An Indecent Pedagogy: Marcella Althaus-Reid Leading Theology Out of The Closet Through Indecent Theology

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Resumen
A través de la Teología Indecente, Marcella Althaus-Reid contribuyó a la liberación a través de la educación o la pedagogía como una «guía». Debido a la forma en que Althaus-Reid nos saca del armario de los marcos sociales y teológicos opresivos, este artículo sostiene que su trabajo es simultáneamente teológico y pedagógico. Las nociones de pedagogía de Paulo Freire proporcionan un marco teórico adecuado para el análisis. La lectura de la Teología indecente de Althaus-Reid a través del trabajo de Freire proporciona una comprensión recontextualizada de su teoría pedagógica, permitiendo así emerger la praxis teológica y pedagógica liberadora de la Teología Indecente. Concluye que, a través de una apreciación más profunda de la naturaleza liberadora de la Teología Indecente de Althaus-Reid, su trabajo es una Pedagogía Indecente.

Palabras clave: Pedagogía, Teología Indecente, Opresión, Liberación.

Resumo
Por meio da Teologia Indecente, Marcella Althaus-Reid contribuiu para a libertação por meio da educação ou da pedagogia como uma «líderanza». Devido ao modo como Althaus-Reid nos conduz para fora do armário de estruturas sociais e teológicas opressivas, este artigo argumenta que seu trabalho é simultaneamente teológico e pedagógico. As noções de Paulo Freire sobre pedagogia fornecem um quadro teórico adequado para a análise. Ler a Teologia indecente de Althaus-Reid através da obra de Freire fornece uma compreensão re-contextualizada de sua teoria pedagógica. Assim, permite o surgimento da práxis teológica e pedagógica libertadora da Teologia Indecente. Conclui que, por meio de uma apreciação mais profunda da natureza libertadora da Teologia Indecente de Althaus-Reid, seu trabalho é uma Pedagogia Indecente.

Abstract

Through Indecent Theology, Marcella Althaus-Reid contributed to liberation through education or pedagogy as a «leading out.» Because of the way that Althaus-Reid leads us out of the closet of oppressive social and theological frameworks, this article argues that her work is simultaneously theological and pedagogical. Paulo Freire’s notions on pedagogy provide an apt theoretical framework for the analysis. Reading Althaus-Reid’s Indecent Theology through Freire’s work provides a re-contextualized understanding of his pedagogical theory. Thus, allowing the liberatory theological and pedagogical praxis of Indecent Theology to emerge. It concludes that —through a deeper appreciation of Althaus-Reid’s Indecent Theology’s liberatory nature— her work is an Indecent Pedagogy.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Indecent Theology, Oppression, Liberation.

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Introduction

Our perception of the world is shaped in part by our knowledge, which is sometimes more and sometimes less accurate with respect to our present lived experience. Some knowledge is so deeply embedded that we may no longer even recognize it as a construction itself — to use an analogy, if we are inside of a building, we are not likely to give much thought to what materials were used in building the foundation. There has to be some reason that we confront the framework. One moment when this might happen is if there is some problem with the foundation. In terms of knowledge, we might recognize a problem with our knowledge when our knowledge conflicts with our experience of living. An experience of contradiction.

In some instances, our knowledge is so deeply taken for granted that we may not ever speak it directly or explicitly, but we can know it by its fruits — that is, in the ways we think, behave, and structure our societal systems and institutions. And then there is knowledge that is explicitly held as sacred or divine. When it comes to a contradiction between lived experience and knowledge that is regarded as having been spoken from the mouth of G-d, or is otherwise held as sacred knowledge, this can add to the level of disturbance in the experience of contradiction and conflict.

Much of our knowledge is so complex as to form internalized systems, which are both reflective of and productive in the construction of the social systems and institutions of our external context. These internalized systems of knowledge come to build upon one another and rely on one another. In confronting contradictions between lived experience and knowledge that is more deeply embedded in the complexity of our worldview and self-understanding, we may be surprised at what we find, and what we have been missing.
In her work, *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender and Politics* (2000b), Marcella Althaus-Reid draws out into our immediate consciousness the sexuality, sexual implications and constructs that are communicated through theological discourses. Through doing Indecent Theology, Althaus-Reid puts into practice the art of «indecenting» theological thought, addressing both the taken for granted theories of sexuality that are inherent within systematic and liberation theologies, and also the sexuality which is repressed or excluded from the theological universe of her contemporaries and forerunners.

