

Knowledge Fair Trade

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The matter I want to write about here has robbed me of many hours of sleep for the past few years. It concerns my attempts at adopting narrative therapy into a context foreign to the one in which it originated. Therefore, it relates to how I position myself, critically, as a reader of narrative therapy (White and Epston 1990).¹ This matter did not become a sleep depriving issue for me until I was able to discern that in spite of the tantalizing resonance I experienced with narrative therapy practices there was an abyss between its Australasian authors—David Epston and Michael White—and myself as a reader—a Colombian immigrant living in the U.S. The abyss was as deep as the Colombian Chicamocha Canyon, 6561 ft deep and 143 mi

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Lower case intentional.

¹I have come to adopt narrative therapy as a family therapy practice that provides a context for conversations that help better discern the various effects that systems of power (colonial and otherwise) have on people's lives, infringing in our rights to fabricate life in our terms. In narrative therapy conversations, possibilities of response are rendered available hence choices to live life more attuned to our moral, ethical and aesthetical convictions rather than of the ones imposed by social, cultural and historical systems of power.

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long, carved by the differences in our social, historical, linguistic, political, gender, cultural and personal conditions.

The recognition of our marked differences happened after my narrative therapy in English had already turned into my *lingua franca* for speaking, thinking and practicing family therapy as faithfully as I could in the image and likeness of its originators. Narrative therapy had crossed over the border that separated my immigrant English from my Colombian Spanish. In my view, it did so with a “first world passport in a crisp Dolce and Gabbana suit, in first class, un-jetlagged, and unaffected by Bogotá’s altitude of 8661 ft above sea level” (Polanco 2011, p. 46). In its new ‘Englished,’ elite status, narrative therapy became inaccessible to my speaking, thinking and practicing in my Colombian Spanish. When attempting to practice narrative therapy with Spanish speaking families my curiosity about their lives would only take form in English. Consequently, when trying to craft narrative inquiries, I was unable to access any vocabularies in Spanish. Although a bilingual, my narrative therapy had turned monolingual.

Undoubtedly, I had glossed over the many subtle and overt efforts of Epston and White to alert their readers to cultural sensitivities and humility that would keep narrative therapy from traveling around the world as a first class, global trademark. I read, or rather imported and consumed narrative therapy as a trademark, much like the trademarks of the clothes I wear and the food I eat. This led me to conclude that I had engaged in a colonizing reading of narrative therapy. Contrary to what I have come to understand as the intentions in their work, my readings of Epston and White, and the many other narrative therapists that have informed my work in English, unintentionally suffocated any possibilities of my speaking, thinking, and practicing in my Colombian Spanish, and petrified my imagination and creativity. How on earth did this happen to me given narrative therapy’s philosophy of social justice? Well, this may very well had to do with something beyond narrative therapy’s radical epistemological and philosophical intentions of resistance against the very same practices I engaged with when reading it.

For the French, literary theorist Roland Barthes (1977), a text contains multiple layers of meanings that depend on the impressions of the reader instead of the passions or intentions of the writer. For Barthes, the author produces a text and the reader explains it. The power of interpretation lies on the reader rather than on what he called—the Author-God. Hence, he proclaimed, metaphorically speaking, the death of the single interpretative power of the Author-God of a text. Although, I am a bit critical of his proposal of giving interpretative power only to the reader rather than sustaining a dialogical, interpretative partnership between reader and writer, his proposal may shed some light here on my predicament. The power of interpretation of a reader could turn any texts by the founders of narrative therapy, Epston or White, which have the intentions to be anti-colonial, into colonial texts depending on how the reader reads them and on the reader’s historical, social, political and cultural conditions. In retrospect, the contextual conditions of my first readings had me engaged in a colonizing reading of narrative therapy.

More recently, I have been repositioning myself to find alternatives that allow for a decolonizing reading of foreign knowledge, consequently leading me to considerations of constructing my renewed, local, more culturally suitable versions of narrative therapy. I accessed these alternatives through a de-colonial translation of narrative therapy into my Colombian and Latin American terms. This translation required me to let go of Epston and White's terms to pick up my own, together with the ones of Latin American authors who share similar anti-colonial concerns and who are intimately connected to the vicissitudes of my cultures.

