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Gender, Place and Culture

Living a *Callejera* Methodology: Grounding María Lugones' Streetwalker Theorizing in Feminist Decolonial Praxis

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Abstract

This intervention considers how the writings of María Lugones, a philosopher of feminist decolonial theory, might shape a *callejera* [streetwalker] feminist decolonial methodology and what such a methodology might look like in practice. I describe how a *callejera* methodology foments deeper relationality by highlighting as methodological tools three of Lugones' concepts: resisting ↔ oppressing, the collective and *tantear en la oscuridad*. To ground the theory and illustrate possibilities of deeper relationality offered by a *callejera* methodology, I reflect on on-going research with Colombian collectives actively negotiating experiences of indigeneity and womanhood in relation to histories of colonial and more recent armed violence, as well as ongoing state disinvestment. I make three contributions. First, I suggest that integrating an intersectional analytic of 'both/and' with the complex fluidity between Lugones' concept of resisting ↔ oppressing permits scholars to better understand the negotiation of multiple, intermeshed identities and oppressions, social inequality and power relations in relation to colonial histories and presents. Second, I encourage geographers to embrace a decolonial lens attentive to the relationality between

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and among collectives, from which many acts of resistance begin. Finally, I consider how a *callejera* methodology considers coalitional work as central to the research process. Such work embraces difficulty, discomfort and messy relationality often negotiated as if walking blindly through the dark (*tantear*). I conclude by arguing that geographers' relationally-based research can strengthen feminist decolonial thought in our attention to spatial and temporal scalar differences of place and our commitment to understanding contextually differentiated navigations of identity.

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Introduction

"I will not think that which I cannot practice."

- María Lugones

Geographers are increasingly engaging decolonial theory to inform more equitable and anticolonial research design, methodology, outreach and teaching. My intervention considers how the writings of María Lugones, a philosophy scholar of feminist decolonial theory, might shape a *callejera* [streetwalker] feminist decolonial methodology and what such a methodology might look like in practice. Lugones, who passed away in July 2020, was an Argentine-born, United States-based feminist philosopher perhaps most known for her extension of decolonial theory to consider the coloniality of gender (Mignolo 2007; Quijano 2007; Lugones 2008). Throughout her work, Lugones insisted that actively engaging in decolonial thought requires of scholars "an emphasis on methodologies that work with our lives, so the sense of responsibility is maximal" (Lugones 2010, 755). In her resolve that scholarship become a life's work, a praxis, to advance epistemological and social justice, Lugones joined and advanced a rich community of anticolonial thinkers. I narrow my focus to three of Lugones' essays, "Tactical Strategies of a Streetwalker" (2003), "On Complex Communication" (2006) and "Toward a Decolonial Feminism" (2010), to sketch a *callejera* methodology, at once carefully strategic and deeply relational. I reflect in particular on Lugones' insistence that scholarship be submerged in the mundane relational realities of life best understood and experienced as a *callejera*, one that

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intimately knows the day-to-day happenings in the streets.

In this intervention, I reflect on three of Lugones' concepts that could frame a *callejera* methodological approach to foment deeper relationality in geographers' research methods. First, I highlight Lugones' articulation of *resisting* ↔ *oppressing*, constantly active and intermeshed gerunds foundational to a feminist decolonial lens (Lugones 2003a, 24). Second, Lugones' discussions of *the collective* shift attention from the individual to the complex and more "dispersed" social (2003, 208). Finally, I consider Lugones' articulation of *tantear en la oscuridad* (to feel one's way through the darkness) in relation to informal coalitional work, which requires deep self-vulnerability and acceptance of relational discomfort as one spends time with and among individuals and collectives, especially across cultural and global North/South contexts (Schutte 1998). I reflect on the processual practice of each concept in my current research. In closing, I suggest that geographers' engagements with place may further strengthen feminist decolonial thinking on the complexity of relationality.

