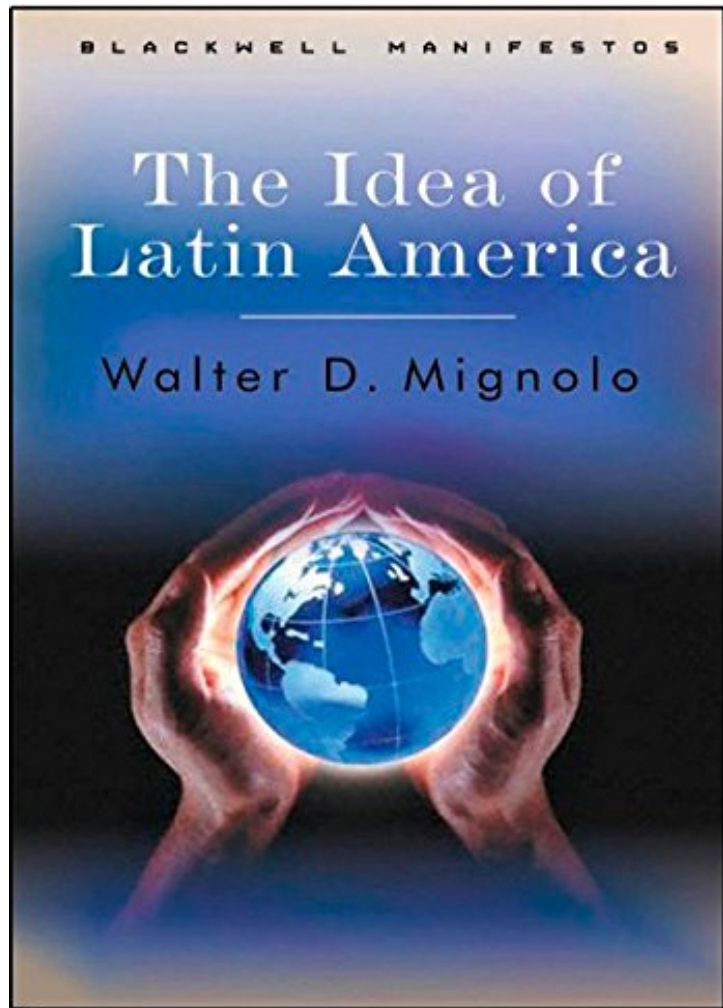


The Idea of Latin America

Walter D. Mignolo

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#991813 in Books Wiley-Blackwell 2005Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.08 x .63 x 6.08l, .76 #File Name: 1405100869218 pages | File size: 36.Mb

Walter D. Mignolo : The Idea of Latin America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Idea of Latin America:

2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Great bookBy AnnaWell written, interesting, and a thoughtful exploration of the creation of Latin America, race, and post-colonial theory.20 of 20 people found the following review helpful. Decolonizing Knowledge in/of "Latin" AmericaBy K. N.This is a self-consciously polemical critique of the idea of "Latin" America from an anti-neoliberal, pro-indigenous standpoint. Mignolo's "manifesto" is a welcome addition to the field of Latin American studies and a helpful condensation of his major scholarly work, including The Darker Side of the Renaissance (1995) and Local Histories/Global Designs (2000).The book is divided into three chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 outline Mignolo's understanding of the world-system of modernity/coloniality, which, in

the Americas since the sixteenth century, paved the way for colonial domination over indigenous and black communities. The third chapter surveys various forms of resistance to the continuing logic of modernity/coloniality, including indigenous social movements, the World Social Forum, and the Zapatistas in Mexico. In many ways this chapter is the heart of Mignolo's book, forcefully articulating as it does the need to decolonize not simply territories and resources but knowledge itself -- the core beliefs and ways of seeing the world that inform our ethical relation to other human beings. Missing from Mignolo's account is any consideration of how indigenous intellectuals (whom he supports, over and against Eurocentric, modern/colonial intellectuals) might not exactly "represent" the will of the communities they come from. He too readily accepts that these intellectuals speak the voice of "the people." I appreciate Mignolo's desire to critique Western epistemology and colonial regimes of knowledge, but I don't think he questions the category of "intellectual work" enough, even in indigenous contexts. A more ethnographic approach to indigenous intellectual work might have helped his account here. Still, this is an accessible and engaging summary of major problems in the professional study of "Latin" America. Recommended reading for Latin American scholars and transnational activists alike.

