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MUJER EN LAS AMÉRICAS

BRECHA DE GÉNERO
EN UN MUNDO GLOBAL



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MUJER EN LAS AMÉRICAS BRECHA DE GÉNERO EN UN MUNDO GLOBAL

WOMEN IN THE AMERICAS. GENDER GAP IN A GLOBAL WORLD

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MUJER EN LAS AMÉRICAS

BRECHA DE GÉNERO EN UN MUNDO GLOBAL

Edgard Fernando Pacheco Luza
Crayla Alfaro Aucca
(Editores)



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Fabiana Cristina Turelli

Regaining the Global North? A foreign Latina facing and challenging social structures while working for (re)gaining a diverse world¹

¿Reconquistar el Norte Global? Una latina extranjera que enfrenta y desafía las estructuras sociales mientras trabaja por (re)ganar un mundo diverso

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Abstract

Small wins may be an option to be pursued when revolutions present themselves as too far away. People facing overlapping oppressions are often traumatized and can face difficulties in dealing with the processes of healing from suffering. Thus, even though social justice must be achieved, there may be room for steps that respect personal rhythms without losing the ability to respond to contemporary social issues from critical approaches and positionalities. In this chapter, I address some intersectional social issues lived in a singular manner by myself and reflected through a critical lens. I intend to corroborate that small wins obtained by people used to overlapping oppressions contribute to keeping going and fighting for social transformation, but they are far from being enough and are filled with discomforts and (disguised lived attempts of) domination. For doing so, I report intersectional social issues that, to some extent, were faced in my journey both in the Global North and South, briefly wonder about restrictive “definitions” for or specifics about people such as the concept of a Latina,

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¹ I thank my scholar colleague and friend, Dr. Heidi Jancer Ferreira, for her reading and comments on this chapter, contributing to its development and my own confidence in delivering the material. Heidi is part of the community for empowerment that I mention on this chapter.

bring a short piece on experiencing queer feelings in academia, draw on suffering and a healing process, and conclude with general thoughts on the regaining of concrete or symbolic places lost due to oppressions, but in a different manner that opposes justice to domination.

Keywords: latina, challenging structures, global north, diverse world, gender.

RESUMEN

Las pequeñas victorias pueden ser una opción a seguir cuando las revoluciones se presentan demasiado lejanas. Las personas que enfrentan opresiones superpuestas a menudo quedan traumatizadas y pueden enfrentar dificultades para afrontar los procesos de curación del sufrimiento. Así, si bien se debe lograr la justicia social, puede haber espacio para pasos que respeten los ritmos personales sin perder la capacidad de responder a las problemáticas sociales contemporáneas desde enfoques y posicionalidades críticas. En este capítulo, abordo algunas cuestiones sociales interseccio-

nales vividas de manera singular por mí mismo y reflejadas a través de un lente crítico. Pretendo corroborar que los pequeños triunfos obtenidos por personas acostumbradas a superponer opresiones contribuyen a seguir adelante y luchar por la transformación social, pero están lejos de ser suficientes y están llenos de malestares e intentos (disfrazados de) dominación vividos. Para hacerlo, informo sobre los problemas sociales interseccionales que, hasta cierto punto, enfrenté en mi viaje tanto en el Norte como en el Sur Global, me pregunto brevemente sobre "definiciones" restrictivas o detalles específicos sobre personas como el concepto de latina, traigo un breve artículo sobre la experiencia de sentimientos queer en el mundo académico, se basa en el sufrimiento y un proceso de curación, y concluye con reflexiones generales sobre la recuperación de lugares concretos o simbólicos perdidos debido a la opresión, pero de una manera diferente que opone la justicia a la dominación.

Palabras clave: latina, estructuras desafiantes, norte global, mundo diverso, género.

