

Decolonizing Sport and Exercise Psychology Within a European Context

A Critical Overview

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Abstract

Until recently, sport and exercise psychologists have been researching acculturation and its relation with sport and exercise through a lens of universalism and (post)positivism. Using such ontological and epistemological assumptions, researchers have been preoccupied with finding linear patterns that predict the behaviours of immigrants in their new environments without much consideration to historical, sociopolitical and cultural contexts (Chirkov, 2009a). Acculturation, however, is a changing process that is extended over time and revolves within and around specific historical, political and cultural contexts. Considerations from post/anti/decolonial studies maintain that through the western eyes, race and ethnicity have become synonymous for non-white people who have been positioned as different and lesser than their white counterparts (Butryn, 2009). Western scholarship has continued to place this ‘cultural other’ in the margins of the society and in constant need of intervention. Despite a call for rethinking the epistemological understanding of the acculturation and its relation to sport and exercise (Chirkov, 2009b; Ryba & Schinke, 2009), European and Scandinavias sport and exercise psychology has remained unchallenged territory for the most part. This critical overview is a call for decolonizing the knowledge and scholarship within sport and exercise psychology by utilizing transformative approaches that centralize the voices of the cultural ‘other’ and treat them as active agents in the process of knowledge production.

Keywords: integration, acculturation, anticolonial research, immigration, multicultural, othering, critical sport psychology, cultural sport psychology

From the vantage point of a Middle Eastern immigrant woman, “a position I choose to privilege” (Smith, 2012, p.1) and write from, I have been the direct product, consumer, reproducer and critic of the dominant public and academic discourse regarding non-Western diaspora, and in particular the Middle East. As a Middle Eastern person living in Europe and North America, I have witnessed how Western hegemonic discourses have become a familiar site where our most intimate relationships with ourselves, our families, our histories and our cultures are constantly questioned, investigated, translated and legislated by the media, legislators and academia (Smith, 1999; Young, 2003). Sport and physical activity scholarship has been especially important in (re)producing problematic stereotypes about us – the ethnic and ‘cultural other’ – and our bodies, “as well as [providing] a surface-level analysis that [has] mostly failed to critically interrogate the political implications of being an ‘outsider’ within the inequitable, able-bodied, gendered” (Ratna & Samie, 2018, p. 23) and Eurocentric fields of sport and physical activity. In order to address this important issue at this critical time, firstly, I would like to address the researchers in my field of study, sport and exercise psychology, and their role in reproducing and maintaining certain social inequalities pertaining to marginalized ethnic groups and immigrants within a European context. Secondly, I aim to emphasize the need for an increase in ‘decolonial’ scholarship that critically tackles the traditional epistemological understandings of sport and exercise psychology by centring the world views of ‘cultural others’ and treating them as active agents in the process of knowledge production. Thirdly, I intend to offer two approaches that can operate within decolonial frameworks to address these goals. The following is meant to be a critical overview of the above-mentioned concepts within Europe; therefore, in accordance with recommendations of Grant and Booth (2009) and their guidelines regarding a critical overview, I will only highlight European studies that have examined acculturation of migrants and ‘cultural others’ within the field of sport and exercise psychology that have been published in the last decade.

Framework

In order to define decolonial thought and decolonizing methodologies, I will first discuss colonization. Definitions of colonization vary across contexts and sites; in some cases it represents marked political and economic hierarchies, in others the production of certain discourses about visible ethnic groups and non-Western cultures; and yet, in other contexts it could refer to the appropriation of imagery, creations and ways of knowing of certain populations while rejecting the very same people who fostered those ideas (Smith, 1999; Sugawara & Nikaido, 2014). What I wish to address here is the application of the latter two denotations by academics, which has contributed to the creation of a ‘cultural other’ – a constructed homogenic group that is culturized, problematized and ‘othered’, in ways that are radically different to and less than its white counterparts (Eliassi, 2015; Ratna & Samie, 2018). Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) whose ideas inspired the title and my opening statement, emphasized that the taken-for-granted belief that academic research is inherently a noble profession is a problematic concept that has made adverse and harmful effects of research, and the existing inequalities within it, invisible. She further argued that many researchers embodying this ideal, have simply assumed that their work is ethical and will benefit humankind regardless of means and implications of their research for the communities involved (Smith, 1999). Sport and exercise psychology researchers have not been immune to such practices. University-based (Western) sport and exercise psychologists coming from positions of power and authority, have entered vulnerable communities, particularly communities of the ‘cultural other’ (i.e. Indigenous and immigrant communities), often without active consultation and reflections of the members of these communities (Blodgett, 2015; Smith, 1999). As a result, the knowledge produced by such means has tended to focus on negative social issues that debilitates the members of the community, ‘othering’ them further in the process (Forsyth & Heine, 2010). Additionally, many recommendations, interventions or theories that have been produced in this way do not give any legitimacy to the thoughts, world views and the agency of the people they are meant to influence. Reflections of Paulo Freire (1970/2005, p. 65) articulate this point eloquently:

Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must

be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated.

It is important to note that criticism of normative ways of research within the field of sport and exercise psychology, particularly when researching ethnicity and culture, has been continuously present (see for example Duda & Allison, 1990; Ryba & Wright, 2005). Duda and Allison (1990) argued that viewing culture and cultural identity as simple categorical variables reflective of ethnicity not only diminishes the experiences of ethnic groups, but also results in biased and distorted understandings of the human condition within these contexts. Subsequently, inspired by feminist scholarship, researchers have increasingly criticized the Eurocentrism of sport psychology scholarship and advocated a multidisciplinary approach of ‘cultural praxis’ that combines theory and practice and engages sociocultural as well as social justice themes (Ryba & Schinke, 2009; Ryba & Wright, 2005). As a result of such work, cultural sport psychology (CSP) has been developed as a valuable branch that can advance the field beyond its universalist assumptions towards a discipline that is ethically and politically concerned with equity and social justice (Ryba & Wright, 2010; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009). Although CSP researchers are challenging the mainstream assumptions and working towards social justice, they are still few in numbers and their research for the most part continues to be within the framework of Western philosophies. Decolonial scholarship, on the other hand, entails contesting dominant (Western) academic paradigms as taken-for-granted approaches to research in order to actively transform not only the site but also the aspirations of knowledge production (Forsyth & Heine, 2010; Mignolo, 2009). This scholarship engages in knowledge-making processes to advance the cause of communities who are marked as ‘cultural other’ by questioning the underlying structures of research itself, from organization to dissemination (Forsyth & Heine, 2010; Mignolo, 2009). In this way, decolonial methodologies informed by local ways of thinking become praxis – action informed by reflection – embedded in the epistemologies of the ‘cultural other’ and the ways that people have generated and communicated knowledge historically and/or through their social relations and interactions with the world (Blodgett et al., 2013; Freire, 1970/2005; Smith, 1999). In such a way, voices from the margins can take the centre stage in the process of research and knowledge production, offsetting and transforming the structural power and uncontended ways of knowing while working towards community development and

rebuilding leadership from within the communities concurrently (Macdonald, 2012; Smith, 1999).

Against the backdrop of public debate relating to immigrants and the rise of populist ideologies in Europe and across the world, I highlight the importance of continuing to decolonize sport and exercise scholarship with the aim of centralizing the experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing of the people who are living the problematic realities that are at the centre of investigation as well as advancing critical perspectives on the dominant discourses. I will start by presenting and critiquing the current approaches and the knowledge that has been developed through their application in the field within a European context. Next, I will argue for decolonial approaches that can advance the current monolithic understandings about the ‘cultural other’ and produce critical scholarship that endeavours to value, reclaim and foreground the marginalized voices and epistemologies, transforming the site of knowledge production in the process.

Sport (exercise) and Acculturation Psychology

Sport (and later exercise) psychology emerged as an academic discipline in the 20th century (Ryba & Wright, 2005). In the early days of the discipline, despite having a variety of disciplinary orientations, most sport and exercise psychologists, seeking credibility, followed the well-travelled path of (post)positivism (i.e. rationalism, quantitative, neutrality, etc.). As a result, the research and knowledge that has been produced in this field is mostly quantitative as well as concerned with explaining and predicting athletic success (Ryba & Wright, 2005). Acculturation through and within sport and exercise/physical activity has not been an exception and the majority of sport psychology research in Europe (including my own earlier work) has employed cross-sectional sampling and linear models of acculturation (Berry, 1997) as a theoretical foundation (see Elbe et al., 2016; Hatzigeorgiadis, Morela, Elbe, Kouli, & Sanchez, 2013; Mashreghi, Dankers & Bunke, 2014; Morela, Hatzigeorgiadis, Kouli, Elbe, & Sanchez, 2013).

