INDIGENOUS EPISTEMIC DISOBEDIENCE AT THE BOUNDARIES OF MODERN POLITICS

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Abstract: Drawing on insights from decolonial studies, the paper problematizes the eurocentric character of IR theories, specially their modern categorizations of knowledge linked with the subjective process inaugurated by the nation-state. State sovereignty is read as an ability to establish specific forms of discrimination, since it incorporates a set of assertions about temporality and history enabling the lines that constitute the Other, and specially the “self” in the exercise of politics. Through these lenses, the paper will question the universal political ontology promoted by classical thinkers such as Hobbes, which creates a world where identity is prior to otherness, and stability to tranformation. Drawing on authors such as Walter Mignolo, the paper suggests that the re-articulation of the indigenous nations, like in Bolívia, provide a rich space for reviewing the traditional equation “one nation, one state”. In this sense, it investigates the extent to which the indigenous epistemic disobedience in relation to the subjectivity and sociability specific to the state’s operation could represent a fracture on a classical political theory, and a possible recognition of other practices of politics, other types of social bond, other distributions of power, of the universal and the particular, and finally, other image of thought.

Keywords: Eurocentrism; Indigenous Peoples; Postcolonialism; International Relations.

Introduction

According to a sociological perspective, political theory constitutes a system of social relations, in which the intellectual perspective, to erect itself, interacts with an economic system and power structures of social groups historically located (ASHCRAFT, 1981). This perspective, while positioning the theoretical production as public discourse provided with a framework of shared meanings, opposes its reduction to a kind of universal consciousness, in which the theoretical would represent a unit divorced from the context of collective life.

Thus, the role of academia is resumed as a historical and social entity, whose activity (re)produces power structures and, not unusually, political constraints. On this track, emerge debates about epistemic spheres of domination (and resistance), which have diverse inspiration, now resuming thinkers like Foucault, Marx, etc., and then stressing non-

1 The authors record here our gratitude to colleagues Xaman Korai P. Minillo and João Nackle Urt for dialogue and support in accomplishment of the work.
European traditions. The so called postcolonial theories\textsuperscript{2} are inserted in this movement emphasizing the reflection on identities that are historically created and marginalized in the process of political theorizing. Although plural in its conceptual and philosophical filiations, postcolonial strands share a critical position towards the set of subjects and silenced Histories in the process of expansion of the modern narratives\textsuperscript{3}.

Under this horizon, in the field of International Relations, issues emerge around the cosmological cell in which knowledge production operates, in order to verify their effects on the composition of subjects and interpretations of the field. In parallel, the goal of this paper is inserted in the debate on such impacts on the organization of political life and its meanings, expressing an analytical perspective towards the discipline of International Relations (IR) and its principles. Therefore, investigating contemporary international politics, we will look at its meaning structures recorded in the works of great thinkers such as Hobbes. This exercise seeks to understand the structure of conceptual responses that the discipline’s mainstream offers to the delimitations of otherness and subjectivities in politics, in order to interpret some of its potentials and its limits against contemporary signs.

As Walker suggests, we argue that such categorical landmarks of hegemonic thinking in IR are able to authorize

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\textsuperscript{2} The postcolonial perspective employed in the current paper is widely understood. That is because from inside such perspective emerge others, such as the decolonial approach. Adopting such umbrella category aims at favoring the debate among different ideas sensitive to the consequences of colonialism and its links with modern thought. As suggests Ballestrin, “even non linear, disciplined, and articulated, the postcolonial argument in all its historical, temporal, geographic, and disciplinary width, perceived the colonial difference and interceded on behalf of the colonized” (2013, p. 91). Some are the premises that inform the adherence of this paper to postcolonialism: the discursivity of the social, the decentering of contemporary narratives and subjects, the criticism to modern essentialisms and conceptions (COSTA, 2006 apud BALLESTRIN, 2013, p. 90). Although, two reservations about the use of the word postcolonial should be listed, which will not be explored in depth in the present paper, but might contribute to future analyses: 1) the first problematizes the prefix “post”, which points to a linear constitution of these theories, given that it signifies an advancement, a passage from a previous colonial world to a subsequent/superior postcolonial context. The “post” in postcolonialism does not emphasize enough the continuation of many forms of advanced colonialism in the contemporary world (BEIER, 2002), notably against indigenous peoples worldwide. To sum it up with recourse to an indigenous voice: “Postcolonialism? Have they left?” (SMITH, 1999) about the use of Postcolonialism to understand the Latin-American reality, there is the reservation presented by Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, which worries about “Uncritical transfer of ideas and interpretations, marked by their original contexts, acquire public life, hence political, in other situations” (2000, p. 3, our translation). With those words, the anthropologist stresses the importance of noting the regional and timely differences among the processes of (post)colonialism, as well as building a critical narrative tuned with local reality, and establish heteroglossic dialogue with other speeches of the globalized world.

\textsuperscript{3} Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) mentions the sociology of absences, which would be the process by which the monocultural rationality of Eurocentric thinking treats the experiences and knowledges produced outside the Western milestone as nonexistent; or, stereotyping them as inferior.
a complex structuring of points/moments (of origin, of centralized authority and of ending), lines (as boundaries of sociocultural cohesion, as borders of secured identity, as limits of legal authority and as trajectories of future possibility) and planes (of political space, place and territory, of scalar levels and structural ruptures) all framed against a world that is ultimately excluded but also included on specifically modern terms (WALKER, 2010, p.14)

Therefore, an intellectual exercise on the subject cannot escape the analysis of its classical theoretical structures and its key-concepts. Among these pillars, we will emphasize the concept of the political, in its modern sense. In this scope, we will pay attention specifically to the principle of national sovereignty by understanding it as a cartographic exercise capable of delineating the lines that demarcate the (im)possibilities of political life, including the externalities that constitute the international. From this perspective, sovereignty is read through its ability to establish specific forms of discrimination, creating statements “about temporality and history enabling constitutive discriminations between those who belong within the world of the modern international and those who do not” (WALKER, 2010, p.100).

Thus, catalyzing the process through which the subject-citizen and the national population are born; and in the external environment, that articulates the society of nations (the International), sovereignty establishes boundaries of time, otherness and subjectivity. From such discrimination, follows the idea that the boundaries established by the solipsistic principle of state sovereignty imply central problematics to the field of IR, related to the difficulty of opening for (and recognizing) plurality.

In philosophical context, it is argued that such national matrix captured the political within the limits of individualization and citizenship of society and makes politics a violent practice, private and closed to alternative ways of life. As Dussel pointed out, modern thinking has totalitarianism as a normative key, through which it rejects all that exhausts its identity standards:

“the thinking that takes refuge in the center ends up thinking it as the only reality. Outside its borders is non-being, nothingness, barbarism, non-sense. Being is the

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4 Such an undertaking on politics is associated with the three concepts or processes of subjectification considered pillars of the modern world – the modern man, the modern state and the modern international system – within which the tension between the particular and the universal in space and time is negotiated (WALKER, 2010).
Simultaneously, it is argued that the traditional political perspective of International Relations, while epigone of the modern tradition, reproduces such foundation and, not infrequently, resists the undisciplined existence of alterity by silencing it. Therefore, to demonstrate the ambivalences, contradictions and the use of force that accompany this legacy of modernity becomes the main goal of the first topic devoted to clarifying the process of subordination implied in categorical landmarks of the modern Western thought, focused specifically on Hobbes.

Through the eyes of this research, such an exercise, although still incipient, ascends even more pressingly because of the crises affecting the existing system. As Giovanni Alves and David Harvey (2012) argue, the 2011 civil demonstrations against the social, economic and financial crisis that reached the core of global capitalism since 2008 unveil not only a material failure of the system, but also a crisis of thought. This crisis, in the case of Europe, cradle of Western Enlightenment, takes the form of an intellectual and moral dramatic bankruptcy (ALVES 2012, p.35).

