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Latin American sociology's contribution to *Sociological Imagination*: analysis, criticism, and social commitment

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There are no countries of which a man could be prouder than our aching American republics. (José Martí, 1891)

A journey that is, over and again, search and denial, acknowledgment and re-creation. (Octavio Ianni, 1993)

Sociology has expressed the deep changes in Latin American societies: it has followed the construction process of State and of Nation; it has questioned the social issues; and it has analyzed the effects of worldization on the conflictualities, always maintaining itself within a multiple international dialogue, for “they are important, the possibilities which present themselves with the plurality of interlocution. The potentiality for reflection and creation multiplies” (Ianni, 1993: 138). The distinctive features of the sociological knowledge in the continent have been the following: internationalism, hybridism, critical approach to processes and conflicts of the Latin American societies, and social commitment on the part of the sociologist. In other words, we do agree with Ianni (1993: 122) when he says the “Latin American culture is branded by three more or less clear tendencies: colonialism, nationalism, and cosmopolitanism.”

We can identify six periods in Latin American and Caribbean sociology: (i) the intellectual inheritance of sociology (from the 19th c. to the early 20th c.); (ii) the chair sociology (1850-1950); (iii) the “scientific sociology” period and the configuration of “critical sociology” (1950-1973); (iv) the institutional crisis, the consolidation of “critical sociology”, and the diversification of sociology (1973-1983); (v) the sociology of authoritarianism, democracy, and exclusion (1983-2000); and (vi) the institutional consolidation and worldization of Latin American sociology (since 2000).¹

I- The intellectual inheritance of sociology (from 19th c. to early 20th c.)

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¹ According to Germani (1959), sociology in Latin America has had three essential moments: (a) a phase of pre-sociological thinking and the independence wars (until late 19th c.); (b) a phase of authoritative teaching (1890/1900-1950); and (c) a phase of “scientific” sociology (beginning roughly in the 1950s). (Liedke Filho, 2003) (Cf. Castañeda SABINO, 2004; Chacon, 1977; Germani, 1959; Ianni, 1989; Marini & Millán, 1994).

The intellectual inheritance of sociology in Latin America was outlined by authors who were concerned, during the first decades of the 20th c., with presenting a general interpretation of the society in which they lived. We may name them “social thinkers.”

The period of the Social Thinkers corresponds historically to the period that spans from the struggles for Independence in the Latin American nations until the beginning of the 20th c. During this period, social theory was developed mostly by thinkers who were under the influence of socio-philosophical ideas developed in Europe and in the USA, such as the French illuminism, Cousin’s eclecticism, Comte’s positivism, and Spencer’s evolutionism. (Liedke Filho, 2003)

In Brazil, the intellectual milieu was marked by the Modernistic Revolution (1922), a contemporaneity of ideas that grew in depth with missions of foreign scholars from both the USA and France. It dates back to the 1930s the publication of some admirable works: *Casa Grande e Senzala*, by Gilberto Freyre (1933),² *Evolução Política do Brasil*, by Caio Prado Júnior (1933),³ and *Raízes do Brasil*, by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1936).⁴ These “books express a moment of debate on the identity and development of Brazilian society” (Barreira, 2003, p. 1).

In other Latin American countries, the social thinkers’ contributions were equally important. In Chile, José Vitorino Lastarria (1817): *O Positivismo*; Valentin Letelier (1852-1919); Enrique Molina: *O Ensaio Moderno* (Brunner, 1988). In Peru, we could list José Carlos Mariátegui (1895-1930)⁵ and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre (1895): *El Imperialismo y el PARA*; and José Miguel Arguedas. In Cuba, Ramiro Guerra wrote *Azúcar y población en las Antillas* (Sosa, 1994, in: Marina & Millán, 1994).

In Venezuela, Vallenilla Lanz wrote *Cesarismo democrático, estudio sobre las bases sociológicas de la Constitución efectiva de Venezuela* (1919); José Rafael Mendoza, *Ideológica y moral* (1938), and Rafael Caldeira, *Idea de una sociología venezolana* (1954) (Albornoz, in: Romero Salazar, 2001: 21). In Mexico, the following books were published: *Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales*, by José Vasconcelos and Andrez Molina Henríquez; *Las Clases Sociales*, by Mariano Otero, and *Evolución Política del Pueblo Mexicano*, by Justo Sierra. In Argentina, as early as in the 19th c., *Facundo o Civilización y Barbárie*, by Sarmiento (1811-1888), published in 1845.

