


The beautiful gesture of *corazonar* and the risk of reintroducing the reason-emotion binarism

El bonito gesto de *corazonar* y el riesgo de reintroducir el binarismo razón-emoción

O bonito gesto de *corazonar* e o risco de reintroduzir o binarismo razão-emoção

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ABSTRACT

This article takes up the provocation of the Indigenous Tule teacher Abadio Green Stocel, for whom "going to the other and returning from the other" is not an intellectual problem, but a problem of the heart. From that standpoint, he suggests the fact that studying the other is something different from understanding them. It involves knowing the life of and with peoples. For him, researching means changing the heart, the methodology. This sounds beautiful and has given rise to *corazonar* as a "method-wisdom" (*métodosabiduría*) developed by the Ecuadorian musician and anthropologist Guerrero Arias, an expression akin to the border thinking, which we consider necessary for that "going and returning to the other", to grasp the way subjects understand reality and offer creative responses based on their own thought. Yet, at the same time, it leads us to ask ourselves: does it not reintroduce the old binarism between emotion and reason, despite the sympathy evoked by that beautiful

expression? That said, our intention is to build a bridge between this “going and returning to the other”, the meaning of *corazonar* among the Ecuadorian Indigenous people (Kitu Kara), and our own way of understanding/assuming it, which implicitly involves a relationship with what is represented, shaped by our intellectual task.

Keywords: Corazonar; Other epistemologies; Intellectual task; Binarism.

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo recupera la provocación del maestro indígena tule Abadio Green Stocel, para quien, “ir al otro y volver del otro” no es un problema intelectual sino un problema del corazón. Desde allí, sugiere que estudiar al otro es algo distinto a comprenderlo. Implica conocer la vida de y con los pueblos. Para él, investigar es cambiar el corazón, la metodología. Esto suena bonito y ha dado origen al corazonar como métodosabiduría desarrollado por el músico y antropólogo ecuatoriano Guerrero Arias, expresión próxima al pensamiento fronterizo que asumimos necesaria para ese “ir y volver a lo otro”, para captar la forma en que los sujetos entienden la realidad y ofrecen respuestas creativas apoyadas en un pensamiento propio, pero, a la vez, nos conduce a preguntarnos: ¿no reintroduce el viejo binarismo emoción y razón contra la simpatía que nos genera esa hermosa expresión? Dicho esto, nos interesa tender un puente entre ese “ir y volver a lo otro”, el sentido de “corazonar” de los pueblos indígenas ecuatorianos (kitu kara) y nuestra forma de entenderlo/asumirlo, lo cual lleva implícita una relación con lo representado moldeada por nuestra la tarea intelectual.

Palabras-clave: Corazonar; Epistemologías otras; Tarea intelectual; Binarismo.

RESUMO

Este artigo retoma a provocação do professor indígena tule, Abadio Green Stocel, para quem “ir ao outro e voltar do outro” não é um problema intelectual, mas um problema do coração. A partir daí, sugere sobre o fato de que estudar o outro é algo diferente de compreendê-lo. Isso envolve conhecer a vida das e com os povos. Para ele, pesquisar significa mudar o coração, a metodologia. Isso soa bonito e deu origem ao *corazonar* como um *métodosabedoria* desenvolvido pelo músico e antropólogo equatoriano Guerrero Arias, como uma expressão próxima ao pensamento fronteiriço que supomos ser necessário para esse “ir e voltar ao outro”, para compreender a maneira como os sujeitos entendem a realidade e oferecer respostas criativas com base em seu próprio pensamento, mas, ao mesmo tempo, nos leva a nos perguntar: isso não reintroduz o velho binarismo de emoção e razão, batendo de frente com a agradável impressão que essa bela expressão gera em nós? Dito isso, estamos

interessados em construir uma ponte entre o "ir e voltar ao outro", o sentido do "corazonar" dos povos indígenas equatorianos (kitu kara) e nossa maneira de entendê-lo/assumi-lo, o que implica uma relação com o que é representado, moldada por nossa tarefa intelectual.

Palavras-chave: Corazonar; Outras epistemologías; Tarefa intelectual, Binarismo;

Introduction

This article emerges from the exchange initiated between authors 2 and 3¹ following the provocation of the Indigenous teacher and continued during discussions held within the framework of the First Latin American Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences (*I Congreso Latinoamericano de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales*), celebrated in September 2022 at the National University of Catamarca (*Universidad Nacional de Catamarca*). It was during this event, with the incorporation of author 1, that we presented an initial version of this paper as a conference presentation at a panel we coordinated entitled: Ways of doing research from the perspective of the subjects, their everyday life, territory, and historical memory (*Formas de hacer investigación desde la perspectiva de los sujetos, su cotidianidad, territorio y memoria histórica*). Taking that presentation as a starting point, we revisit the proposal of *corazonar*¹ from our own loci of enunciation and dwelling: urban, academic, and situated in medium-sized cities that are not national capitals (Porto Alegre, San Juan, and Córdoba). We are white, descendants of European immigrants (in the case of authors 2 and 3), and Black, descendant of Afro-diasporic and Indigenous peoples (in the case of author 1). We are professors at public Argentine universities and research and technology agencies (authors 2 and 3), and at a private institution (author 1); in other words, from a place distinct from that of the Kitu Kara people. The decision to present these characteristics, to situate ourselves as authors and social actors by marking our sites of discourse production and action, is intended to make understandable the leap that *corazonar* implies for us.

