

Making the road *caminando de otra manera*: Co-constructing decolonial community psychologies from the Global South

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Abstract

Current discussion on coloniality dismantles structures embedded in neoliberal capitalism that maintain and perpetuate social pathologies. Theories and praxes emerging from Abya Yala (North, Central, and South America) provide academic and nonacademic contributions to co-construct community psychologies *de otra manera* (otherwise). These accountable ways of knowing and acting in cultural context and local place, become ways of making counterculture to inform decolonial community psychologies. The epistemologies of the Global South have produced invaluable teachings for transformative revisions of community psychology within frameworks that go beyond liberation and toward decoloniality. Activist women and decolonial feminists from the Global South, contest patriarchal rationality and universalism and co-construct new ways of being, thinking-feeling, *sentipensar*, and acting. Decolonial paradigms weave networks of solidarity with communities in their struggles to sustain Indigenous cosmovisions, delinking from western-centric ideologies that are not anthropocentric and promote sustainability, epistemic and ecological justice, and *Sumak Kawsay/Buen Vivir* (wellbeing) that includes the rights of the Earth. This paper deepens into decolonial community psychologies from Abya Yala that are making the road *caminando* (walking) *de otra manera* by applying methodologies of affective conviviality with communities, *sentipensando*, and co-authoring collective stories that weave pluriversal solidary networks within ecologies of praxes into colorful tapestries of liberation. These are the proposed coordinates to sketch pathways toward decoloniality.

KEYWORDS

Buen Vivir, decolonial community psychologies, ecological justice, ecology of knowledges, epistemic justice, Global South

Key points

- Committing to work with Indigenous communities means making community psychologies otherwise.
- This paper describes legacies and contributions from community psychologies in Abya Yala, epistemologies from the Global South, Indigenous psychologies, and feminist contributions.
- Decolonial community psychologies are co-created with *sentipensar*, and affective conviviality.
- Building webs of solidarity with communities' struggles, sustaining their cosmovisions, and co-authoring stories that delink from western-centric ideologies within pluriversal ecologies of praxes.
- These are the proposed coordinates to co-construct decolonial community psychologies to promote collective wellbeing that includes the rights of the Earth.

COLONIZATION AND ONGOING COLONIALITY

The analysis of the impact of colonization in knowledge production as well as wider areas of life has been addressed since centuries ago. Authors from the Global South earlier in the 19th Century such as W.E.B. Dubois and in the 20th century Memmi and Fanon, not only de-constructed the deep impacts of colonization on the human psyche causing double-consciousness, introjection and identification with the perpetrating colonizer, internalized oppression, but also rage and the need for rebellion to instill systems change. Mignolo and Walsh (2018) asserted that there are numerous decolonial contributions from thinkers, activists, strugglers, and practitioners around the globe and from, "...the many others whose *herstories*, *transtories*, and *ourstories* of thought have been made invisible by the racism and heteropatriarchy of the modern/colonial order" (p. 8—italics in the original). Current discussion on coloniality of power (Quijano), knowledge (Mignolo), being (Maldonado-Torres), and gender (Lugones)—among others—have dismantled the persisting forces and structures embedded in neoliberal capitalism that maintain and perpetuate social pathologies. Coloniality is also evident in the systems that produce, disseminate, and archive its knowledge and practices such as academia and its disciplines.

According to the decolonial authors from the Global South, coloniality is deeply embedded in modernity maintained by the colonial matrix of power (CMP) that determines the colonial difference, thereby dividing the world between those who have power (the colonizers, the developed, the civilized, the superior) and those to whom power is applied (the colonized, the underdeveloped, the primitive, and the inferior) to extract profit and uncontrolled gain, and promote imperial expansion in the name of progress and civilization. Dualistic conceptualizations are constitutive of coloniality, assuring that the colonial difference remains clearly separating two states of affairs by defining one in relation to the hegemonic other and preserving the abysmal and racist rupture that divides them. Consequently, a decolonial project would delink from this abyssal thinking and embrace holistic conceptualizations in our engagements with psychological phenomena. Coloniality has been amplified by the existing pandemic that exponentially produces more inequities and ecological catastrophes. Now more than ever, we must band together to co-construct antiracist and decolonial community psychologies in plural that are informed by epistemologies and praxes from the Global South as well as Indigenous psychologies.