The major result to derive from the contribution of the social thinkers was the legitimation of a certain discourse on society, one that defines where the intellectual being stands as an interpreter of the meaning of the construction of the national society (Brunner, 1988: 337/34). In other words, “the formation of the Latin American thought can be seen as the history of the idea of a Latin America” – with a basic issue, i.e., the “national question.” According to Ianni (1993: 32-33, 35):

This is the most frequent challenge to be faced in the interpretations on civilization and barbarism, chronic political instability, civil society and a strong State, cosmic race, Our America, bourgeois revolution, socialist revolution, and others. ... The national question refers to how a nation is formed and transformed. [However,] there are several nations in the Latin American nation.⁶

II- The “chair sociology” (1890-1950)

Sociology’s academic institutionalization took place in terms of the so-called *Sociologia de*

² Bastos, 2003; Kosminsky, 2003.

³ D’Incao, 1989; Rego, 2000.

⁴ Veloso & Madeira, 1999.

⁵ MARIÁTEGUI, José Carlos. *7 Ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*. 27th ed. Lima: Amauta, 1973; Amayo & Segatto, 2002; Bellotto & Corrêa, 1982; Cotler, 1982: 15.

⁶ Cf. Halperin Donghui, 1994.

Cátedra, a period which, according to Liedke Filho (2003: 226), began,

... in the Latin American countries, generally speaking, towards the end of the 19th c., when the disciplines of Sociology were introduced in the Schools of Philosophy, Law, and Economy. In Brazil, this period did not start until the 1920s, when the Sociology disciplines were offered in the *Escolas Normais*.⁷ This phase was characterized by the publication of handbooks (*manuais*) for the teaching of Sociology, and it was through them that one could learn about the ideas of renowned European and American sociologists, as well as about sociological ideas on social problems such as urbanization, emigration, illiteracy, and poverty.

In Brazil, in the 1930s, some schools were founded in the upper education system: Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política (1933) and Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras of the University of São Paulo (1934), both in the state of São Paulo (Barreira, 2004; Kantor, 2001); in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the University of the Distrito Federal was founded in 1935, afterwards becoming the University of Brazil, when then its Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia was founded, in 1939 (Lippi, 1995: 242). An author of paramount importance in that period was Fernando de Azevedo.⁸

In Argentina, the Institute of Sociology of the School of Philosophy and Languages of the University of Buenos Aires was created in 1940. Alfredo Poviña was the intellectual leader in that period, notwithstanding the fact that Sergio Bagu's work, *Economía de la Sociedad Colonial* (1949), was a milestone in the interpretation of the Latin American history.⁹

In Mexico, Lúcio Mendieta y Nuñez encourages the organization of the Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales and starts editing the Mexican Journal of Sociology.

In Uruguay, the discipline of sociology is created in 1951 at the Facultad de Derecho y Ciencias Sociales, Universidad de la República, and another discipline of sociology is created in 1952 at the Facultad de Arquitectura. Among the most outstanding sociologists, one finds Isaac Ganon (*Estructura Social del Uruguay*, 1966) and Aldo Solari (*Sociología Rural*). The Instituto de Ciencias Sociales is created in 1958, and the CLAEH is founded – Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (Facultad, 2000; Filgueira, 1979; Piñeiro, 1988).

In Chile, the Facultad de Filosofía y Educación of the University of Chile was organized in 1931, and Astolfo Taipa is one of the most important Chilean sociologists from that period.

In Venezuela, the first academic disciplines in sociology were created in the Central University, in 1902, and, later on, at the University of Los Andes. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the Central University of Venezuela was created in 1953.

The Latin American Sociology Association (ALAS) was created during the First World Congress of Sociology, organized by the ISA (International Sociological Association), in Zurich, in 1950. The ALAS 1st Congress was held in Buenos Aires, in 1951. Alfredo Poviña was elected President. The ALAS 2nd Congress was held in Rio de Janeiro, in 1953, and Manuel Diegues Júnior was then elected President. Two years later, in Quito, the 3rd ALAS Congress was concerned with outlining “a common basic program for the Latin American universities which would address the following division and organization of academic disciplines: History of Sociology, Logics of Sociology, General Sociology, Special Sociologies, and Latin American Sociology” (Brunner, 1988: 149).