Althaus-Reid seeks to articulate the way that the sexual assumptions in theology reflect, invest in and profit from political and economic institutions and social systems. Through deconstructing sexual theories and ideology in theology, Althaus-Reid troubles the sexual theories and ideologies which are formative of and in some ways foundational to oppressive economic and political systems. By transforming theology toward liberation, the impact that theology makes in broader society will be transformed as well, thus participating in some way in the liberatory transformation of society. Liberation here meaning a dismantling, or disarming of and freedom from internal and external forces of oppression.

In fact, Althaus-Reid (2000b) says that more than even G-d,

... theology is still desperately clinging to what gives it an ultimate sense of coherence and tradition [...] a theory of sexuality. To challenge God is not as indecent as to challenge the sexuality of theology. Sexual idealism pervades theology, including Theology of Liberation (p. 22).

Because of this pervasion of sexual idealism, theologies, including systematic and Latin American Liberation Theology, often fall prey to taking these hegemonically embedded sexual ideals for granted as a starting place, instead of starting
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orthopraxically at the place of material reality, even if that material reality is «indecent.» In Althaus-Reid’s work (2000b), drawing from Judith Butler and Adrienne Rich’s scholarship, as well as the works of Wendy Holloway, Julia Kristeva, and Simone de Beauvoir, she defines sexuality as «a site of bodily and emotional preferences which defines a sexual and/or gender identity» (p. 109).

Indecent Theology addresses sexuality as it is articulated in theologies and as it is expressed and lived in society. Indecent Theology begins in the material experience of «bodily and emotional preferences,» the human experience and expression of sexuality and sexual relationships. Althaus-Reid’s Indecent Theology is an expression of theology emerging from her understanding of sexuality beginning in the lives of people living theology in Buenos Aires, in particular women poor, and this Indecent Theology is also a prophetic call for change in the way economics, politics and social institutions function in her context and beyond. She is Indecenting Theology and at the same time participating in the destabilization of oppressive social systems, working toward a different structure, or perhaps toward an «Indecent» way of living and working that does not require the kind of static, concrete stability that dominating power requires.

Through Indecent Theology, Althaus-Reid is stepping out and leading out toward liberation, in the sense of education or pedagogy as being a «leading out.» Indecent Theology involves recognition of the interconnectedness of theology, politics and economy; the making problematic and deconstruction of patriarchal hetero-normative sexuality; the articulation of Indecent Theological knowledge and praxis; and consideration of how the praxis of Indecent Theology might nurture ongoing liberation in society more broadly.
Because of the way that Althaus-Reid leads us out of the closet of oppressive social and theological frameworks, I argue that her work is pedagogical as well as theological, and that Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2018 [1970]) provides an illuminating theoretical framework through which the liberatory theological and pedagogical praxis of Indecent Theology is brought into distinct relief.

**Althaus-Reid in dialogue with Freire**

Three key concepts that Freire defines in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2018 [1970]) are at work in Althaus-Reid’s approach to Indecent Theology, those being (a) dialogical problem-posing, (b) conscientização and (c) cultural action or cultural revolution. Reading Althaus-Reid’s *Indecent Theology* (2000b) with Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2018 [1970]) provides a re-contextualized understanding of Freire’s pedagogical theory; leads to a deeper appreciation of the liberatory nature of Althaus-Reid’s Indecent theology; offers insight into her contribution to theology; and recognizes the ways that Indecent Theology is also an Indecent Pedagogy.

**Dialogical Problem-Posing**

The first concept that Freire is perhaps most well-known for in the United States is dialogical problem-posing education, most often defined in contrast to banking education. In dialogical education, the teacher-student does not present the student-teacher with a prepared ideological construction or explanation of the universe, but first investigates peoples’ self-revelations of their worldview through dialogue. Then the teacher will «“re-present” that universe to the people from whom she or he first received it- and “re-present” it not as a lecture, but as a problem» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 109).
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Not only was Freire re-presenting the world of the people to them through his work, but his dialogue and interactions with the people also formed his pedagogical theory. He did not write *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and then do the work, but through reflection and action developed the teaching theory and practice through a dialogical approach.

For dialogical engagement, Freire (2018 [1970]) understands,

> [t]he starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people. Utilizing certain basic contradictions, we must pose this existential, concrete, present situation to the people as a problem which challenges them and requires a response — not just at the intellectual level, but at the level of action (pp. 95-96).