INTRODUCTION

Times have changed. Things are no longer as known in the past, and some certainties have lost their established places (Kirk, 2020), making people often uncomfortable as they do not know how to behave properly due to the disruption of normative standards. On the one hand, we have conservative people, those who used to be well served by patriarchy, capitalism, and several other intersectional structures appealing to tradition, that may be concerned by the change of times accompanied by the questioning of their social stability. On the other hand, we have those people who historically have not been served by the traditional structures, facing, instead, overlapping oppressions (Crenshaw, 1989), being led, then, to fight social injustice to start or advance change. They keep facing increasing unfairness, with change not satisfactorily achieved, which, in a realistic view, is never going to be fully reached. The changes of times, then, seem uncomfortable for all. But despite the, to some extent, hopeless tone of the beginning of this introduction, there is hope and a perpetual renovation of motivation to keep fighting. The path is indeed extremely tough, but having uncomfortable positions experienced everywhere is at least fairer than having them only lived by those historically oppressed (Freire, 2005). Perhaps society is seeing, while so-called minority groups are acting for, a movement of disruption of traditional norms that privilege a small group of the population. This group, in turn, does not want to lose its privileges (MacDonald, 2014), sustaining power oppression dynamics against social justice.

There can be found small wins (Kirk, 2020), although successful revolutions became quite unachievable. Power and domination socially exerted keep going on (Bourdieu, 2012), being re-elaborated, disguised through improved discourses

(Foucault, 2016), and neoliberal approaches making people believe that they are just free to take their (wrong) choices and responsible (and guilty) of their constant failures (McRobbie, 2015). Thus, the change of times does not mean a change of positions for oppressed and oppressors. Perhaps the fight has been reframed, with the disruption of structures targeting consolidated areas never thought of before, such as gender binary. However, the struggle is far from an end. The feelings of discomfort (Ahmed, 2004) and tiredness may be overwhelming at times for those engaged in the fight. Some days, they can feel that they are done, but they are reborn in the next to keep fighting because it is still worth it and extremely necessary to avoid even worse oppressions. There is progress reached through continuous and strenuous effort, though, and yet, as noted, there is not enough progress. This chapter addresses some intersectional social issues lived in a singular manner by myself and reflected through a critical lens. This is done in order to corroborate what has been argued in this introduction. It means there are small wins obtained by people adapted to overlapping oppressions, but they are far from being enough and are filled with discomforts and (disguised lived attempts of) domination.

Having these general points being made, I assume the narrative of the chapter, considering that it relates to some of my lived experiences as a daughter of the conflict (see Diversi & Moreira, 2018). They are relevant to be reported as evidence of the gender gap, the general theme for this book, still faced by women in different positions around the world. In the Global South, conservatism and inequalities may be lauder. Notwithstanding, they are not exclusive to this Global area, imposing difficulties for women in the Global North too, as I have been investigating in previous studies (Turel-

li, 2022; Turelli, Kirk & Vaz, in press). I have carried out an ethnographical study with European *karate-ka*² women³, to which I added auto-ethnographical notes, hence the validation of personal experiences being reported here. Even though their situation is often more comfortable than that of, for example, racialized women from the Global South or Muslim women, they still face challenges in performing their sport due to their gender (see Turelli et al., 2022). It may be said that there are layers of oppression, and the more they overlap, the greater the suffering. My personal experiences as a daughter of the conflict, a complex concept that will be unpacked later, were lived both in the Global South and Global North. Some of them were quite hard experiences, and although it is not possible neither it is my desire to compare and prove who may have struggled the most, it is undeniable that the place where someone was born may be often pejoratively taken into account, even in the occasion of small wins being achieved.

Considering this, in the next pages, I report intersectional social issues that I faced in my journey both in the Global North for the last six years and, before that, in the Global South, where I was born, grew up, and lived the most of my life. Such challenges are certainly shared by other people and are exposed here as a claim for more of them to raise their voices to join forces and make unfair inequalities visible (Dubet, 2020). After that, I wonder briefly about restrictive “definitions” for people, classifying and labelling them as, in sum, others –but I also ponder about specifics taken into account towards equity. Next, I bring a short piece on how it feels to experience queer feelings as a newcomer scholar. Then, I draw on a topic about suffering and a desirable, though hard to achieve, healing process. Finally, I conclude with general thoughts on regaining places of power and normative structures enabling domination, arguing that this is not the path I necessarily advocate for.

