social theory. But because racism is so entrenched in Eurocentric epistemology, I have decided to spend a separate chapter on a DTM theory of racism (chapter six).
- Mathematics and natural sciences (chapter seven).
- History, notably world history (chapter eight).
- Economic theory (chapter nine).
- Social theory (chapter ten).
- Cultural theory (chapter eleven).
- Political theory (chapter twelve).

In each of these disciplines, I give an outline of the basic concepts and provide a critique of these concepts. All these disciplines have a wide array of authors - both in the past and today - who have developed the discipline. I focus my explanation and critique on the authors who are considered to be the founders of that discipline. After the critique, I discuss alternative concepts from a DTM point of view. Finally, I look into the practical implications for policy making. This is how I have developed my DTM framework.

The last chapter takes up the issue of the transition of a colonial world civilization into a new decolonial world civilization. We are experiencing the decline of the old world order, but what will emerge from the ashes of its destruction? How might a new world civilization look like from a DTM perspective? The concept of a new world civilization is at the core of DTM.

With this book I want to encourage open discussions and debates with people who

disagree with the propositions I put forward. I realize that my knowledge is limited and the decolonial movement has a long way to go in the coming decades. In my view the only way to further the development of decolonial theory and practice is by critique and not by applause.

There is a note on the terminology that is used throughout this book. As I explain in paragraph 5.4.2.1 (The terminology) there is a link between terminology and the power to colonize the mind. Changing terminology can be an arduous enterprise.

Take the example of Abya Yala: Suppose that an Aztec discoverer from Mexico in 1750 managed to read about a country named China. In his time, it was known that he could travel westward to reach China, but he decides with the support of his rich rulers to travel to the east to find another route to China. He ends up in Europe but thinks he has landed in China. Now he calls all Europeans Chinese. He tells stories about the Chinese in the cities of London and Paris. Every textbook that is written about Europe since his voyage refers to the Italians, Germans or French as Chinese. This sound hilarious. Why? Not because it is impossible. In fact, that is exactly what happened to the people in the Abya-Yala. Columbus thought that in his search for a westward route to India he had actually landed in India, while in reality he landed in the Caribbean. He named all the people in Abya-Yala Indians, although they had many different names for their nations. The difference between Columbus and the Aztec discoverer is that the Aztec would have no power to enforce his terminology on the mind of the world, but the Spanish occupiers did have the power of an empire. In fact, if Columbus thought that he was searching for a route to China, the people of Abya Yala would now have been named "Chinese" in every Eurocentric history book.

America was named after Amerigo Vespucci (1454-1512). He was an Italian who travelled with Spanish and Portuguese invaders and mapped the continent, which he claimed to be a new continent. Columbus believed that he had not discovered a new continent but arrived in the old continent of Asia. The cartographers Martin Waldseemüller (1470-1520) and Matthias Ringmann (1482-1511) named the continent America, after the first name of Vespucci, Amerigo, in honor of his work.

As an act of resistance, the Bolivian Aymara leader Takir Mamani proposed the use of the term "Abya Yala" in the official declarations of governments and official institutions. He says that *"placing foreign names on our villages, our cities, and our continents is equivalent to subjecting our identity to the will of our invaders and their heirs."*[6] Abya Yala" means "Continent of Life", "land in its full maturity" or "land of vital blood" in the language of the Kuna peoples of Panama and Colombia. I use Abya Yala when referring to the Americas as a whole and Latin, North or South Abya Yala when referring specifically to Latin, North and South America. When I specifically refer to the US, I just use US. I keep "America" in quotes that use "America". When I refer to ethnicity that uses America (African American, White Americans) I keep "American", because it is part of a name.

On September 14th, 2021 the Māori Party of New Zealand launched a petition to change the official name of the country to Aotearoa, its name in the te reo Māori language. The campaign also calls on Parliament to restore the Māori names for all

towns, cities and place names. The Māori name for New Zeeland is Aotearoa. I use the Māori name when I refer to New Zeeland. I hope that I can be consistent in using decolonial names in this book and apologize if I err in this regard.

Finally, I use extensive citations in this book for two reasons. The first reason is educational. Whenever I refer to sources, I want to use primary sources. If I discuss an idea of a thinker of institutions, I quote from the primary source to show how the idea was articulated by the thinker and not by an interpreter of the thinker. Teaching students and readers to use primary sources enables them to think or interpret for themselves. The second reason is to show that many ideas that I develop in this book are based on work that others have done and on whose shoulders I stand.

Sandew Hira