In this space, other life forms, before systematically excluded by the modern world, emerge as not only real alternatives to the capitalist economic system itself but to the civilizing cultural landmark of modernity (BAUTISTA S., 2014). Therefore, in the second part of this article, we propose to search for a "new politics", investigated from community-based indigenous knowledges and experiences.

Community policy refers to a horizon of meaning that indigenous political praxis has been implicitly insisting throughout his entry into the political system in force. Irruption that is no longer simple resistance but establishes a decisive step in resistance movements: it is a move from resistance to transformation. This step makes it possible to devise a transformation process from the actual content of the policy (BAUTISTA S., 2014, p.25)

We argue, therefore, that the indigenous worldview of millenary origin expresses an epistemological rupture with the West as it counters universalizing, monotheism, Eurocentrism and homogeneity as a life system (MACAS, 2010). Thus, as we shall see from

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5 The translation of this citation, as all others were made by the authors.
the political projects underway in some regions, like in Bolivia, the lesson of the Amerindian ontologies comes to demonstrate that multiplicity, not duality, represents the real alternative to unity (CASTRO, verbal information).

The path followed here to disentangle, even timidly, form the Eurocentric colonialist scientific practice refers to the adoption of interlocutors close to the reality to be accessed. Accordingly, in the second part, Latin American and indigenous writings, absent in the bibliographical references cited in the field of IR writings are resumed. Moreover, knowledges transmitted by the subjects of collective action are projected in these lines. We caution, however, that the indigenous is not taken in this work as The solution of modern problems or in defense of an idyllic time proposed by a reverse teleology. We expect to reflect on how indigenous experiences and knowledges assist in understanding the absences of modern theoretical discourses adopted by traditional theories of International Relations and, above all, how they can contribute with elements for change.

**In the boundaries of modern politics**

“The best way to teach something is not defining it, but exposing it (...) Indeed, it is a disassembly that epistemologically, shows itself as condition for a new assembly”

(BAUTISTA S., 2014, p.21)

As Bautista S. (2014) suggested, for us to move from decolonization as rhetoric to decolonization as a methodological criterion, is necessary to initiate a process of systematic "dismantling" of the political, to then rebuild it from new bases. In this perspective, both moments are not atomized stages, instead express phases of the same movement, which “co-determine themselves from a transcendental locus” (ibid., p.22)

Therefore, this first stage we will critically discuss what is established as closed totality, in order to expose the colonial character of modern political theory, whose manifestation opens space for rethinking it from another understanding horizon and, therefore, release. In the specific field of IR, as suggested by Walker (2010), the confrontation between

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modern forms of politics – simultaneously centralized within individual subjects of state sovereignty and the international state system – and the world offers us a propitious direction to identify the difficulties that the theories in this field have to confront the role of new movements and political actors.

Thus, our investigation goes back, firstly, to the narrative that conventionally is tied to the genesis of the modern period associated with the solipsistic principle *cogito ergo sum* (TOULMIN, 1992), which establishes the individual as a central element of political representations. As Bautista S. (2014) put it, the process of modern subjectivity that pervades Europe, implied the construction of an ego that

will secularize for itself determinations that constituted the medieval God; that is, the process of subjectification of an individual who had never possessed such power and wealth (as offered by the new world) will not only catapult his superiority but his fetishization. For only the being that does not have any determination, beside himself, is one who develops “experience into his consciousness” as an absolute and universal experience; and may, because he did not owe anything to anyone, constitute the world, reality, and the gods, its image and likeness (p. 85)

Therefore, the centrality of the anthropocentric process is revealed in moving from medieval life to modern philosophy. This which, according to Macas (2010), will lead to a civilizatory matrix sustained by Cartesian separation between man and nature, by the privatization and commodification of resources, and by processes of instrumentalization and technicization of subjectivities. As a result, we would have a worldview that would act on the margins of the world, but submerged in modern reason.

In epistemological terms, this subjectivist centeredness prevailed until the end of the twentieth century in much of the research in the field of IR, whose intellectual debates experienced a kind of theoretical monism, revered by the hegemony of epistemological rationalism and positivist methodology\(^7\). In the context of ontological politics, such a legacy is highlighted by the influence of the liberal philosophical tradition, bounded by the theory of social action centered on individualism and rational calculation of interests.

\(^7\) According to studies conducted by Steve Smith (1996), such positivist scientific criteria are particularized by the methodical naturalist commitment – geared towards social regularities –, although they do not deny the explanatory component of the theory. This posture approaches the review conducted by theorists such as Ernest Nagel, Carl Hempel and Karl Popper, who eased the extreme tone of the logical positivists, becoming, in the words of Smith (1996), the influences of larger scope in the IR literature since the 1950s.
The movement for the constitution of the notion of instrumental rationality refers to the dominant political philosophy in the seventeenth century, and incorporates the subjective characterizations of authors such as Hobbes and Adam Smith (CARVALHO, 2006). For them, the individual, experiencing an uncontrollable craving of desires in a context of scarcity adopts a posture of personal satisfaction through rational calculation of the consequences of each action for his particular benefit. In IR, much of traditional theory (neorealism and neoliberalism) will make use of this understanding of reason: a cognitive faculty focused on the instrumental calculation of costs and benefits involved in the decision making process or policy formulation.

The importation of the notion of instrumental rationality also responds to the demand of the behaviorist movement\(^8\) that reaches the field in the 1950s, representing the introduction of a mathematical abstraction model and a predictive determinism\(^9\). Therefore, the quest for scientific rigor implied theorization of a particular kind of subjectivity of the political actor, referring to processes of individualization under a competitive social teleology. The theory of action that unfolds from this context is based on the notion of competition as a mode of essential interaction, translating, philosophically, an opportunistic notion of man, and a Hobbesian worldview.

Given this last horizon, we highlight the specific contribution of Thomas Hobbes, taking him as one of the proponents of the notion of politics that establishes the boundaries of orthodox IR imagination, whose reflections will be buoyed by the notion of state domination. By analyzing the contract, from which the *Civitas* is born, we verify an act of invention capable of exterminating its constituent exclusions, distinguishing between us (inside) and the Other (outside) in the political exercise. Therefore, it is argued that the work "Leviathan"

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\(^8\) The authors Alker and Biersteker (1984) refer to the behavioral science model through an inclusive design. In this, they highlight the methodical commitments common to the supporters of such a model, such as: philosophical adherence to a neutral and objective view of reality, represented by methodical strategy guided by the construction of empirically testable hypotheses; or, in other words, an admiration for the logical and empirical rigor of the natural sciences, committed to the identification of objective, eternal and universal laws, and with a social management capacity, based on technical expertise. In IR, the behaviorist tradition would be represented by neorealist theories (e.g., Theory of International Politics, K. Waltz) and liberal-internationalist theories (e.g., Power and Interdependence, R. Keohane).

\(^9\) The assumption of self-interest becomes a predictable and stable support to build an objective theory of sociopolitical rationality. This because the vector solipsistic catalyzes the simplification of social action establishing fixed behavioral elements, increasing the possibility of anticipating the observed behavior. The understanding of a positive reality, from which only the substantive parameters are used, is compatible with the methodological positivist engagement linked to the depuration of empirical reality.
exposes a conceptual framework capable of simultaneously defining the time, otherness and modern subjectivities.

As pointed out by Professor Luiz Eduardo Soares (1995), the reflections proposed in that work translate an effort of ethical and political inspiration through which Hobbes seeks to answer the question of the legitimacy of political institutionality, seeking to provide meaning for new ways of life under its social context. It would have been as a result of these anxieties that Hobbes created “the conceptual myth that will reinvent politics for us, that will give meaning to the political adventure of modern man; or yet, that will make politics a significant adventure for the modern man” (SOARES, 1995, p. 24).