Due to limits of space, I am here only discussing the problematization of the internationalization of professional knowledge. This is, as relevant to narrative therapy or family therapy training across borders, inadvertently engaging with a colonizing agenda that result in the faithful adoption of its practices into local cultures as the only legitimate alternatives. I hope to raise a critical perspective to be considered by family therapists when training and practicing in global contexts. This is by cautioning the reader on the importance of situating family therapy theories in the euroamerican geographical and political contexts in which they belong along with their values, traditions and intentions, making visible their foreignness and potential intentions to domesticate or suffocate if not received critically. Rendering foreignness visible may open space for the reader/audience to imagine their own transformative local production of knowledge outside the euroamerican paradigms. The matter of the renewal of more suitable, de-colonial alternatives of narrative family therapy practices I am documenting elsewhere.

Among the alternatives that resulted in my repositioning as a reader I am introducing below one of a multi-lateral fair trade of knowledge across cultures, which I believe contributes to maintain the integrity of all contributors. This may be of relevance, particularly to therapists who self-identify outside of the euro American paradigms. In my case, it has led me to rethink, reimagine and reinvent my former euro-american family therapy training into a practice more so in tune with my cultural locations as a Colombian immigrant in the U.S., working with families of Latin American heritages. My Colombian oral storytelling traditions, magical-realist's worldviews, and de-colonial ethics, for example, have found their way into my therapeutic conversations, which lead me to ask questions that would raise the eyebrows of my euro-american colleagues when, for example, I become curious about how someone's heart changes colors and tastes differently under various circumstances of their lives. The matter of the renewal of more suitable, de-colonial alternatives of narrative family therapy practices, however, I am documenting elsewhere.

While my experience here relates in particular to narrative therapy, it very well applies to the field of family therapy which is informed to a great degree by western European and anglo North American worldviews. For that I will start with a discussion of the contextual conditions that led me to engage in a colonizing reading of narrative therapy in the first place given my historical, social, political, economical and cultural conditions as a narrative therapy reader.

My Historical and Cultural Conditions as a Reader

My name is Marcela Polanco bejarano. It is written in small letters to emphasize that the life that it carries does not stay put, nor does it hold aspirations to claim any authority of the proper conventions of the classes of names. My first name came to me on account of a temporary memory lapse by my mother. At the time of registering my name, she had forgotten that the name she and my father had chosen to secure me a good life was Gisela, not Marcela—also a name of Italian origin. According to my family's history, my paternal last name has its origins during the times of Colombia's systematic colonization by Spain. Around the late 1800s two Polanco brothers from Spain settled in Tolima, west central area of Colombia, in the land of the Pijao aboriginal communities. This is the land where my father's family lived for many generations and some still do. My maternal last name, Bejarano, also has Spanish origins. Specifically, it comes from the Bejarano Jewish families that were exiled from Spain in the 1500s. They settled in Muisca territory where I was born and raised. My cousin Elsa and I have no doubts that beyond our aboriginal and European heritages, Africana blood also runs through our veins but we have no record of it.

My mixed heritage defines me as a mestiza. Therefore, as a mestiza, my body represents the battlegrounds of the oppressor and the oppressed and the colonizer and the colonized. My mestiza body yearns to transgress such duality by aspiring to a yet unknown postcolonial existence. In the Spanish colonial system of racial hierarchy defined to determine the degree of purity of one's blood and to subsequently determine the conferral of people's rights, mestizos and mestizas were lower in the social, political, economic and social continuum. Our rights to humanity-worthiness were beneath that of the Colombian-born Spaniards or Criollos, and over that of the African and Aboriginal communities. After the so-called independence from the Spanish colonization, mestizos and mestizas became the majority and the dominant group. We strived to represent ourselves as close as possible to possessing a Spanish heritage by dispossessing ourselves from any afra or aboriginal traditions, language or worldviews; although of course we proceeded to take possession of their lands. Mestizos and mestizas acquired the language of our colonizers, their western worldview, their god, their justice system, their values and their violent relationship with nature. We denied representations of anything other than western eurocentric views.

Our colonization resulted in our internalization of the European colonizing gaze to continue their ethnocidal project. When looking at ourselves through euro-christian eyes, however, we grew suspicious of the degree of our own humanity, striving for the impossible—the purity of the white skin. We attempted to whiten our consciousness and worldviews by uprooting our traditions for the salvation of our souls according to their god. Our colonization resulted in becoming colonizers to one another in the image and likeness of our colonizer. I don't know any more atrocious and despicable effects of colonization than the turning against one another to further replicate the inhumane solitude of such an act; or, according

to the Martinique-born Afro Caribbean revolutionary and philosopher, Fanon (1961/2001), to systematically deny another, depriving them of qualities of humanity.

