

Facing colonial logics in Psychology training: Implications for the production of citizenship

Enfrentando lógicas coloniais na formação em Psicologia: Implicações à produção de cidadania

Enfrentando lógicas coloniales en la formación en Psicología: Implicaciones a la producción de ciudadanía

Lutte contre des logiques coloniales dans la formation en Psychologie : Implications pour la production de citoyenneté

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Abstract

Based on our academic positions and experiences monitored through research entitled Production of Citizenship in the Field of Social Assistance Policy, we propose to think about the production of knowledge in the field of psychology training, as well as its implications in the production of an exercise of citizenship allied to anti-racist ethics and the confrontation of colonial logics. We weave discussions that offer us an understanding of the colonial logic of the university, based on the records of field diaries produced in the research, seeking to highlight the need for our productions to be based on a perspective from here because there is no possible social transformation, in the sense of the effective exercise of citizenship, justice, and social equality, without engagement in confronting the current policies of domination – such as racism, in our country. Finally, we point to the need to learn from the teachings of those who resist and fight daily against the violence of a modern colonial world project, offering clues for the exercise of psychology committed to social transformation.

Keywords: Psychology, training, coloniality, citizenship, anti-racism.

Resumo

A partir de nossos lugares acadêmicos e de experiências acompanhadas através da pesquisa intitulada Produção de Cidadania no Campo da Política de Assistência Social, propomos pensar a produção de conhecimento no campo de formação em psicologia, bem como suas implicações na produção de um exercício da cidadania aliançada à ética antirracista e ao enfrentamento às lógicas coloniais. Tecemos discussões que nos oferecem compreensões acerca das lógicas coloniais da universidade, a partir do registro de diários de campo produzidos na pesquisa, buscando ressaltar a necessidade de que nossas produções estejam assentadas em uma perspectiva

desde aqui, pois não há transformação social possível, no sentido do efetivo exercício da cidadania, justiça e igualdade social, sem que haja engajamento no enfrentamento das políticas de dominação em curso – como o racismo, em nosso país. Por fim, apontamos para a necessidade de aprendermos com os ensinamentos de quem resiste e luta cotidianamente contra a violência de um projeto de mundo moderno colonial, oferecendo pistas para o exercício de uma psicologia comprometida com a transformação social.

Palavras-chave: *Psicologia, formação, colonialidade, cidadania, antirracismo*

Resumen

A partir de nuestros sitios académicos y de experiencias acompañadas por medio de la investigación intitulada Producción de Ciudadanía en el Campo de la Política de Asistencia Social, propusimos pensar la producción de conocimiento en el campo de formación en psicología, como también sus implicaciones en la producción de un ejercicio de la ciudadanía articulada a la ética antirracista y al enfrentamiento a las lógicas coloniales. Tejemos discusiones que nos ofrecen comprensiones acerca de las lógicas coloniales de la universidad, a partir del registro de diarios de campo producidos en la investigación, buscando resaltar la necesidad de que nuestras producciones estén asentadas en una perspectiva desde aquí, pues no hay transformación social posible, en el sentido del efectivo ejercicio de la ciudadanía, justicia e igualdad social, sin que haya compromiso en el enfrentamiento de las políticas de dominación en curso – como el racismo, en nuestro país. Por fin, indicamos para la necesidad de aprender con las enseñanzas de quien resiste y lucha para el ejercicio de una psicología comprometida con la transformación social.

Palabras clave: *Psicología, formación, colonialidad, ciudadanía, antirracismo.*

Resumé

En partant de nos positions académiques et de nos expériences suivies à travers la recherche intitulée “Production de la citoyenneté dans le domaine de la politique d’assistance sociale”, nous proposons de réfléchir à la production de connaissances dans le domaine de la formation en psychologie, ainsi qu’à ses implications pour l’exercice d’une citoyenneté alliée à l’éthique antiraciste et à la confrontation des logiques coloniales. Nous tissons des discussions qui nous offrent des compréhensions sur les logiques coloniales de l’université, à partir de l’enregistrement de journaux de terrain produits dans le cadre de la recherche, en cherchant à souligner la nécessité pour nos productions d’être ancrées dans une perspective locale, car il n’y a pas de transformation sociale possible, dans le sens de l’exercice effectif de la citoyenneté, de la justice et de l’égalité sociale, sans un engagement dans la lutte contre les politiques de domination en cours – comme le racisme, dans notre pays. Enfin, nous soulignons la nécessité d’apprendre des enseignements de ceux qui résistent et luttent quotidiennement contre la violence d’un projet de monde moderne colonial, en proposant des pistes pour l’exercice d’une psychologie engagée dans la transformation sociale.