To draw this new meaning of politics around the state, Hobbes articulates three fundamental stratagems: the isolated and apolitical individual; the people, constituted as a political body; and society (societas), setting of private life and therefore distinct from participation in public life (LÉBRUN, 1984). These assumptions exert a central role in understanding the modern state, which, as Clastres explains, “is not the ministries, the Elysées, the White House, the Kremlin. [...] The state is the exercise of political power” (1978, p. 166, emphasis added). And how power is exercised? Through the individual and society who operate as subjectivity and sociality specific to the state functioning.

First we operate with the intrinsic link between the rise of individual man as basic element of state politics, and the emergence of centralized power as a tool for the order in the Civitas (BARBOSA, 2004). According to Soares (1995), the configuration of the contract arises form the invention of the universal subject, given the mention of individuality as an expression of human universality:

We are, therefore, faced by the foreshadowing, in the seventeenth century, of the conception of individual typical of main philosophical movement of the eighteenth century. In the Enlightenment perspective, as well as for Hobbes, the individual represents a topical realization of the essence that characterizes human nature, short of historical changes, cultural differences and psychological or moral specificities [...] They identify themselves as men because they are beings endowed with reason and attributes flowing from it (SOARES, 1995, p.38-39).

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10 In the thesis defended by Luiz Eduardo Soares, Thomas Hobbes is considered the interlocutor, explicit or not, of “the great authors who have dedicated themselves to think politics since the seventeenth century”; so that, in his view, “the reactions to Hobbes, in their multiple directions, assembled the modern political-intellectual constellations” (SOARES, 1995 p.22), including big names such as Rousseau and Kant. Thus, either by direct study of his writings, or through their epigones, the readings of Hobbes continue modeling strands of contemporary political thought.
Thus, contemporary to Descartes, Hobbesian thought will dialogue with the Cartesian system, depositing the basis for thinking the state, moral, society and politics, in modern reason, contrasting the naturalistic tradition. Elevated to the status of human spirit, the reason unifies and aggregates, converting “the chaotic and fragmentary flow of experience into cosmos, that is, in a comprehensible, predictable and controllable universe” (SOARES, 1995 p.39). In other words, endowed with reason\textsuperscript{11} and free from passions, man walks towards the civil state.

In these terms, citizenship presupposes the condition of equal men, forming a universalistic political ontology. In Hobbes, the universal is realized in the particular, and creates a world where identity is prior to otherness, the terms superior to relation, and form to inner transformation. In this sense, we note that in “Leviathan”, the study of atomized units does not consist in an end, but the starting point. That is, Hobbes updates a uni-verse (despite a multi-verse) without appealing to a multitude of intersecting agents. Thus, the membership of the Hobbesian universal subject narrative promotes closing on itself at the expense of openness to the Other.

Identity and difference arise as effects of the political game established by the contract, and act, at once, as the basis of social life and permanent source of tension and conflict. The myth of the Leviathan proposes the birth of a policy that craves putting an end on uncertainties, establishing sociability through the extermination of diversity. To this end, the integrating element of reason, which connects the individual to civil society, projects alterity (synthesized in the state of nature) abroad, or in the silence of the uniform world.

Therefore, the state of nature (otherness) becomes the opposite pole, but also constitutive of the sovereign identity of the state. In other words, before translating the cause or the effect of the political pact that originates the Leviathan, the state of nature in Hobbes operates as conditionality of state authority. Meanwhile, the original political act is responsible for creating an impenetrable boundary between the internal and external rules, between Us and Them, between stability and conflict. With this, alterity is understood as

\textsuperscript{11} “for Hobbes, reason is a calculation operation, with which we extract consequences of the names chosen to express and record our thoughts. It does not have substantial value, only formal; it does not reveal the essences, but puts in positions to draw the consequences from certain principles; is not the faculty by which we learn the evident truth of the first principles, but the faculty of reasoning.” (BOBBIO, 1991, p.105)
enmity and politics as the exercise of control and coercion, mediated hierarchical dichotomies (friend/enemy, citizen/alien, etc).

It is clear, therefore, that metaphysics implied in Hobbes’ thought develops through opposing and hierarchical pairs (reason being superior to emotion, the self to the other, sovereignty to anarchy, order to chaos, domestic to international, etc.), which require the exclusion of the supposedly inferior element, even though it is constituent of the dyad itself. As pointed out, this repressed Other works, at once, as a possibility and destabilizer of the dichotomy, and with this, the Cartesian divider expresses his binarism between universal and particular, form which arise from related pairs, such as body and mind, nature and culture, objective and subjective, physical and moral, among others.

Within these separations, Walker (2010) highlights Hobbes’ explanation that slips over an abstract consideration of time and space, related to the definition of a here and a now [inside/today]; that unfolds in an also fluid construction of externality: a there and a then [outside/before]. Thus, the concept of Leviathan spatializes time in order to control its deviant ways, and, thereby, legitimize the authority of the Civitas.

The idea of timing and spatial distribution of difference as central to modern thinking has been widely discussed by authors of postcolonial inspiration. As Chakrabarty (2008) explains, the state ontology projected in time invents a past (present in dualistic symbologies as despotic/constitutional; medieval/modern, feudal/capitalist), and creates the gap between the civilized world and the savages of the new world. Such separation revolves around the theme of historical transition, so that the invention of the myth of origin (the contract/state of nature) will serve as foundation for the hypothetical passage of natural (pre-modern) to the modern.

Alien to the unlimited manifestations of otherness, the contractualist speeches and their epigones on the international continue the colonial venture spurred since 1492 and the myths about savages in the New World, extracted from the imagination of Renaissance travelers (BEIER, 2002, p. 82; MCCLINTOCK 2010, p. 44). According to Beier,

The origins of these conceptual predispositions and of the neglect of Indigenous peoples can be traced to the travelogues of the first Europeans in the Americas, the enduring influence of which in social contractarian thought recommends their treatment as foundational texts of the social sciences. This view highlights the relevance for international relations of challenges raised against the veracity of these formative ethnographical accounts inasmuch as such re-evaluations simultaneously call into serious question some of the most fundamental ontological commitments of
Meanwhile, as Bautista S. (2014) argues, modern political theory emerges as an
contribution for ethical-political legitimation of Europe’s imperial action in Europe on the
new world. The ideas about the natural right of the individual\footnote{Before basing Locke’s and Hobbes’ texts, these ideas had been introduced by names such as Francisco de Vittoria and Francisco Suarez, who acted towards the European expropriation of aboriginal peoples (BAUTISTA S., 2014).} are justified by the
characterization of the world outside Europe as inferior or delayed, whose foundation is not
an empirical basis, but the European colonial experience portrayed in “travelogues”. Violence
earns, therefore, legitimacy, from the civilizatory function attributed to the European, in other
words, “the concealment of the victim and its consequent subsumption as available object,
will only be possible because of this naturalization of its “inferiority”, that is, its racialization”

To some extent, the establishment of this hierarchizing process in which the superior
subordinates the inferior in a relationship buoyed by violence is linked to a private
understanding of power, in which this becomes something to be owned by the exclusion of
the other (BAUTISTA, S, 2014). Thus, modern political theory conceptualizes power in a
negative sense, since it is conceived as the will-of-dominating, whose affirmation would
depend on the denial of another will, “the realization of its self is the un-realization of the
other” (ibid, p.75).