In the next pages I will address contributions to community psychology from the Global North and Global South. These two geopolitical regions are not conceived as reduced and essential binaries. There are manifestations of the former within the latter and vice versa due to the complexities of coloniality that continue to exist despite liberation movements in the Global South and manifestations

of decoloniality within the Global North. This paper focuses on community psychology's contributions from the American continent as one of the many other geopolitical regions of the Global South that include previously colonized territories such as Africa, Asia, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGIES FROM THE GLOBAL NORTH

Psychology has played an important role in preserving and maintaining coloniality, constituting its power as a legitimized discipline within western scientific paradigms. Western psychology has attempted to produce universal theories and practices based on white men's regimes of truth that have served to maintain systems of exploitation of peoples and nature. Psychology and its subdisciplines have largely contributed to hegemonic production and reproduction of coloniality. For instance, Fryer (2008) proposed examples of applications of social psychoanalysis to community issues in the early 1900s in Austria as evidence of the earlier origin of community psychology in Europe. Socialist and psychoanalyst, Marie Jahoda engaged a team of academics and community residents in solving the severe unemployment consequences occurring in the community of Marienthal in the midst of a post-war recession. At the same time, Sigmund Freud created the free clinics in which psychoanalysis was offered to disenfranchised communities. Consequently, this psychoanalyst has been considered a contributor to the emergence of community psychology. Alfred Adler viewed the psychological feeling of community belonging, *Gemeinschaftsgefuehl*, as the main factor of individual and collective well-being, and therefore has also been considered the founding father of this field in Europe.

However, community psychology's womb has been claimed as belonging to the United States and it has been proudly exported to other geopolitical localities. This imposition has been perceived as benevolent education in other regions where the subdiscipline has been assumed to be needed the most such as Latin America, Africa, and Asia and without first learning from their rich legacies and contributions. US-centric community psychology has become a universal and legitimized subdiscipline of western psychology. As holder of universal truth, it has been imposed on non-western cultures regardless of its suitability or the lack of "fit with the environment"—paraphrasing Rappaport (1977, 1981) who defined community psychology as a movement and paradigm only valid in its own social, cultural, economic, and political context.

In the United States, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the war on poverty during the 60s, and the Swampscott Conference are given as historical forces of the origins of community psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Reimer et al., 2020). However, this origin has been widely contested by community psychologists from the Global South such as Dutta (2016) and Sonn

(2016). There were and continue to be growing peoples' movements in many other places of the world that inform community psychologies from the Global South. However, these contributions are rarely reported in hegemonic textbooks written and published in the Global North. In many communities of the Global South, the struggles for decolonization and decoloniality are expanding, and Indigenous expressions of community psychologies are multiplying in the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGIES FROM ABYA YALA

Abya Yala is the Indigenous name given to the American continent by the Kuna Indigenous peoples from Panama. It comprises Northern, Central, and South America (Del Valle Escalante, 2014). Multiple social movements have been sprouting over centuries in this geopolitical region that have claimed access to Indigenous lands and basic human rights. During the 60s and 70s, committed social scientists devoted their efforts to the analysis of social inequities and the challenges posed by the uncritical adoption of ethnocentric social sciences developed in Europe and North America. Social action became the main vehicle of social transformation to accomplish liberation from pervasive forms of racist and colonial oppression using theory to act upon reality addressing coloniality. This type of social action is conceived as praxis as a means of liberation. It was reinforced by Freire in his formulations of a liberation theology constituted by a continuous cycle of action-reflection-action that can more effectively transform structural conditions. Reflecting on how US-centric community psychology has shown a persistent lack of interest to learning from contributions from the Global South, Irma Serrano-García (2020a) asserted,

I realized that U.S. Community Psychology despite its proclaimed interest in cultural diversity and relativity is really quite ethnocentric. I am continuously surprised when I attend different events in the U.S. and hear colleagues identifying gaps in the field which have already been attended to in other countries. For example, Latin America was way ahead of the U.S. in qualitative and participatory research, Freirian models, and community interventions. To fill similar gaps, colleagues must travel and learn other languages so that they may collaborate in projects and access literature published in other tongues (p. 14).