Mots clés: *Psychologie, formation, colonialité, citoyenneté, antiracisme.*

When we think about knowledge — whether in relation to what we consider valid or about those whom we recognize as capable of producing it — it is likely that our thinking takes us to an image placed in a large library, preferably within a renowned university, in which only specialists in a given field could take an interest in or even understand what is written there. This view allows us to perceive how knowledge is assumed as something almost transcendental, produced by people who would be at a superior level in relation to others, whose production is inaccessible to most people. This is not because the doors are closed, but because there are other, more effective mechanisms for separating and hierarchizing who may or may not have access to it and, thus, also who may or may not produce knowledge (to be considered legitimate) in our society.

When we think about this production of Western knowledge, hegemonically considered valid, it is not uncommon to forget the relations of privilege that offer conditions of possibility for those who are now considered renowned thinkers in history to have created their works. Time and access to information are fundamental conditions for what the modern/colonial world project in which we live can sustain as validated production, aligned with market values and the individualization of knowledge. As Walter Mignolo (2017) argues, the modernity of so-called “developed” countries only exists due to a logic of power that persists to this day, concealing an inseparable side of its existence—coloniality—that is, there is no outside; everything is part of the same system, in which one side benefits and the other does not. In this way, biopolitical control is established and it operates on subjective, economic, sexual, labor, military, racial, spiritual, linguistic, pedagogical, spatial planes, among others. Countries of the Global North export their lived experiences to countries deemed “peripheral/underdeveloped,” maintaining their influence. According to Eduardo Restrepo and Axel Rojas (2010), coloniality operates by:

(...) inferiorizing human beings (colonialidad del ser), marginalizing and invisibilizing systems of knowledge (colonialidad del saber), and hierarchizing human groups and places within a global pattern of power for their exploitation in the interest of expanded capital accumulation (colonialidad del poder) (Restrepo & Rojas, 2010, pp. 37–38)

Thus, we import ways of being and being-in-the-world, models that sometimes do not correspond to our reality and that erase our identities and ways of living. It is through the colonality of knowledge that the guidelines of valid knowledge are dictated, set in motion by policies of domination of life (Grosfoguel, 2016) that recognize as true only European civilizational values. In this sense, Brazil, as a colonial project architected and written by those who consider themselves the “winners” of our history, “(...) grounded in catechesis, forced labor, the overt submission of women, and the preparation of men for virility (...)” (Simas & Rufino, 2020, p. 12), continues to unfold, perpetuating genocidal and ethnocidal violence against thousands of Black and Indigenous people every day (Nascimento, 2016). Faced with this colonial project, which continues to update itself in order to function, the call by Luis Simas and Luis Rufino (2020) becomes urgent: we need to think about how to make it fail; to learn from the ‘supraviventes’ (super-survivors): those capable of eluding the condition of exclusion, ceasing to be merely reactive to the other and going beyond, arming life as a policy of building connections between being and world, human and nature, corporeality and spirituality, ancestry and future, temporality and permanence (Simas & Rufino, 2020, p. 6).

Our bodies—logic of two white women and one black woman—who move through the university (inserted in academic teaching–learning processes as undergraduate student, professionals, and as professor), are also traversed by everyday relations that perpetuate colonizing logics. Policies of domination that insist on being reproduced, since the Westernized academy is also part of this modern/colonial project (Grosfoguel, 2016). From our positions within the university space and from experiences followed through a research project entitled *Produção de cidadania no campo da Política de Assistência Social* (Producing Citizenship in the field of Social Assistance), we propose, in this article, to think about the production of knowledge in the field of psychology education and its implications for the production of care and the exercise of citizenship that may be allied with a feminist and antiracist ethic (Hooks, 2019), affirming themselves as countercolonial.

We emphasize that when we refer to countercolonial struggles in the academic field, we are referring to works and studies allied with decolonization processes that, as Ochy Curiel Pichardo (2014) points out, have placed at the center the experience and construction of subjects in our contexts who were violated by colonization. In this sense, it matters to us to think—paraphrasing what the author affirms regarding feminism—which psychology we want to experience and which paths to follow so that this field can produce and act from a radical commitment to social transformation (Pichardo, 2014), therefore against systems of domination such as white supremacist, patriarchal, and classist ones (Hooks, 2019).