Whereas a banking approach denies history as a living process and suppresses the historicity of human beings, «problem-posing theory and practice take the people’s historicity as their starting point» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 84). Likewise, Althaus-Reid (2000b) writes that «the everyday lives of people always provide us with a starting point for a process of doing a contextual theology without exclusions, in this case without the exclusion of sexuality struggling in the midst of misery» (p. 4).

Starting with people’s life experiences and sexual stories, she articulates Indecent Theology in dialogue. Through this dialogue, Indecent Theology is created, and this dialogue also allows for the exposure and confrontation of contradictions between lived experience and people’s knowledge and worldviews. This leads to *conscientização*, to be discussed later in this essay, the emergence from false consciousness and then taking action.
Althaus-Reid grew up a woman poor in Argentina and knows the worldview of the women with whom she writes. She knows that they «can tell you a few things about postmodernism [...]. Perhaps they have not heard of Liberation Theology but they know about the end of the Grand Meta-narrative, and not from reading Lyotard» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 3). The Bible of the people is not necessarily the Biblical text but «there is another Bible, that which has been created by five hundred years of Christianity in the continent. This is the Bible of popular proverbs and selected images» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 130). Freire (2018 [1970]) writes about learning the generative themes of the people — the themes, concepts and images that generate their worldview, their self-understanding, their self-understanding in relation to the world and their understanding of the world.

The largely orally shared and remembered Bible of the people that Althaus-Reid describes is part of understanding the worldview and theology of the people. Althaus-Reid is with and of the women poor, and then is moving into the revolutionary leadership position that is neither dominator or dominated. Here I understand Althaus-Reid’s subjectivity in terms of Freire’s explanation of revolutionary leadership in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*:

Domination, by its very nature, requires only a dominant pole and a dominated pole in antithetical contradiction; revolutionary liberation, which attempts to resolve this contradiction, implies the existence not only of these poles but also of a leadership group which emerges during this attempt. This leadership group either identifies itself with the oppressed state of the people, or it is not revolutionary. To simply think about the people, as the dominators do, without any self-giving in that thought, to fail to think with the people, is a sure way to cease being revolutionary leaders (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 132).
Althaus-Reid enters into the contradictions between the lives of the women poor and the world as presented through colonial Christian theology, and through this dialogical relationship emerges Indecent Theology.

The bringing to consciousness of contradictions is found in the process of doing Indecent Theology. Althaus-Reid (2000b) writes that:

Every discourse of religious and political authority hides under its skirts suppressed knowledge in exile, which is marginal and indirect speech. This is knowledge which people dictate through religious and political counter symbols and mythological contradictions of the official versions. Indecent Theology is therefore made of these contradictions and contradictums, and a transgression which is a regression, a going backwards to some struggle or primary resistance to the discourses of religious power, not to a beginning of sexual resistance fixed in time, but to the several openings which were suppressed or calmed down in the process of the hegemonisation of meaning (p. 20).

Having been not only with the women but of the women poor herself, Althaus-Reid (2000b) has exhumed the generative themes, articulates what has been the «subversion of sexual and gender codes in their lives as a result of their struggle for life and dignity» (p. 5). This Indecent Theology is emerging with indebtedness to and also reaching beyond, or perhaps is reaching more deeply within Latin American Liberation Theology in the way that Althaus-Reid (2000b) brings out to the forefront the «hidden worker» who has «produced that discourse» of liberation because, as she writes, «[d]iscourses of liberation have a value which comes not from their textual force, but from the realm of human activity, that is, from the rebellious people» (p. 21).
In their way of life, and way of being human, the women poor of Buenos Aires live the praxis of breaking the codes of life that are dictated by dominating, Western colonial definitions of morality, womanhood, and personhood more broadly. And as Freire (2018 [1970]) writes, this exhuming and articulating of generative themes is «not an attempt to learn about the people, but to come to know with them the reality which challenges them» (p. 110, footnote 23).

Althaus-Reid re-articulates —or, in the Freirian sense, represents— the theological praxis of the people, and she also is participating in this theological praxis. In so doing they are creating theological discourse that includes the excluded, that takes up what Althaus-Reid (2000a) has called «excessive sex». She writes that «unless there is excess in God too, we women cannot be represented» (Althaus-Reid, 2000a: 219). Althaus-Reid (2000b) confronts liberationists and Latin American Liberation Theology on this point, questioning why they «re-presented» the lives of the poor to United States publishing houses and the Western theological marketplace instead of working to «change the production of theology.» She further asks: «Where were the new institutions to train poor women and give them theological degrees?» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 35).