Feminist decolonial theory fits within broader anticolonial thought. The roots of feminist decolonial thinking recognize the racializing (Quijano 2000), classing, gendering (Castro 1992; Lugones 2003), and sexualizing of bodies as both products of colonialism and sources of extraction (LaDuke 2017; Pérez 2003; Zaragocin 2017). Significantly, decolonial theory affirms and promotes epistemologies from multiple worlds and recognizes the multiplicity of selves, thus unsettling colonial categorial logics of the self and dominant (Eurocentric) epistemes (Martinez 2018; Naylor et al. 2018). Here borderlands thinking and working in the space of the in-between open new possibilities for the creation of relational power from a place of non-categorical logics (Sundberg 2014; Anzaldúa 1987; Ortega 2016). The colonial difference, i.e. or the difference

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between modern (dominant epistemes) or not-modern, consists of a space of creative relationality from which to question and resist colonial power and its past and ongoing violence (Mignolo 2007; Lugones 2010). Decolonial thought demands material change, often based in justice around land and access to resources that were seized from Indigenous, enslaved and colonized peoples (Simpson 2000, 2008; Tuck and Yang 2012).

Decolonial feminisms have been theorized among Latin American scholars for many decades including before the work of Lugones, who wrote from a Global North position as a scholar in the United States. Feminist decolonial thought from theorists throughout Latin America emphasize the significance of territory (*territorio*), the body (*el cuerpo*), class and Indigenous and Afro-Latina identities to understandings of decolonial feminisms. For example, Ulloa (2016) offers the concept '*feminismos territoriales*' to make sense of women's particular political demands against extractivist projects within lands of Indigenous or Afro-descendant communities in Colombia. The work on *cuerpo-territorio* (body-territory) has been central to Latin American decolonial feminisms, to consider the body as of earth or land (*tierra*) and as earth or land (*territorio*) (Haesbaert 2020; Zaragocin and Caretta 2020; see also Ulloa 2021; Walsh 2018; among others). The work on *cuerpo-territorio* and other concepts are engaged by communities of scholars of Latin American decolonial theory committed to transformative social theories from the South (in Colombia see contributions in Alimonda, Toro Pérez and Martín 2017 as one example).

Importantly, scholars are engaging the complexities and demands of anticolonial feminist thought in their writing (Noxolo 2009; Noxolo and Preziuso 2012), reading (Dorries and Ruddick 2018), research (a few of many: de la Cadena 2015; Radcliffe 2019), teaching (Daigle

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and Sundberg 2017; Esson 2020; Molana 2021, this volume), mentoring (Mullings and Mukherjee 2018), methodologies (McEwan 2003) and overall consideration of academic culture and structures (Esson et al. 2017; Kinkaid, Parikh and Ranjbar 2021, this volume). Within this body of literature seeking epistemological change, some scholars engage Southern theories to centre and deeply think with and through theories from non-Eurocentric cultures and traditions (Banerjee and Connell 2018; Connell 2011; Purkayastha 2021). In this intervention I contribute to feminist decolonial work by reflecting on a *callejera* methodology as a decolonial and feminist praxis that recognizes and prioritizes our relationality with one another.

Feminist methodology has emphasized, among many important tenets, positionality, reflexivity, the importance of context, careful listening to silences and attention to gendered, classed and racialized spaces, among other axes of difference (Sundberg 2005; Harding 1987; Haraway 1988; Espinosa Damián 2011). Black feminist thought and critical race theorists among others have demanded attention to the multiple interstices of intersectionality, which in Latin American contexts crucially includes indigeneity (Cusicanqui 1997; Mollett 2017; Purkayastha 2012; Rodríguez-Shadow 2000; Hill Collins 1986). Furthermore, feminist scholarship frequently aspires towards or results in material social change (Dowler and Sharp 2001), challenging scholars, as Courtney Desiree Morris (2015) writes, to “imagine our work as a practice of freedom, an act of imagination, a tool for healing a traumatized, highly unequal world.” Other anticolonial methodologies including Indigenous methodologies align with many of the above methodological stances and further push scholars to design research that is committed to dialogue, participation, the promotion of other ways of knowing and cultural autonomy (Carlson 2017; Simpson 2004; Denzin, Lincoln and Smith 2008; Gaudry 2015). The concepts of a practice

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of social change through attention to and dialogue regarding colonial logics are especially important to a feminist anticolonial praxis.