Before moving on to the next section, it is also important to highlight that this research was based on an investigative policy supported by a theoretical–methodological perspective that we constructed through the articulation of elements from Science, Technology, and Society (STS) studies, Actor–Network Theory (ANT), and clues from the cartographic method. Based on this theoretical–methodological composition, our fieldwork was carried out inspired by the ethnographic perspective developed by Annemarie Mol (2008), through which we followed the routine activities carried out by the team of a Social Assistance Reference Center (CRAS), located in Porto Alegre, over a six-month period.

University and Coloniality

The colonial logic that sustains the Westernized academy (Grosfoguel, 2016) is also the one that has allowed a certain Brazil of the “little masters” (*sinhorzinhos*) to persist into our contemporary moment. A logic that is organized and operates through patterns of hierarchization and binary opposition, in which there is always a good vs. bad, superior vs. inferior, normal vs. abnormal, and so on. This reminds us of a scene we took part in during an event on the National Day of Black Latin American and Caribbean Women and Tereza de Benguela (recorded in a field diary), during the six months in which we followed a CRAS. This location constituted the research field mentioned above, through which we sought to understand how citizenship was produced within the field of social assistance policy. On that day, one of the participants, a resident of the area, commented—after a conversation circle to compose and establish agreements for coexistence—that in her participation in the previous event at the location she had left early because she felt uncomfortable with a discussion that centered on only one person who, as she mentioned, “acted in a superior way” toward the rest of the group, marking the hierarchy of relations that constitute coloniality: “(...) wisdom is one thing and knowledge is another; a person may even have gone to college, but if they do not know how to deal with respect, it is worth nothing” (Ivone, field diary, July 25, 2019).

This account speaks to one of the important points we seek to discuss in this article so that we may think about a psychology education implicated in a production of citizenship aligned with a feminist, antiracist, and countercolonial ethic: the need to problematize the production of knowledge reproduced in this Westernized university. Education shapes, directs, and forges our listening, our gaze, our feelings, and our ways of thinking toward professional practice in the field of health sciences, especially regarding psychology, our field of practice and the one we wish to challenge here.

This functioning of a colonizing project that sustains the hierarchization of knowledges, subjects, and ways of living produces an operation that places, on one side, a production of knowledge considered legitimate (whose compass is guided by Euro-U.S. standards) and, on the other, knowledges situated in African, Amerindian, *quilombola*, Asian epistemologies, whose valuation is constantly subjected to the same Global North compass. In this scenario, what is produced by all those who represent Brazil—not as coloniality, but as *brasilidade* that survives the colonial project that updates itself upon us every day (Simas & Rufino, 2020)—is frequently dismissed as relevant within academic teaching and learning processes.

Knowledge production understood as scientific, recognized by major European and U.S. academic centers, sustains a unidirectional view of how knowledge is produced. Defined as a neutral and objective model, it has come to be hegemonically considered the only possibility for constructing and validating knowledge, as if it did not represent merely one of several practicable possibilities among different forms of knowledge production about the world. Without diminishing its contributions, we must recognize that it does not encompass plurivivences and diverse epistemologies. As Suely Messeder (2020, pp. 179–180) mentions: The knowledge produced in the academic space, the knowledge produced about knowledges, and the knowledges themselves need to create new horizons of openness and encounters beyond the moralities that surround them, and for this reason it is necessary not to dismiss them, but rather to think of an alchemical process that dismantles the tentacles of enclosures.

Historically, our education in psychology has had, as most of its bibliographic references, production carried out by white people (Barcellos, 2020) who—considering the authors recognized as classics in the field (Menezes et al., 2019)—are European and U.S. men. Among these, few are Black or Indigenous authors, and even rarer are Black and Indigenous women who are called upon to compose the literature on which our training is based. This Euro-U.S.-centeredness brings with it not only a way of producing knowledge, but also a single way of recognizing lived experiences and specific subjectivities of being and being-in-the-world as legitimate experiences, with a white, cis-heteronormative, patriarchal, racist, ableist, and elitist universe as its parameter.

Colonial violence was physical and epistemological, and although colonization *strictu sensu* has ended, its effects remain in terms of a white/European cultural pattern as an organizer of the world, of life, and of thought. European rationality originating in the Enlightenment still splashes its remnants upon us and continues to impose a colonial project that involves economic, political, social, cognitive, and subjective aspects. (Menezes et al., 2019, p. 2)

In this sense, the game of coloniality keeps in motion a complex process established with colonization, extending to the present and materializing through the naturalization of territorial, racial, cultural, and epistemic hierarchies that inferiorize modes of existence and being, while invisibilizing modes of knowing. There is a valorization of knowledge produced in the Global North (Europe and the United States), without recognizing the privileges of prominence granted through the exploitation and domination of the South. As Ramón Grosfoguel (2016) also affirms, there is a presumption that what is produced by men from these few countries has the capacity to explain the sociohistorical realities of the rest of the world.