**Conscientização**

A second key concept in Freire’s work is conscientização, wherein people learn «to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 35, footnote 1). Some who challenge Freire state that conscientização will lead to anarchy or disorder — and some «however, confess: Why deny it? I was afraid of freedom. I am no longer afraid!» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 35). Perceiving contradictions in the present social order does lead to a disordering, at least disordering relative to the present order. And
why do we necessarily fear an anarchic or even somewhat anarchic society except that our imaginations are limited by the present order?

Instead of seeking after the ordered coherence that is sought after by «[D]ecent theologies,» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 24) and in light of an argument for a Marxist understanding of the theological marketplace, Althaus-Reid process differently. She suggests the possibility of «an aleatory theology, which works from contingency and encounters, instead of a teleological theology which implies idealism»1 (Navarro, 1988: 33 as cited in Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 29). Perhaps there is some kind of anarchy wherein society, and theologies, might be guided by aleatory relations rather than by oppressive hierarchy or telos, where we might experience the kind of collaboration and relationship that challenges our imagination when we are so deeply embedded in oppressively structured hierarchical power systems.

To reflect further on the conscientização of Indecent Theology, I will turn to Althaus-Reid’s critique of the conscientization project that Latin American liberation theologians pursued in seeking to find, for example, the liberatory aspects of Marian theology. In so doing, Althaus-Reid (2000b) exposes how an investment in Marian Theology as it has been defined is an investment in what she describes as «Vanilla Theology which cannot question more than the approved script on women and Christianity in the continent,» (p. 52) which is inevitably also going to be an investment in patriarchal violence and economic oppression. Althaus-Reid (2000b) later writes that «Vanilla Theology is the realm of the decisions made for us by others, like Sexual Systemic Theology» (p. 89).

1 Althaus-Reid (2000b) is considering an aleatory theology in terms of Althusser’s «presentation of aleatory Marxism» (p. 29).
Desire is repressed or denied, and our sexual options are dictated to us dogmatically from above. This is a sexuality in service, not to our pleasure or for the nurturing of our self and our relationships, but to the economic and political well-being of dominating power. In performing this critique of Marian theology, I understand Althaus-Reid (2000b) as furthering what Freire calls conscientização, seeking to undo the restrictive and oppressive «Marian false consciousness in Latin America,» (p. 40) which is particularly significant in Latin America because of the level of investment in Marian faith and the influence that Marian faith has in politics.

Althaus-Reid has pointed out how this constructed Mary is related to the Western construction of Indians or Indios. Those concepts were superimposed upon indigenous people of what became called Latin America, the deconstruction of which «unmasks the oppressive role of the foreign religion of Christianity in the continent and keeps endorsing women with boundaries, aspirations and ideals which are imperialist in nature and ideological in method» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 42).

Marian faith and the symbolics of Mary in Latin America often serve capitalist, colonial ends, and maintain the sexualities and definitions of personhood defined by those hierarchical social systems. One clear example of the mis-fit of Mary to the lives of real women is the way that Mary is a virgin while many poor women in Latin America are not only not virgin, but have had to endure the violence of rape or sell their sex through prostitution (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 49). That is only one example of the way that Mariology creates a false consciousness which is an oppressive cloak suffocating a consciousness that might emerge out of the actual lives lived by Latin American women. Later in her discussion of Guadalupana, Althaus-Reid (2000b) states explicitly the life or death implications of this false consciousness, wherein «theology has got away with murder by naturalisation. By naturalising a closeted heterosexuality and not allowing the sexual
imagination of religious symbols to identify with sexual reality, theology has missed the point of religious imagination» (p. 62).

The rules of decency and indecency in society create conditions for people to be exploited, abused, and murdered. That is because the rules of decency and indecency are not dictated by humane standards but by standards set to serve hierarchical power systems like patriarchy and capitalism. To the extent that theology stays «decent,» it does not confront the inhumanity of these rules and societal constructs.

Another striking example of conscientização in Althaus-Reid’s work is her attention to fetishism. She develops that though in a section of her book called «Black Leather: Doing Theology in Corsetlaced Boots» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 148-151). Where systematic theology has not likely addressed the fetishization of God in Jesus, or the fetishizing of Mary in the virginal conception story, Althaus-Reid makes explicit how the fetishist epistemology structuring these stories is the same as the epistemology of sexual fetishism. Part of the point being that sexual fetishism is excluded from theology because it does not fit the patriarchal heterosexual matrix of systematic theology even as it shares epistemological premises. This example is both pedagogical and an act of conscientização in that Althaus-Reid is exposing the contradiction of the exclusion of sexual fetishism when in fact sexual fetishism has much insight to offer to theological thought.