In Latin America, liberation theology was led by some representatives of the Catholic Church who critically reflected about the existing pervasive conditions of poverty and marginalization. Flores-Osorio (2009) analyzed, “This

new ecclesial position started from an analysis of justice and the problems of poverty, considering community as the space where freedom can be realized” (p. 24). Several Episcopal conferences were held in Medellín, Colombia, and Puebla, Mexico in which the Catholic Church declared its commitment to work for the poor and against injustice. Liberation theology was practiced in communities struggling for survival and dignity. Liberation psychology was first coined by the Jesuit Ignacio Martín-Baró (1994) who resided in El Salvador. This field was influenced by works written by scholars from Africa and the Caribbean such as Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon. Martín-Baró proposed to transcend ideological barriers caused by long-standing processes of colonization such as fatalism and dependency, to change the structural conditions of pervasive poverty and marginalization. He critiqued neoliberal ideologies that promote individualism and the accumulation of capital based on egoistic greed and power. Other Jesuits such as Archbishop Oscar Romero were also preaching the same demand. Furthermore, Martín-Baró critiqued the teachings of western psychology. He challenged us to stop looking,

...up to the Big Brother, already respected in the social and scientific fields, borrowing from him its conceptual, methodological and practical assets, waiting for a chance to negotiate at the social instances of each country a social status similar to the one obtained by their North American colleagues (Martín-Baró, 1986, as cited in Flores-Osorio, 2009, p. 31).

Martín-Baró was paving the road toward the analysis of coloniality of knowledge, thereby dismantling hegemonic regimes of knowledge from the European colonizers, and the new colonizers such as US imperialism and neoliberal globalization. Their dominant knowledge systems continue to be imposed in other geopolitical regions by means of formal education to warrant internalized, psychological colonization. According to this author, liberation would only be possible through de-ideologization, that is, the dismantling of regimes of knowledge and oppression as well as conscientization of its effects on psychological and collective wellbeing—psychological, social, economic, and political liberation.

Community psychology in Latin America emerged from all these sources and was conceived as social psychology applied to community—thus called “community social psychology or social community psychology.” Montero (1994) claimed that the term “social community psychology” emerged in the 70s when the first program with this name was offered at the University of Puerto Rico. She further added that in “Latin American countries, the subdiscipline had been adopted, either as part of the general programs of social psychology (Brazil, Colombia, México, Venezuela, for example) or as community oriented courses” (p. 23; in Flores-Osorio, 2009, p. 28). Notwithstanding there were (and continue to be) uncritical

adoptions of Euro-American psychology's theory and practice in Latin America—and in other previously colonized regions—some psychologists have critiqued its inadequacy given that it addresses different issues than those being faced in the southern continent (Díaz-Guerrero, 1977; Montero, 1998, 2004; Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Serrano-García & Vargas, 1993). The application of critical self-reflexivity continues to be imperative to effectively delink from colonial impositions and to avoid perpetuating them.

The culturally anchored community psychologies have centered on the solution of pervasive issues caused by poverty and marginalization because of coloniality. In this process, psychologists have become primarily committed practitioners, and if they are teaching in universities, they ask their students to apply learning in communities needing their solidarity (Ortiz-Torres, 2020). These community psychologies evolved from popular education, critical consciousness raising, constructivism, liberation theology, Marxism, and participatory action research (PAR; Montero & Sonn, 2009; Montero, 2004). PAR incorporates the engaged communities' context, meanings, values, beliefs, knowledge, and localized experiences—*vivencias*—into research and action (Rahman & Fals Borda, 1991). Moreover, conviviality with community becomes a key ingredient for effective collaboration that includes long-lasting emotional and affective involvement. Consequently, it is conceived as affective conviviality (Ciofalo, 2019). Thus, Latin American community psychologists have viewed the community not as the other but as one of us, as experts and main contributors in the struggle for liberation.

Serrano-García and Vargas (1993) asserted that the values of the Latin American community psychology evolved from the 50s to the 90s and were characterized by a commitment with the marginalized sectors of society to address the solution of socioeconomic and political issues; the belief that communities have the resources and capacities to identify and prioritize the issues they are facing; solidary horizontal relationships, and a deep sense of community, cohesion, and belonging. These authors reviewed the state of the discipline in different countries in the 80s and early 90s and found that each differed according to the focus of its implementation and the socio-historical and political factors present at the time. For instance, in Puerto Rico, community psychology has been based in the critical analysis of ideology, language, and communication that allows to generate understandings of everyday socio-cultural processes. This way, community psychology has been incorporating several disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, education, community mental health, and policy impact analysis (Montero, 1998, 2004; Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Montero & Sonn, 2009; Rozas, 2015/2016; Watts & Serrano-García, 2003).