The Idea of Latin America is a geo-political manifesto which insists on the need to leave behind an idea which belonged to the nation-building mentality of nineteenth-century Europe. Charts the history of the concept of Latin America from its emergence in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century through various permutations to the present day. Asks what is at stake in the survival of an idea which subdivides the Americas. Reinstates the indigenous peoples and migrations excluded by the image of a homogenous Latin America with defined borders. Insists on the pressing need to leave behind an idea which belonged to the nation-building mentality of nineteenth-century Europe.

Winner of the 2006 Frantz Fanon Prize for Outstanding Work in or on the Caribbean Thought in the English Language
What's in a name? This vigorous, politically engaged essay reveals the 'colonial matrix of power' behind the invention of the term Latin America. A timely and significant contribution to de-colonial theory and to debates about new social movements in the Americas. John King, Warwick University
In this gilded age of hyper-theory, and the next big paradigm that supersedes the latest, and the anxiety of not having a paradigm; in this age of theory hyper-inflation, and the furor over the latest missive from the great masters, it is mentally refreshing to read a major work that is not burdened by obsequiousness toward the intellectual fashions of the EuroAmerican dominated market place of ideas, and that without great fanfare manages to turn on their head all our assumptions about our place on the map of history and reason. Walter D. Mignolo's *The Idea of Latin America* has elegantly achieved what great manifestos generally accomplish. It has announced the obsolescence of entrenched ways of thinking; it has given us new conceptual and historical narratives; and it has opened up an effaced, ignored, and derogated archive. What is announced in this book is not a new paradigm, but the existence of a type of thinking that has been producing new epistemic sites and weaving counter-narratives that both challenge the claim to universality of EuroAmerican theorizing and that nonetheless explain its origins, political economy, resilience and insidiousness. We simply will not be able to see America and Latin America in the same way after this book. Brilliantly Mignolo offers this new optics and geopolitics of knowledge by rejecting the epistemic-historical-onto-theological blackmail imposed by EuroAmerican hyper-theory: either Orientalism or Occidentalism. Beyond this imperial Manicheanism of the new, latest, improved Euro-American paradigm, beyond either you are for us (Eurocentrism), or you are against us (Thirdworldism), there is a way of thinking that looks at the geography of reason transversally, across and sideways, and not in terms of time-tables and invidious hierarchies, which allows to think many worlds co-existing in empathic solidarity. On the shelf of those works one thinks with in order to think beyond, where one finds the books of Fanon, Said, C.R. L. James, Shiva, and Retamar, one will now have to put those of Walter D. Mignolo. Eduardo Mendieta, Stony Brook University
From the Back Cover
The term "Latin" America supposes that there is an America that is Latin, which can be defined in opposition to one that is not. This geo-political manifesto revisits the idea of Latinity, charting the history of the concept from its emergence in Europe under France's leadership, through its appropriation by the Creole lite of South America and the Spanish Caribbean in the second half of the nineteenth century, up to the present day. Reinstating the indigenous peoples, the enormous population of African descent and the 40 million Latino/as in the US that are rendered invisible by the image of a homogenous Latin America, the author asks what is at stake in the survival of an idea which subdivides the Americas. He explains why an "American Union" similar to the European Union is at this point unthinkable and he insists on the pressing need to leave behind an idea of Latinity which belongs to the Creole/Mestizo mentality of the nineteenth century.