Theories formulated based on this model—which, ultimately, is a model that imposes the reproduction of an idea of humanity—when transported as “universal” explanations, justifications, and definitions for any and all population scenarios, reproduce violences that persist and obey colonial logics of domination. These same subjects, constituted by production of subjectivity dominated by European values and grounded in privileges, construct canonical references. These, in turn, regulate the possibilities for considering lives, bodies, and distinct experiences as more or less human. This process shapes the oppositional relationship between, on one side, the implementation of policies of care and protection for certain lives and, on the other, genocidal policies of domination.

When only certain lives matter, there is concern for guaranteeing rights and citizenship, which we learn from Maria Aparecida Bento (2002) to be a kind of narcissistic indignation, “a feeling of indignation over the violation of rights (...), but only when that violation affects the group of belonging” (Bento, 2002, p. 28), in this case, whiteness—understood as a system of oppression and privileges (Bento, 2002; Cardoso, 2018). As the Westernized academy is a means of (re)producing knowledge that sustains a world guided by European civilizational values, it often corroborates teaching–learning processes performed through domination, correction, and the inferiorization of other ways of experiencing and inhabiting the world.

It is important, when speaking of knowledge production, to always locate where it comes from and what relationship it assumes as the basis for its formulation. The way sciences, in general, have been constituted was grounded in rationalism. Truth could only be reached through logical reasoning, that differs from perception offered by bodily senses. This division supports a position of neutrality, by which a production detached from the body that produces it would be possible. As various works teach us—such as those by Gloria Anzaldúa (2019), Bell Hooks (2019), and Ochy Curiel Pichardo (2014)—recognizing and assuming situated knowledges is fundamental to engaging in our countercolonial confrontations.

In this direction, Suely Messeder (2020, p. 189) writes: “we are always a corporeal subjectivity producing knowledge,” that is, we are situated subjects who speak from bodies, territories, and diverse experiences. Bell Hooks (2017) draws attention to how the split between mind and body promotes dualism between public and private and, as an effect, we objectify subjects instead of seeing them in their entirety and understanding them as a production that gains existence in the correlation between the subjective and the social.

As mentioned above, in psychology, most of the references studied pertain to production by white, cisgender, European/U.S. men who regulate the academic understanding of what is considered psychological knowledge. The defense that this select group can formulate theories considered universal is the rationalist argument of neutral scientific production. This claim is a result of coloniality, as it proposes that there is a standard distant from all real influences; however, the basis of this model comes from well-located places, bodies, and experiences that invisibilize many others under the mantle of the supposed universality attributed to them. In other words, “the visible and the invisible of a theory are strongly conditioned by the geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge from the place where we think” (Grosfoguel, 2012, p. 340).

Brazil, the country with the largest Black population outside the African continent, is the same country where very few Black people—and even fewer Black women/people—have the possibility of occupying positions of power and, consequently, spaces of knowledge production in universities. As Lélia Gonzalez (1988) shows, every Black contribution to Brazilian culture is minimized as popular folklore, even denying the importance of Black people in the construction of the national language, reducing their knowledges to superstitions or exotic manifestations. There is a continuous effort to keep these identities and contributions—named by the author as *amefricanidade* (Gonzalez, 1988)—invisible.

As intellectuals such as Lélia Gonzalez (1988) and Kabengele Munanga (2017) show, in Brazil racism assumes nuances that differentiate it from how it is established in other contexts. Here, Brazilian-style racism is “implicit,” intertwined within subjectivities. It is socially denied due to a discourse of diversity, of a supposed racial democracy that has never been more than a myth. The idea of cordial miscegenation of the Brazilian population, grounded in a policy of whitening the population, created conflicts of identification for Black people, while the racialization of white people and the recognition of their privileges—maintained through the persistence of racism—remained distant from discussions. Thus, as Abdias do Nascimento (2016) shows, in a country with an enormous contingent of Black people, power remained in the hands of whiteness, manipulating instruments capable of granting or denying access and mobility to sociopolitical and economic positions for non-white subjects.