In Argentina, the main focus has not only been on the development of interventions in communities, but also in community mental health centers based on models applied by the Italian psychiatrist, Basaglia (1964). Most of the theoretical developments have been centered in

constructivism and PAR. Community interventions have been promoted by state agencies but community psychologists have warranted that the needs and demands of the community guide them. Many of those interventions have been formulated according to planned social change deliberations as well as systemic analyses that could generate community diagnostics and plans for action to effect social change. Serrano-García and Vargas (1993) concluded that these processes have supported the creation of theoretical models that are responsive to the characteristics of a country instead of imitating those produced in the Global North.

In the case of Brazil, these authors further found that community psychology was strongly influenced by Freire's liberation pedagogy as well as theories of group dynamics, emotions, learning, socialization, language, motivation, and social representations. Community work that raised critical awareness—conscientization—of the impacts of colonization was conducted in dialectic interaction, to address the conditions that oppress communities and to effect social change. Multi-disciplinary teams were and continue to be formed and diverse techniques have been implemented such as critical reflection, psychodrama, analyses of group dynamics, and need assessment for resource mobilization. Brazilian community psychologists continue to motivate women to take charge of their own lives, and increase ties with school and communities to improve the lives of youths and children based on liberatory education as proposed by Paulo Freire (1970). Furthermore, they have engaged with key populations such as marginalized children living and working in public streets (Diversi & Moreira, 2016). Brazilian community psychologists are engaging in provocative plurilogues with communities to promote conscientization of individual suffering tied to structural conditions of coloniality that maintain oppression and marginalization. In this way, as Freire proposed, community education means to read the word to understand the world. Learning to read and write is a political act by which people gain awareness of the social conditions that oppress them, and learn to act to transform them (Quintal de Freitas, 2000, 2011).

In Chile, popular education and praxis based on Freirean approaches and community mental health guided developments in community psychology. Interdisciplinary teams worked to promote resources and increase community capacity in the nation. Community need assessments and action plans to address them were evaluated by methods such as video and narrative documentation. Among the positive impacts of community psychology's application in this country during the 80s and 90s were community animation and mobilization, and the promotion of a new critical and transformative conceptualization of the psychologist' role as key agent of change to end imperialist interventions (Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Rozas, 2015/2016; Serrano-García & Vargas, 1993).

In Colombia, Fals Borda's and Freire's theories and applications were the main foundations for the development of community psychology. The work in communities

was interdisciplinary evolving from the grassroots and influencing the treetops—governmental and nongovernmental institutions. During the 80s and 90s, a policy of governmental decentralization promoted the establishment of academic–community relationships and collaborations among social scientists. Community praxis has been guided by participation, the action-reflection of community interventions, and evaluations of community action plans. Sociologist Orlando Fals Borda (1985) proposed a new approach to do applied research that resists hegemonic social theory constructed in the academic ivory tower. Instead, he promoted research based on peoples' popular knowledge of their own reality. This study approach is created in conviviality with those with whom the committed researcher partners to transform social structures that oppress and marginalize them. It is co-constructed with others to collaboratively act upon the very conditions it seeks to understand as defined by the engaged communities. Fals Borda critiqued the hegemony of knowledge systems developed in countries that have colonized others and advised that universities in Latin-America co-construct new knowledge engaging communities with a multidisciplinary perspective. In this way, knowledge can be applied to liberating praxis that serves to build decolonial knowledge (Rozas, 2018).

In Costa Rica, two directions emerged: (1) community mental health influenced by the Chilean model, and (2) a community psychology based on social service, research, and the capacity building of community leaders. This second direction has been influenced as well by popular education and PAR approaches. The role of community psychologists is of a catalyzing facilitator for systems change (Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Serrano-García & Vargas, 1993).

In Cuba, community psychology has been informed by dialectical materialism and its applications to the prevention of holistic health as well as social processes that promote community participation and belonging. It is in this country that the loudest critique against Euro-American community psychology and its alliance with the preservation and maintenance of coloniality through imperialist capitalist systems emerged. Cuban community psychology has been positioned as a psychology of social change and liberation of Euro-US-centric influences. The positive impacts accomplished by the work of these committed community psychologists have been attributed to governmental support and the focus on emancipatory community action (Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Serrano-García & Vargas, 1993).

In Venezuela, community psychology emerged through the work of prominent psychologist Maritza Montero and collaborators integrating Freireian approaches, liberation psychology, and PAR. Important concepts for its development have been community agency and autonomy, community empowerment, learned helplessness, alienation, and the interaction of theory and praxis. Community action is based on ownership and control and the application of knowledge to promote community empowerment.