The Second Arrival of Columbus

I am not necessarily writing here about a history that took place 500 years ago even though it may have started back then. I am writing about the history of our colonization that is alive and well in the early 21st century. Social hierarchies according to which rights are conferred to people remain. For example, I am part of the approximated 27 % of colombians with access to higher education; the 7 % whom had access to a bilingual education, and the 2 % who completed a degree as a bilingual. In my better-situated conditions, which result in worsening the conditions of millions of others, I earn about 10 times more than 67 % of the 47.662.000 colombians, with a 12 % difference between women earning less than men.

Shiva (2011), physicist, author and environmental activist from India, said it best; “we are experiencing now the second coming of Columbus,” this is, “a more secular version of the same project of colonization...” (p. 158). In Colombia, for example, the second coming of Columbus arrived on July 14th 1995 as the first McDonald’s² fast food chain store opened its doors. They opened their first restaurant in the exclusive mall Andino, located in a privileged neighborhood north of Bogotá. At long last Colombia was worthy of a McDonald’s®, some of us thought. It was a faithful replica of a U.S. McDonald’s®. There was absolutely nothing Colombian about it. Even the staff were strategically recruited for that purpose. While Colombians, they had the most Anglo traits amongst us.

At the time, I was working as an organizational psychologist in human resources at a large multinational food company in Bogotá. My colleagues and I—all part of the 2 % of bilingual professionals graduated from the same top private universities in the country and now working at better-paid multinational companies—were eagerly awaiting its arrival. We wanted to experience a piece of the enchanting American Dream. Despite our plans, however, we were not able to make it on the opening day, nor on the weeks that followed. The line to get in was outrageously long and tangled up like the arteries of our bodies that were about to be challenged by their Mcfood.

McDonald’s® arrival came 4 years after President Gaviria declared an open economy in 1990. In only one year, 10 of its restaurants were opened with an investment of 85 million dollars. In no other country did it grow as fast as in Colombia. McDonald’s® strategy of capital expansion is only one example of the

²Among other things, McDonald’s® is one of the largest companies in the world that acts aggressively against any attempts by their employees to organize themselves into trade unions.

agenda of the second coming of Columbus. This agenda started to take shape at the end of the Second World War. It promoted a neoliberal modern ideal of development, serving as a context for the development and consumption of knowledge.³ I will continue to outline it here, drawing heavily from the work of the colombian anthropologist, Escobar (2007).

A Neoliberal Market for Knowledge

On January 20th of 1949, U.S. President Truman (1964) announced to the world in his inaugural address his concept of fair trade to resolve the problems of the world in underdeveloped countries, introducing the word *underdeveloped* for the first time:

...More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. [Note here, however, that who is speaking is the president of the country that invented McDonald's® and that has the highest rates of obesity-caused mortality in the world]. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people. The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques... I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life....What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing...Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge (para. 45).

While proposed as a democratic fair dealing, it seems a rather unilateral one, involving naming others' misery and poverty for the justification of the application of the neoliberal modern agenda of scientific and technical knowledge of the U.S. and prosper countries. Colombia got word of these grandiose ideas, even 50 years after. Despite our handicapped, primitive and stagnant conditions, although questionably peace-loving peoples given our international representation of drug trade (with prosperous countries), we learned to realize that our aspirations for a better life were worth standing in line for weeks to obtain the so desired key to unlock our stagnation into prosperity at any cost. Never mind that such a key comes at times in the form of a big clown dressed in red and yellow. But only then could we consume the key of modern greatness that humanity possesses to relieve our suffering and to realize our aspirations of life because we do not seem to have the capabilities to do so ourselves.

³See John Williamson's (2004) work on the Washington Consensus referring to economic policies by Washington D.C.-based institutions to solve the world's crisis, with particular interest in Latin America, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the U.S. Treasury Department.

This rhetoric spread worldwide. It created the necessary conditions in countries referred to as underdeveloped, like Colombia, to reproduce the characteristics required for neoliberal development. This is the kind of development of industrialization, urbanization, technification of agriculture, fast growing material production and life status, and adoption of modern cultural values of education (Escobar 2007) and knowledge. These are the conditions for the realization of the American Dream trademark in almost every single corner of the world. According to Iranian, Rahnema (1986) poverty, illiteracy and hunger have never been so profitable sources for industrialized countries—in the name of progress and development.