Starting from the assumption that race is most often not an issue for whiteness, it is not surprising that racial agendas in universities are raised only by Black, Indigenous, or Asian people within these spaces. As a result, our bibliography continues to be predominantly white, male, and colonial. As an effect, we produce a training process in which students are not offered exercises that instigate critical thinking toward recognizing whiteness as an identity and as a system of oppression and privileges. The idea of *lugar de fala* (standpoint) seems to have gained strength in everyday spaces; however, many white people use it to justify the silencing of injustices. This is not about appropriating others’ experiences or assuming the experiences of others, but about speaking while assuming one’s identity, that is, from a critical whiteness (Cardoso, 2018). In the same direction, racial studies are often seen as additional rather than fundamental to understanding Brazilian realities.

Self-declaring as white and debating issues related to whiteness stems from a political conception, from a need to introduce the political into education (Azerêdo, 2002), as Hooks (2013, p. 36) also tells us: “this knowledge must be understood and pedagogically defined not only as an academic issue, but as an issue of strategy and practice.” However, the academy often feeds the academy, and public practices are relegated to the background. Sandra Azerêdo (2002) points out that it is in the public sphere that there is an encounter with the plurality of subjects; it is through it that we can leave our “social bubbles” and build a collective and political transformation of knowledge for the benefit of all. However, our education, still grounded in Eurocentric bases, ends up annulling new events that clash with it. This reminds us of a scene experienced in the research field by one of the authors on Black Consciousness Day:

(...) I commented on the importance of these exchanges and stories in the school, and a Black teacher commented that she agreed, but that they still did not have much access; someone commented on education being worse (...) Suddenly, the main subject—even resumed by the CRAS coordinator—became school uniforms (...) how did a discussion about representativeness emphatically turn into a conversation about whether schools had uniforms or not? At the time, I tried to understand, while that moment dragged on too long and none of the staff realized that the topic of that conversation was another. (Field diary, Nov. 20, 2019)

Epistemicide as an academic practice legitimizes that a subject about racial inequality becomes a discussion that unfolds solely around school attire, without our paying attention to how racism is embodied in that situation. According to Sueli Carneiro (2005, p. 114), “epistemicide is carried out through multiple actions that articulate and feed back into one another, relating both to access to and/or permanence in the educational system, as well as to the lowering of the cognitive capacity of Black students.” It ensures that, even when there are no explicit strategies privileging white people over non-white people (such as Black, Indigenous, and Asian people), there are articulations that maintain this status quo by sustaining the structural permanence of this racial hierarchy, such as the deterioration of public schools (attended mostly by Black people), in contrast to the quality of public higher education (to which white people have more facilitated access due, for example, to prior private education).

Ignoring that this selectivity of attention is the result of a white supremacist structure that does not think of itself as privileged—and therefore does not need to dwell on themes that do not harm it—is to ignore not only the entire psychological

formation of the subject, but also to displace this subject from the social environment in which they live. It is to deny that this population is socially vulnerable and that this would have direct effects on how it experiences its lived reality.

Another point that comes into question when we propose a critique of the hegemonic academic system is that it is not enough merely to address racial, feminist, countercolonial themes, etc., within universities if the voices and tools presenting these proposals continue to favor white, North-centered discursive logics. Audre Lorde (2019) speaks about how there are restricted limits to the changes possible and admissible in a space built on patriarchal, colonizing racism, “for the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us to beat him at his own game for a while, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change” (Lorde, 2019, p. 137). It is necessary to bend language, to subvert such scientific postulates that have gradually created processes of *desmacumbização* (Rufino, 2019), which consist of disqualifying all these other lived experiences. This does not mean devaluing consolidated knowledge, but opening to crossroads, multiple creation.

No matter how much effort is invested in solidifying regimes of truth grounded in a supposed universalist logic, there will always be something that escapes. The margins have produced and continue to produce countless discourses; these are enunciated in different ways from the presences and potentials embodied by multiple forms of being in the world. (Rufino, 2019, p. 117)

Professional training in psychology, as in other fields, marked by the erasure and disregard of knowledges that fall outside the hegemonic model of organization of the Western academy, dangerously flirts with framing our social scenarios (and, consequently, the experiences and subjective productions arising from them) within psychological theories constructed in times, spaces, and scenarios far removed from our reality. Beyond the possibility of generating suffering—rather than effectively assisting those who need psychological professionals’ support—training guided strictly by Euro–U.S. productions distances itself from a proposal grounded in an ethic and politics that help us decolonize our practices. Bringing this reflection to the field of psychology training, it is necessary to produce alternatives to procedures that reduce the human dimension and to the reiteration of hegemonic Western universality, which, beyond annulling diversity, also annuls the testimonial voice of those who experience social inequalities. (Menezes et al., 2019, p. 7)

For this to be possible, it is essential that psychology training be guided by an antiracist ethic of care (Rodrigues & Battistelli, 2021), enabling a commitment to practices aligned with the principle that all lives are worth living (Merhy, 2012). Therefore, it is to the exercise of thinking about these propositions in the field of psychology training, their implications for the production of care and the exercise of citizenship, that we invite you, reader, to continue with us in this article.