Wiesenfeld (1998) asserted that community psychology in Venezuela—as well as in other Latin American countries—was guided by a diversity of paradigms. There were other influences informed by psychological theories of behavior as well as psychoanalyses, health psychology, and organizational psychology (Montero, 2007; Montero & Serrano-García, 2011; Serrano-García & Vargas, 1993).

Lastly, in Mexico, community action has been informed by anthropology, sociology, and Marxism as well as Euro-American community mental health. Influences from the psychological concepts of Carl Rogers as well as behavioral psychology were operating along psychoanalytic approaches proposed by Eric Fromm to the analyses of peasant communities and Mexican culture, and critiques to positivism. There is also a strong influence of critical social analyses of oppression, marginalization, community conscientization, and the impacts of colonization (Almeida, 2012, 2016; Almeida & Flores-Osorio, 2011). Eduardo Almeida (2012) stated that community psychology in Mexico has been informal and informed by Indigenous and rural communities since precolonial times. Community life has been and continues to be the unit of social life surviving colonization through the independence and revolution movements (Almeida & Flores-Osorio, 2011, Almeida & Sánchez, 2014). Almeida and Osorio (2011) and Flores-Osorio (2009) further reinforced that Indigenous peoples have lived in community with the Earth, “maintaining equilibrium between humans and the world, the body and the spirit, the individual and the collective, and dream and reality” (p. 4). Furthermore, the Aztecs considered community essential and formed the so-called *calpullis* or pieces of land inhabited by families where they also built a temple. The Spanish conquerors imposed private property laws on Mexican Indigenous land owned collectively. Notwithstanding, collective ownership of the land continues to exist up until now as another form of resistance against the pervasive impacts of colonization.

Almeida (2012) asserted that community psychology has been constructed by many movements including those of Indigenous peasants, rural education, critical education applied to community development in some universities, and “the rebelliousness of women (Marcos, 2008)” (p. 137). Furthermore, US-centric CP has had weak influence in its development and applications. Among the approaches this author used in his collaborative work with community since the 70s until now, are PAR and popular knowledge advanced by peoples' self-inquiry about their own life stories (*autobiografías de vida* and *vivencias*). This way, community people become what Gramsci and Orlando Fals Borda called “organic intellectuals and co-researchers” who contribute to the generation of new paradigms of liberation (Rahman & Fals Borda, 1991, p. 31). Knowledge and praxis co-constructed in cultural context and in particular localities become what Eduardo Galeano called places of counter-culture that contain “testimonies of who we are, prophecies of the imagination, and denouncements of what impedes us to be” (cited in Rahman & Fals Borda, 1991, p. 57).

Montero (2007) concluded that conscientization and transformation are the main goals pursued in Latin American community psychology. Among the methods employed to accomplish these goals are PAR and biographical narratives. Important actions to promote conscientization are dialogue and reflection. De-ideologization and de-alienation are processes to critically analyze, problematize, and reflect on everyday life and transform it toward the manifestation of more just conditions. Referring to Freire's *problematización*, a process of critical awareness by which people come to understand structures of oppression, Serrano-García (2020b) emphasized that it needs to start with our own critical self-reflexivity on our positionality and privilege as committed community psychologists. We need to question our methods and practices to warrant that these respect the communities' values and culture, center their knowledge and praxes systems, are nonexploitative, and contribute to sovereignty and decolonization. Problematización promotes what Isaac Prilleltensky (2008) called political validity that warrants ethical responsibility assessing the extent to which research findings and learnings contribute to decolonial systems change.

Referring to an overall analyses of main themes encountered in the review of publications from various Latin American countries, Wiesenfeld and Astorga (2012) stated that there was diversity in the transdisciplinary conceptual frameworks and paradigms used that integrated anthropology, sociology, psychoanalysis, gender studies, social constructionism, Marxism, and philosophy—including sub-disciplines of psychology such as clinical, cultural, environmental and political. Wiesenfeld (2014) concluded that this phenomenon could be viewed as a crisis of the neoliberal developmental models in Latin America. This crisis promoted the emergence of new paradigms toward the co-construction of decolonial community psychologies focusing on lessons learned from Indigenous movements and emergences in the Latin American social sciences that seek to address the crisis of civilization (Almeida, 2019; Rozas, 2018; Sanchez Díaz de Rivera, 2021). Moreover, Wiesenfeld (2016) proposed a social community psychology that restructures itself “upside down,” addressing inter-disciplinary and popular knowledges within diversity, intersectionality applying creative capacity in relation with heterogeneous communities to influence government policies for transformative change, and “a vision of multi-dimensional knowledge” (p. 7; translation by author).