¹ Translator's note: the verb "corazonar" in Spanish derives from "corazón" (heart) and can be understood as to think with the heart, implying an approach guided by empathy and heartfelt understanding rather than mere intellect.

Although the idea of *corazonar* was first put forth by the Kitu Kara people in 2009, calling upon the entire Ecuadorian nation to *corazonar*, it was later reinterpreted by the Ecuadorian anthropologist, poet, and musician Patricio Edgardo Guerrero Arias as a distinct—other way of understanding life. For the Kitu Kara, it constitutes a spiritual and political proposal for the healing of being in the face of the colonality of the dimensions in which life is interwoven in the Andean world (saywas, powers or forces): affectivity (Munay), the spiritual and sacred dimension of life and the feminine aspect of existence (Ushuay), and wisdom (Yachay). For us, it will take on a different connotation.

From this experiential expression, throughout these pages we ask ourselves: How can we move toward forms of creation that are less confined by theoretical thought tied to disciplinary discourse, within which we often behave as mere repeaters of theories, or, conversely, by the thought of our interlocutors, whose everyday life and worldview have little to do with our own? Is it possible to think in a non-representational way? Would it not be a political abdication to assume that representation is always at play since it is the very mode through which we can think the world? And even the form of *corazonar* itself – does it not reintroduce an old binarism? Is it not, after all, a form of representation? These are some of the questions that guide the collective construction of this text.

As for the structure of this article, we begin with a discussion of the idea of *corazonar*, engaging it in fertile dialogue with other manifestations of knowledge. Subsequently, we problematize these forms of understanding within our intellectual and academic practice, concluding with reflections in which we argue that this movement does not reintroduce an old binarism as far as we are able to “live between worlds.”

***Corazonar* as another mode of knowledge**

As anticipated, Guerrero Arias (2016) takes up this idea and develops it in his Doctoral Dissertation in Latin American Cultural Studies at the Andean University

Simón Bolívar, Ecuador Campus (*Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Sede Ecuador – Área de Letras y Estudios Culturales*), under the supervision of Ariruma Kowi, as a decolonial project that can be seen, in the author's own words, as an expression of border thinking or akin to the *sentipensamiento*² of Fals Borda (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p. 121), which may also be associated with the idea of knowing otherwise. His dissertation begins as follows:

Following the path of water and the call of dreams, under the full moon of the September 2009 equinox, the Kitu Kara people called upon Ecuador to *CORAZONAR*, to let the word walk from the heart and express their feelings about the situation faced by life, the country, and the planet. The Kitu Kara people put forth *corazonar* as a spiritual and political proposal, distinct from that of certain traditional Marxist left-wing social movements, which have been more concerned with structural and socioeconomic transformations. *Corazonar*, instead, proposes the healing of being; hence, we feel that *corazonar* may be viewed as a proposal for the decolonization of power, knowledge, being, and life (p. 12).³

Corazonar is thus a call for decolonization. Although Guerrero Arias does not dwell on its association with border thinking, we understand this connection because border thinking “aims to transcend modern epistemology and hermeneutics, the distinction between subject and object, and to create a space of dialogue between Eurocentric forms of knowledge and the forms of knowledge that were subalternized in colonial imperial processes” (Pulido Tirado, 2009, p. 193)⁴. It is a rupture that seeks to go beyond a mere (new) epistemology, since *corazonar* brings together the integrity of being in communion with the cosmos and, indeed, with nature. By considering these

² Translator's note: the term “sentipensamiento”, coined by Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda, combines *sentimiento* (feeling) and *pensamiento* (thought), expressing an epistemology that unites emotion and reason.

³ Original: “Siguiendo el camino del agua y el llamado de los sueños, en la luna llena del equinoccio de septiembre del 2009, el pueblo Kitu Kara hace un llamado al Ecuador para *CORAZONAR*, a fin de dejar andar la palabra desde el corazón y expresar su sentir sobre la situación que enfrenta la vida, el país, el planeta. El pueblo Kitu Kara plantea con el *corazonar*, una propuesta espiritual y política, distinta a la que algunos movimientos sociales de la izquierda marxista tradicional han llevado adelante, más preocupados por las transformaciones estructurales y socioeconómicas. El *corazonar* en cambio, propone la sanación del ser; de ahí que sentimos que el *corazonar* puede mirársele como una propuesta para la decolonización del poder, del saber, del ser y de la vida” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 12).