How might a decolonial feminist praxis differ from other genealogies of anticolonial and antiracist feminist thought, and what might Lugones' writings contribute to ongoing conversations of fostering feminist decolonial methodologies? The foundation of decolonial feminist methodologies is sustained attention to the movements and interactions of decoloniality, especially in relation to racialized and gendered bodies (Zaragocin and Caretta 2020), sensitivity to contextual and place-based specificities of identities and relations (de la Cadena 2015; Radcliffe 2015), and a praxis that actively works to dismantle structures that uphold colonial logics (Velez 2019). Powerfully, a decolonial feminist methodology decentres Western thought as the locus of ontological and epistemological truth, opening new pathways for ways of relating with one another (Pitts 2017; de Sousa Santos 2016; Toro Pérez 2020). My intervention seeks to contribute to the significant work of many feminist and anticolonial scholars by considering how concepts from Lugones' feminist decolonial philosophy might be useful in living into a feminist decolonial methodology.

Research Context

Cognizant that representation is profoundly and irrevocably problematic and that in referencing categories I reproduce and reinforce logics I am trying to overcome (Asher 2017; Barnes 2018; de la Cadena 2015), I offer from my location as a non-native-fluent Spanish-speaking, white, able-bodied, heterosexual, cisgender woman academic, a brief description of the places in which I engage in relationships and research in Colombia. My research examines the social-

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environmental impacts of rural water infrastructure in Colombian smallholder communities, particularly the nuances of how rural development projects benefit or hinder the livelihoods of historically marginalized groups, specifically those of smallholder or landless farmers and women. In recent years, my research has been in the southern region of the department of Tolima. The Andean valley of southern Tolima is the home of the Pijao Indigenous peoples. Many Pijao individuals and families are self-organized into Indigenous governments (*cabildos*) and some reside in and cultivate land granted to the *cabildos* by the Colombian government (*resguardos*). The Pijao do not have a living traditional language but many maintain strong cultural practices, frequently demonstrated through traditional agricultural cultivation systems as well as in culinary, architectural and artisan traditions.

Both Pijao and peasant (*campesino*) smallholders in southern Tolima have been peoples historically marginalized by the government and, not unrelated, have experienced periods of violent conflict from guerrilla, paramilitary and state military groups as well as difficulties from climatic stress in the form of intense droughts.¹ Local governments and nongovernmental organizations in the region are fighting to improve some of the country's most severe rates of poverty (39% rural and 58% urban) and childhood malnutrition (23%) (Alcaldía de Coyaima, "Acuerdo Nro. 008 de 2016"). Domestic violence and generalized violence against women have been prevalent in this region and persist, reported by news outlets and corroborated through my interviews with women in Tolima.

¹ For a discussion of *campesino* identity, see Devine, Ojeda and Yie Garzón 2020.

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Resisting ↔ Oppressing Produces Relational Space

To engage a *callejera* methodology is to understand relational spaces as being created through opposing, dynamic and mutually dependent gerunds of “resisting ↔ oppressing” (Lugones 2010, 746). Importantly for feminist thinking, Lugones’ articulation of resisting ↔ oppressing as fluid, relational and connected as the inhaling-exhaling of breath, calls for a methodology of watching for the constant, everyday relationship between resistances and oppressions. Lugones writes that “to understand the spatiality of our lives is to understand that oppressing/being oppressed/resisting construct space simultaneously and that the temporality of each, at their infinite intersections, produces multiple histories/stories” (2003, 24). The tensions of oppressing and resisting create social space and interactions, making relationships thick with history and experiences. The tensions of resistance of active subjects experiencing intermeshed oppressions form an important thread of feminist decolonial theory. For example, Gisela Espinosa Damián (2011) draws attention to the *triple emancipación* (triple emancipation) of Indigenous women active subjects also experiencing the intersectional *triple opresión* (triple oppression) of gender, ethnicity and class. Such tensions are central to intersectional approaches to research, attending to the intermeshing of oppressions experienced differently by diverse groups while equally appreciating the linked movements of resistance.

A *callejera* methodology complements feminist theory by encouraging scholars to read resistances to power often made silent or invisible. A *callejera* methodology looks for “infrapolitical resistance” as formulated by Lugones among others, that may be “nonreactive” (Lugones 2003, 99); or quiet, logics that subvert or cause conflict and intentions that aspire toward emancipatory futures. A *callejera* methodology guides awareness particularly to the

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movements of *los atravesados* (Anzaldúa 1987), or those troubling dichotomies, power structures and normalized senses of meaning. It produces scholarship that teases apart the nuances of or highlights the often-unseen resistances of individuals and groups (Dowler and Ranjbar 2018; Morris 2010; Graddy-Lovelace 2017). Through the lens of resisting ↔ oppressing, where oppression exists so, too, does resistance. Lugones (2010) urges scholars to see the relational ties between both oppression and resistance, recognizing the tensions between them.