COMMUNITY PRACTICES, INDIGENOUS MOVEMENTS, AND TRANSNATIONAL COMMONALITIES

In Abya Yala, committed praxis is conducted not only in rural and urban communities that are struggling for survivance—surviving and resisting (Vizenor, 2008)—but also in the form of large student and Indigenous

movements and demonstrations that have ended in tragedy due to violence applied by repressive governments such as the 1968 massacre of students in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* in Mexico City, and the death of the 43 students in Ayotzinapa, Guerrero on September 26, 2014. In addition, many American Indian struggles have erupted all over the US such as the Sioux protest against the Dakota oil access pipeline in 2019, the Apache protest against copper mining in 2021, the ongoing Native Hawaiian protest against militarization and recent scientific exploitation of sacred land in 2020, and the many Pan-Indigenous protests against extraction of natural resources that have been loudly voiced throughout Abya Yala for centuries. American Indian scholarship has contributed widely to these movements against coloniality co-constructing their own expressions of liberation psychology (Duran et al., 2008); Indigenous community interventions based on their own epistemologies and praxes (Gone, 2016); research based on Indigenous cosmologies, ontologies, epistemologies, and axiologies conceived as ceremony (Wilson, 2008; Windchief & San Pedro, 2019); Indigenous science (Cajete, 2016), and contestations against misrepresentation, appropriation, and coloniality (Deloria, 2009; Grande, 2008; Meyer, 2008; Tuck & Yang, 2012—among others).

Indigenous women have promoted holistic, community wellbeing through the use of spirituality and traditional healing practices, activism, and scholarship to revive cultural knowledge systems applying decolonial community praxes (Ciofalo, 2017, 2019; Dudgeon & Bray, 2018; Nikora et al., 2007; Rivera-Cusicanqui, 2018; Speed et al., 2006).

Integrating knowledge learned from Vilma Almendra (Masa-Misak) from the collective *Tejido Comunicación para la Verdad y la Vida* (*Weave of Communications from Truth and Life*), Catherine Walsh (2018) referred to “*palabrandar* (walking words)” that exercise counter-power and resist “the death project strategies that continue in the Indigenous territories...” across the Global South (p. 37). It is a collective and intergenerational construct that dismantles the structural violence of neoliberal capitalism. Likewise, all grassroots organizations that embrace the *nos-otras*, the “we, the peoples” and resist and survive corporate greed and ecological extractivism entail examples of transformative praxes from which we must learn to co-construct decolonial community psychologies otherwise. Walsh added that The Zapatista community struggles “weave a propositional praxis and activate political pedagogies of struggle from below” (pp. 47–48). This way, the Global South becomes a new political imaginary to cocreate decoloniality.

Decolonial paradigms weave networks of solidarity and affective conviviality with Indigenous communities in their struggles to sustain spiritual cosmovisions, delinking from western-centric ideologies that are not anthropocentric and promote sustainable, epistemic, and ecological justice (De Sousa Santos, 2014/2016, 2018; Ciofalo, 2019). Grondona-Opazo (2016), a community psychologist from Ecuador, expanded the work of Uruguayan scholar-activist Gudynas

(2014) proposing that community psychology be based on the new political formations in Ecuador and Bolivia emerging from Indigenous cosmovisions of *Sumak Kawsay/Buen Vivir* (wellbeing) that include the rights of the Earth. Decolonial community interventions include Indigenous communities by de-professionalizing the role of the community psychologist who is not considered the expert and centering the communities' knowledge and praxes in the co-construction of theory, research, and action.

Common to the development of community psychology in Abya Yala is the application of theory and methodology to practical experiences that in turn inform theoretical developments embracing various disciplines in the social sciences. Community praxis and popular education occur before the formulation of theories to construct a particular community psychology, yet its methodological foundations have been stronger than theoretical constructions that are relativized in the diverse cultural and geopolitical contexts. Most of the community interventions have been promoted by community demands made to the state to be responsive to their needs and rights or as a means to organize themselves against oppression. A common focus has been the critique of false consciousness that is created by ideologies of oppression and coloniality and the need for conscientization as a means for liberation. The main approach in working with communities in the Global South has been holistic, seeking to address the cultural, socio-historical, economic, and political factors that impact community life. This requires going beyond psychological explanations highlighting the environmental and structural factors that impact marginalization and oppression, to center explanations that dismantle coloniality as overall structural violence (Serrano-García, 2020b). A concerted effort has been emerging to cocreate a transnational sense of community solidarity to achieve our common goal of community liberation from oppression, epistemic exclusion, and marginalization to co-construct decolonial community psychologies based on transdisciplinary epistemologies and praxes from the Global South.