INTERSECTIONAL SOCIAL ISSUES

Intersectionality is an approach that may encompass intersectional thinking, practice, methodologies, and positionalities. As a theory, it emerged

from the Black feminist activist movement (Crenshaw, 1989) to fight overlapping systems of oppression (Kriger et al., 2022) in the direction of anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-classism, and other socially unjust specifics. I am using an intersectional lens in this chapter to critically reflect and report personal experiences to attest to how social barriers make life a challenge. I do not address my positionality in a single statement here because I have chosen to allow it to come up along the chapter, unpacking the concept of a daughter of the conflict. I acknowledge, though, my privileges straight forward, as a cis-gender woman, able-bodied, visibly White, despite the features of my mixed ethnicity as a Latina. I am aware that if I had to face the same social issues I went through with, for example, another color of skin, my path would have been much harder, with considerably fewer small wins being achieved. Even though they overlap, perhaps I may say that the strongest oppression I have been facing is regarding gender. Then, implications of living in a society of classes are added, mixed with discrimination due to ethnicity and its various related matters. There are still other social situations that oppress people, but I concentrate on the issues in these three broad categories here in order to organize and summarize my argument. I describe them next, in a general sense and not in the first person, because it makes the matter less heavy in the sense of avoiding a revival of the experiences.

Gender

In my understanding, gender issues are in place due to patriarchy and its interest in dominating and making the other weaker and taken as, in fact, other. Gender binary with the traditional view of men’s superiority over women is spread Globally in Western and Eastern societies. In addition to patriarchal religious myths, renowned Western philosophers helped consolidate the inferior place for women (see Gonçalves, 2014), putting them, children, and animals all together (see, e.g., Aristotle, 1996). Once this gear is meticulously well articulated and set in motion, it absorbs its own victims as people who pass on and reproduce its dynamics. It means women themselves are led to believe that they are

² Karate practitioners or environment.

³ I am referring to cis-gender women and in the mentioned previous research I worked with gender binary categorization. I highlight that this was due to the features of the karateka environment, which is supported by traditionalism, (hetero)normativity, and gender binary.

inferior, often embodying (Merleau-Ponty, 2005) systemic oppression. Women tend to believe they are weak and require protection, becoming quite dependent on men (Roth & Basow, 2004). Different waves of feminism have been working to dismantle such beliefs, notwithstanding, they remain largely in place. Yet, women have been trained to be constantly self-conscious of the male gaze (Foucault, 2009), pleasing others and worrying about their bodies' appearance, safety, and modesty (Mason, 2018; McRobbie, 2015; Young, 1980).

In the gender issues category are located problems related to sexism. It is linked to the gender binary, with women and girls, ultimately females, being addressed in strict gender roles and facing stereotypes (Lynch, Walton-Fisette & Luguetti, 2022). Among stereotypes, sensualisation of women's bodies, and accusations of masculinization if they fail to please expectations, are often experienced (see Turelli, Vaz & Kirk, 2023). The disruption of socially given gender roles with women's choices for sexuality poses challenges for them and may increase the masculinization stereotype. The acronym LGBTQIA+ brings together gender and sexuality, even though they are not the same (Turelli, 2022). However, Lynch, Walton-Fisette, and Luguetti (2022) argue that it is important to work them together to understand people's identities better (or subjectivities). Considering this, there is also room for a critique of heteronormativity, where people who do not follow the norm are just classified as abnormal.

Society of classes

Capitalism works in a way that just a few are allowed to not complain about the increasing precarity. People are led to engage in the harmful logic of the gig economy to survive (Almeida & Eusse, 2023), following the neoliberal model that blames them for all sorts of misfortunes. This is added to a picture where various uncertainties in life around work and living conditions increase health issues and general well-being or, according to Kirk (2020), mental health conditions, and may still lead to obesity due to poor nutrition, falling into another social issue, that of fatism (Lynch, Walton-Fisette &

Luguetti, 2022). It is in place a generalized increase in poverty that arose much earlier than the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. People living in unstable financial situations and unsafe environments, adapted to the margins of society and the lack of fair opportunities, may stand to this.