⁴ Original: “tiene como objetivo trascender la epistemología y hermenéutica modernas, la distinción entre sujeto y objeto, y crear un espacio de diálogo entre las formas de conocimiento eurocéntrico y las formas de conocimiento que fueron subalternizadas en los procesos imperiales coloniales” (Pulido Tirado, 2009, p. 193).

relationships, *corazonar* dethrones the hegemony of a single Western mode of thinking-knowing, displacing reason from the center of all argumentation. It calls upon us to open other spaces to access other ways of knowing. Yet this movement is not a cordial one – it contains tensions; it entails, in some sense, bringing back to life those wisdoms that had been buried. In other words, Guerrero Arias (2016) writes:

It opens possibilities for those wisdoms that had remained clandestine to become visible; for the wisdom of the invisible communities announced in prophecies to come to light, to make themselves visible, and to offer humanity the possibility of healing from so much death generated by coloniality, and of sowing, of nurturing, another horizon of living (p. 45).⁵

As we can see, the starting point of *corazonar* seems to be the “negation of affectivity in knowledge” (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p. 102); hence, the need to bring those insurgent wisdoms into the palace of knowledge through the interrelation of affectivity and reason. Therefore, it is not merely an academic or epistemological proposal; it is an opening to “other senses of existence” (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p. 102) in response to the colonial–imperial matrix of power that denied diversity, crushed singularity, and consequently disregarded “the existence of other ways of seeing the world and weaving life” (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p. 105). From there, he points out that the coloniality of affectivity and otherness appears as one of the most perverse forms of the coloniality of being, which decreed the absence of the other.

In line with this anthropocentric view that legitimized, in addition to the masculine and whiteness, the power of reason, science, and technique, Guerrero Arias invites us to reintroduce this old binarism in order to transcend it, noting that affectivity and emotions represent the preconscious, the prediscursive. “Sensitivity has been banished from productive routines and from the field of knowledge” (Restrepo, 2010, p. 19). In this sense, it is not an invitation to simply incorporate these two dimensions or to add the ancestral to the modern as a means of restoring their denied place, but rather to change the heart. This is precisely the focus of the *métodosabiduría* (method-

⁵ Original: “*abre posibilidades para que las sabidurías que se habían mantenido clandestinas empiecen a visibilizarse, a que la sabiduría de las comunidades invisibles que se anuncian en las profecías, salgan a la luz, se hagan visibles y aporten a la humanidad, la posibilidad de sanar de tanta muerte generada por la colonialidad y de sembrar, de criar, un horizonte otro del vivir*” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 45).

wisdom) he develops in his doctoral dissertation: “to confront a soulless reason and propose that we let the word walk from the heart, from where it will be possible to weave another fabric of living” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 13).

This is the path that allows one to go to and return from the other without denying who we are or adopting a voice that does not belong to us. Blaser (2019) calls this ontological openness. Thus, *corazonar* has to do with intuition, with bringing forth the words of the ancestors (which he calls insurgent knowledges), and with meditating on what happens. From this Indigenous inspiration, Guerrero Arias seeks to connect with people’s ways of living, affirming that one *corazonar*⁶ in everyday life. But what does this mean? What would it be, in our contexts – in our urban, hybrid, modern environments – to *corazonar*? Once again, the author offers an answer that includes the displacements he himself experienced:

Corazonar an active method-wisdom of life and a spiritual and political proposal – these new perspectives of *corazonar* as a concrete action of a people transformed the research questions initially formulated from more academic perspectives, turning them into questions that sought to be answered through the practice of living and of sharing some of those vital experiences in which *corazonar* has been present (2016, p. 18).⁷

A turn is required, one that returns to the other, to the community, to the collective, emphasizing forms of knowledge that consider other modes of knowing. What Arias proposes broadens this possibility and recognizes the need for the exercise of active listening to what already exists, as a form of resistance from the edges of the Eurocentric vision. Indeed, “there is no single way of thinking or doing, but rather cultural rationalities and different paths to knowledge” (Valiente, Godfrid & Berteau, 2017, p. 58).

⁶ Translator’s note: one thinks with the heart.

⁷ Original: “*corazonar una metodosabiduría activa de vida y una propuesta espiritual y política, fueron esas nuevas perspectivas del corazonar como acción concreta de un pueblo las que transformaron las preguntas de investigación formuladas inicialmente más desde perspectivas académicas, para volverse preguntas que buscaban ser respondidas en la práctica del vivir y de compartir algunas de esas experiencias vitales en las cuales ha estado presente el corazonar*” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 18).