Such exclusion of the political agency is linked to the assembling of the economic
order and the State. Modernity and capitalism walk together (QUIJANO, 2005). The
exploitation of the new world gave conditions for the West to build its modernity, because it
promoted: the geopolitical opening of Europe towards the Atlantic, the invention of the
colonial system, the origin of capitalism (mercantile at first, of primary accumulation), and
the development of the World-System (DUSSEL, 2005). From that simultaneous (mutually
constituted) reality emerges the unequal place of the peripheral cultures, thus being the State a
mechanism of legitimating asymmetries, derived from an erroneous interpretation of Europe
concerning America: the occidentalism (Ibid). Therefore there is an intersection between the
symbolic fields and power, which can be measured both in economic terms and in terms of
legitimate domination.
In the hegemonic political theories such as Weber, we can verify the political relationship depicted by the sign of legitimate domination, in which the legitimacy conceals or normalizes domination relations to a point of naturalizing them. This process, for Bautiste S. (2014), portrays the fetishization of politics in modernity, insofar as the subjects, to legitimate state domination, assume the position of objects of passive obedience being dispossessed of their subjectivity: “their will belongs to the other” (p. 65).

In Hobbes we see such harmonization between freedom and obedience being developed through the status of citizenship, which will legitimize the transfer of the right to self-government to an external entity (Leviathan). This movement segregates man (now individual) from public affairs; and thus, the state (driver of public affairs) inaugurates the divide between the private life (societas) and the public life (civitas) of the citizen\(^\text{13}\). In these terms, the individual and his collective reflection lose their potential for political action beyond their institutional boundaries, or the boundaries of modern citizenship. In other words, all (real or possible) forms of power that escape the terms of the hierarchical relationship between the state would characterize a situation short of political.

As stated by anthropologist Pierre Clastres (2003), the interpretation of modern culture of social relations identifies in the lack of command-obedience relation a ipso facto condition of political power vacuum. Thus, the enclosure of politics within the boundaries of the state, and the configuration of society in atomized terms translate the construction of Europe as a sovereign theoretical subject. In this condition, the political experiences of European geography become a reference and benchmark for all other narratives, where the deviant characters are always the figure of inadequacy, lack or failure (CHAKRABARTY, 2008)

In other words, the ideal of citizenship and the nation-state are portrayed by Eurocentric knowledge as the theological end to which all people should submit. As pointed out by Chakrabarty (2008, p.64) “even today the Anglo-Indian term "communalism” refers to those who allegedly fail to live up to the secular ideals of citizenship”. In IR, discourses of realistic inspiration highlight this legacy through the fundamental link with the conception of the state of nature. As Beier points out:

\(^{13}\) Detached from politicized activity in the polis, society is constituted as distinct and segregated from the political sphere. In this sense, it is said that the Leviathan invents not only the individual, but also the society, both of which act as subjective frames and social machines hinged to the exercise of state power (BARBOSA, 2004).

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The ontological commitments of the theoretical orthodoxy of the field, chief among which is an abiding faith in a Hobbesian state of nature, foreclose the possibility of political community in the absence of state authority. Hence, not only are the Indigenous peoples of the Americas rendered invisible to the international relations orthodoxy, but it also becomes possible to characterize the settler states resident on their territories as former colonies, thereby mystifying the contemporary workings of advanced colonialism. In this sense, the undifferentiated idea of the state, making no distinction with respect to settler states, obscures even the obscurity that it creates. This construction turns principally on a prior acceptance of the Westphalian state as the only possible – or at least the only legitimate – expression of political order (2002, p. 84).

Therefore, through the lens of Eurocentric (or North-American) political theory, the history of India, Latin America, Africa, etc., are in a subordinate condition, in which it is only possible to project themselves as subordinate subjects. Such structures expose the limitations of the sociological imagination of the North to understand the new political experiences of the South without colonizing them (SANTOS, 2010). For Boaventura de Sousa Santos, the reading of these proposals through external signs runs the risk of extracting what they possess of most innovative, turning them into mechanisms of domination reproduction.

Therefore, emerges to need for an epistemology of the South able of reading the new actors and social and cultural horizons, including reconstructions or refoundations of the state (SANTOS, 2010). A sociology of emergences, in the terms of Boaventura, would be an important move, in that it commits to the analysis of changes, and the experiences ignored by the monocultural Western thought. As Bautiste S. (2014) also suggests, we must think of a new politics “from the horizon containing the novelty itself” (BAUTISTE, 2014, p.30); in other words, from an externality that transcends modern-Western totality, which is, in this article, the indigenous community experience.

**Indigenous epistemic disobedience: forms of political agency**

“Damn you, I'm not an Indian, I am an Aymara, but you made me an indian and as an indian I will fight for freedom.”[14]

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We focus on the Latin-American reality to illustrate the epistemic disobedience of the indigenous with regards to the politics of the modern matrix. Such a choice is derived from our commitment with our place of enunciation and with the trajectory of Latin-American social thoughts and their marginality in the IR. Experiences and wisdom in the continent are presented in a scattered form, being that some native references from other parts of the world are again taken up, so as to indicate an ample context of brunt initiatives in relation to advanced capitalism (RIBEIRO, 2000). So, it is not just a case of locating Latin America, but situating different cultures that, nowadays, confront each other in all levels of daily life. (DUSSEL, 2000).

Before being an intensive analysis, the exercise proposed in the lines that follow have, as their objective, to illustrate the diversity of political conduits which stimulate a semantic amplification of the political. Because of this, the use of generalized categories such as ‘indigenous movement’ is used sparingly. We recognize that within this usage there exists an ethnic multitude of political meanings, in a way that we complete this topic filing a gap presented by Guillermo Trejo (2006) about the minute production in social sciences about the indigenous reality in Latin America, excluding ethnographies.

For the state-centered perspective of IR, Latin America entered the universe of international relations after the independence of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies during the 19th century. Before this marc, the entire process of founding modernity and capitalism that was developed in the contact between the old and new continents were – and are – silenced\(^\text{15}\) by the traditional approaches of the field. The Eurocentric perspective of knowledge, bearing a dual and evolutionist history, applied to Latin America has carried out the tragedy of the sovereign state as destiny. In the words of Quijano,

\begin{quote}
Here the tragedy is that we have all been led, knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or not, to see and accept that image as our own and as belonging to us alone. (...) And as a result we can never identify our real problems, much less solve, unless in a partial and distorted manner (2000, p.226).
\end{quote}

As seen in the first topic, the experiment that gave birth to the modern states and joined them in a nationalized society is specifically European. In the covered continent, it was

\(^{15}\) For Quijano, Mignolo, Escobar e Dussel the coloniality is the obscure and silenced side of modernity. In these authors perspectives, it has only been constituted in the context of exploration and domination of peoples and territories found on the other side of the Atlantic (2000).
with distortions that the enterprise of centralization and individuation of political power in the Leviathan was realized, the transmutation of the people into citizens and the democratization of the political institutions, associated to the diverse matrix of control over work and productive resources (QUIJANO, 2000). This is one of the conditioners of the Nation-state issue in Latin-America, even though the traditional scientific discourse takes the national issue as a universally valid totality, the countries of this portion of the world live, each in their own way, the mismatch with this classification (ZAVALETA, 1990).

As Quijano (2000) defends, the Eurocentric thinking, including its critical strands, has produced in Latin-American theoretical deviations and incongruous political practices, the victims of which were and are the marginalized population. The liberal project of a modern nation-state would be one of these deviations, more so if we consider the specificity of the Latin-American region, previously demarcated more by the coexistence and de-articulated overlap of cultures, than by the homogenous and articulated configuration of European societies, unified by the sign of citizenship.

Composed of multi-social\textsuperscript{16} countries (TAPIA, 2002), Latin-America becomes, thus, controversial grounds for that kind of experiment, which can only be realized through violent means. In this context, the strategies of construction of the entity of European matrix are materialized by means of the genocide of social diversity, of the imposition of dominant culture, of the ethnic and cultural mix and the forced assimilation (TAPIA, 2002). The debility of these processes in the effectuation of the formula “One State, one nation” can be seen in the attempt to govern multiplicity without incorporating political institutions from Other cultures and ethnicities\textsuperscript{17}. Therefore, the political and state unity in Latin American countries remains monocultural, organized in monoethnic patterns (DIAZ-POLANCO, 1996).