They lack economic, social, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986) and are denied access to such forms of privileges due to a hierarchy of birth. It means that since they were born in a given social class, they must, in a sort of condemnation, last in that hierarchical unequal and subaltern class forever, with the mobility among classes becoming more and more difficult. Here is room for a critique of the meritocracy because people are often accused of being effortless when traumas can be in place to the extent that they make learning, for example, more demanding. So, on the one hand, neoliberal discourses may advocate for class-blindness as if it would be inclusive, but it just ignores unfair social conditions that need to be equitably taken into account. On the other hand, discrimination due to class and country of origin may also be used to deny access arguing that a poor person has too many lacks, not being capable of performing some tasks, especially intellectual tasks.

Ethnicity

Colonialism, with the excuse of offering civilization for people who did not share the way of living of colonizers, in a quite uncivilized manner, imposed norms widely. Such norms were and remain White since colonizers linked Whiteness and general whitening processes to religion, positioning all sorts of White vocabulary close to God, colonizing language in a gear-way that served them and keeps the reproduction of domination unconsciously spread (see Butler, 1990). Racialized people or ethnic groups are often discriminated against and considered others as if the color of their skin makes them less human. They may also embody such beliefs, losing self-confidence (Freire, 2005), and taking a while to realize that they were just told an unfair story. Until such realization, they can find it difficult to stand for their own thoughts, pose their voice, and claim for change (Lenette, 2022). Many

of them are the outcome of colonization, carrying within themselves the conflict between colonizers and colonized people, needing to deal with messed subjectivities.

Associated with the hate that racism portrays are exclusionary practices against migrants and foreign people, with Eurocentric nationalism often disguising xenophobia. When trying to make a life in other countries, migrants yet may face challenges to communication (see Spaaij et al., 2020). At times, it may be difficult to communicate in their mother tongue due to the difficulty of finding their voices; thus, it can get worse in a foreign language. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) populations face discrimination for several factors, having dialects and accents in non-standardized use of English as another stigmatization (Lynch, Walton-Fisette & Luguetti, 2022). Considering the points of this first session, I move to the next, approaching restrictive “definitions” that are often set for people, classifying and labeling them. Specifically, I address the idea of a Latina, a concept that supposedly defines myself.

WHAT IS A LATINA?

What, not who. Since it is a definition of categorizing people, I am classified as a Latina, but I was not aware of this “identity” of mine until a few months ago. Do I feel like a Latina? Well, I may understand that it helps in organizing populations and society, for example, but, on the one hand, it is a labeling action that values and distributes people in classes and branches (Ferreira, 2014). It caught my attention when, this year, I visited the Museum of Immigration in Madrid, Spain. Some Spaniards and some Latin American people (Latinxs) feel respectively proud and grateful for the colonization process (see Gullo, 2022; 2023), extending these feelings to what is shown in the Museum that, according to them, has more pieces than Latin America itself. Such affirmation may be disturbing. It can reflect the appropriation process carried out, in addition to highlighting how history is reported through the selection of parts of the tradition (Williams, 1977) to keep a hegemony (Gramsci, 1992) or

even through the invention of traditions suitable for the present (Hobsbawm, 1983), creating room for neo-colonialism. Latin America has much more culture and art richness than a museum may be able to exemplify.

Nevertheless, it is relevant to comment regarding the Museum in Madrid that there was a presentation of every outcome from the reproduction of people. They exhibit paintings of, for example, a Spaniard and a native Indigenous person, resulting in a determined new ethnicity; then, this new ethnicity again with a Spaniard, and so on. There are several specific classifications, many more than I learned as a child in Brazil. My first reaction to this is that it makes people see differences as categorization for othering practices (Luguetti et al., 2022). On the other hand, if there was an interest in celebrating differences, as proposed by equity, it gains a positive use. Thus, it depends on the use (Ahmed, 2019) given to such specifics. Knowing people’s backgrounds helps to identify the overlapping oppressions they have been facing in life and would be useful in addressing social injustice.