Berry and colleagues (Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Berry & Sam, 2013; Kunst et al., 2015), operating within a (post)positivist framework, which views social phenomena as compatible to natural phenomena (Chirkov, 2009a; Cresswell, 2013), formulated one

of the most prominent acculturation strategies models in psychology. Their model emphasizes the individuals' links to both their cultures of origin and their societies of settlement. These two dimensions overlap to create four categories of Separation and Marginalization, Assimilation and Integration. The model further explains that *separation* occurs when the individual values holding on to his or her original culture while involvement with others is avoided. *Marginalization* is ensued when neither cultural maintenance nor interaction with others is practiced. *Assimilation* happens when the individual has little interest in maintenance of his or her original culture and instead demonstrates a preference for interacting with the larger society, and *integration* exists when the individual has strong ties to both culture of origin and the larger society (Berry, 1997). Empirical evidence have also suggested that those with an integrative profile have the most effective psychological and socio-cultural adaptation outcomes, making integration an ultimate goal of an immigrant's acculturation strategy as well as the larger society's best adopted policy (Berry, 2016; Berry & Sam, 2013). As mentioned before, the majority of sport psychology acculturation studies implemented in Europe have used this model as a theoretical foundation. Here I will review some of this research.

Sport and Acculturation Research in Europe

Morela and colleagues (2013) investigated the relationship between team cohesion and acculturation of a group of youth participants who were first generation immigrants in Greece and engaged in team or individual sports. Their finding showed that participating in a sports setting with high team cohesion did not necessarily enhance integrative features of the acculturation model. It did however, have a negative relationship with feelings of marginalization and separation. Using the aforementioned parameters, my colleagues and I carried out a cross-sectional study in Sweden, where we investigated the relationship between acculturation and motivational environment of sports setting for adolescents (Mashreghi et al., 2014). Our findings suggested a relationship between non-competitive motivational climate and assimilation features of the model. In fact, in this study we observed a negative interaction effect between the non-competitive motivational climate and the ethnic belonging feature of the model. Interpreting this result within a Swedish con-

text, we suggested that students in this sample were more comfortable with assimilation features of the model rather than seeing and accepting ethnicity in themselves and in others. We argued that such perceptions run the danger of leading to further marginalization of more visible minority groups.

In a third study, Elbe and colleagues (2016) investigated young first-generation migrant athletes in Spain and Greece (with countries of origin located in Latin America and Eastern Europe respectively). The participants in Spain played in migrants-only teams while the participants in Greece were members of mixed teams which consisted predominantly of ethnic Greek players. The participants in Greece who were members of mixed teams scored much higher in either feeling marginalized or assimilated whereas the participants in Spain who were members of Latin American only teams illustrated a more integrative acculturation profile. The authors explained that this may be due to the societal context since migrant communities in Spain were more established in comparison to migrant communities in Greece. Once again non-competitive motivational climate was inversely correlated with integrative features of the model, suggesting that motivational climate within the sports contexts did not necessary enhance integration but rather may have aided in prevention of marginalization and separation. The participants in the above studies did not experience acculturation in homogeneous and linear fashions. Moreover, contrary to the political claims of integration, the sport environment (and possibly the wider society as well) were more assimilatory in practice. The presence of high feelings of assimilation alongside high feelings of marginalization demonstrated by the migrant youth in the Greek case (Elbe et al., 2016) problematizes these assimilatory practices. It is possible to assume that such practices can be beneficial to certain members of the migrant society that perhaps do not demonstrate visible markers of difference but it can simultaneously be harmful to others who fail to assimilate due to having those visible markers of difference.

Bearing in mind that the objectives of research within a (post)positivist framework is to predict behaviours and yield irrefutable correlations, the conflicting findings of these studies and the inability of the model to perform as it was assumed, underlined fundamental issues with this acculturation model that may reflect other psychological or socio-political factors. Consequently, in a position stand paper in *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* (IJSEP), Ryba, Schinke, Stambulova and Elbe (2018) concluded that both quantitative and qualitative research in

sport psychology have depicted a non-linear process of acculturation that intersect with the socio-political environment, culture and ethnicity; and sport and exercise psychologists need to investigate beyond the linear models of acculturation.