Fast forwarding fifty years after Truman's speech, the World Bank (1999) took a look at development problems across the globe.^{4,5} In their study, they took a look at development this time from the perspective of knowledge. They concluded that "poor" countries differ from "rich" countries because they have less knowledge. The production of knowledge, they considered, is too expensive. That is the reason it asserts why most of the production of knowledge is generated in industrial countries. In turn, they concluded that developing countries do not need to reinvent the wheel. Instead of recreating existing knowledge, poor countries have the option of acquiring and adapting knowledge that is already available in countries that are richer. Acquiring knowledge for poor countries would then involve accessing and adopting available knowledge through a free trade arrangement, foreign capital investment, and assuring that the poor have access (de Souza Silva 2008).

Now, what counts as legitimate knowledge in the modern development agenda of the World Bank that it is only produced within the capabilities of the wealth of industrialized countries—wealth accumulated at the expense of third world countries? What are the implications of representing us through their discursive hegemony of "development" as "poor" and "underdeveloped"? And, is their proposed free trade agreement yet another unilateral strategy to continue stripping our resources in exchange for the industrialized knowledge of rich countries?⁶

Knowledge, in the era of the second Columbus, has become a vehicle for the proliferation of the neoliberal modern development agenda, particularly through its professionalization. It became the institutionalizing means to organize, validate and disseminate development, and ways of being, globally through academia and

⁴The World Bank is supposed to be one of the most democratic organizations that lend humanitarian aid around the world, together with the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund. However, they are run by a board of directors of only 6 of its 188 member countries, none of them elected by vote. None of the 6 directors represent countries from Latin America, Africa or the Middle East. They are China, France, United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and, of course, United States.

⁵For a more recent perspective on development, see the United Nations agenda on the Sustainable Development Goals agreement released on 2015.

⁶These questions could very well apply to the production of knowledge within the field of family therapy. What counts as legitimate practices? Are only evidence-based, published models of practice what counts for training and practice? Are family therapists adopting similar positions as the World Bank to determine what counts as billable and legitimate?

scientific research. From the geopolitics of knowledge, in the colonial system of classification of the second coming of Columbus, the legitimation of knowledge, language and identity is determined by a geographical place and origin (Mignolo 2005/2012). What counts as legitimate today comes in certain languages and from certain places—For example, it comes in the language in which I am writing this manuscript, it is white, patriarchal, heterosexual, and comes with a first world trademark seal of approval.

The rhetoric of the arrival of the new Columbus, once again, has stripped our capabilities to produce legitimate knowledge from which to raise consciousness about our own conditions of oppression. Our double internalized colonization has convinced us that the neoliberal agenda of development is what we ought to aspire for, and therefore, to achieve it, we ought to stand in line as long as it takes to obtain it. We ought to access their sacred industrialized knowledge to consume it while we become consumed by it. No matter if it this is done at the expense of the exploitation of our local cultures, women, identity, history and land. We are defined as poor, ill, fragile, vulnerable and stagnant therefore we must be rescued by the first world dressed in red and yellow. In Shiva's (2011) terms: "Five hundred years ago, it was enough to be a non-Christian culture to lose all claims and rights. Five hundred years after Columbus, it is enough to be a non-Western culture with a distinctive worldview and diverse knowledge system to lose all claims and rights. The humanity of others was blanked out then and [...] [our] intellect is being blanked out now (p. 160). The new Columbus has arrived with a clear agenda. Shiva (2011) puts it very clearly:

The principle of effective occupation by Christian princes has been replaced by effective occupation by the transnational corporations supported by modern-day rules...The duty to incorporate slaves into Christianity has been replaced by the duty to incorporate local and national economies into the global marketplace, and to incorporate non-western systems of knowledge into the reductionism of commercialized Western science and technology. (p. 151)

The neoliberal, modern, colonial agenda of development seeks to eradicate the differences among our cultures.

In Colombia, I suspect that it may be us, the 27 % with access to higher education and the 2 % with access to bilingual education that later govern the other 73 %, whom might be at the core of replicating the colonial neoliberal agenda of development. With our chests full of air and our chins up, some of us display in our professional or academic offices our doctoral degree diplomas from European or North American universities. We do so as a symbol of development and of the realization of our dreams of progress and civilization. And, perhaps, seeking recognition for the hard work it required some of us to obtain it, while rolling up our trademark, ironed sleeves when seating comfortably at our mahogany desks to type away the world on our Apple© computers, only at the expense of few hours of sleep. Although, I wonder if a Wayuu, indigenous woman in Colombia, who has been caught in the crossfire of Colombia's civil war between paramilitary, guerilla, drug traffickers and government forces would share the same idea of hard work.