Corazonar in the academic–intellectual *métier*

The Colombian philosopher José Rosero speaks to us about opening the way for a decentered and othered philosophical thought, which does not mean opposing one form of thinking to another, but rather overcoming three traits that have characterized our practice:

- analytical or fragmentary thinking (a tendency toward classification),
- rational or conceptual thinking,
- and the privileging of written language.

Undoubtedly, these are decolonizing actions, just as *corazonar* is, and once again, we ask ourselves: how does this resonate within us? It may appear clear and feasible at a theoretical level. However, as academics, working with everyday life and with the idea of producing knowledge differently – whether through research or teaching, both of which also draw on the hegemonic principles that guide such production – presents itself as a challenge. The issue here concerns the concrete problem of who knows and how one knows; and also, what happens to that knowledge once it becomes part of the repertoire of readings, positions, and visions that constitute what is done in the real world (however that may be understood). There is something complex about obscuring one's own practice when demands arise for it to be otherwise.

It is also true that these demands emerge as a result of the process of practice itself and of the attentive listening cultivated throughout one's professional experience. This is not a matter of disciplinary defense, reifications, or similar concerns. It is rather about recognizing that within the *métier*, within the craft, there exist several planes. One of them is quite porous, let us say, in relation to representation, understood in the negative sense in which it is often conceived; that is, as the representation of others by a discourse that claims enunciative centrality. That risk is always at play. Another, less visible, relates to the modulations produced by research practices as craft, as a set of enunciative rules, as discourses that regulate a material and shape an archive. Not everything necessarily occurs in the first sense. For example, thought organized

analogically, common to expressions in the social sciences and the humanities, often operates by confronting the incommensurability of the orders at play, which resist, through action or omission, simplification.

To think disciplinarily, as is evident, refers to discipline in every possible sense; but we should remember that there is not a one-to-one relationship between disciplinary thinking and cognitive extractivism^{III}. It is true that this becomes clearer when one considers issues such as the geopolitics of knowledge, for instance, where the effect of representations deeply modulates – and indeed produces – the represented. In philosophy, this is what is called the “other” of the self. “I took the liberty of imagining it this way, though it is actually more complex,” comments author 3.

In any case, this does not justify a generalization about knowledges that assumes they only function in the direction of dominating the real, and so forth. Author 3 continues in the written narrative: I think, for example, of the following. Is it possible to imagine that some of our works affect that which they study, as, for instance, the old representations of cultural others influenced anthropological thought in its initial stages? That is to say, is there a performativity at play that might allow us to affirm something similar regarding the present of our research? When discussing representations, power relations, and their exercise, a key dimension in the knowledge–power relationship seems to be precisely the capacity to affect a symbolic plane, a dimension of practices that may hold some instituting force.

For author 1, one question that arises is whether the previous reflections might be considered within a modeling framework that translates meaning within Western thought, within sciences or knowledge traditions linked to it. But what would happen if we performed a displacement from centrality, positioning alongside it other elements that originate in other traditions? By making such a displacement, it becomes senseless to reverberate with a methodological or epistemic conflict. It should be emphasized here that both conflicts point us back to the idea of extractivism. Author 1 continues: “What consoles me, at least at this first moment, is being aware of that risk and maintaining a vigilant consciousness of it.” We share the view that what is at stake is what and who occupies centrality; in other words, we are attempting to highlight the

historical dispute over power. We distinguish ourselves from certain anti-colonial assumptions that, while not denying anyone the possibility of thinking otherwise, at the same time claim the right to do so and to seek dialogue with other forms of knowledge, working among different epistemologies in circularity.

Yet this point seems never to be fully resolved. A moral consideration is often placed in the foreground, one that emphasizes the immense value of listening, among other similar dimensions. However, this over-integrates the vision of the craft we inhabit. Suddenly, we hear the demand to *corazonar*, a beautiful one, but it immediately imposes a closure upon what we consider constitutes the knowledge we produce. The effect is somewhat caricatural, yet it operates: faced with the demand to *corazonar*, a certain “guilt” caricatures the complexity we detect in our work, producing an odd consequence. *Corazonar* seems to be an ontology that does not articulate with how we know, yet it destabilizes it.

Indeed, we do not know how to produce a text in which affectivity escapes words. Added to our tendency toward hyper-theorization, this reinforces our ignorance, or rather, the lack of attention we give, to the experiences of everyday life and to the difficulty we have in recovering them. As author 2 observes, we end up reproducing what we see and interpret, often violently, far removed from the spirit of *corazonar*, with theoretical thinking serving as a closure to it. Or, when we attempt to recover vital experiences in line with what is being proposed, we become like the Castilian chronicler whose discourse was uprooted, even if there was an effort to integrate the foreign into the familiar. In other words, good intentions or will are not enough. To decolonize ourselves demands that we inhabit otherness, that we destabilize ourselves.