**Cultural Action, Cultural Revolution**

The third and final concept that I will discuss from Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is cultural action or cultural revolution. That concept can be understood as both a means toward and a result of conscientização. Freire (2018 [1970]) describes cultural invasion as,
the ends of conquest and the preservation of oppression, always involves a parochial view of reality, a static perception of the world, and the imposition of one world view upon another. It implies the ‘superiority’ of the invader and the ‘inferiority’ of those who are invaded, as well as the imposition of values by the former, who possess the latter and are afraid of losing them (p. 160).

The Conquista [the conquest] is a Latin American experience of cultural invasion. Cultural action or cultural revolution, on the other hand, brings oppressed people and communities together in unity. It contributes «to clarify to the oppressed the objective situation which binds them to the oppressors, visible or not» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 175). As peoples and cultures vary, «the methods used to achieve the unity of the oppressed will depend on the latter’s historical and existential experience within the social structure» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 175). Indecent Theology is more than a move toward liberatory cultural action or cultural revolution. Because Indecent Theology starts from the material reality of people, and is dialogical in that it is an expression of the people who are making sense of theology through the praxis of their lives — doing Indecent Theology is doing the work of cultural revolution.

Althaus-Reid writes about how Cultural Liberation Theology produced theologies about culture and Christianity, and did so without necessarily addressing the deeper roots of oppression by capitalism and patriarchy that continued to be formative of cultures and theologies. These systems of oppression not only oppress the people but also the cultures of people. Namely, culture includes language, stories, rituals, and other aspects of human expressiveness and human means of being in relationship with each other and the world. Without addressing and uprooting the depth of oppressive systems, cultures are deformed by them. In other words, the culture nurtured and structured by oppressive systems tends to be a culture in service to those systems and to
those who profit most from those systems. It does not becomes a culture for the sake of the nurturing and growth of humanity, for liberation. Freire (2018 [1970]) writes:

[d]ialogical cultural action [...] aims, rather, at surmounting the antagonistic contradictions of the social structure, thereby achieving the liberation of human beings. Antidialogical cultural action, on the other hand, aims at mythicizing such contradictions, thereby hoping to avoid (or hinder insofar as possible) the radical transformation of reality. Antidialogical action explicitly or implicitly aims to preserve, within the social structure, situations which favor its own agents (p. 179).

To do Indecent Theology is to get at these roots of contradictions between theology and life. Thus, Indecent praxis is aiming to surmount these contradictions, toward a theology that reflects «the authentic relation between the Subject and objective reality,» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 173) toward the liberation of peoples and cultures.

Althaus-Reid makes an Indecent Theological argument in suggesting that if Jesus was friends with sinners and prostitutes, he also had sinner and prostitute in himself. This challenges the imagination of Jesus as going and preaching at or to or for these communities, and instead recognizing Jesus as being of these communities. Jesus participated in the culture of these communities, was formed and informed by the people with whom he invested his time and being.

Indecent Theology is not just for the books, but has cultural implications today. For instance, the way that we recognize and know Jesus has implications for the way we live our faith: «a Bi/Christ gives us food for thought in terms of church organisation and strategies for community transformation, breaking down monopolistic economic and affective relationships» (Althaus-Reid,
The way we understand people is interwoven with the relationships we have with people in our world, the way we live our theology, ministry, or other work.

Culture in Argentina—and elsewhere, including the United States—has been shaped by patriarchy and other political and economic systems. Uprooting these systems entails challenging oppression as well as remaking culture. Althaus-Reid (2000b) writes that she has,

been a poor woman myself and I dreamed of warm clothes for my mother during winter, and nutritious meals for me and my family. But I also dreamt of having an education, a vocation in life to be a priest, and I dreamt of justice, love and lust in my life (p. 134).

Althaus-Reid’s dreams exceeded the cultural expectations of a poor woman living in Buenos Aires, where the expectations are restricted by patriarchal gender roles and family structures in service to capitalism. To do Indecent Theology is to reflect and also to live out of the closet, breathing new life into culture as well as into theological discourse.