From the very first congress on, the opponents of the “chair sociologists” were already present in these international meetings, and would eventually become the “scientific sociologists”, people as, for instance, Gino Germani, who presented papers in Rio de Janeiro in 1953, in Quito in 1955, and in Montevideo in 1959 (Germani, 1971: 13; 2004: 133)

In 1957, in Santiago, Chile, where the 4th ALAS Congress took place, sociologist Astolfo

⁷ Secondary schools training female teachers for the primary schools. (Translator's note)

⁸ AZEVEDO, Fernando de. *Princípios de Sociologia*. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1951 (Ed. Mex. FCE). For a reconstitution of this period, cf. Miceli, 1989.

⁹ BAGU, Sergio. *Economía de la sociedad colonial* (ensayo de historia comparada de América Latina). México: Grijalbo, 1992 (Edición ampliada y actualizada).

Taipa was elected President. In 1959, during the 5th Congress, in Montevideo, it was Isaac Ganon's turn to be elected President.

One may assert that the phase of "chair sociologists" made possible the institutionalization of the sociological discourse and the foundation of schools of higher education in sociology or else social sciences (Brunner, 1988: 347).

III- The "scientific sociology" period and the configuration of a "critical sociology" (1950-1973)

The "scientific sociology" period was characterized by academic institutionalization and theoretical disputes linked to empirical investigation, from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s. In Argentina, the Institute of Sociology of the University of Buenos Aires was organized, and their "scientific sociology" was defined by the presence of Gino Germani, Jorge Craciarena, and Torquato Di Tella; later on, Sergio Bagu and Tulio Halperin Dongui joined the faculty.

In Mexico, the National School of Political and Social Sciences was founded in the UNAM (Autonomous National University of Mexico) in 1951, and the Center for Latin American Studies was founded in 1961.

In Brazil, in the 1950s, the School of Sociology of the University of São Paulo was finally consolidated, led by Antonio Candido, Florestan Fernandes, Octavio Ianni, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. This faculty would guide Brazilian sociology for decades to come. The evolution of sociological work as done by Florestan Fernandes (1920-1995) since his intellectual readings (1941-1952), is the major expression of this style in sociology in Latin America. This was the time for being concerned with "sociology in an era of social revolution" (1952-1967) (Candido, 2001; Garcia, 2002; Liedke Filho, 2003b). In Rio de Janeiro, at the same time, sociology was thriving in the universities:

The state of Rio de Janeiro, in the 1950s, has among its exponents in Social Sciences Hélio Jaguaribe, Nelson Werneck Sodré, and Guerreiro Ramos. In the other states of the Brazilian federation, the university courses of Social Sciences are being structured, especially in Bahia, Pernambuco, [Rio Grande do Sul] and Minas Gerais, with teachers who had had their education in Law or Economy, as well as having graduated from Medical School, as was the case of Thales de Azevedo, from Bahia. (Barreira, 2003: 3)

A major figure from that period is Guerreiro Ramos (1915-1982), whose book *A Redução Sociológica* (1958) was a landmark in Brazilian sociology, albeit its having been forgotten until very recently (Lippi Oliveira, 1995). This is a book which presents three different meanings for "sociological reduction":

(1) ... reduction as a method of critical assimilation of the foreign sociological production. ... (2) reduction as a parenthetic attitude, i.e., as cultural taming of the individual, something which will enable him to transcend ... the circumstantial conditionings that conspire against his expressing himself freely and autonomously ... (3) reduction as going beyond Sociology in the institutional, academic terms in which it is to be found. Sociology is a science yet to be made. (Ramos, 1965: 16)

The creation of CEPAL (The Economic Commission for Latin America) by the United Nations in 1948 gave rise to an important diagnosis of the Latin American economies, based on Raul Prebisch, as well as on a number of economists and sociologists:

As to the external obstacles, the main dispute in terms of the free operation of the market has been articulated around the concept of center-periphery, and within this concept, it has focused in the deterioration of the terms of trade. The center-periphery concept ... developed from acknowledging the

existence of an international division of labor, according to which the Latin American countries are assigned a subordinate role and specialize in producing and exporting raw materials and different kinds of food... (Estay **Reino**, *apud* Marini & Millán, 1994: 28)

According to Estay **Reino** (*apud* Marini & Millán, 1994: 30), once the internal facets of the Latin American societies were analyzed, the Cepalian concept was actually asserting the following: “the existence of a ‘structural heterogeneity’ in the economies of the region, resulting from an uneven penetration of technology in the different sectors, and in particular, in the primary production and in the activities of craftsmanship...” As to the Latin American agrarian question, CEPAL points out two elements: “(a) an extremely slow growth associated to certain agrarian structures, and (b) the structures of property and possession of land.” (Giarraca, *apud* Piñeiro, 2000: 78)

CEPAL congregated notorious economists from Latin America - Celso Furtado, Aníbal Pinto, Oswaldo Sunkel, among others - and gave rise to the creation of ILPES (The Latin American Institute of Economic and Social Planning) in 1962, which aimed at taking a path to planning through theories on development – by teaching a sequence of courses in Santiago, Chile, as well as in other Latin American countries, in order to qualify the development agents.