In spending time with women in southern Tolima, I learned how resisting ↔ oppressing forces are often evidenced in quotidian material actions. Since the early 2000s, both Pijao and *campesina* women have organized groups that promote sustainable agricultural practices to improve family food access. The women teach neighbours and community women to collect rainwater and establish diverse kitchen gardens (*huertas caseras*) to foment family nutrition and encourage women's livelihoods. In one of the first farmer field schools in which I participated, *campesina* women and their daughters taught all participants their recipe for making chicken feed using kitchen scraps, native plant species and drought resistant starches such as yuca. As I grated yuca, some of the leaders' daughters recounted to me that their chickens, a fundamental source of nutrients for low-income families, experienced fewer illnesses on the homemade feed than the store-bought ones. Moreover, a daughter noted, making one's own feed was more economical. She added that, as a bonus, making feed every month brought together the entire family, or even neighbours, creating solidarity between community members.

Similarly, women sharing native, drought-resistant bean and maize seeds with one another is a means by which to ensure food for the family during drought times. More

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importantly, saving seeds is a form of resistance to cultural loss and to the market-driven seed companies, reflected in Colombia's recent seed laws (Silva Garzón and Gutiérrez Escobar 2020; Moreno 2016). One of the region's leading seed guardians showed me her stores of brilliantly multi-coloured maize seed, speaking with great affection and respect for the drought-resistant varieties she and her community had adapted to the extreme climate throughout decades. Each variety had a special culinary use in traditional foods (see Baumann 2021). She noted how *chicha*, a fermented drink from maize, is of great cultural importance. She and other women, she described, teach each other to make *chicha* the traditional way with native corn varieties.

Informed by Lugones' resisting ↔ oppressing concept, I understood that women's promotion of making *chicha* was not simply the production of a drink their families liked. Instead, I recognized both ongoing histories of oppression and a defiant resistance in the claiming of culture and identity. Making *chicha* was prohibited in the late 1940s as the government established laws ultimately benefiting large beer and soft-drink companies reliant on sugar and corn syrup. While large consumption of processed sugars has been linked to heightened rates of obesity and heart disease, *chicha*'s fermentation promotes helpful gut bacteria. Its nutritional importance then for low-income, marginalized rural residents complements its cultural significance. I now understand such actions like creating gardens to feed families, exchanging native seeds and making *chicha* are quiet resistances that denote the importance of place, territory and identity. As such, they resist homogenizing laws that privilege corporate actors largely unconcerned with issues of identity and the importance of place in terms of seed adaptation or cultural culinary practices. For some communities in southern Tolima, Lugones might have adapted her statement, "Eating posole may be a resistant activity," (2003,

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168) to instead read, “Making *chicha* from traditional maize varieties may be a resistant activity.”

Throughout the eleven months I spent among Tolima women and the collectives fostered, we discussed the strategic importance of intimately linking practical skill development and community building for the creation of solidarity among women. One experience especially comes to mind in reflecting on the power of the collective within the resisting ↔ oppressing forces. First, one of the women leading many of the gatherings organized members of the community to finance and build a clay oven, traditional for rural kitchens, as well as a small fenced-in garden for a neighbouring family that was severely under-resourced. One Saturday, twenty of us arrived with all the materials and constructed the oven and garden, which would serve to bolster the nutrition of the family. The woman that had initiated the action was herself from a family with limited income. She told us, “We can only get stronger if those around us are strong.”