In Bolivia, for example, there is a casing between different languages, beliefs, traditions, historical periods and systems of referential and symbolic construction that are embodied in the modes of production and conception of the world (TAPIA, 2002). However,

\textsuperscript{16}The notion of multi-social society is derived from the idea of abigarramiento proposed by René Zavaleta. This term refers to the ill-composed heterogeneity by the colonial domination. The concept of multi-social differs from the previous when it declares that a major part, though not a totality, of co-presence of social relation matrixes is disarticulated and gestated by colonial domination (TAPIA, 2002).

\textsuperscript{17} The silencing of the other is revealed in the exclusion of fact and law, that the Indians suffered in the representation systems of the modern state: “the Indians, for the power, were outside politics, outside the state, outside the republic, outside the present and history” (DAVALOS, 2005, p.25)
such coexistence is disjointed, circumstance in which domination and distortion relations, produced in large majority by colonialism, become effective (TAPIA, 2002). Colonial domination encloses the space of conduction of politics in the state, whereas the resistances of subordinate peoples prevent complete nationalization of societies – who do not recognize themselves as citizens and are not recognized as civilized in imperial discourse.

However, the diversity of the population does not make a state multicultural, multinational or multiethnic. The problem of the nation state in Bolivia and elsewhere in Latin America is not solved by simply adjusting the monothetic notion of state by means of a qualification appointing the plural. The constitution of a new type of state is consequence of the valuation of political, social and economic institutions of subaltern ethnic groups.

Therefore, the demand for adapting the scientific discourse that impregnates universalist political agency appointments with qualitatives such as plurinational or multicultural or multiethnic, reveals mainly the dystopia of modern politics of Hobbesian matrix. There is therefore a reality of practices, values, projects and instruments violently excluded from the political sphere, “in the margins of language formations that organize the collective field of experience” (KEHL, 2009, p.26). However, such systematically denied realities have revitalized their forces and claimed the political and epistemic space:

There is today a strong Indigenous intellectual community that among many other aspects of life and politics has something very clear: their epistemic rights and not just their right to make economic, political and cultural claims [...] Epistemic fractures are taking place around the world and not among the Indigenous communities in the Americas, Australia or New Zealand; it is happening also among Afro-Andean and Afro-Caribbean activists and intellectuals [...] And as far as that epistemic break is concerned, the consequence is the retreat of “nationalism”, that is, the ideology of the bourgeois State that managed to identify the State with one ethnicity and, therefore, able to succeed in the fetishization of power” (MIGNOLO, 2007, p. 31/32)

When dealing with the fetishization of power, Mignolo discusses the identification between the state and a nation, so that the power of the people is identified with the power of their representatives – both subjected to the same cosmology: “Western political theory from

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18 As a critic of the Eurocentric vision of the idea of universal, Aimé Césaire affirms that: “The West told us that in order to be universal we had to start by denying that we were black. I, on the contrary, said to myself that the more we were black, the more universal we would be. It was a totally different approach. It was not a choice between alternatives, but an effort at reconciliation. The identity in question was an identity reconciled with the universal. For me, there can never be any imprisonment within an identity. Identity means having roots, but it is also a transition, a transition to the universal.” (CESAIRE, 2011, p.22).
Plato and Aristotle to Machiavelli, Hobbes and Locke” (MIGNOLO, 2007, p. 32). Therefore, the indigenous struggle for their own cosmology, distinct from the experience and the accumulation of capital, is seen as an experience capable of contributing elements for historical and epistemological reflection.

In this process, one should note that the political discourses of indigenous peoples would not be a negative rejection of the legacy of modernity, but the possibility of undertaking a dialogue of knowledges (DÁVALOS, 2005). After all, when the existence of other knowledges is established, space is created for other conceptual provisions within a distinct epistemological field.

There must be a process of re-rationalization, re-construction of knowledges, because we cannot neglect the theoretical, aesthetic and ethical baggage that the Western world was created; this is about enriching human knowledge, incorporating diversity, new ways of understanding the world that are also legitimate because they are historical. (MACAS, 2005, p.41)

According to Davalos (2005), proposals in favor of the reconstruction of ancestral knowledge constitute one of the most interesting processes that Latin American indigenous movements have undertaken in recent decades. These, inserted in to the decolonization process, mean, at the same time:

a) unveiling the logic of coloniality and the reproduction of the colonial matrix of power (which of course, means a capitalist economy); and b) de-linking from the totalitarian effects of Western categories of thoughts and subjectivity (e.g., the successful and progressive subject and blind prisoner of consumerism) (MIGNOLO, 2007, p.31)

Thus, the indigenous epistemic disobedience unfolds while it builds existence and action referentials not confined to modern epigones – as the *ayllu* ideas, “*ch’ixi, pachamama, tekohá* among others that will be interpreted throughout the text. But before that, we should dwell a little on the indigenous phenomenon, existing in various parts of the contemporary world.

Over the centuries of colonization, many people were racialized\(^\text{19}\) and therefore indigenized. This process of identifying a social group as being indigenous is violent, in that it operates the imposition of an exogamous, generic and racialized identity: exogamous as it is

\(^{19}\text{The idea of race “was built s referencing alleged differential biological structures” and social relations referred to this idea produced historically new social identities, including that of the Indian (QUIJANO, 2000, p. 202).} \)
imposed by external subjects to the group so defined; generic, because it nestles many peoples who were not previously identified with each other or do not identify themselves as equal, but now constitute an umbrella group (Indians); and racialized, because it refers to differential biological characteristics, socially transformed into markers of inferiority (PRATT, 2007, p. 398-399).

However, from the increased number of international organizations that have made the "indigenous" their specific concern, especially since the end of the twentieth century, peoples who were indigenized throughout colonization, have formed a global collectivity that includes groups previously defined as natives, aboriginal, autochthonous, indigenous and other denominations. Such groups promoted a transnational process of ethno-genesis that allowed them to constitute an identity around the common suffered oppression (MERLAN, 2007, p. 125-126; NIEZEN, 2000).

This appropriation of indigenous identity by the groups thus defined has taken place at different levels, ranging from local to global. As explained by the indigenous anthropologist and philosopher Gersem Baniwa, with the emergence of organized indigenous movement from the 1970s, the indigenous peoples of Brazil, for example, concluded that it was important to maintain, accept and promote the generic name of Indian or indigenous as an identity that unites, articulates and makes visible and strengthens all the native peoples of the current Brazilian territory and mainly to demarcate the ethnic and identity border between them as originating and native inhabitants of these lands, and those coming from other continents, like Europeans, Africans and Asians (BANIWA, 2006, p. 30).

Thus, the mobilizations of these subordinate subjects is common and historical, beginning in the sixteenth century with the arrival of Europeans and their expansion in the territories, remaining within the context of revolts against bourbon reforms (notably the rebellion of Tupaq Katari in 1781); coming to the process of independence and integration of the countries into the international division of labor (until mid-1930s); and advancing with the demonstrations that were organized since the 1970s, united in their criticism of adopted neoliberal models and the economic globalization.
Under this horizon, since the seventies, various organizations were formed in order to strengthen indigenous autonomy\(^{20}\), known as the fourth wave of indigenous mobilizations, stressing the critique of indigenism – a process of apparent evocation of Indians, that in truth seeks the assimilation of minority groups in the national and developmental culture (Diaz-Polanco, 1987; Gutierrez, 2005). As examples we have: Organización de Profesionistas Indígenas Nahua, 1975; the journal Etnias, 1987, the International Agency of Indigenous Press, 1992. Such initiatives emphasize the emergence and visibility of an indigenous elite\(^{21}\) uses different media to demonstrate the disadvantageous situation of their people (Gutierrez, 2005).