In Chile, in 1951, the Institute for Sociological Research of the School of Philosophy and Education of the University of Chile was created, an institution where Eduardo Hamuy played an important role. In 1958, the School of Sociology was organized, and in the same year, the School of Sociology of the Catholic University opened its doors. In both institutions, a renowned generation of sociologists developed their academic work, and among them we find Eduardo Hamuy, Hernán Godoy, Guillermo Briones, Rafael Baraona, Enzo Faletto, Danilo Salcedo, Edmundo Fuenzalida, Orlando Sepúlveda, Manuel Antonio Garretón, and Roger Vekemans. One might say that

The influence of functionalism is evident in the theoretical fundamentals, and emphasis is put on quantitative techniques as methodological fundamentals. The sociological education of the time takes as its desideratum an amalgam of the theories by Parsons y de Merton together with a sound knowledge of the statistical techniques. (Godoy Urzúa, *apud* Camacho, 1979: 519)

UNESCO’s support to the development of social sciences in Latin America materialized, at that time, in two projects, as follows.

The first UNESCO project resulted in the foundation of a Latin America Center for Research in Social Sciences,¹⁰ in Rio de Janeiro, in 1957. Until 1961, its director was Luiz A. Costa Pinto. Many Latin American sociologists took part in seminars at the institution, such as Gino Germani, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Torquato Di Tella, and Jorge Graciarena (Chor Maio, 1999: 35).

The Center published the journal *América Latina* from 1959 to 1976, with a total 251 articles published – 113 in Spanish, 76 in Portuguese, 49 in English, and 13 in French. Most articles discussed topics on development in Latin America, or else they were topics concerning each of the different countries (Lippi, 1995: 270-76). The main bibliographical production referred to developmental sociology, from modernization to “dual societies” (Lippi, 1995: 276, 280). Its end, in 1976, was dramatic: “with the financial resources from the Brazilian government having been discontinued, it did manage to survive for a while, but then it eventually closed its doors and deplorable events followed, such as the handing out of its entire library in order to cope with paying what was due to former employees – and the books were sold to a paper-recycling mill” (Lippi, 1995: 303-04).

The second UNESCO project resulted in the foundation of FLACSO (Latin American School of Social Sciences), in 1957. Its first director was José Medina Echevarría, whose seminal book, *Aspectos sociales del desarrollo económico*, was first published in 1959. FLACSO expanded throughout a dozen countries in the following decades, and it was responsible for institutionalizing

¹⁰ For further information on the Center, see article by Lúcia Lippi Oliveira, “Diálogos intermitentes: relações entre Brasil e América Latina” (Intermittent dialogues: relations between Brazil and Latin América), in *SOCIOLOGIAS*, 2005.

social sciences in Latin America during the difficult years of the military regimes which would scar the continent from the 1960s on.

In Colombia, a group forms around Orlando Fals Borda and starts writing sociological analyses – their landmark is the publication of *La Violencia en Colombia*, followed by the publication of *Las revoluciones inconclusas en América Latina* (Fals Borda, 1971 and 1976, respectively).

In Venezuela, J.A.Silva-Michelena and Orlando Albornoz start writing. In Guatemala, Severo Martínez Peláez publishes, in 1970, *La Pátria del Criollo – ensayo de interpretación de la realidad colonial guatemalteca*, an indispensable reference book when the subject is the Central American societies.

In Mexico, Pablo González Casanova publishes, in 1965, *La democracia en México*, a remarkable work in the sociological approach guided by a structural viewpoint, analyzing the molding of the National State with the notion of an internal colonialism (González Casanova, 1967). In Uruguay, the Institute of Social Sciences is founded in the Universidad de la República, in 1958.

The period from 1950 to 1973 corresponds to the period of the populist democracies: Vargas, in Brazil (1950-54); Perón, in Argentina (1945-55), and then Frondizi (1955); Ibáñez, in Chile (1952-58), followed by Alessandri's liberalism (1958-64), and by Eduardo Frei's Christian democracy (1964-70); and there were a few experiences with socialist governments: Arbenz, in Guatemala (1948-54); the mobilization in the Dominican Republic (1966); the Cuban Revolution (1959); and in Chile, Allende's government (1970-73).