Without having thought with Lugones' streetwalker concepts, I might have read women's gatherings, making *chicha*, or building ovens simplistically as relational acts imbued with cultural traditions among neighbours. However, a feminist decolonial methodology equips me with a lens to understand such collectivity as complex actions motivated by various relationalities, including struggles against poverty, male household dominance and state disinvestment, as well as the power present in women's collective negotiations of identity, celebrations of their roles as those who nourish families, resistance to cultural loss and agroecological adaptation to climatic stresses and droughts. A *callejera* methodology offers a lens through which to engage in such gatherings and read them not dualistically as either acts of

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resistance or responses to oppression but instead perceive their entanglements in the interstices of resisting ↔ oppressing. In thinking through Lugones' essays, I am more attentive to daily practices as part of a dynamic process of navigating identities of indigeneity, experiences of womanhood and being *campesinx*. Such collective and personal negotiations occur in the context of colonial violence, ongoing disinvestment and fears of displacement from their land. Indeed, the daily efforts of caring for bodies and land in the face of more extractive development regimes, intertwined with a sense of identity rooted in territory additionally reflects decolonial concept of *cuero-territorio*.

It is in the negotiations of identity that a feminist decolonial framework may converse with an intersectional analytic, a complementing that has been the topic of debates in recent years (Belle 2020; Velez 2019). The fluidity inherent in the tensions of resisting ↔ oppressing reflects the relationality “both/and” in intersectionality (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016, 28), in which power relations and social inequality interact or intermesh with negotiations of identity. Thinking through an intersectional analytic with a feminist decolonial framework in the context of Tolima enables me to understand that being Indigenous or *campesina* means different things to different women in various communities. I am better equipped to appreciate the relational efforts to negotiate identities and experiences of womanhood in relation to historic and ongoing colonial violence tied to various axes of domination and material access to land and resource (Simpson 2017; Tuck and Yang 2012).

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The Collective

Second, Lugones (2003) challenges scholars to attend to the collective in addition to individuals. Lugones sketches *callejera* theorizing as moving from an understanding of individuals to an engagement with the social that is “dispersed, more complex, multiple, interactive, uncertain and necessarily engaged” (2003, 208). A methodology attuned to the collective requires of us a lens of “sustained intersubjective attention” (Lugones 2003, 170), while “hanging out [which] permits one to learn, to listen, to transmit information, to participate in communicative creations, to gauge possibilities, to have a sense of the directions of intentionality, [and] to gain social depth” (ibid., 161). Attention to a collective’s fluid representations allows the *callejera* to attune to, for example, relational beliefs about an issue, how a collective might influence social ideas through relational pressure. In other moments, that attention perceives how certain people’s participation might shift relational dynamics and then asks why and how such relational shifts occur. The collective is not static but continually shifts and (re)creates itself depending on the context and people present. Knowing the collective requires the *callejera*’s sustained presence in varied and multiple social spaces. Ethnographic methods demand such presence. However, thinking of the collective requires a fine tuning of attention to how the collective represents itself and to its inner struggles. To understand representations, conflicts and movements of the collective requires observing closely what is said but even more the intonations, actions, omissions among various groups in many spaces in order to capture relational differences.

I find Lugones’ writing about the collective to perhaps be the one aspect of a *callejera* methodology that most challenges the techniques of my methodological training. I have been trained to interview individuals, active subjects. I have been trained to look for cross-cutting

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themes and use of language across tens of such interviews. I have also been trained in participant observation, to be present in spaces, in agricultural fields and kitchens, to listen and observe tensions and conflicts in conversations between individuals. But to know the collective requires different methodological tactics. As opposed to methods of key informant interviews or individual surveys, a study of the collective shifts the methodological lens towards relationships. As a result, a significant part of my participant observation is now in group settings. Instead of interviewing or working with key informants, to study the collective, I choose key collectives and follow their interactions across various social spaces.

For example, part of my broader research agenda is to understand shifting dynamics of local food systems and livelihoods in relation to rural infrastructure development. For many southern Tolima Indigenous communities, the topic of agrobiodiversity, or the human-environment relationships surrounding food production, occupies a place of great cultural importance. Much traditional scholarship on agrobiodiversity quantifies seed counts, varieties conserved on the farm, or analyses institutional rules. Yet a *callejera* methodology, through attuning to the collective, encouraged a deeper questioning of the social relationships of agrobiodiversity. Instead of crop counts, I started attending to which collectives spoke of agrobiodiversity, what relationships promoted it. I spent time with and between nongovernmental organizations, Indigenous communities, national Indigenous organizations and local women's groups to better understand what agrobiodiversity meant for each collective. Through hanging out and intersubjective attention to these relationships (Lugones 2003), I understood that agrobiodiversity functioned not only as a production system, but held profoundly symbolic relational power for some collectives in southern Tolima, reflecting fears of cultural

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loss, land dispossession and alienation from resources (Baumann 2021). The collective influences and informs the decisions of individual active subjects, shaping larger relational dynamics including resistance against dominant power regimes. Lugones emphasizes that only through knowing and interacting with the collective can one perceive the depth and complexity of the social. I am starting to see where the collective is located for different people in various contexts, how it changes, its divergences and conflicts, where it finds harmony and inspiration, where it stagnates and stalls in action.