I am a Latina because I was born in Brazil. There is a mix of European colonizers in the region in South Brazil where my family lives, relatively near the area of Spanish colonization of other countries, especially Argentina. Our mother tongue is Portuguese, but the main colonizers were Italians, who mixed with natives Indigenous of the area. Therefore, it is difficult to fit in a singular definition. People in this region are often ashamed of miscegenation, preferring to be linked to Europeans than to First Nations as if it would be more glamorous –even though the Italians who migrated to my region were the *polenteros*, it means the poorest. From my side, I feel as a daughter of the conflict, to a large extent, carrying the conflict within myself. This conflict makes me wonder about classifications and feel confused because they try to fit people in systems when systems should be built to serve people. As I said, specified features of people help in looking at them equitably. Therefore, specifics are desirable⁴, but the conflict... it messes everything. I grew up as

⁴ Specifics are desirable considering approaches of EDI as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and not as Erasure, Denial, and Ignorance (Joseph, 2021). I am pointing out two possible interpretative paths for difference here, one that excludes, and another that respects and may have the ability to respond to. Notwithstanding, for the second, it is necessary to be aware that there are fractures and fissures in how EDI has been addressed and that to be social and just, as to achieve social justice, is not always a task fully embraced by institutions and governing bodies. (I thank Dr. Dillon Landi for his inspiration in playing with words and concepts.)

a timid and quiet person, lacking social, economic, and cultural capital, with difficulties expressing myself, ashamed of my yokel Portuguese accent, and struggling to find my voice. Due to overlapping oppressions caused by social class, precarity, and the sexism naturalized in my family, I just got to learn English at the age of 35, and that was a very difficult late start. It feels like the embodied conflict affects one in the sense of feeling constantly disengaged, non-fitting, and weird, deeply experiencing queer feelings (Ahmed, 2004).

So, am I a Latina? Yes, and this word encompasses a lot of struggles behind it, undeniably recalling intersectionality. Latinxs seem to be known for their joy and parties; at the end of the day, they supposedly did not experience as much of wars as, for example, European countries. Notwithstanding, colonization was actually war, with European men being invited to explore lands in Latin America and turn it White. So Latinxs know suffering from close, being possibly conceived through the rape of First Nations females. They keep finding and fighting the outcomes of that as suffering currently. To make it softer, the struggle regarding CALD issues, for example, is continuous. I personally am quite open to learning about new cultures and languages; however, feeling discrimination due to my own diversity as a foreign person in Spain, United Kingdom, Italy, Australia, countries where I have lived, and Canada, the country where I am currently living in; as a Brazilian, with an Italian background and Indigenous miscegenation, is... unpleasant. Performing as a Latina woman, as noted, adds to the stigmatization, being seen in various places as passible of objectification, and yet commercialization, as if women from the Global South would always be searching for ways to escalate social strata classes. In sum, systemic unfair inequalities required and require strength to raise my voice. There are small wins for sure, but the struggle keeps always going on. In this sense, the next session is a short piece that reports recently experienced feelings of unsuitability.

QUEER FEELINGS IN ACADEMIA

I recently attended international conferences in the Global North. One of them, in Europe, both im-

proved my network and recalled the impostor syndrome (Breeze, 2017) that I can identify with. I met kind people there. At times, though, they become perhaps too theoretical. Some of them may, with the best of intentions, speak from places too far from poverty, violence, and fear. They master theories amazingly, but it sometimes sounds like the supposedly superior colonizer saying what inferior people should do; it still sounds like a way of civilizing others. I would say that they do not necessarily have this intention, but then, they may lack proposals to make it a reality where it is needed the most, which means, places where living conditions are highly precarious (see Almeida & Eusse, 2023). I did not meet many people from the Global South, and I keep wondering how many people from the Global North usually attend conferences in the Global South⁵. Nevertheless, it caught my attention that I am able to write about this, but I was unable to say this to people.

Contradictorily, I hold lived experiences to attest to this, but perhaps these experiences became too embodied, blocking me and making me lack confidence, as Freire (2005) argued. I know I should not, so at the end of the day, I achieved a small win; I was at the conference with all those who master theories amazingly, delivering a presentation of my work as much as them, and representing a Canadian University to which I work for, another small win. However, it is about the social construction I went through and the overlapping oppressions that seem to have framed some of my behaviors and beliefs. I know I should instead feel empowered by my own journey, but I still feel other; I felt that I was out of place in the conference despite my will to be there (see Landi, 2018; Lisahunter, 2017). Queer feelings, as Ahmed (2004, p.155) defines it, "embrace a sense of discomfort, a lack of ease with the available scripts for living and loving, along with an excitement in the face of the uncertainty of where the discomfort may take us." Thus, I ask how the land where one is born can be so powerful as to empower them with a supposed heritage of winners or disempower them to the point of feeling their culture unsuitable and themselves always as yokel colonos? It goes far beyond the land itself,

⁵ I acknowledge here that recently a well-known international conference in the area of physical education took place in Chile. It is fair to highlight the efforts of Dr. Carla Luguetti to make it possible.

with impactful consequences for all. In the next session, I share some reflections on dealing with embodied conflict resulting in suffering, and a required strength to keep fighting.