This phase of the “scientific sociology” attempted to institutionalize both the teaching of and the research in Sociology – based on the structural-functionalist paradigm – in a way that were analogous to that of the sociological centers of the hegemonic countries. According to this approach, the concept of development was expressed in the theory of Modernization and in the analysis of the process of transition from a traditional society to a modern society. The theory of Modernization perceived the process of development as a transition from a traditional rural society to a modern industrial society. (Germani, 1971, chapter V-VI, p. 195-236). As Liedke Filho (2003) puts it, this transition, when incomplete, brings about a coexistence of both social forms within a single national society which then becomes in fact a dual society.

At that period in time, the ALAS congresses were held each time in a different country; for instance, in Venezuela, in 1967 – the elected President of the 6th Congress was sociologist Rafael Caldeira, and the main themes discussed were: “possibilities and limitations of the sociological research in Latin America; political parties and electoral sociology; and the social changes in Latin America” (Caldeira, 1961: 6-7). In 1963, the 7th Congress took place in Colombia; in 1967, the 8th Congress was held in El Salvador.

By the end of that period, the configuration of the “critical sociology” was under way, with an analysis that disputed both the assumptions of the “sociology of modernization” and the development of an approach based on a “multiple interlocution” (Ianni, 1993), with nonconformist authors from the United States (such as W. Mills and Horowitz), or from the French heterodox Marxism (as incorporated by Henri Lefebvre and Jean Paul Sartre), and from the UK (the first works by historians from Birbeck College, London, who were followers of Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm, 2002).

One of the most prominent sociologists from that period is Brazilian Luiz Aguiar de Costa Pinto, director of the Latin American Center for Social Sciences from 1957 to 1961, and editor of the *Revista América Latina*, having been Vice-President of the International Sociological Association (ISA) from 1956 to 1959. The contribution of Costa Pinto to sociology derives from his concept of sociological study as a critical analysis of society. He devoted himself, with both theoretical talent and accuracy in his empirical investigations, to interpreting the racial relations and the transitions that characterized societies at his time. Costa Pinto studied the complexity of racial relations in Brazil and what chances Brazil had to carry out a transition towards development. He put emphasis on the analysis of the social and cultural changes in the Brazilian society – and this he did with an acutely critical eye, being an author with an ideal: the pursuit of a new society (Chor Maio and Villas Bôas, 1999; Costa Pinto, 1970).

In other words, the institutionalization of sociology in that period that ends in 1964, in the case of Brazil, “revealed to the intellectuals another interpretive perspective in the horizon, one that was based on the social and economic inequalities inherent to the Brazilian society” (Villas Bôas,

apud Bomeny and Birman, 1991: 37).

In Argentina, as early as 1967, Jorge Graciarena was already outlining a framework for the “sociology of conflict”:

In this type of perspective, society is taken to be a system of forces out of balance and in permanent conflict. ... Society is therefore a unity, albeit a complex unity, formed by a huge diversity of elements – their congruence and final compatibility is the consequence of a fact of either force or power which internally corresponds to a dominant class overpowering the other social classes. ... The Sociology of Conflict sees this as an inseparable aspect of the social dynamics, which is centered in competition and in the struggle for distribution of power and social gratifications. (Graciarena, 1971:178).

A critical approach to the “sociology of modernization” was under way; its exponents were Miguel Murmis, Juan Carlos Portantiero, and the followers of José Aricó – editor of the periodical *Cuadernos de Pasado y Presente*, that came to define a renewal in the sociological thought in Latin America (Murmis and Portantiero, 1974).

Finally, the Latin American Rural Sociological Association (ALASRU) was created in 1969, in Buenos Aires, with the purpose to “encourage the circulation and refinement of Rural Sociology” (Nino Velásquez, *apud* Piñeiro, 2000: 212). Their 1st Congress was held in 1983, in the Dominican Republic, and their 6th Congress, in 2003, in Porto Alegre.

The phase of institutionalizing social sciences in Latin America had come to its end, with a brilliant generation of intellectuals having been devastated by the military coups which succeeded each other in the South Cone, starting with Brazil (1964) and Argentina (1966) (Brunner, 1988: 351-56).