The conclusion drawn by Ryba and colleagues (2018) is also reflected in the findings of numerous acculturation psychologists who have scrutinized Berry's model of acculturation on various grounds (see Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Chirkov, 2009b; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). One of the criticisms has been the model's universalist perspective which asserts the same two acculturation processes and the same four acculturation strategies describe all migrants alike – notwithstanding the type of migrant, countries of origin and settlement and the ethnicity of the individuals and groups. Moreover, as Bhatia and Ram (2009) further elucidated, Berry's model has failed to consider the issues of historical and current conflict and power, and has implicitly assumed that the two cultures in question have equal status. Despite Berry's (2016) later contentions regarding the required presence of equity as a precondition for full integration, his model of acculturation is founded on the assumption of equity of all cultures (Chirkov, 2009b) which, I believe, is rarely (if ever) the case in the current (or historical) contexts, especially considering the privileged position of Euro-American world views and the power they exert in the contemporary socio-political world. Another criticism has been the linearity that is implicit in the model, according to which integration strategy is an optimal end-goal. However, the experience of acculturation is far from a simple linear journey (Chirkov, 2009b). Thus, acculturation, from a critical perspective, is a changing process that is extended over time and revolves within and around specific historical, political, sociological and cultural contexts (Chirkov, 2009a). Acculturation scholarship, therefore, needs to consider and reflect on these issues.

Cultural sport psychology

In light of the above-mentioned critiques, a previously sporadic criticism on over-representation and centralization of Euro-American knowledge in sport settings, as well as in acculturation psychology, has gained momentum (Blodgett et al., 2008; Butryn, 2009; Ryba & Wright, 2005; Schinke et al., 2010; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009). Over the last decade, sport and exercise psychologists, especially within North America, have

criticized the research and theories produced in the field, stating that despite the greater presence of the ‘cultural other’ within the field of sport, either culture has rarely been discussed, or it has been presented as a categorical grouping in studies (Blodgett, 2015). Responding to this criticism, scholars in the discipline have developed the field of cultural sport psychology (CSP) as a critically reflexive and contextually informed line of inquiry that contemplates contextual and cultural influences on the lived experiences of individuals and the meaning-making processes within the context of sport (and to some extent exercise) (Blodgett, 2015; Ryba & Wright, 2010; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2009).

Positioning their work within cultural sport psychology and building upon the work of feminist and indigenous researchers, Ryba and Schinke (2009) scrutinized the conventional methodology of Western scholarship, highlighting its ritualized Eurocentrism, a process through which Euro-American perspectives and methods have become the only legitimate and valid frameworks of knowledge. They stated that despite the marginalized groups’ objections to the hegemonic knowledge claims and presence of sophisticated frameworks of knowledge in the margins, the mainstream knowledge base in sport psychology has continued to be a Euro-American construction, established through ritualized (formal education in mainstream universities) methodologies that have imposed hetero-Euro-centered strategies across all populations and cultures (Ryba & Schinke, 2009). They, therefore, advocated the use of cultural praxis through “an active and reflexive process of blending theory, lived culture and social action” (Ryba & Schinke, 2009, p.266), with the aim of cultivating sport psychology scholarship that intersects with sociocultural difference, power and ethics, and facilitates a contextual understanding of marginalized voices.

CSP, though embraced more fully in North America, is still in its early stages in Europe, especially within the acculturation arena (see Ronkainen, Khomutova, & Ryba, 2017; Ryba, 2017; Ryba, Stambulova, & Ronkainen, 2016). Ryba, Stambulova and Ronkainen (2016) examined life stories of 15 transnational professional and semi-professional athletes (including one black and one mixed-race athlete) to understand the developmental dynamics of cultural transition and psychological mechanisms that assisted athletic career adaptability. Their findings provided rich stories that highlighted the intense feelings of loss, excitement and hope involved in migration experiences of professional athletes, as well as underlined the host countries’ organizational shortcomings in address-

ing the challenges of elite athletes' mobility and migration. In a second study, Ronkainen, Khotumova and Ryba (2017) examined the life stories of two athletes who migrated to a different country for work and family reasons. Their findings highlighted the open-ended path of acculturation and the importance of multiple relational and belonging contexts in the process. Despite the non-normative ways in which these two studies interrogated acculturation in sporting contexts, they did not fully engage in critical and decolonial paradigms so as to move the dialogue beyond explanatory discussions and into more transformative work. The above studies, for example, did not engage in analysis of psychosocial or racial – as it relates to whiteness studies – differences between the individual migrant athletes and how those differences might affect their acculturation processes. One example of such a difference could be the effects of historical racialization (and colonization) on internalized belief systems (as described by Fanon, 1965/2001) of the European and African athletes as well as their coaches and teammates, and the ways in which this effected their acculturation strategies. Moreover, as evidenced by articles reviewed in this paper, CSP research has been developed within the realm of professional or semi-professional sport and have not yet made any progress in areas of physical activity and exercise.