There Is No Production of Care and Citizenship Without Struggle Against Systems of Domination

Professional training in psychology—our training territory—governed by the erasure and devaluation of Black intellectuals and ancestral knowledges that mark knowledge production beyond the university walls, distances itself from a practice grounded in an ethic of care allied with social transformation, in opposition to policies and systems of domination (Hooks, 2019). In this sense, when we look at professional practice in psychology, it becomes difficult to think of strategies and interventions for an effective production of care if we do not learn to understand and look at our realities through knowledge produced from here (Battistelli & Rodrigues, 2021). How can it be possible to think of antiracist, antipatriarchal, and anticapitalist interventions against present inequalities and violences if our listening and our reading of the world are based on productions by only a few men who, as Grosfoguel (2016) notes, come from four or five countries in the world? How is it possible for us, as psychologists, to contribute to the production of an exercise of citizenship if we do not consider how we offer care? Understanding care here as an “event and not an act” (Merhy, 2013, p. 69), as what happens in-between, in the everyday relationship established between service operators and users (Merhy, 2013).

Lélia Gonzalez (2018) speaks about how, in Brazil, we produce a second-class citizenship. We are heirs to the colonial practices of a Portuguese state that, as the author brings, because it obeys a hierarchical conception of social organization, does not accommodate the existence of the concept of equality (Gonzalez, 2018). In this sense, we can draw a connection between what is produced as this second-class citizenship (for subjects considered second class) and what Simas and Rufino (2020, p. 6) point to as “‘living leftovers,’ disposable beings who do not fit into the hyper-commodified and normative logic of the system, where consumption and scarcity act as Siamese twins; one depends on the other.”

Our colonial inheritances, which update racial hierarchies, mark a contemporary moment in which, as Sueli Carneiro (2011) states, poverty has color. This is easily confirmed when we look at indicators of social inequality, rights violations, and violence in the country, where the Black population occupies the highest percentages (Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada [IPEA], 2011; IPEA, 2019; Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2010). Therefore, it is among those who have most suffered from the logics of white supremacist, patriarchal, and capitalist systems of domination and oppression (Hooks, 2019) that the full exercise of citizenship is impeded or compromised.

According to data related to the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS), among households receiving Bolsa Família, 70% are headed by Black people (IPEA, 2011). Among program beneficiaries, 90% are women, of whom 75%

are Black (CadÚnico, 2018, as cited in Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social [MDS], 2018). Regarding the Services for Coexistence and Strengthening of Bonds (part of Social Assistance Policy), 55% of participants are women, of whom 64% are Black. Among people in situations of vulnerability and risk, about 68.9% are Black; among children/adolescents in child labor situations, Black individuals represent 81.9%; in situations of violence or neglect, 70.8%; in situations of abuse and/or sexual exploitation, 68.6%; while among people experiencing homelessness, 77.9% (MDS, 2018). Thus, it is evident that, to a large extent, black people are the most vulnerable and, consequently, the ones most denied the right to exercise citizenship.

In this sense, how can it be possible to work within Brazilian public policy services without considering the implications of our practices for guaranteeing the exercise of citizenship of the users and families we serve? What tools and interventions will be possible if our training has been guided only by Eurocentric and white productions? Failing to pay attention to discourses such as the universality of psychosocial issues and race as a mere social marker present in society—and also permeating the academic field—has effects such as not perceiving suffering, minimizing it, or invalidating it; modifying and controlling bodies and ways of life in an exercise of life orthopedics so that they fit the social standard consolidated as hegemonic. As Jaqueline Gomes de Jesus (2015, p. 208) states, the “history of our science-profession has been marked by a yearning for control, for the colonization of bodies, for pathologization.”

For Another Possible Training

If we do not wish to continue reproducing a colonized world project, grounded in policies of domination such as white supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism, and ableism, it is imperative that we invest in and exercise the production of another possible academy. An academy that contributes not only to learning professional training content grounded in diverse epistemologies, but also to ways of being together, of establishing relationships of respect and care that consider our formation as integral subjects (Hooks, 2013).