For his part, author 1 maintains that one can think of the beauty of *corazonar* in the sciences, of *corazonar* in our academic and teaching work. Here lies the possibility of moving beyond the mere reproduction of a hegemonic and singular model. That beauty resides in the possibilities of revisiting consecrated modes of knowledge production and of the craft itself. We agree that there is an internal struggle within us, one we have inherited and must confront. Colonization has imprinted upon our memory

a process of belonging to inferiorized cultures. Quijano (2000), in his analyses of colonial power, emphasizes a dual effect. The first was the existence of a multitude of peoples inhabiting the Americas (among them, the Incas, Mayas, Aztecs, Aymaras, etc.), who, at the time of the European conquest, had formed complex political, economic, and cultural societies, and who, within a few centuries, were reduced to the new identity category of “Indians.” The same transitional process occurred with African populations (Akan, Yoruba, Zulu, etc.) who were subjected to the diaspora of enslavement and to the ascription of being “Black”^{IV}.

In Quijano’s (2000) words: “Their new racial, colonial, and negative identity entailed the dispossession of their place in the history of humanity’s cultural production. From then on, they were nothing more than inferior races, capable only of producing inferior cultures” (p. 221).⁸ Here lies precisely the challenge for us in our academic craft: these new identities constructed in the Americas directly affected the epistemic position we came to occupy. Quijano continues: “In other terms, the power pattern founded on coloniality also implied a cognitive pattern, a new perspective of knowledge within which the non-European was the past and thus inferior, always primitive” (2000, p. 221).⁹

In this trajectory, we ask ourselves: what would happen if we thought of the knowledges and associated practices we inhabit as something less pretentious, neither so guilty nor so minimal? What if we considered them as one register among others, which sometimes acquires stronger tones and touches areas of social dispute, intelligibility, and conflict, and sometimes does not? From this, we also ask: why should the craft be abandoned to assume a position that articulates itself as an external demand upon it? Why not, instead, reflect on how the rules of enunciation emerged,

⁸ Original: “*su nueva identidad racial, colonial y negativa, implicaba el despojo de su lugar en la historia de la producción cultural de la humanidad. En adelante no eran sino razas inferiores, capaces sólo de producir culturas inferiores*” (Quijano, 2000, p. 221).

⁹ Original: “*En otros términos, el patrón de poder fundado en la colonialidad implicaba también un patrón cognitivo, una nueva perspectiva de conocimiento dentro de la cual lo no-europeo era el pasado y de ese modo inferior, siempre primitivo*” (Quijano, 2000, p. 221).

on how, we might say archaeologically, the themes and problems of our modes of knowing were constituted?

After saying this, author 3 brings the example of art, of artists. Should they, for instance, set aside the techniques that describe and make possible a piece of writing, a painting, or a sculpture in response to a demand that is external and ontologically alien to them? Or should they rather consider the effects such a demand produces precisely within the regularities of their practice? We are not naïve when we say this. We know that knowledges are inscribed in practices that exceed individuals; in other words, they are a social relation. At that point, an articulation may emerge otherwise, because we detect this relation through many paths. The question, then, is whether, in that exercise of detection, something like an ongoing awareness of the moment of a practice's constitution does not occur. If it does, what kind of exercise do we privilege there? In relation to this, we close with the following fragment by Homi Bhabha:

Is the cause of radical art or critique best served for instance, by a fulminating professor of film who announces, at a flash-point in the argument, 'We are not artists, we are political activists?' By obscuring the power of his own practice in the rhetoric of militancy, he fails to draw attention to the specific value of a politics of cultural production; because it makes the surfaces of cinematic signification the grounds of political intervention, it gives depth to the language of social criticism and extends the domain of 'politics' in a direction that will not be entirely dominated by the forces of economic or social control. Forms of popular rebellion and mobilization are often most subversive and transgressive when they are created through oppositional cultural practices.

And further on:

In this complicated formulation I tried to indicate something of the frontier and the location of the event of the theoretical critique which does not contain the truth (in polar opposition to totalitarianism, to 'bourgeois liberalism,' or to whatever it is supposed to be able to repress). The 'true' is always marked and grounded by the ambivalence of the very process of emergence, by the productivity of meanings that construct counter-knowledges in media res, in the very act of agonism, within the terms of a negotiation (rather than a denial) of opposing or antagonistic elements. Political positions are not simply identifiable as progressive or reactionary, bourgeois or radical, before the act of engaged critique, or outside the terms and conditions of its discursive appeal. It is in this sense that the historical moment of political action has to be thought of as part of the history of the form of its writing. I do not intend to assert the obvious: that there is no political knowledge, or other knowledge, external to representation. I intend, indeed, to suggest that the dynamics of writing and textuality require us to rethink the logic of causality and

determination through which we recognise the 'political' as a form of calculation and strategic action dedicated to social transformation. (<https://red.pucp.edu.pe/wp-content/uploads/biblioteca/4.pdf>)

We will return to this point in the conclusions.