Our diplomas confirm that we, the poor, peace-loving peoples have gained the key to access the legitimate knowledge of the “rich” so that the World Bank can be at peace with itself. We have obtained it first hand as close as possible to a replica of the English, patriarchal, white, heterosexual, first world knowledge. Only now do we have the capability to overcome our stagnation and to solve our suffering. Therefore, we can proceed to strip off our mochilas⁷ and ruanas⁸ so we can bring the scientific, professional knowledge back to our country, now in our crisp Dolce and Gabbana suits, in first class, un-jetlagged and unaffected by Bogotá’s altitude of 8661 ft above sea level. We do so for the ignorant, poor, underdeveloped, stagnant and illiterate fellow colombian to no longer be required to wait in line for it. What we don’t know, however, is that our well-intentioned and better-situated actions are, once again, further replicating the worse colonizing act: The compromising of our own liberation by turning against one another.

Subaltern Knowledges

Our first world therapy diplomas turned us blind and deaf to the real sabios and sabias—the subaltern wise. They are the ones whom have known how to recognize, resist and oppose, with their lives, if necessary, the euro-christian rhetoric of salvation and the first-world rhetoric of neoliberal modern development, no matter how cute and charming the clown who delivers it may be. By the subaltern wise I am referring to the 102 Aboriginal communities in Colombian territory, with 68 different languages and 292 dialects. They are still facing extinction but have survived the arrival of many Columbus-es clothed in various ways over the past 500 years. I am also referring to the 4 million of afra/o Colombians who remind us that resistance is possible and that colonization is unstable; and to the 7.1 million campesinas/os whom have always known the value of our land. Only they, who have invented many wheels long before the World Bank even existed, will help us overcome our colonial education of blindness; only they will help us see that our diplomas turned us poor.

Unlearning neoliberal development may lead us to our decolonization so we could imagine a different Colombia, Latin America, Africa and Asia. I agree with Escobar (2007) when considering that this will not take place in professional academic circles. Nor will it happen in the offices of the World Bank or the scientific journals of Tier 1 universities in the U.S. or the U.K. It will take place, instead, in a de-colonial project based on the trafficking of the local interpretations of everyday life, where the subaltern engages in practices of restitutions of their

⁷Handcrafted indigenous backpacks.

⁸Handcrafted, wool, poncho-like garment wore by native Muiscas.

land, identities, relationships and cultural meanings and productions. Unbeknownst to the World Bank, the subaltern has had a voice and the subaltern has spoken even though the audibility of their voices in academic circles has been barely heard (Escobar 2007).

Fair Trade

So, what about narrative therapy (or any other family therapy frameworks)? As a perspective that traffics in the periphery of conventional practices, seeking to interrogate the effects of the production of life when following first world, neoliberal, diagnostic, eurocentric parameters, I believe that it presents itself as an important contributor and ally. Narrative therapists often situate at the forefront the historical, social, cultural and relational contexts of the authorship of knowledge, exploring a multiplicity of knowledges, particularly from the subaltern formerly displaced by a problem embedded in neoliberal systems of power.

To enter into a multi-lateral fair trade agreement with narrative therapy required me to reverse my earlier training that resulted in the English monopoly of my practice. Instead of continuing my attempts at bringing narrative therapy into my Colombian Spanish unjetlagged, I had to delink (Mignolo 2005/2012) from its practices to facilitate instead a fair, reciprocal inter-cultural—rather than inter-national—intellectual and practical trade agreement. Only then an exchange between two legitimate contributors could be facilitated; and hybrid de-colonial options could be conceived to inform one another about our local “respective life support systems” (Rahnema 1986, p. 44)—respecting each other’s Chicamocha-canyon-like-abyss-differences in solidarity while doing so.

Such agreement presented itself to me as a challenge at first, however. What local life support systems, claims and rights from my colombian culture did I have to bring to the table to establish an alliance with narrative therapy for a decolonial project? None whatsoever. My knowledge in Spanish came from my training in Colombia, which had already undergone intellectual colonization by the unilateral internationalizing trends of the euro-american disciplines of psychiatry and psychology, currently being followed by family therapy. After psychiatry, psychology settled in my country and I had access to through Skinner, Pavlov and Freud. Psychology practices were founded on euro-american evidence-based criteria, with techniques that monitor the development of human behavior from stagnation toward progress on the realization of aspirations of first world happiness, health, and prosperity.