Indecent Theology also questions the culture of marriage, which in Christianity has theologically defined people as property. Althaus-Reid (2000b) suggests the framework of amigovio, a concept in Argentina that is a «transitional category of relationship which usually involves sex, but also a sense of friendship which trespasses beyond the heterosexual patterns of friendship in Argentina» (p. 144). That concept offers one possibility as far as the way the culture of marriage might be revised to more humanely reflect the way people relate with one another when the imposition of patriarchal heterosexuality is removed.

In Latin America, Western theology destroyed indigenous Latin American Meta-narratives and part of Althaus-Reid’s work is recovering aspects of these Meta-narratives while deconstructing
patriarchal heterosexist constructs in indigenous systems as well as in western capitalism. She writes that Christianity created superfluous needs for Latin Americans such as «redemption» and «salvation» in a Christian framework, and that these needs and desires became intertwined with political struggles. Over time,

[...] national identities became entangled with a mixture of Christian patriarchalism and their own heterosexual cultural ideologies [...] . It is obvious that the developmental crisis cannot be sorted if we remain in the terrain of the heterosexual ideology which sustains capitalism and Christianity, although we must recognise also that there is a patriarchal substratum in the ‘gift economy’ system, as used for instance in Paraguay, or in any other form of economy and/or religious exchange (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 174).

She emphasizes that deconstructing these systems is not destroying them but is a cultural project toward the construction of a «per/verted Sexual Theology for social change» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 174). Here we can recognize Freire’s concept of cultural revolution.

Another particularly inspiring idea of cultural revolution toward social change is the concept of «Collocation Community,» which Althaus-Reid draws from Italian feminist thought. Althaus-Reid (2000b) affirms that Collocation Community,

refers to the community of women who engage in dialogue outside the boundaries of time and space and allows us to relate to the experience and struggle of women in other times, past, present or even future — in the future of a dreamed utopia — and from different geographical contexts (p. 203, footnote 1).
She suggests the potential of Collocation Community in telling the story of a Wamue, a woman from Kenya who was widowed, and the way her community excluded and exploited her according to social systems structuring the treatment of women in general and widows in particular. Althaus-Reid (2000b) writes that just as dominating systems which impose themselves globally on cultures and peoples require solidarity, had Wamue had the support of women in her community, or the strength of solidarity from people anywhere in the world, «the breakthrough of decentralisation could become a praxis in people’s everyday life, then it would be revolutionary» (p. 191).

The patterns of cultural revolution do not necessarily hold to the same political, social or cultural boundaries that are imposed by patriarchal, capitalist hierarchies. The notion of Collocation Community opens our imaginations to what possibilities of solidarity and praxis this concept of culture might hold.

**Conclusion**

Indecent Theology is pedagogical in that Althaus-Reid advocates starting at the point of historical reality and leads us out of our closets. She not only contributes for the personal liberation of being able to come out with our sexuality, but also for the way that coming out Indecently in theology destabilizes and deconstructs patriarchal hetero-normative sexuality. For centuries that patriarchal hetero-normative sexuality has been is integral to Systematic and Latin American Liberation Theologies. It has also been foundational to dominating and oppressive political and economic systems and institutions in society more broadly.

Taking our historicity as starting point might already be an act of resistance or rebellion in the United States to the extent that U.S. national ideology promotes the U.S. as a place to cut ties with history and start anew. Forgetting, or more often mis-
remembering or selectively remembering history, becomes an oppressive impediment to joining the collaborative global efforts toward shared liberation.

While we may not escape ideology, that is, ideas about reality, rather than having a comprehensive and absolute understanding of reality, I think that we can collectively reach ideological formations which more accurately reflect our reality and our identity within that reality. In other words, we can reach closer to «the authentic relation between the Subject and objective reality» (Freire, 2018 [1970]: 173) than hegemonic or dominating ideologies typically allow. In so doing, we can break down the internal barrier of false consciousness.

Coming out of our closets means shedding the ideological framework, habitus and dictates of capitalism and patriarchy masking as morality. Indecent Theology is pedagogical in the way that Althaus-Reid leads us and compels us to live out of the closet, while deconstructing and decolonizing frames of mind and habits of living that have been constructed dogmatically and enforced in service to patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism. Althaus-Reid suggests that all of us will be liberated if we can recognize that «[d]eep in our hearts, we are all ‘Queer Nation’ needing to come out and denounce that human beings live and love according to reality, and not Christian indexes on morals» (Althaus-Reid, 2000b: 120).

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