Nonetheless, an intellectual process was under way: Eliseo Verón, on analyzing the recent history of sociology in Argentina, revealed the beginning of the scientific sociology crisis:

On the one hand, a certain ideological diversification is produced From 1964 on, for instance, the already mentioned teaching of Systematic Sociology, which is now under the supervision of Miguel Murmis and myself, endows the Marxist thinking with paramount importance, given that it brings to the classroom approaches which are foreign to structuralism-functionalism (e.g., structural anthropology, or communication theory), and tendencies which are preponderant in the US academic Sociology (with authors such as Goffman, Garfinkel, Becker, and others). (Verón, 1974: 45)

In many Latin American countries, sociology would experience a sort of rebirth, and would even present itself as “critical sociology,” often within that one space of freedom which was provided by the ALAS congresses.

IV- The institutional crisis, the consolidation of the “critical sociology,” and the diversification of sociology (1973-1983)

The diaspora of sociologists from Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay had begun. In 1969, the 9th ALAS Congress was held in Mexico, with Pablo González Casanova being elected President. The generosity of the Mexican people contributed to the creation of institutions that welcomed many of the exiled intellectuals. According to Cueva (*apud* Salles et al., 1985: 8-9),

Latin American exiles and emigrants come to Mexico in successive swarms, as well as social scientists with large experience in the profession. ... a fact that consequently determines that this country converts, in the 1970s, into a sort of cultural-ideological crossroads, an inevitable point of

reference to any social scientist.

In 1971, the Center for Sociological Studies is created, and in 1973, the Doctorate Program in Sociology of Colégio do México – not to mention that UNAM was still going strong as an institution of reference, with Pablo González Casanova's guidance.

In 1971, a very significant World Congress of Sociology was held in Venezuela, hosted by the International Institute of Sociology, with the presence of outstanding sociologists, such as Alwin Gouldner, Jean Duvignaud, and Henri Chombart **de Lowe**.

In 1972, while Allende's government was effervescent, Guillermo Briones was elected President of the 10th ALAS Congress. That period, from 1964 to 1983, refers to the period of the military governments, with traces of authoritarianism and State violence against their opponents and against many a sociologist (Brazil, 1964-1985; Argentina, 1966-1983; Uruguay, 1973-1985; Chile, 1973-1989).

Within the context of the military coups, in the 1960s, there was the "period of crisis and diversification in the Latin American sociology," the consolidation of the "critical sociology," and the emergence of the theory of dependence, while at the same time a double movement was taking place. If, on the one hand, in some countries (particularly in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay) an institutional crisis in sociology was brought about, in other countries, on the other hand, an institutional consolidation took place (as in the case of Brazil, in the 1980s, and Mexico). According to Andrade Carreño (*apud* Olivier, 1996: 80), "the climax and generalization of the theories of dependence, of Marxism, and of critical sociology, on the other hand, coincided with a moment of institutional consolidation, of larger numbers of students enrolled, and of both an extension and an accelerated diversification in the university infra-structure."

During this period, in many countries, centers for research were organized, thus giving rise to a process of overtone to new institutional possibilities for sociological work. In Brazil, **CEBRAP – Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento** and CEDEC - Centro de Estudos de Cultura Contemporânea, were founded in 1970 and 1976, respectively. In Uruguay, the **CIESU – Centro de Informaciones y Estudios del Uruguay** was founded in 1975; in Chile, FLACSO and the Group of Agrarian Investigators (GIA, 1991); in Peru, the Center for Peruvian Studies (CEP) was founded; in Argentina, the Institute Di Tella was founded, as well as the Center for Research in Social Sciences (CICSO) and the Center for Urban and Regional Studies (CEUR).

As a consequence, the Latin American Council on Social Sciences (CLACSO) was founded in 1967, and it was their function to coordinate efforts, to be a representative organ before UNESCO, and to be an agent in raising funds from international organizations for the projects to be developed at the centers for research in the various Latin American countries, thus being able to provide job opportunities in social sciences, something which would secure the continuity of sociology in Latin America. In fact, this was a noteworthy effort in the history of sociology in Latin America, involving devoted executive secretaries and authors of milestone books for the critical explanation of our continent (Francisco Delich, Fernando Calderón, Márcia Rivera, and Atilio Borón – the latter since the 1990s).

The consolidation of "critical sociology" may be well characterized by its basic dimensions, taken to be common ground by numerous Latin American social scientists (Florestan Fernandes, Octávio Ianni, Orlando Fals Borda, Aníbal Quijano, Pablo González Casanova, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto, Miguel Murmis, among others): a perspective from integrated analysis; the historical-structural or dialectic method; the historicity of the object of knowledge as a *sine qua non* factor; the analysis of complex phenomena of an international nature; a radical criticism of structuralism-functionalism; an interest in Marxism as an all-encompassing theory that could explain any regional reality; the themes of development and of social and political change (Franco, *apud* Camacho, 1979: 271-84).