International organizations are also part of this movement, as we see in Convention 107 and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, both on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, 1957 and 1989, respectively, which translated into effective tools for guiding ethnic conflicts derived from the extreme conditions of shortage of indigenous peoples, especially in the 1990s (Gutierrez, 2005)\(^{22}\). This period was marked by extensive ebullition of indigenous fronts, which clashed directly with neoliberal policies, and especially with the array of liberal thought, whose claim to universality denies in its interior, the space of difference (Davalos, 2005).

\(^{20}\) According to Diaz-Polanco, the appropriation of the “Utopia of Autonomy” is not hegemonic, two attitudes emerge on the mantle of this fighting platform. The first mentions autonomy as a legal and political system to resize the nation, the links between ethnicity and the state. And a second approach, prevalent, in which autonomy represents a “catalog of specific demands” without an alternative proposal for a national society. As an example of this second perspective of autonomy in the political practice, the author mentions the development of specific rights of the Maya people, in 1991 under the Consejo de Organizaciones Mayas de Guatemala, COMG (Diaz-Polanco, 1999, p.844)

\(^{21}\) When Natividad Gutierrez Chong makes reference to indigenous elite, he is referring to the Indians who become intellectuals and leaders, willing to undertake dialogues between different cosmologies. As well as emphasize the delayed public acknowledgment of indigenous thought and activism (2005).

\(^{22}\) These, especially Convention 169, guided constitutional reforms in some Latin American countries such as Mexico, and inserted supranational actors as pressure mechanisms in the face of violent state action towards ethnic diversity. This is an interesting process, because as states are not effective in fulfilling and protecting indigenous rights, these groups seek support from other institutional apparatuses and structure corporateboomerang networks. This breaks with the traditional view that places a strict boundary between the internal and external context of states and the centrality of the state in regulating people’s needs. The transnational indigenous activism is an ascending agenda in studies of global politics. For the authors Kathryn Sikkink and Margaret Keck, “The combinations of closed domestic structures in one country with open structures in other countries and with international organizations is what activates the boomerang pattern characteristic of networks” (1998).
In this phase, emerged forces such as the World Movement of Rebellions (CECEÑA, 2005), whose integration element would be the confronting of attempts to homogenize standards of living, subordinate subjectivities and maintain extreme poverty and social inequality. Thus, it is noticeable that the advance of neoliberalism in Latin America demarcated the difference between ways of life, where indigenous values such as subsistence farming, reverence to nature and making decisions by consensus diametrically opposed to the advancement of individualism and private property, characteristics of economic globalization (TUALI-CORPUZ, 2005).

In response, the Indians reinforced the mobilizations to ensure their right to continue autonomous and distinct. A milestone for indigenous mobilizations in Latin America and the World is the uprising of the Zapatista National Liberation Movement (EZLN) in 1994, which gave visibility to the project of plural nation. Articulated by indigenous peasants under the slogans “Democracy is the people with guns” and “The land belongs to those who work it”, took the capital of Chiapas, St. Kitts, demanding reforms in the Mexican political system and full citizenship (DIAS; MILLAN, 2005). Aware of their classification as “second class citizens” (GUHA apud RIVERA-CUSICANQUI, 2010) they develop a policy of levels: local, building autonomous municipalities; National Trading indigenous as part of a multicultural nation that recognizes the autonomies; and international conferences intended to promote the strengthening of global civil society (DIAS; MILLAN, 2005). Such a political articulation is justified in seeking autonomy and respect for diversity, summarized in the famous words “The voiceless and faceless will finally face and the word that will resonate in every corner of the earth” (EZLN).

Taken by the moral impetus to ensure survival, the Indians begin a process of confrontation in relation to the national-state. Despite the diversity of ethnicities and states in Latin America, it is possible to emphasize that “with strength a social and organizational framework based on community life of indigenous peoples rebels, which will provide support

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23 In this framework, the state is based on and maintained by the silent exclusion and systemic and persistent violence (DAVALOS, 2005). As the bolivian-ayamará declares: “Public speeches became ways of not saying. And this universe of not spoken meanings and notions, belief in racial hierarchy and in the inherent inequality of human beings, are incubated in common sense, and occasionally burst, cathartically and irrationally” (RIVERA-CUSICANQUI, 2010, p. 20).

24 As Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, from the Igorot ethnicity in the Filipinas, affirms: “we have had to rescue and consciously relearn our worldviews and our traditional religions to bolster our fight for our rights, our identity, our culture and our territories” (2005, p.13)
for social and political mobilization of many social movements in the continent” (DAVALOS, 2005, 17). We can also highlight Ecuador and Bolivia as scenario of those social articulations.

For Mignolo, the indigenous movement in Ecuador in the last ten years, as well as in Bolivia with the election of Evo Morales are the most visible signs of the de-colonial option today. It is argued that such a re-articulation of indigenous nations promotes the transformation of the traditional equation: one nation - one state, in that it questions the mono-topics (mono-linguistic and religious ethnicity) of national (creole-mestizo/a) and international (Western Europe and the U.S.) elites.

De-colonial thinking is the road to pluri-versality as a universal project. The plurinational State that Indigenous and Afros claim in the Andes, is a particular manifestation of the larger horizon of pluri-versality and the collapse of any abstract universal that is presented as good for the entire humanity, its very sameness. This means that the defense of the human sameness above human differences is always a claim made from the privileged position of identity politics in power (MIGNOLO, 2007, p.20)

On this view, when speaking of the Plurinational State it is not only a discourse to justify diversity, “the different is there and has always been there” (MACAS, 2005, p.38). The important point of this project is to include a cultural and identitarian perspective in the political struggle in order to reshape democracy under a participatory and community perspective, based on dialogue and consensus. In this model, diversity is important to guarantee that in the country the existence of the Other is recognized, as opposed to the current standard of the colonial state, vertical and uninational (MACAS, 2005).

Moreover, in the Plurinational State we can verify a rethinking of the economic system and its rationality. This because most of the indigenous community has an economy based on collective work, “based on the community, based on solidarity, respect for nature, respect for human beings, respect for future generations” (MACAS, 2005, p.38). Accordingly, for Nina Pacari, from Ecuador, the growing indigenous political agency in the last decade in Latin America alludes to four principles: proportionality, solidarity, complementarity, reciprocity and correspondence (apud MIGNOLO, 2008)25.

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25 There is a huge diversity of people sheltered under the name Indian, which currently live according to numerous social models, which include an urban life style based on wage labor, a peasant style, linked to agriculture destined for the local sale of surplus, and a hunter-gatherer model. Within any of these models, there often exists ethnic solidarities that reinforce the value of belonging to the community and that support a
Some examples can be mentioned, such as when observing the Yanomami Shamanic policy, from which can be inferred a model of collective political action in which the core value is respect for the land, which is perceived as complementarity and reciprocity. Protect the forest, for the shaman Davi Kopenawa Yanomami, is not only “ensure the continuity of an essential physical space for the physical existence of the Yanomami”, but also “preserve from destruction a web of social coordinates and cosmological exchanges that constitute and ensure their cultural existence as ‘human beings’” (BANIWA, 2006, p.32)

The principles of this policy are originated from a traditional rationality which is community based. This is narrative knowledges, which are “the contingent result, filtered through collective memorization, of the shamanic creativity” (ALBERT, 2002, p. 248-251). The authority of the leader, in this political and religious case, rests on correspondence between his speech and the memory of the community. The economy does not emerge from the accumulation, but from solidarity and complementarity aimed at administration of scarcity.