Bell Hooks, in her book *Teaching to Transgress* (2013), addresses the importance of conscientization as a liberatory educational apparatus, through which knowledge is not produced via banking education (in reference to the work of Paulo Freire), but organized as a plantation in which all of us would have to work, where each seed makes a difference regardless of where it came from or what it produces. In this perspective, education has, as Simas et al. (2020) point out, the capacity to build worlds, paint other meanings, and slow the disenchantment of life. However, the way we receive it in the academic environment, rather than producing deviant routes, traces one-way paths. Neutrality, compromised by a specific subjectivity, produces scarcity. In our field of practice, it produces violence, meanings, limitations; it removes rights, identities, and territorialities (Jesus, 2015).

Thus, we must build maps that produce routes, cracks in this dominant logic—provisional escape routes, as Jota Mombaça (2021) tells us—guided by *brasilidade*. This *brasilidade* that daily survives a racist, genocidal, homophobic, sexist, ableist Brazil; amid the trickery, loafing, and roguishness (*malandragens*) (Simas et al., 2020), our much-maligned “Brazilian way.”

The everyday *pelintrações* highlighted by the authors refer to the swagger necessary to exist. “The objective of the *malandro*, after all, is not to defeat the opponent—an impossible task—but to play while assuming protagonism in the game, proposing bodily and sonic grammars that the opponent is incapable of mastering. To adapt in order to transgress, to sway to keep balance” (Simas et al., 2020, pp. 87–88). The *malandro* does not want to destroy old buildings; he lives in the tenements of knowledge, leaving his mark in razor slashes on everything determined by colonization and power. Along this path, it is with Seu Zé Pelintra that we learn that if we are to accept any adaptation, it must be one attuned to *malandragem* that teaches us to transgress the meaning and the act inscribed in that word (Rufino, 2020).

As psychologists, we need to *malandrar* (to be crafty with) the academic knowledge that prevails in our field. To recognize our *América Ladina* (Gonzalez, 1988) as a producer of knowledges - knowledges that, returning to the opening of this text, speak of ethics, respect, and a social and political commitment in psychological practice. Knowledges produced in the streets, in ancestry. We must be suspicious of words, since they produce power, and recognize a grammar based on everyday minutiae, for it is not merely an aesthetic of action; it is a necessity, an emergence of other presences (Simas et al., 2020). As Jaqueline Gomes de Jesus (2015) argues, let us take the Brazilian reference of the middle ground, which is little open to immediate changes but impatient with long-term ones, acting assertively, with active listening, promoting protagonisms, “eating around the edges” as care for the other’s affect, recognizing the “political that derives from the social and seeps into the psychic” (Jesus, 2015, p. 215).

Our production from here must be grounded in and constituted by an antiracist ethic and politics, for there is no possible social transformation—in the sense of justice and social equality, and therefore of the effective exercise of a psychology committed to social transformation—without engagement in confronting racism and maintaining privileges exercised by whiteness. Let us be rabble-rousers in our practices!

Thinking Citizenship, From Here

When we consider that there is a world project governed by policies of domination, as Bell Hooks (2019) shows us, we must recognize that they manage logics of a Brazil that has historically reproduced practices sustaining precarious living conditions for the Black population and Indigenous peoples. In this sense, it is essential to ask whether we are acting, from the field of psychology, in a way that contributes to the exercise of citizenship of the people to whom we offer our work.

Whose citizenship are we guaranteeing when we do not consider racist and exclusionary processes that involve access to the guarantee of rights (including the right to existence itself), especially when speaking of these populations? Which lives are we considering worth living (Merhy, 2012)? It is necessary to remember, as Dias et al. (2019, p. 116) tell us, that “[b]eyond concept and definition, citizenship (...) carries within it a Eurocentric epistemology,” forged within a modernity project that celebrates its achievements while hiding the colonial logic that sustains it (Meneses, 2018; Mignolo, 2017).

It is with the *brasilidade* of the “living leftovers” (Simas & Rufino, 2020) that we can find clues and escape routes for countercolonial exercises that open paths to think, recognize, and produce citizenship processes that make sense and consider all lives from here, from our *América Ladina* (Gonzalez, 1988). The production of citizenship from here must be grounded—or rather constituted—by an antiracist politics and ethic, for there is no possible social transformation in the sense of justice and social equality, and thus of the effective exercise of citizenship for all, without engagement in confronting racism and maintaining privileges exercised by whiteness: the “Brazil of the *sinhas*, *sinhões*, and all the charge magnetized by them is the one that needs to be erased by the *brasilidade* of the living (...)” (Simas et al., 2020, p. 12), all those who survive the colonial project by creating strategies to affirm life.