The beautiful gesture of *corazonar* and the risk of reintroducing an old binarism

In these exchanges, two concerns guide us. On the one hand, the potentiality of this beautiful gesture; on the other, the tension within the act of knowing, so heavily modulated by our profession, that seems to be destabilized by the intrusion of affectivity into knowledge. Because this beautiful gesture seems not to articulate itself with our way of knowing, of thinking the world. It appears to be reserved for those who embody a relational ontology, such as that of this Ecuadorian people, incompatible with the rationality of academia or with other forms of knowledge production that originate from groups subjected to the tragic experience of colonization, such as other Amerindian communities, or the peoples who speak Tupi, in Brazil, for instance. And here, we seek precisely the possibility of exemplifying what it means to go through the process of unlearning in order to relearn in other ways – to make that leap. For this, we draw on the contributions of Kaká Werá Jecupé (2020), who introduced the idea of *Arandu Arakuaa* as the knowledge of the movement of the universe, a kind of knowledge that invokes a certain systemic complexity. In making this proposal, there seems to be a movement away from a binary perspective and an approach toward systemic integrality, although this too is understood as a challenge. In this case, the story is told from another place and by another historical and social actor, one who is geographically situated and who preserves the memory of what colonization has meant for his people. It is a way of filling the historical void of other voices and creating spaces for these other discourses to gain visibility. This simple gesture calls into question the truths presented thus far by the hegemonic paradigm.

Returning to the exercise of our profession, the potential lies precisely in rethinking it within our own contexts, assuming that it may take on another designation.

After all, what motivates *corazonar* is also part of our own interests and challenges, recalling the words of Guerrero Arias (2016), for whom “what interests us is to *corazonar*, that is, to reflect from affectivity; what we analyze is not people, but how people weave the webs of meaning that shape their existence, their living, and their struggle” (p. 14).¹⁰ His words are not foreign to us, they move us, calling us to listen from within people’s own words, prioritizing the voices that have been silenced by coloniality and that, under other classifications, continue to be silenced. This encourages us to think that *corazonar* is possible despite the disciplinary tendency to fragment knowledge. Thus, we traverse this path of breaking the old affectivity–reason binary. To achieve this, Guerrero Arias (2016) gives us clues on how to do so:

If we remain only in observation, no matter how participatory it may be, or in participation that merely observes, we will maintain a positivist gaze that, in the name of objectivity, imposes a cold distance from a reality that seeks only to be cognitively explained; whereas militant participation committed to life is not only a cognitive exercise but, above all, a political and affective one – another way of *corazonar* – for it sets aside the positivist neutrality imposed by scientific objectivity, takes a stand, and commits itself militantly from the heart and intelligence first to life, to reality and its actors, and, if that is the horizon, commits itself to those who struggle for it. Hence, *corazonar* seeks not only to explain but, above all, to understand in order to transform situations marked by domination (p. 25).¹¹

This experiential perspective, this dialogical and affective encounter with our interlocutors, without idealizing actors, speaking for them, or attempting to become their spokespersons, seems an ideal situation. Once again, the specter of representation reappears. Cognitively, we may be clear that the aim is to listen to their words rather than judge them, but within that dialogue, our own voice is also present.

¹⁰ Original: “*lo que nos interesa es corazonar, es decir hacer una reflexión desde la afectividad, lo que analizamos no es a la gente, sino como la gente teje las tramas de sentido que moldean su existencia, su vivir y su luchar*” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 14).

¹¹ Original: “*si nos quedamos en la sola observación, por más participante que sea, o en la participación que solo observa, mantendremos una mirada positivista, que nos impone en nombre de la objetividad, una fría distancia frente a una realidad que busca solo ser explicada cognitivamente; mientras que la participación militante comprometida con la vida, no es solo un ejercicio cognitivo, sino sobre todo político afectivo, otra forma de corazonar, pues deja a un lado la neutralidad positivista que impone la objetividad científica, toma posición y se compromete militantemente desde el corazón y la inteligencia primero con la vida, con la realidad y sus actores, y si ese es el horizonte, se compromete con quienes luchan por ella, de ahí que el corazonar lo que busca, no es solo explicar, sino sobre todo, comprender para transformar situaciones marcadas por la dominación*” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 25).

In conversations, we usually share what moves us mutually, yet that does not free us from the rules of enunciation, from the effects of representations that shape what is represented. In this regard, something similar recently occurred in one of the routine activities of academic practice.