One must add to the above list the vast expansion of rural sociology and of the agrarian social processes in Latin America, which had been guided by the critical sociology approach since the 1960s (Delich, 1970; GIA, 1991; Giarraca, 1998; 1999; Pereira de Queiroz, 1973; Piñeiro, 1998; 2000; Brumer and Tavares-dos-Santos, *apud* Piñeiro, 2000; Souza Martins, 1981; Tavares-dos-Santos, 1991).

There was an intense dispute as to the variants of Marxism, from the historicist Marxism of

the University of São Paulo to the Althusserian Marxism. It was also a period when the theory of dependence became internationally pervasive. Moreover, one should not forget to mention the endogenous Marxism, the neogramscian scholars, and the neodevelopmentalism (Marini and Millán, 1995: 15).

In other words, “Critical Sociology placed itself in the foreground of the debate when the problem discussed was the necessity for a practical transformation in society, that is, the question of social revolution” (Briceno-León, 1990: 32).

A critical-sociology landmark was Heleieth Saffioti’s book, *A mulher na sociedade de classes*, published in 1969 with the aim of “grasping the typical mechanisms through which the factor gender operates in the class societies in such a way as to discard from the occupational structure vast contingents of women” (Saffioti, 1969: 17). Furthermore, she may have been one of the very first woman authors in Latin America (inspired by Marx and partially by Simone de Beauvoir) to reconstitute the “feminine mystic in the era of science.” As Saffioti herself puts it, “the feminine mystic has been nourished countless times with scientific hypotheses and mistakes, as well as with discoveries deformed by the social re-interpretation they get” (Saffioti, 1969: 305). Her study suggests the “explanation of the women’s situation in the capitalistic society can be found via the analysis of the relations between the natural factor gender and the essential determinations of the capitalistic mode of production” (Saffioti, 1969: 387).

Other authors from the second generation of the School of Sociology of the University of São Paulo had their first books published in the 1980s. Among them, we have Marialice Foracchi, José César Gnacarini, Luiz Pereira, José de Souza Martins, Gabriel Cohn, Sedi Hirano.

In the case of Chile, the production of NGOs may be best characterized by their “critical texts” – due to a questioning attitude geared directly against the military government. “The institution responsible for the greater part of this bibliographical production was FLACSO/Chile, not only given the number of works published and their periodicity, but also due to its social and scientific influence. *Un espejo trizado*,¹¹ for instance, was published by FLACSO/Chile.” (Alvarado and Santander, 2003: 137).

Norbert Lechner’s reflection belongs to that phase as well, for the main theme of his work is “to explore the subjective dimension of politics. ... I assume that politics, just as the cities, is filled with desires and fears” (Lechner, 1988: 13).

At the same time, the author took for granted society’s conflictuality and the renewed importance given to civil society (Lechner, 1988: 33-34), therefore defining – all the while he was writing during the military regime – to be one of the central tasks of the process of democratization a change in the political culture that would originate from the very daily life as linked to differences in the social structure (Lechner, 1988: 40, 50, 62, 64). “Secondly, people’s interest in their daily lives must be linked to a more general discontentment: a discontentment with the customary ways of making politics” (Lechner, 1988: 60).

At that time, Lechner resumes the debate between authoritarianism and democratization via symbolic representations: actual fears and invisible fears; lack of security and a society under constant surveillance; the construction of democratic order and trust.

Who is afraid, and what are they afraid of? By defining fear as the perception of a threatening circumstance, whether real or imagined, I suggest that fear should be investigated – those fears present under the authoritarianism of the Latin American societies of the South Cone. ... What is it that people perceive as a vital threat? Firstly, any threat to their physical integrity (murder, torture, assault). Secondly, that which endangers the material conditions of their lives (poverty, unemployment, inflation, etc). ... Together with the visible fears, there are hidden fears, only verbalized ... Anguish, this vague fear with no defined object, can ruin everything: hopes fall apart, emotions vanish in thin air, vitality fades away. (Lechner, 1988: 95-96)

¹¹ *Un espejo trizado* was written by Brunner (1988).

Finally, the author evokes a need for utopia, given that “the utopia of democracy is the self-determination of a people over their circumstances and their way of life” (Lechner, 1988: 16).