Along this path, situating ourselves from a countercolonial gaze makes it possible to invest in a production of citizenship that goes beyond guaranteeing access to social rights, also marking its “emancipatory/liberatory and transformative bias in relation to the oppressive patterns of the modern–colonial–capitalist paradigm” (Bello, 2015, p. 50). As Milton Santos (2007) states, producing a citizenship that is truly for all is not limited to promulgating constitutional documents, but is also constituted through the collective political and social organization of subjects who perform it as a struggle “for a pluriversal world, where the voices of the silenced and subalternized can be heard” (Dias et al., 2019, p. 117). A process in which

the multiplication of critical knowledge, recognition of human dignity, and the overcoming of paradigms, concepts, and prejudices are possible means to build a new history for a truly citizen society, and for this to be realized, the strengthening and implementation of human rights education are indispensable - meaning, forming people capable of respecting others in their rights and in their condition as human beings. (Dias et al., 2019, p. 117)

This process must also include transforming teaching–learning pathways within a hegemonically colonial and Westernized academy (Grosfoguel, 2012). Movements toward changes in professional training are fundamental, as is offering spaces for continuing education to professionals working in different fields of Brazilian public policies, providing learning spaces and dialogues through which we can sustain recognition of racism and its violent effects on the Black and Indigenous populations of this country.

In this sense, it is imperative to think about some possible paths for transformative movements in education. Thus, we highlight three points. The first is the need to know and access documents produced within the scope of the Center for Technical References in Psychology and Public Policies (CREPOP) of the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP), which constitute fundamental references for psychological practice. This includes the field of ethnic–racial relations and commitment to decolonizing its Eurocentric and colonial legacies that produced a so-called universal subject—whose parameter is the white, cis-heteronormative, European man. Documents such as: *Relações Raciais: Referências Técnicas para a Prática da(o) Psicóloga(o)* (CFP, 2017); *Referências Técnicas para Atuação de Psicólogas(os) com Povos Tradicionais* (CFP, 2019); *Referências Técnicas para Atuação de Psicólogas(os) junto aos Povos Indígenas* (CFP, 2022).

The second concerns thinking about teacher education in psychology. When we turn to the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCN) for undergraduate psychology programs, we find principles and commitments that should guide our training for: 1) practice as psychology professionals (bachelor’s degree) and 2) training of psychology teachers (teaching degree). The latter, conceived as a complementary and differentiated pedagogical project in accordance with legislation regulating teacher education in the country, is based on structuring axes that consider, among other points, the relationship between Psychology and Public and Educational Policies; Psychology and Educational Institutions; and African History and Indigenous History (CFP, 2018).

However, regarding teaching practice in higher education, completing a teaching degree is not required; instead, postgraduate education is emphasized, whose centrality is the development of research and of being a researcher. If the principles underlying teacher education in the country pertain only to teaching degrees for work in educational institutions such as schools, how can we ensure a pathway committed to pedagogical processes that make it possible to “train psychology teachers committed to human rights, to the values of solidarity and citizenship, capable of reflecting, expressing, and building—critically and creatively—new contexts of thought and action” (CFP, 2018, p. 133)?

The third point we consider fundamental concerns recognizing the effects of maintaining a white supremacist system (Hooks, 2019) on education, which constantly reaffirms privileges for white people—daily corroborated by the narcissistic pact of whiteness (Bento, 2002).

We must shift away from the colonial gaze of this hegemonic academy so that we can break with the cloaks of Eurocentric knowledges - so often colonizing—that we use to look at and constitute interventions and practices in our everyday work. This movement will not be possible if our practices are not aligned with the antiracist struggle, for producing and claiming citizenship without antiracist implication amounts to playing the game of adaptation to colonial logic. It is with the *brasilidade* of those who erase the project of a colonial Brazil (Simas et al., 2020) that we find clues for producing an antiracist citizenship from our actions in the field of psychology and beyond. We still have much to learn from strategies of enchanting the world as a politics of affirming life (Simas & Rufino, 2020), which contribute to performing a psychology committed to social transformation.

As Wanderson Flor do Nascimento (2020) points out, it is with the popular philosophy of the “streets that laugh at us when we seek some purity and roar with laughter at our naivety when we think the colonial powder magazine has dominated everything” (p. 8) that countercolonial strategies are produced. That is, it is with Maria Mulambo, with the *boiadeiros*, *Estamira*, *Zé Pelintra*, *Pombagiras*, *Pretos Velhos*, and *Erês*, with *malandros* and the sway of samba that new meanings for life are created - life that bravely insists on (r)existing.

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