EMERGENT DECOLONIAL COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGIES INFORMED BY EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

In recent years, the epistemologies of the Global South have produced invaluable teachings for transformative revisions of community psychology within frameworks that go beyond liberation and toward decoloniality, co-creating alternatives *to* rather than *of* the status quo. Decolonial community psychologists from the Global South such as Urmitapa Dutta (2018) interrogate the sources of knowledge production, where it comes from, and its impacts on community psychology's conceptualization to dismantle its hegemonic origins such as the myth of its universal origin in the Swampscott conference (p. 331). Furthermore, in

agreement with Ronelle Carolissen, she urges us to question the conceptualization of community as a disadvantaged other in need for intervention (p. 334). Christopher Sonn (2016) demanded that community psychology addresses the imperative consequences of coloniality and the epistemic ignorance it has maintained, in reference to non-western knowledge and praxis systems. Reyes Cruz and Sonn (2011) proposed a decolonial standpoint in the construction of our theories, research, and actions, becoming aware of the impacts of white privilege and unequal power in racialized and ethnicized discursive practices and relations, promoting alliances and solidarities to address them.

Furthermore, praxes conducted by Indigenous communities in Abya Yala (North, Central, and South America), provide academic and nonacademic contributions to co-construct community psychologies otherwise (*de otra manera*). Decolonial feminists from the Global South have brought Indigenous women's ways of knowing and praxes that resist neoliberal capitalism and coloniality at the center of discourse. Dissident women unite in the struggle against assumptions of progress and civilization that justify inequities and exploitation engendering human, epistemic, and ecological atrocities. Activist women and decolonial scholars contest patriarchal rationality and universalism (Ciofalo, 2017, 2019; Dudgeon & Bray, 2018; Nikora et al., 2007; Rivera-Cusicanqui, 2018; Speed et al., 2006). Decolonial feminists from the Global South are co-constructing new ways of being, thinking-feeling, *sentipensar*—proposed by Arturo Escobar (2018, 2016) as feeling-thinking with the Earth—and acting addressing systemic hegemony manifested in racism, ableism, and heteropatriarchy. For example, Maria Eugenia Sanchez Díaz de Rivera (2015) conceived decoloniality as epistemology that is co-created within a pluriversal living process outside of the capitalist hydra.

The most important challenge within the persisting coloniality, and added to it a horrifying pandemic that exponentially produces more inequities, is to find ways in which we can co-construct decolonial community psychologies informed by epistemologies and praxes from the Global South to review academic curricula and practices that can become antiracist alternatives to systemic hegemony. As Joseph Gone proposed (2016), theory needs to evolve from practice as practice-based evidence and community psychology needs to learn from Indigenous knowledge systems. In this regard, De La Cadena (2015) has conveyed the knowledge learned from her Andean mentors and friends who understand practice as knowledge that is inseparable from ethical and political obligations to humans and non-humans alike and embedded in ways in which we know the world or ways of making the world that she called “worlding...without consuming difference” (p. 2). Moreover, Isabelle Stengers (2005) described an ecology of practices based on relational heterogeneity as domains of knowledges and praxes within differences—but not divisions—that coexist in a web of interconnections whose interests diverge. She reclaimed animism as, “ways

of thinking-feeling with the Earth Beings who allow to expand connections with other worlds” (p. 109). De la Cadena and Blaser (2018) stated that the Anthropocene, in which the human being is at the center of a one-world-world (OWW), is in sharp contradiction with Indigenous cosmovisions based on a new epoch—the Ecocene.

The ecology of practices provides an inspiring metaphor for decolonial community psychologies that coexists in a relational web of diverging interconnections. It assumes heterogeneous knowledges and praxes within differences—but not racist divisions. In contrast, Stengers (2018) called “a civilized practice...a never innocent ‘divergence’ [that] creates the specific way in which its practitioners world and word their world...[and] the values that commit [them]” (p. 91). This kind of practice causes paradoxical dysfunctions of progress and civilization as,

...the hegemonic machine that is now destroying the [civilized] practices that claim to be indispensable for “modernization” of the world. It does not need those who presented themselves as the very soul of “progress,” as it does not need a general trust in progress either (p. 92).