MANAGING SUFFERING WITH MOVEMENT AND COMMUNITY

Due to my background, I do not easily take an optimistic stance for the future; my position is critical, though, pursuing alternatives that may enable social change, perhaps through small wins as I have been arguing, in the form of active hope (Freire, 1992). As it has been seen in this chapter, each point made seems to have at least one counterside. In this topic, there is the situation of people struggling and facing suffering, in some cases ending up traumatized, and, on the other hand, it is true that they also become stronger. Is this a sort of justification and authorization for suffering? Definitely, it is not. I believe there are other ways to find strength in life than through facing suffering and painful experiences. However, when they are unavoidable, a good attitude is to learn from the resilience they teach, which may lead to their own overcoming, never giving up. This idea of never giving up may be connected to keeping in movement and keep moving, impacting epigenetics (Bedregal et al., 2010). To move oneself seems to be an action capable of disrupting persistent thoughts that degrade holistic well-being (see Gibson, 2021). Somehow it may work as an agent for change in a given condition, shaking structures, purifying feelings, and helping in a healing process that aims to “clean” suffering. It is not about stopping suffering in a denial position but allowing it to fade out.

I am sure this is not an easy path. The project for reconciliation between non-Indigenous and First Nations and Indigenous Peoples adopted in Canada, for example, has shown to be highly complex (see Henhawk, 2009)⁶. With so much suffering involved, it is complex to achieve reconciliation when even moving forward becomes difficult. Thus, a healing process is a requirement to allow collaboration between people, and it takes time. Suffering as an outcome of facing intersectional oppressions may both contribute to and be increased

by isolation in loneliness times. I argue that forms of movement may help engage in community relations, allowing bonds to be built in an ethics of care approach (Clement, 2018). To move, in the sense of being physically active, may ask for some level of awareness of the moment being carried out, as much as sharing conversations tends to bring people together in the present. Such temporal oblivion of the pain can be helpful because it allows a different time and space to be experienced. It is not about erasing experiences, which is impossible, but simply allowing time and (safe) space to deal with them, without judgment or pressure, but with love.

Recalling my lived experiences, I personally found some relief in both moving myself and having support from kind people in hard moments. Embodied practices, such as training in karate for me or just running, represented an important release valve for distress and moments of deep suffering mixed with some rage, bitterness, and sadness. Bonds of friendship and feelings allowed to be shared with a trustful and empowering community help in moving forward in the healing process and in achieving small wins. This is small but still so relevant that it generates the will of sharing, despite the uncomfortable self-exposure, and giving back to others in similar situations the kindness experienced, in addition to the invitation to more people raising their voices to turn unfair situations visible. This is in accordance with approaches adopted to work with and in vulnerable environments and in challenging and loneliness times, using critical pedagogies of affect, as may be seen in Ferreira, Luquetti, and Kirk (2023) and in Turelli and Kirk (2021).

Freire (2005) proposes radical love (see Gandolfi, 2023) to educate people, especially marginalized young people. What these people lack the most are feelings for their flourishing. When that is lacking, love may be hard to be experienced, both in offering it since people do not know how it feels and receiving it once they are not adapted to it. A healing process requires radical love for oneself, prioritizing good relations with empowering communities, and making commitments to oneself, for example, in maintaining action or movement for well-being and the consequence of engagement in a fight for

change. For the minimum that the impact may appear, it exists. In addition, a healing process asks for the mentioned moments of forgetfulness. For those who suffer, according to Nietzsche (2005), it is a moment of joy to be able to deviate the look from suffering and forget oneself for a while. However, such an ability to forget demands effort. Forgetting has etymological proximity to forgiving, allowing one to move forward through the liberation from things that happened in the past and are heavy to carry. Forgiving, then, is liberating not of others, but of those who forgive from others, the past, some feelings, and so on.