Community is therefore a key word to understand the idea of political practice of the indigenous form the Andean region (BAUTISTA, S., 2014). Living in community is living the ayllu, the mode of being of that particular – Andean – world of life preexistent to the arrival of settlers (BAUTISTA, S., 2014). As Bautista explains, “this set of reciprocal and solidary relations, which make existence a place of merit and responsibility; is what comes closest, semantically, the original meaning of ayllu: community” (p.136). This community doesn’t have an individualistic matrix, but represents an extensive congregation of kin – potential relatives; where the established relations involve fellowship, identification and openness to all beings in relationship. Accordingly, “relatives” are not just men and women, but the land, the plants: the objects become subjects, since “in the production I set the mode of relationship that defines me as part of a presupposed community” (p.143).

As mentioned, the community not only involves human belonging, but interaction with apachamama – a representation of mother earth that gives life, nourishes, protects and

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26 As Grimaldo Rengifo explains “when all members of my pacha or house, or mi ayllu, all who dwell in it are experienced as my family. The same activity of regeneration is in the runes is not only experienced as a result of
calls for death; place as the origin and existence (BAUTISTA, S., 2014). Is becomes unthinkable in Andean indigenous cosmoview the separation between man and nature, god and man, individual-collective. Politics is and is made in community. In this interaction the Earth acquires centrality, the notion of belonging also includes a list of “thankful responsibility” and therefore politics with pachamama (BAUTISTA, S., 2014).

This notion of umbilical and territory associated existence is expressed in different indigenous cosmoviews. For the Guarani the sacred space or living space is called Tekohá - “tekó is the way to be, the system, the culture, the law and the habits; the tekoha is the place and the environment in which the conditions of possibility of the Guarani way of being are given” (BRIGHENTI, 2005, p. 42). For the Anishinaabe ethnicity in Obibway, Nishnabeakin means “the land that belongs to the people” and dinawaymaaganinaadog “all our relatives”, referring to plants, animals and other beings that inhabit the earth (LADUKE, 2005, p.23).

In this view the relationship with the land, implicitly involves responsibilities. Language, culture, history and teachings make sense in their relationship with the land: “When ‘property rights’ of our communities are discussed, it is necessary to signal in what serious way our traditional system of land tenure, particularly our system of collective property, has been violated” (LADUKE, 2005, p.24). This assertion from Winona LaDuke justifies the wars undertaken by indigenous mobilizations in different parts of the globe for land (DIAZ-POLANCO, 1999). The brand of the Indian program of struggle is the territory, perceived as the foundation of communal status quo.

The importance of the community, the land, the distribution and reciprocity in relation to the Other are synthesized in the utopia of Well Living of the people that inhabit the Andean region:

the Well Living points to a simple life that reduces our consumption addiction and maintains a balanced production without ruining the environment. In this sense, living well is to live in community, in brotherhood and especially in the union of beings of the same species, but also as an expression of the creating activity of pachamama” (apud BAUTISTA S., 2014, p.146)

27 According to the testimony of the Indian Werá Tupa, tekohá: “Is the place where life is lived. It is connected to the place, to the community, to the person. A place that has plenty of water, bushes take things from to live, such as honey, palmheart crafts. A place where you can make houses, orchards, plants, dances, where you can develop a work of citizenship with the young, get an education. Which these things lack is not a tekoha, it is a “tekohazinho”, a precarious tekoha, as a poor district of the city that does not have much infrastructure (BRIGHENTI, 2005, p. 42).
complementarity. It is a communal, harmonious and self-sufficient life. Living Well means sharing and complementing without competing, living in harmony between people and nature. It is the basis for the defense of nature, of life itself and of all of humanity (CHOQUEHUANCA apud GIRALDO, 2014, p.114)

As Giraldo (2014) mentions, the use of words with networks of transcendental meanings in relation to the modern grammar, as the Well Living, is essential to stimulate new political practices. Hence the importance of incorporating bi/plurilingualism in nation-building projects anchored on the principles of interculturalism, the plurinationali and multi-ethnicity. By associating the utopia of good living to the state, it ceases to act in the context of a representative authority and assumes authority as a service – this premise brought by the EZLN in the slogans “govern obeying” and “we are all Subcommander Marcos”. In this process, power is shared and performed in community, assumes the character of the task and is not characterized in a negative, oppressive and domination sense.

The absence of a notion of becoming within the Andean indigenous worldview can be associated with the report “a strange dream of future”. This narrative describes a dialogue between a Munduruku who lives in the city and his cousin who lives in the Brazilian Amazon.

After lunching the delicious tucumaré stew, we decided to rest. I lay on my net and I was thinking about everything that we were living. (...) I thought about the future.

- Future? What is this? - Asked little Tawé.
- It’s what we will be tomorrow - I replied.
- But what is the future? Stubbornly insisted the boy.
- It’s what we’ll be when we grow up – I tried to be didactic.
- I still haven’t got it. Probably because I am a child – the boy concluded.
- That’s not it, Tawé. The future is really difficult for anyone to understand.
- But, cousin – he stared at me --, if the future is what I’ll be when I grow up, you, who has already grown, aren’t you the future? My future isn’t you? For me it is very difficult to understand these words because our grandfather [shaman] always says that there is only the present, the now, that it is good to live one day at a time.
- Our grandfather is right -Tawé. You are also right. I’m your future. The people who live in the city always forget that. (...) 
- When I’m adult - thought Tawé from the height of his nine years – I will continue defending our present. Our children will have a future: Me.

(...) The most interesting part of this conversation was that when I realized no one was talking to me. Had I been dreaming? What could this dream mean? (MUNDURUKU, 2004, p.76 e 77, our emphasis)
In this passage, the existence that takes place in the now is noticeable, the communal responsibility of the young Indian who declares his commitment and solidarity with future generations, so that they can use the well-being experienced at the present. Reciprocity as a fundamental social bond is perceivable. Such a narrative differs from the gradual empowerment of spheres of life, which emerges from the need of the modern subject of replacing reality from himself and for his development. Seeking progress, the modern individual interweaves himself in the logic of a destructive creation (BERMAN, 1987), a departure from the other and nature, reaching absolute solitude (BAUTISTA S., 2014).

It is noteworthy that community is not the absence of conflict, feature learned on the Aymara notion “ch’ixi. It describes a reality in which “multiple cultural differences, which do not melt together, but antagonize or complement themselves, coexist in parallel” (RIVERA CUSICANQUI, 2010, p. 70). There is a combination of opposites without submission, a powerful image depicting the coexistence of heterogeneous elements that do not aspire fusion, overcoming or aggregation28 (RIVERA CUSICANQUI, 2010, p.7). From this formula the indigenous bet focuses on the notion of citizenship that does not seek homogenization, but difference (RIVERA CUSICANQUI, 2010).

Citizenship in modern states is derived from the notion of belonging, mutual recognition between individuals who have established a contract. The citizen is a private owner, including an owner of rights, a subject of needs (BAUTISTA S., 2014). Therefore citizenship is not a communal relationship, it continues to orbit the context of atomization of life. However, the indigenous cosmology brings elements capable of resignifying citizenship in the context of symbolic expansion of the idea of politics. To this end, the first claim is “the right to have rights” as Boaventura de Souza Santos explains: “(...) people and social groups have the right to be equal when the difference abashes them, and the right to be different when equality mischaracterizes them (1997, p.458)”. Subsequently, the indigenous cosmoview presents the subjects of law as not only individuals but, collectives and the relationship of these with the environment. In this horizon, democracy becomes inclusive, participatory, communitarian, based on dialogue and consensus (MACAS, 2005).

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28 According to Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui the idea of “ch’ixi approaches Rene Zavaleta’s concept of abigarrated societies, from which Luis Tapia’s concept of multisocietal societies derives. See reference 16.
The inventive art composed in the indigenous activism in relation to the traditional spheres of power outlines the injunction character of political agency. Identity in politics is a movement to break with the grids of modern political theory, which is racist and patriarchal because it denies political agency to persons classified as inferior – these had their agency denied by colonial reason. For this reason, every change of political decolonization should raise an epistemic disobedience (MIGNOLO, 2008). As seen in the experience of the multinational state in Bolivia, which, although in its infancy, already seems to be a project capable of fracturing “the political theory in which the modern state and mono-topic was founded and perpetuated under the illusion that it was a neutral, objective and “democratic” state” (p.297).