Additionally, knowing and being among a collective reshapes my understanding of participant observation. Within the cultural context of the Tolima collectives in which I participate, silence and observation is not appropriate. By attuning to relational dynamics in the collectives, I have learned that my presence requires that I speak and engage as fully as possible. In contrast to ethnographic research conducted as a passive observer, in one of my first collective gatherings a Colombian colleague told me, “If you are here you must speak, you must contribute.” I know this is not true for all collectives, cultures or forms of participation for a U.S. ‘outsider’ researcher. Yet I offer this reflection as a note of how attention to the relationality within collectives has reshaped my own practice of research and relating. By shifting ethnographic methods to place myself in spaces of collective relationality, I am better able to learn how knowledge is relationally formed and realized across different worlds.

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Informal Coalitional Work: Tantear en la Oscuridad

Finally, a *callejera* methodology prioritizes coalitional work. I am strongly drawn to and directed by Lugones' (2003) description of relational work as a process of “*tantear en la oscuridad*” (to move tentatively through the darkness) (2003, 180). As a contextual translation, *tantear* is to walk in the dark with our hands in front of us, inevitably bumping into and groping for the unknown, a sensorial embodied engagement that is not neat and orderly. Certainly, *tantear* is hesitant, but for me the verb implies for me a directed initiative, an active process of movement. *Tantear* is also signals a material, bodily engagement. I think about waking in the middle of the night to get a glass of water. I think of feeling my way through the dark and almost always running into a dresser or bed frame. I often bruise my shins. Lugones' word choice of *tantear* reminds us that coalition building requires that we engage our self-differences and others' in such a way that is, by nature, uncomfortable and often relationally messy, in order to “become with” as Mariana Ortega (2016, 146) writes, ever in movement as a collective against oppression (Moraga 1997; Ramírez 2017). The work of *tanteando* in coalitional work requires a deeply relational vulnerability as each person enters an unknown in relation to others in coalition (Cahuas 2021, this volume).

A *callejera* methodology is carefully attuned to the relational interactions of coalition building and makes visible sometimes informal coalitional work that *tantea en la oscuridad*. Many other South Asian, Latinx and Black among other feminist and anticolonial scholars have long discussed the power and creativity resultant from building coalitions (Alcoff 2011; Lorde 1984; Nagar 2014; Sandoval 1990). Frequently, coalition building is understood to be a more formalized relational exchange regarding differences and “the relational nature of those

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differences” (Brown 1992, 298; Reagon 1998; Keating 2005). Yet engaging a feminist decolonial methodology has allowed me to see the coalitional work achieved in informal relational moments and to be conscientious of the sometimes-messy process. I offer a few reflections.

When I first visited southern Tolima, I accompanied a Colombian colleague that has worked and conducted research with communities there for decades. Over lunch in a market hall he told me, “We must take care to support the social movements in the communities here, but to understand, too, that their fights are not ours. We are not from these communities, we do not live here, but we can offer important data and tools to strengthen their efforts based on what they tell us they need.” His words have stuck with me throughout the past five years, and in some sense, started the process of *tanteando* for me. While it is true that the struggles for land and water access enlist all of us, there are real, practical distances in space and impossibilities understanding of connection to the territory (*territorio*), that merit reflection and respect of differences. Lugones' writings have provided rich concepts through which to wrestle with such disconnects. I have aimed to support Tolima communities as my colleague described. I designed my research program based on various collectives' concerns about soil health, land access and seed sovereignty. More importantly, I have formed relationships with women that have opened continual opportunities to discuss our self-differences in how we understand our identities as women, our cultural differences and the different contexts in which we live.