The case took place during the defense of a doctoral dissertation in education, in which the researcher engaged in dialogue with an Indigenous community living in the urban area of the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre (Brazil). For this reason, the tribe's chief was invited to be part of the examination committee. During the discussion among academics, the chief remained silent for much of the time. The debate concerned the Indigenous community's desire to have "the white people's school" in their village (neighborhood). In her field notes, the researcher emphasized that the chief – the same one who was now in the committee – had said during fieldwork interactions: "We want the white people's school in our community so that we can better understand how they live, what their values are, how they understand life," while the academics were more concerned with understanding the life and culture of the Indigenous community. The chief knew exactly what he wanted and what role the whites would play in his community. They wanted to know them better. Their goal was clear. The school was necessary. it signified a double gain: first, it would allow them to better understand white culture; second, it would enable them to appropriate white knowledge without abandoning their traditions. Following the chief's reasoning, the question that emerges is: who studies whom? In the words of Guerrero Arias: "What we humbly seek is that we feel, that we listen, that we learn what the wisdom of this word is teaching us, in order to transform our existences" (2016, p. 26).

This situation illustrates that the need for openness is not solely an academic issue. To step out of the inherited centrality of Western thought – to decolonize ourselves and allow our profession to experience other ways of engaging with knowledge – is also a need of those others who have been denied. We have inherited a position within the epistemology of the sciences, but we also know that location does not determine destiny. While we acknowledge that we seek other voices, we do so from a position of centrality, risking reproducing thought elaborated from that very

center. By thinking ourselves dislocated from that centrality, we must relocate ourselves elsewhere, somewhere that escapes mere reproduction of knowledge and the exoticization of the other. The question is not to lose sight of where we are and with whom we are as we seek to broaden that web of meanings in our lives.

In this regard, Geertz (1989), a renowned anthropologist formed within the tradition of anthropological knowledge, has questioned the model of monologic ethnographic authority that represented the Other. In his words, “the gap between the familiar ‘us’ and the exotic ‘them’ is a fundamental obstacle to meaningful understanding of the Other [...]” (p. 24). According to his understanding, it is only possible to overcome this gap through participation in the world of the other. Returning to the perspective advanced by Guerrero Arias, *corazonar* existence “can also be an exercise in life and living, allowing us to discover the beauty of the music that dwells in the affectivity, wisdom, and spirituality of the people” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 26).

Perhaps we should be less ambitious and allow ourselves to recognize that this beautiful gesture also constitutes us, and commit ourselves to *corazonar* the dominant epistemologies, following the Ecuadorian thinker, even if we are not facing insurgent knowledges, because, ultimately, what is at stake is contributing to the construction of an academic and epistemic proposal that is different, based on other meanings of existence, not to transform, but to “think and struggle for shared horizons of existence” (Guerrero Arias, 2010, p. 112). Expanding his reflection:

We *corazonar* that an exercise of decoloniality of knowledge involves adopting a more humble attitude in the research process, understanding that conceptual and methodological frameworks are references that sometimes collapse, that fail to explain or tell us very little about what happens in dimensions of reality that exceed rational conceptual frameworks, such as the spirituality and wisdom of the Yachaks; through walking alongside them, we have learned that one way to err less – because making mistakes is inevitable and necessary in the sowing of knowledge, and accepting this would also be another way of combating the obsession of positivist science with finding ‘truth’ – is to have the humility to listen to the heartbeat of life that inhabits the words of the social actors with whom we converse (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 17-18).¹²

¹² Original: “Corazonamos que un ejercicio de decolonialidad del saber, es tener una actitud más humilde en el proceso de investigación, comprender que los marcos conceptuales y metodológicos, son referentes que a veces se derrumban, que no alcanzan a explicar o nos dicen muy poco sobre lo que ocurre en dimensiones de realidad

Let us then think of *corazonar* in this key, a key that limits the risk of reintroducing the old binarism if we can recognize that this wisdom of the heart is expressed in different ways and not exclusively in a turn toward relationality. We must pay closer attention to the ways in which we *corazonar*.

Final Considerations

Along this path of ideas and citations, we recognized both our limits and our possibilities. We also realized that we are neither as creative nor as original as we may think, because in that arrogance we attribute to ourselves in the act of knowing, those others concealed within the rhetoric of modernity ask questions similar to ours. We saw this with the chief, and countless fragments of interviews with community leaders appear in Guerrero Arias's dissertation, expressing the same need to overcome the old reason–emotion dualism: “[...] that is our main goal, that our children learn the scientific part, so to speak, but also our knowledge, our spirituality, because our knowledge and our spirituality are also important” (2016, p. 335).¹³