Considering this body of knowledge in sport and exercise psychology, the need for more critical scholarship pertaining to the 'cultural other' within a European context is evident. In spite of the rapidly growing field of CSP, approaches related to (post)positivist, assimilation, Eurocentric perspectives still linger on in the scholarship of the field. Even though acculturation studies within the framework of CSP have contested the normative discourse on understanding psychological processes as autonomous, by leaving socio-political and whiteness discussions unacknowledged, the research within CSP runs the risk of becoming complicit in the perpetuation of power inequalities and the (re)production of problematic stereotypes about the 'cultural other' (Butryn, 2009; Ratna & Samie, 2018). This is where decolonizing thought and methodologies can offer a different point of departure for researching sport and exercise and their relationship with acculturation.

Decolonizing praxis

As I outlined in the introduction, decolonizing methodologies are first and foremost political projects that intend to transform the site of knowledge rather than merely challenge or reform it (Smith, 1999). They do not revolve around incorporating the ‘cultural other’ in recognizable (and colonial) structures and their point of departure is not the current mainstream institutions of knowledge. Rather they are grounded in epistemic disobedience, which works to transform those same institutions and their underlying taken-for-granted ways of conducting, producing and disseminating knowledge. Concurrently, decolonial research aims to work for the revitalization of peoples who have been historically marginalized and denied their full humanity (Mignolo, 2009; Smith, 1999). Methodologies informed by decolonial thought become praxis that can empower people and communities to tell their stories in their own ways, acknowledging their collective histories and struggles as well as reclaiming their own ways of knowledge production and dissemination (Freire, 1970/2005; Smith, 1999). When researching acculturation in and through sport and physical activity, decolonial praxis can offer deep insights into the needs, interests and lived experiences of individuals who are deemed ‘cultural other’, insights that come from within the communities and highlight the invisible and deep-seated barriers that exist in relation to acculturation and integration strategies. Such scholarship can actively contribute to the development of both communities’ and individuals’ psychosocial well-being by shifting the focus to the needs and experiences of the ‘cultural other’, while also transforming the process of research, its assumptions, ethics and outcomes (Freire, 1970/2005; Smith, 1999). In this way, decolonial praxis can contribute in ways that are meaningful and ethical to the individuals’ acculturation as well as to the academia and acculturation psychology research.

Sport (Exercise) Psychology and Decolonizing Research

As mentioned in the previous section, a number of sport and exercise psychologists, especially in North America have taken up the notion of praxis, arguing for an active and reflexive process of blending theory, lived culture and social action, thus prompting a cultural turn in sport

and exercise psychology (Blodgett et al., 2013, 2008; Blodgett, Schinke, Peltier, et al., 2011; Ryba & Schinke, 2009; Schinke & McGannon, 2014). Working with communities seen as the ‘cultural other’, namely Aboriginal and immigrant communities, these scholars have employed research processes that are in line with the communities’ needs and interests. Employing innovative and culturally relevant methodologies (participatory, art-based and narrative methods), Blodgett and colleagues endeavoured to obtain deeper understandings of the process of relocation and acculturation for the Aboriginal athletes who participated in their study. They argued for the use of Indigenous methodologies as a way to advance past the culturally exclusive practices of traditional sport psychology research (Blodgett et al., 2013; Blodgett, Schinke, Smith, et al., 2011). Not only have these projects made visible the structural and systemic racialized practices in Euro-American (Canadian) contexts, they have also illustrated the nuanced and fluid process of acculturation, showing that it is not a finite process; it can re-emerge again and every time a new practice is encountered (Schinke & McGannon, 2014). Moreover, these studies have drawn their conclusions from within the marginalized groups through the use of meaningful methodologies which aimed not to exploit the individuals’ knowledge or invade their subjectivities (Blodgett, Schinke, Peltier, et al., 2011). As these examples illustrate, decolonial praxis is employed through various approaches and methods. A thorough discussion regarding the specifics of such approaches is outside of this article’s limits. A brief overview of two of these approaches, namely participatory action research (PAR) and art-based research (ABR), will have to suffice.