In line with groping in the dark, the process of *tanteando* through doing research in communities not my own has also been imperfect (Sundberg 2003; Bulbeck 2010). Certainly, there are imperfections in doing cross-cultural research and many of these are tied to the power

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dynamics inherent in the relationships I have as a person from the United States. Colombian colleagues and I have had difficult conversations to clarify misunderstandings over expectations and timelines. Structural demands of working within a university require me to spend the majority of my time in the U.S., which can make continuous collaboration trying as so much coalitional planning and relational connecting occurs while sharing a coffee or *chicha*.

Reproduction of these dynamics is inevitable and merits ongoing attention and effort. Lugones' essay "On Complex Communication" and concept of *tantear en la oscuridad* provide language useful for me in reflections and discussions of the ongoing process of relational work.

In addition to self-reflection of the messiness of relational-based research, *tantear en la oscuridad* permits me to understand informal exchanges as coalition building for communities. I offer one final anecdote. Due to decades of guerrilla and paramilitary violence that closed transit routes, residents in southern Tolima have long been alienated from other regions. Highways were closed between Tolima and neighbouring departments. The strict control of mountain roads by guerrilla organizations effectively alienated families that had previously regularly travelled between the upper and lower Magdalena watersheds. In October 2018, during one of the agrobiodiversity collective's gatherings in which I participated, a group of *campesino* farmers from a high-altitude mountain community visited an Indigenous Pijao community in Tolima. The gathering was the first time the communities had met since the Peace Accord, or the official end of the conflict between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The regions were discussing their differences and knowing one another after decades of forced separation.

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A *callejera* methodology enabled me to understand these exchanges as moments of informal coalitional work, leading to important relational building between regions, parts of watersheds and between families. In addition to valuing the more informal exchanges as coalition building, a feminist decolonial lens makes legible the significance of the relational transformation occurring in such moments across identities tied to place, indigeneity and *campesino* ways of life. Importantly, geography also equips me to attend to how landscape spaces feature both as factors of difference as well as pathways for relational connection, facilitating coalitional work.

Moving Forward

In this intervention, I examine three tenets of feminist decolonial thought specifically drawn from three essays authored by María Lugones. I ask how closer attention to resisting ↔ oppressing, the collective and engagement with ongoing messy, hesitant (*tantear*) processes of coalition building might drive a *callejera* feminist decolonial methodology and transform the relational possibilities of a life and research praxis. My anecdotes of recent field research undertaken among various Colombian collectives are meant to offer reflections on the practice, imperfect and ongoing, of a *callejera* feminist decolonial methodology within the contexts through which I move. A streetwalker position as a researcher demands a commitment to sustained presence, attention, sharing, solidarity, regular and deep reflexivity and messy relationality. Feminist decolonial theory offers many suggestions for those of us engaged in research away from home and, if taken seriously, urge us to reimagine and then practice, through productive discomfort, relating through, within and across the colonial difference.

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Importantly, the anecdotes offered here suggest that geography may bring to decolonial theory insights into the importance of place, spatial and temporal scalar analyses, landscapes and human relationships with the environment. Using intersectionality as an analytic and feminist decolonial theory as a framework, geographers' scholarship of the contextual and relational differences of indigeneity may extend decolonial engagements with the importance of place (Cresswell 2014; Massey 1994). Geographic research highlights the differing textures in relationships and landscapes, emphasizing that regions are important and small-scale actions and relationships have meanings that defy broader, categorical metanarratives.

I continue to look for the fluidity in resisting ↔ oppressing relationships and design research approaches that better allow more space and time for intersubjective attention to such nuance among collectives. I know that research as praxis will always be an imperfect, ongoing process in my life that includes significant groping through the darkness [*tanteando*]. A *callejera* methodology demands sustained time among collectives, moving between spaces with collectives and coming to know the streets and their resistances and oppressions by “hanging out” in them (Lugones 2003, 178). When read for methodological insights, Lugones' essays echo the work of many feminist thinkers in pushing me to use research as coalition building. What relational power could emerge from encounters within research and what could be healed or transformed? Feminist decolonial thinking offers geographers tools to deepen relationality for the contexts of our lives and research and reminds us that our “responsibility is maximal” (Lugones 2006, 755) for deep coalitional, relational engagements.

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