Perhaps, as author 3 of this paper suggests, we should be less ambitious. Author 2 adds that beginning to decolonize ourselves means beginning to become aware that the world is classified, hierarchized, and that we must destabilize ourselves, exposing the limits of our ways of knowing. Evoking Castro-Gómez, “we must get used to living in this world of changing articulations and not in the ontological security provided by the rigid disciplinary canons of the 19th century” (2010, p. 182). This is the task – not to embrace *sentipensante* (feeling-thinking) narratives or adopt other life-

que rebasan los marcos conceptuales racionales, como es el caso de la espiritualidad y la sabiduría de las y los yachaks; por este caminar junto a ellas y ellos hemos aprendido, que una forma de equivocarse menos, -porque equivocarse es inevitable y necesario en la siembra del conocimiento, aceptar esto, sería también otra manera de combatir a la manía por encontrar la verdad que tiene la ciencia positivista-, es tener la humildad de poder escuchar el latido del corazón de la vida que habita en la palabra de las actoras y actores sociales con los que conversamos” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 17-18).

¹³ Original: “[...] ese es nuestro objetivo principal, de que nuestros hijos aprendan la parte científica por decirlo, pero también nuestros saberes, nuestra espiritualidad, porque nuestros saberes y nuestra espiritualidad también son importantes” (Guerrero Arias, 2016, p. 335).

worlds, risking idealization as a form of reparation for a colonial history. Recognizing that modern ontology (dualistic) founded that ontological reductionism, as Escobar would say, is already a major step. We share here a reflection by the Colombian anthropologist with which we align ourselves:

For us urban-moderns, who live in spaces most marked by the liberal model of life (ontology of the individual, private property, instrumental rationality, and the market), relationality constitutes a great challenge, as it requires a profound personal and collective inner work to unlearn the civilization of disconnection, of economism, science, and the individual. Perhaps it implies abandoning the individual idea we hold of radical political practice. How do we take the inspiration of relationality seriously? How do we re-learn to inter-exist with all humans and non-humans? Must we recover a certain intimacy with the Earth to re-learn the art of sentipensar with her? How can we do so in urban and disembedded contexts? Unfortunately, progressivism, and perhaps much of the left, remains far from understanding this mandate. As Gudynas rightly says, neither the right nor the left “understands nature” (Arturo Escobar 2016, en Duque, p. 131).¹⁴

We do not include Escobar’s words as consolation but as an expression of the real possibilities of our existence to experience the pluriverse. Technology has already revealed the multiverse; what remains for us is to learn to “live among worlds,” evoking Cuestas-Caza (2019). To step beyond our certainties and securities will open us to the countless ways of being and existing in the world that characterize the pluriverse. And for this to happen, “there are no pre-established times, one finds when one finds, and that is always a reason for infinite celebration. Otherwise, if we do not become others among others, we will be nothing more than traffickers of hegemonic thought” (Grosso, 05/05/2022)^{V.15}

¹⁴ Original: “Para nosotros los urbano-modernos, que vivimos en los espacios más marcados por el modelo liberal de vida (ontología del individuo, propiedad privada, racionalidad instrumental y el mercado), la relacionalidad constituye un gran desafío, dado que se requiere un profundo trabajo interior personal y colectivo para desaprender la civilización de la desconexión, del economismo, la ciencia y el individuo. Quizás implica abandonar la idea individual que tenemos de práctica política radical. ¿Cómo tomamos en serio la inspiración de la relacionalidad? ¿Cómo re-aprendemos a inter-existir con todos los humanos y no-humanos? ¿Debemos recuperar cierta intimidad con la Tierra para re-aprender el arte de sentipensar con ella? ¿Cómo hacerlo en contextos urbanos y descomunizados? Desafortunadamente, el progresismo, y quizás buena parte de la izquierda, están lejos de entender este mandato. Como bien lo dice Gudynas, ni la derecha ni la izquierda ‘entiende la naturaleza’ ” (Arturo Escobar 2016, en Duque, p. 131).

¹⁵ Original: “no hay tiempos preestablecidos, uno encuentra cuando encuentra y eso es siempre motivo de infinita celebración. Sino no nos volvemos otros entre otros, no seremos más que traficantes del pensamiento hegemónico” (Grosso, 05/05/2022).

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Notes

^I The authors are referred to in the body of the article according to the sequence (1, 2, and 3) in which they are presented in the authorship identification of this work.

^{II} Much could be said and referenced about border thinking, but we have chosen this citation because it synthesizes the thought of Mignolo and many others who recover this notion to refer to the displacement of the locus of enunciation from the First to the Third World.

^{III} Although this is a notion probably familiar to readers of this text, we include it here so as not to take for granted its meaning. In brief terms, it refers to the use of concepts and notions from communities outside their original context, stripping them of their original meaning by assigning them a different sense in a new use and context.

^{IV} An interesting and highly recommended reading for gaining another perspective on the colonization of the Americas is the work organized by Baudot and Todorov (2019).

^V Exchange of messages via WhatsApp with author 1 of this paper.