Final Considerations

Reality proved its complexity in the late twentieth century, among many turns – end of the cold war, flexibility of capital, information age – the article highlighted the emergence of mobilizations that brought new demands and meanings to the political culture. However, this expansion of the real hit IR diffusely. Despite the many criticisms directed at traditional perspectives, they continue dictating the study programs and research in Latin America (TICKNER; CEPEDA; BERNAL, 2013).

Moreover, the notion of modern politics still guides foreign policy and decision making conductions. In this context, possible answers were rehearsed to the question: What indigenous knowledges and experiences have to say about the silences of the modern theoretical discourses adopted by traditional theories of International Relations?

Browsing through the writings of Hans Morgenthau, Hedley Bull, Raymond Aron, Kenneth Waltz, among others, the notion of politics constructed by Hobbes is evoked. With different degrees, the perspective of a state sovereignty, based on centralized and negative power, individually, rational and utilitarian based, is adopted. Therefore, the study of International Relations is built on a universalist political ontology, in which alterity is thrown into the arena of anarchy and ungovernability: the international system. Here the Other (sovereign state) becomes the potential enemy, war and violence to acquire legitimate figuration as political action by other means.
Hobbes describes the state of nature characterizing it based on speculations regarding the experience among indigenous peoples: the empire of barbarism (BEIER, 2004). By transposing this pre-contractual past to characterize the international system, International Relations make the problem of difference insoluble and natural. Defining the Other as that which is in the exterior, while ensuring formal equality of states – condition of existence of sovereignty – intensifies the differences between cultures, religions and ways of life, which must be buoyed domestically. In this construction, IR divest themselves of analytical tools to understand the difference (BLANEY; INAYATULLAH, 2000) and, therefore don’t conceive political agency in movements that are constituted in unity that does not erase diversity: “We are equal because we are different” (CCRI-CG del EZLN, 1996).

Among the crimes of modern political discourse are include: denial of political agency to stateless societies; exclusion of collective subjectivity; naturalization of the inferiority of indigenous peoples; sacralization of the colonial situation; legitimacy of citizenship as the only alternative for the realization of democracy; and non-recognition of multi-verse sociopolitical interactions, those that are not constituted from the structural dualisms of modern-Western-Eurocentric symbolization.

Therefore, we argue that indigenous political activism in its infinite diversity represents a disobedience towards epistemic and disciplinary canons adopted in IR. As can be seen in the following statement, those collectives:

“have neither armies or navies, no national currency, none of the attributes that the nations of the Western world identify as elements of the concept of nation. Nevertheless, they propose that the continuance of their existence is a moral imperative; they have the moral right to continue living as a distinct community and in the way they have for thousands of years” (MOHAWK, 2005,p.26)

Nevertheless, when the notion of policy is centered on state sovereignty, coetaneity of these indigenous peoples and their forms of organization and political subjectivity are refused29. These, taken as primitive and originating, are considered pre-modern, uncivilized and, therefore, unable to act in *contemporary* global politics – a space for the white man,

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29Fabian uses the concept “negation of coetaneity” to explain that there is “a persistent and systematic tendency to identify the referential(s) of anthropology in a Time that is not the present of the producer of the anthropological discourse” (2013, p.67). In the case of IR, the subjects/objects of study are collected in a restrictive manner in the universal present time.
modern, heterosexual, bourgeois, and his atomized institutions\(^3\). However, “all temporal relations (...) are embedded in culturally organized praxis” (FABIAN, 2013, p.69). Or as Munduruku clarifies: “Time is a very relative thing because it passes differently for each society. (...) In capitalism time is money; in indigenous society, time is a treat, a blessing, a blessing, a way of being in the world” (MUNDURUKU, 2004, p.98).

We emphasize the temporality of scientific discourse because the insulation of modern contemporary politics and its legitimate subjects makes them exempt from mediation and communication with the Other. The contact that the European develops with peoples from overseas is endowed with such ethnocentrism and estrangement, that complex societies of the New World were disqualified in the atomistic synthesis of the invention of race and acquired the blurred face of the self-encapsulated European. In such an arrangement, the Indian is the materialization/mystification of performative reverie, sometimes in angelic image of the noble savage, sometimes in cannibal animality. Therefore, the naturalization of inferiority through the invention of race restricts the legitimacy of political action to the insulated white man.

To the extent that the co-presence of multiple societies, cultures, languages and ethnicities is suppressed, the notion of modern politics cools the construction of alternatives to existing power structures, distancing utopia form the horizon of the Real. The disciplinarization of knowledge, the creation of general concepts and their own grammars within the academy and official politics, fulfills the colonizing function as they create words that do not cover, but instead cover up (RIVERA CUSICANQUI, 2010). If the practice of perpetuating their use is continued, the possibility of reporting still formless needs and showing the future potentialities denied by the established order – a central task of thinking – is withdrawn (ZEMELMAN, 2005).

Therefore, for the recognition of this undisciplined indigenous alterity, “the couch researcher, looking at the world from his screen as a divine creature capable of simultaneously seeing all facets of the world, must disappear” (BIGO, 2013 p.183). If there is an interest in understanding the scope of political life in Latin America, it is essential to expand – and, to some extent, subvert – the prism of symbolization of the real prescribed by traditional

\(^3\) “the modern European subject (now gringo) is everything, the absolute that is completed in its development; the rest of the world is just the theater of this development in its completeness (hence for modern subjectivity, the world appears as the set of mediations for the completion of its finished project of domination” (BAUTISTA S., 2014, P.138)
theories. As mentioned by Maria Rita Kehl, “the true civilizing ‘advances’, when they occur, are not necessarily technical advances, but advances in the possibilities of symbolizing the Real.”  

It is expected that the design of IR, as classically representative of North-American political culture, does not continue in the mid-twenty-first century keeping “ethnic and racial exclusion as a non-declared guiding principle of morality and sociability” (RIBEIRO; 2000, p.7). To overcome the silences of the area, the suggestion is to access unstudied realities and critically incorporate possibilities of semantically expanding the idea of politics. The critical and committed dialogue with reality, and its mutations, is considered crucial for IR.

Accordingly, we sought to accomplish this exploratory research which, in its course, realized the vastness and diversity of indigenous studies and intellectuals that focus on the idea of politics from the insurgent practices and movements. Therefore, the proposal initially focused on the Bolivian experience of the plurinational state, directed its gaze to the context of emergence and expansion of indigenous mobilization in Latin America by understanding the presidency of Evo Morales as a consequence of this process.

Although diversity and particularity characterize the ethnicities under the sign of Indian, it is possible to verify elements of proximity in the way they understand life and political action. Therefore, although incipient, the effort here presented involved access to these many worlds in dialogue with the field of IR. An immense, ambitious, exciting and in some measure irresponsible challenge, since for each of the various topics brought up a profound study would be adequate. Anyway, it is believed that from the overview and to some extent, generalizing point of view adopted in this work we can stimulate research agendas to think IR from its locality and plurality. The authors will certainly develop this commitment and hope to thicken their analysis, improving the research focusses and methodological frameworks.

31 According to the psychoanalyst, “From the discursive practices that characterize the society, we can think that what remains ‘unconscious’ in social life are not symbolized fragments of the Real, marginalized from language formations that organize collective field of experience. (...) The silent social transformations usually produce ruptures in normality that are not more than the expression in act of new phenomena or emerging social groups, not yet integrated in the discursive order” (KEHL, 2009, p.26 e 29)
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