South African community psychologist, Ronelle Carolissen, asserted that practice becomes liberatory praxis when it is embedded within diverse perspectives and methodologies that she called “diversality.” She emphasized that we must focus on “... the challenges that are faced at advanced professional training levels to realize epistemic disobedience, cognitive justice, diversality and knowledge ecologies, central to a decolonial project” (Carolissen et al., 2017, p. 503).

Quoting Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Walsh related the history of colonialism in Central and South America to that experienced in the “colonized Global North America” where UK-driven colonization also carried on usurpations of land, peoples, knowledges, and natural resources. Regarding decoloniality Walsh (2018) asserted,

...[it] has a history, herstory, and praxis of more than 500 years. From the beginning of the Americas, decoloniality has been a component of (trans)local struggles, movements, and actions to resist and refuse the legacies of ongoing relations and patterns of power established by external and internal colonialism—what Silvia Cusicanqui calls colonialism’s long duration—and the modern designs of the modern/colonial world (p. 16).

Walsh furthermore invoked the words of Comandante Galeano who asserted that the struggle against coloniality is for the survival of the planet that “begins to propose, to determine.” The Zapatista community struggles “weave a propositional praxis and activate political pedagogies of struggle from below” (pp. 47–48). This way, quoting

Corinne Kumar (2010, as cited in Walsh, 2018, p. 24), “the South as a new political imaginary” creates possibilities of transformative, community praxis.

De La Cadena (2015) further added that the Andean Indigenous communities practice with the participation of Earth Beings “*tirakuna*” who are other than human in the lives of the “*runakuna* (humans) usually monolingual Quechua speakers” (pp. xxiv-xxv). This cosmovision conceives of a mountain (*Ausangate*) not as a commodity or a natural resource that needs to be extracted or preserved but as an Earth-Being. An ecology of decolonial praxes reclaims animism as thinking-feeling (*sentipensando*) with the Earth Beings who allow for expanded connections with other worlds. De la Cadena engaged in participatory storytelling with Indigenous mentors and friends to discern how to integrate the agentic practices of *runakina* and *tirakuna* that enable the individual capacity to make decisions in political processes, thereby addressing imperative issues of ecological wellbeing as a kind of cosmopolitan. In these ecologies of praxes, many worlds exist that do not exclude each other to mark difference. Araya-Moreno (2016) asserted that De la Cadena makes a sharp distinction between the difference as other created by colonial power and the ontological and epistemological difference among a plurality of cosmovisions, creating a space of “partial connections” in which similarities and differences coexist (p. 202; translation by author). This way, the *runakuna*’s cosmopolitan proposes a diversity of worlds in which an ontological equity (sameness) is absent (p. 205; translation by author). Furthermore, this author emphasized that ontological difference should include epistemological and existential dignity as an imperative decolonial community praxis

CAMINANDO DE OTRA MANERA: WALKING OTHERWISE

The commitment to decolonial community psychologies requires that we learn from contributions from Abya Yala and the other regions of the Global South to co-construct practice-based theories applying methodologies of affective conviviality with communities, forming decolonial solidary networks, and co-authoring collective stories that build connections with people and nature (Ciofalo, 2019). As stated above, affective conviviality is forged in the long-lasting and continuous relations with communities. It recognizes the affection and emotions that weave pathways to think, reflect, and act walking together, *sentipensando* (feeling and acting with the Earth). It requires being aware of conscious and unconscious motives that perpetuate power and colonial difference to confront the “white savior complex”—as Kowal (2015) and Land (2015) asserted in Australia. Those with privilege need to undo the structures that generate coloniality within themselves and the colonial social, political, economic, and epistemic structures in which we are embedded. These praxes constitute decolonial solidarity that manifests in participatory action for epistemic, cultural, and ecological justice.

Committing to work with Indigenous communities co-creating praxes and knowledges for liberation means making decolonial community psychologies otherwise. I have described examples of these co-created knowledges and praxes informed by the legacies and contributions from community psychologies in Abya Yala, examples of epistemologies of other regions from the Global South, Indigenous psychologies, and feminist contributions.

Decolonial community psychologies are co-created in transdisciplinary and transnational collaboration within relational ontologies, sentipensar, and affective conviviality. Building webs of solidarity with communities' struggles, sustaining their cosmovisions, and coauthoring stories that delink from western-centric ideologies within pluriversal ecologies of praxes. These are the proposed coordinates to co-construct decolonial community psychologies for the promotion of Sumac Kawsay/Buen Vivir (collective wellbeing) that includes the rights of the Earth.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author declares that there are no conflict of interests.

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