Notwithstanding, to apply it does not fluently read as in paper and in theory. In the own flesh, it feels quite harder and can yet be taken by the relevant perspective of avoiding repeating mistakes from the past generations claiming responsibility and conscientiousness as proposed by Adorno (1995), in *Education after Auschwitz*. Also, different painful experiences may develop empathy in people, creating motivation to recover, empower, and fight together toward change. Evidently, there is no recipe. Trauma, as a “shot- or long-term emotional response to a stressful or disturbing occurrence” (Lynch, Walton-Fisette & Luguetti, 2022, p.60) may take years to be dealt with depending on the sensitivity of each person. Nevertheless, I would advocate for a sort of moral of victory, where victory is not exactly how we are adapted to it. Sometimes, as the supposed biggest loser, one can find peace in having nothing to lose. Perhaps, by working hard to become friends with suffering and loneliness, one may no longer feel alone. Hard work, hard road. Hopefully, this will lead to serenity and fight for a change of unjust conditions, and not necessarily revenge, considering that inflicting pain on others does not heal one’s suffering.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

With the title of this chapter, I proposed a play of words. Even though history is manipulated by being told in the present through selected parts of tradition that keep hegemonies (Williams, 1977), or even through invented traditions (Hobsbawm, 1983), we learn it in school. We learn stories (Collins, 2011).

One of them was about settlers “discovering” America, populating it, despite the peoples that were already there, and thus civilizing such tribal people (read animalized gentiles). Time passed, and times changed. At some point, after experiencing injustice for so long, people get tired of being quiet, timid, and oppressed, which is part of the awareness of the oppression process. So, they may end up trying to find themselves, rescue their roots, and discover that they are as capable as their settlers of claiming the right to conquer things and, ultimately, power. The Global South is said to have been conquered; people from there, in my play with words in the title, I emphasize it, would reclaim their right to regain other global areas to equalize and then neutralize oppressions. However, the supposed regain of the Global North is not given in the same currency as the “conquer” obtained by colonizers. Colonization was a way far from civilization; it was an unrestricted and perverse display of power, exerting domination and oppression over unprepared peoples.

Regaining here is, therefore, a play with the word because it is never going to be in the same proportion. Undeniably, social justice must be achieved. So, it is about regaining, or building, a diverse world. It for sure requires commitments to policies being created and becoming practices, be it through affirmative action or other ways (Moraga-Contreras, 2020; Oswick & Noon, 2014), and work towards people’s critical consciousness (Freire, 2005) deconstructing and transforming education “against sociocultural homogenization and oppression” (Gandolfi, 2023, p.166). This may be a path that allows the regain of oneself, not of the other, recalling the healing process. It seems unfair and, indeed, is not enough to solve domination issues. But a personal advancement in healing oneself is a small win, a step that gives strength to work in the name of social transformation and justice, which cannot be a synonym for revenge. It is about education, as already advocated by Freire. An education that does not take the power and change it of hands, but an education that is empowering. Empowerment can take place both individually and collectively, making people more independent to act in the world to the point of emancipation

(Luguetti, 2014). Other features might be greater awareness of freedom, challenge of gender and other stereotypes, self-esteem, self-determination, acquisition and mastery of skills, and social benefits (Liechty, Willfong & Sveinson, 2016).

Freire warned about the oppressed becoming oppressors if they just achieve power, which means a loss of humanity. They need to keep fighting, growing awareness, and somehow show to oppressors the madness in the domination logic. Their path is tough because then, in Freire's (2005) proposal, they will need to work together with oppressors to achieve liberation and freedom (Giroux, 2010). I find such a union too hard, this is why I speak

more about small wins than revolutions since deep healing is demanding. And, at the end of the day, small wins counting together go in a revolutionary direction. Yet, there are also parallel proposals, with dialogue, solidarity (Freire et al., 2014), and hope (Freire, 1992) playing fundamental roles and representing ways to keep going and keep fighting until the day that radical love can become praxis. Thus, for now, perhaps the strongest challenge of social structures is presented when one just resists and does not become equal, reproducing the unfair logic perpetrated by social structures globally found, regaining oneself and regaining a diverse world.

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