According to Afra and Afro Colombians Libia Grueso, Leyla Arroyo and Carlos Rosero from the *Organization of Black Communities from the Pacific* in Colombia (see Escobar 2007), it is our task to advance local formulations and implementations of new social and cultural alternatives that would inform our therapeutic work, prior to any engagements of fair dealings with foreign therapy productions. These

local formulations, however, are not about literal translations or adaptations of foreign therapeutic theories into my Colombian Spanish. Adaptations of narrative or family therapy maintain the same expansionist patterns of first world, global criteria to make it readily accessible for local consumption. I had actually attempted this kind of adaptation of narrative practice, unknowingly confirming the global systems of power I have represented here.

Instead, a decolonial project applied to therapy practice departs from subaltern *local* formulations of social, cultural and personal transformation translated into *local* political, cultural and social alternatives to invent new options for practice rooted in the domestic. These would destabilize dominant, scientific ways of knowing in the current mental health field i.e. diagnostic knowledge: and would contribute to the liberation of our imagination and creativity in our practices, in defense of cultural difference. Local subaltern therapeutic formulations could draw from the relentless Latin American grass-roots, social, historical and cultural movements (Escobar 2007) such as the Mexican indigenous Zapatista Movement, the Brazilian Movimiento Sin Tierra, The Cocalero Movement of campesina/os in Colombia, The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, the Arpillera women movement in Chile, and other Latin American feminists, campesina/os, chicana/os, working class and black movements. These movements tell us that “we are much more than we are told” (Galeano 2013, para. 17), tradition in Latin America has not vanished and global trends of development have not fully and successfully arrived (Canclini 1990). Not only these offer material for our imagination to construct local therapeutic formulations to facilitate unsuffering processes. They also, remind us that we are capable of creating our own life-support-systems-based therapeutic movements than strictly waiting in line to consume formulations produced and delivered to us from evidence-based euro-american professional journals; even when their foreignness is disguised in our own native language.

Other options for therapeutic local formulations that I consider represent life support systems of everyday life in my Colombian cultures come from resistance and transgression of modern development via magical-realist forms. These are embedded in the mix of our Africana, Aboriginal and European heritages as serve as interpretative frames everywhere in our everyday lives García Márquez (1980–1984). The work of colombian anthropologists Pinzón and Suárez Prieto (1992) illustrates this. They visited 15 psychiatric hospitals in Bogotá over a period of three years. They learned that 32 % of working class patients, emphatically argued, based on their local knowledge, that they were not crazy. Instead, from their magical-realist worldviews, they were under a spell. They were violently put into hospitals against their will. They developed strategies to confront the blind and deaf official western treatments of the hospital. They created and ran groups of opposition to legitimate their healing practices. In their view, only *curandeads/os* would know how to help their circumstances instead of the official professionals of the hospital. They were the only ones with the appropriate knowledge for such a task. Therapeutic practices informed by culturally appropriate knowledge dignify and legitimize local knowledge.

Commentaries

An inter-cultural fair trade agreement of narrative and family therapy knowledge could benefit from decolonial strategies that protect the cultural integrity of the therapist, the consultant and their communities, within their respective historical, social, cultural, political, etc. conditions. It could facilitate the restitution of our rights, as therapists and consultants, to name our practices as much as our social sufferings and unsufferings in our own terms, when resisting the universal euro-american persuasive promises of Christian salvation, civilization, progress, and modern neoliberal development that have not skipped the mental health field. A fair trade agreement emphasizes that modern euro-american knowledge, like family therapy, is not to be eradicated, however. Not only would that be impossible, naive and limiting but it would convey the same dangerous, single, universal paradigm (Mignolo 2005/2012). Instead, a fair trade project involves redefining both the content of family therapy knowledge by local practitioners informed by local practices; and the terms of the current unilateral global and international training of family therapy in *other* countries around the world. Unilateral trades of knowledge ought to consider bilateral or multi-lateral agreements of training and practice supported by solidarity, cultural humility and mutual respect to be different no matter how tantalizing foreign criteria may be. This would support a kind of alliance that eradicates colonialism not only in the territories of our practices but in our lands and our consciousness (Fanon 1961/2001). And for this to happen, according to Peruvian sociologist, Quijano (1990), as therapists, “we ought to stop being what we have not been, and what we will never be, and what we have to be... we ought to stop being strictly modern” (p. 37).

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