Participatory Action Research and Art-Based Research as Decolonial Praxis

The PAR approach moves the investigation from a linear cause and effect analysis to a participatory dialogical agenda that reflects the context of people’s lives through transformative cycles of acting and reflecting (Dimitriadis, 2010; Iisahunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013). It is research that is conducted ‘by’ and ‘with’ the communities rather than ‘on’ and ‘for’ them. PAR is decolonial in its origins and stems from the struggles of South American peasants and Indigenous peoples in the face of colonial and post-colonial practices in that region. A central notion in PAR is the idea of praxis, action informed by thought and reflection, which

is created in the process of dialogue between subjects as co-investigators of a problematic reality (Freire, 1970/2005). Through PAR, cultural sport and exercise psychology researchers can open up a space for critical, multi-cultural and multi-versal dialogue about knowledge that extends and moves outside of the ivory tower of academia and its well-intentioned academics. Via this critical space, opened up in the process of PAR, individuals (both researchers and community members) can learn about complex histories and consequences of certain discourses as well as their own psychological and social attitudes and behaviours; they can begin to re-imagine and denaturalize taken-for-granted realities of their personal and social worlds and start generating and implementing ways of contesting such realities based on the knowledge accumulated through this reflective and critical inquiry (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Dimitriadis, 2010).

Art-Based Research (ABR), which despite being culturally relevant has been particularly underrepresented in acculturation studies of sport and physical activity psychology, is another approach that, when used within a decolonial framework, can work to develop and strengthen the ‘cultural other’ communities and ways of knowing. In his pivotal work, *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1978/2003) highlighted one of the prominent features of the modern social science tradition in relation to the world of ‘cultural others’ as the “singular avoidance of literature” (p. 291) in favour of overemphasizing the facts and statistics. He argued that in this way modern social science has reduced and dehumanized the peoples and the regions in question to statistics and trends. He further contended that since ‘cultural other’ poets or novelists write of their experiences, ideals and humanities, they effectively unsettle the Western representation of their world and their peoples (Said, 1978/2003). I would extend this disrupting characteristic to all works of art, making art-based research a powerful tool that can centralize the marginal voices and revitalize their culture, language and ways of knowledge production. In many cases, such modes of inquiry are also epistemologically and methodologically aligned with the peoples and cultures in question and embrace local ways of thinking and being (Blodgett et al., 2013; Smith, 2012). This especially holds true in the field of sport, exercise and physical activity where the (non)moving bodies, their expressions and (non)performance are the centre of our inquiry. PAR and ABR in sport and exercise psychology have the potential to become decolonizing approaches that (co)produce knowledge from within and by the traditionally marginalized commun-

ities, benefiting the development and revitalization of those communities while working to challenge and transform the mainstream ways of research which reflect Eurocentric biases of those who have historically dominated academia.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper, I have reviewed and exposed various representations of the ‘cultural other’ within the field of sport psychology in order to “work against colonial discourses that further plunge us into hierarchical and binary juxtaposition” (Samie, 2017, p. 53) and situate the ‘cultural other’ as different and/or less than their Western counterparts. With the development of CSP, psychological knowledge about the ‘cultural others and their relationship to sport and physical activity has undeniably developed in the last two decades. Nonetheless, the European scholarship within sport and exercise psychology, particularly in relation to acculturation studies, is still lagging behind; in Europe, Eurocentric beliefs and constructions have managed to predominate and direct academia and research within this field. Guided by Western epistemology, this scholarship have further disconnected the communities from their histories and culture, and devaluing their knowledge and ways of knowing in the process (Fanon, 2001; Smith, 1999). Therefore, now, more than ever, sport and exercise/physical activity psychology researchers, particularly in Europe, need to critically re-examine the ritual of their knowledge production and utilize other ways of knowing that do not reproduce the same patterns of social inequalities that are being researched, other ways of knowing that are drawn from ‘within’ and ‘by’ the communities themselves and therefore are congruent with the peoples’ values and epistemologies. PAR and ABR, within decolonial frameworks, are but two such examples that offer great potentials for reclaiming values and epistemologies that have been eroded historically in the course of Western university-based research. In this way sport and exercise psychology researchers can work towards development and revitalization of marginalized communities and restore their humanity.

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