However, during the military regimes in the South Cone, there was brutal repression and exile of sociologists, at first in Chile, then in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean Islands. The diaspora in Latin American sociology paradoxically produced an unprecedented process of academic exchanges and dialogue, and the ALAS Congresses moved to the Andean America and Central America.

In 1974, the 11th ALAS Congress was held in San José, Costa Rica, and Daniel Camacho was elected President. The main debate took place between two distinct approaches to Latin America: “a debate between those authors who advocate an approach that focuses on the concept of imperialism and those who choose to make use of the category of dependence” (Camacho, 1979: 12).

The 12th Congress took place in Quito, with Agustín Cueva as President. In 1979, at Panama City, Marco A. Gandásegui presided over the 13th ALAS Congress. Two years later, the 14th Congress, held in San Juan, Porto Rico, elected Denis Maldonado to chair the meeting.

The 15th ALAS Congress was organized in 1983, in Managua, while the Sandinist Revolution (1979-1990) was raging. The Congress’s final Declaration revealed the circumstances in Central America, considering the popular Sandinist Revolution as a culmination of an ample anti-imperialistic struggle of the people of Nicaragua in order to restore their sovereignty and build a more just social order. So, the 15th Latin American Congress of Sociology was committed to work, in the condition of revolutionary intellectuals, towards the commitment we have pledged to during this Congress (Mattos and Mato Grosso, 2005).

The atmosphere in that Managua Congress revealed hope in the overcoming of the dictatorships. According to Torres-Rivas (1993: 17),

The authoritarian forms of government are manifested, for instance, in the power the Somoza family had in Nicaragua for over forty years (1937-1979), or else in the permanence of the Army in the government of El Salvador for half a century (1931-1979), and with different characteristics, the military governments that followed Arbenz’s fall from power in Guatemala (1954-1982).

The Sandinist Revolution (1979-1989), the civil wars between guerrillas (F.M.L.N. against guerrillas with the participation of the Indians), as well as the authoritarian governments in El Salvador and Guatemala, they all paved the road to a yearning for social change, but they were followed by political agreements in the first case, and by peace treaties put forward by the Contadora Group, which left great hopes of change for the living conditions of the peoples of Central America (Figuerola Ibarra, *apud* Torres-Rivas, 1993: chapter 2).

That was the period of crisis and diversification in Latin American sociology (1973-1983),

characterized by an institutional and professional crisis in sociology under the cultural-political repression of the authoritarian regimes and, at the same time, by a deep paradigmatic crisis, i.e., by a crisis of the hegemony of the “scientific” sociology, given the emergence of theoretical options, such as the national sociology, the theory of dependence, and the theory of the “new authoritarianism” (Liedke Filho, 2005:400)

Rodolfo Stavenhagen’s work, *Siete tesis equivocadas sobre América Latina: sociología y subdesarrollo*, published in Mexico in 1973, represented a landmark in this critical rupture with the developmentalist and modernizing theories (Stavenhagen, *apud* Durand, 1974).

Alvarado and Santander (2003: 43) say that several authors, such as

... Theotonio dos Santos, Vania Bambirria, Andre Gonder Frank and Enzo Faletto, among many others, start asking themselves whether it was possible that the socioeconomic development could be frustrated **if similar** of the processes experienced by the “metropolitan” hegemonic countries.

Basically, they start thinking that underdevelopment is not founded in cultural specificities, but rather in the historical dynamics of a dialectic nature which requires from the countries to contribute with raw materials and cheap labor when facing the hegemonic societies, the ones that have capital and technological knowledge. By historical specificity the theoreticians of dependence mean the historical development of a social and productive structure, taken to be a class system that produces goods and offers services and through this mode of production keep a tense internal relationship”.

According to Florestan Fernandes, this was the “phase of reflecting on the bourgeois revolution in Brazil (1967-1986),” described in his book *A Revolução Burguesa no Brasil*, followed by another phase (1986-1995), that of the “citizenry militancy” (Liedke Filho, 2003b).

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto’s book, *Dependência e Desenvolvimento na América Latina*, written between 1966 and 1967 in Chile, in the CEPAL environment, published first in Chile and Mexico, and then in Brazil in 1970, was the sociological work from the region that had the most repercussion abroad. According to Cardoso and Faletto (1973: 7), their purpose was

... to clarify some controversial aspects about the conditions, possibilities, and forms of economic development in countries that, while keeping relations of dependence with the hegemonic poles of the capitalistic system, have managed to organize themselves into becoming Nations – and, just like any other State, aspire to sovereignty.

The authors present their concept of dependence: “The notion of dependence refers directly to what the conditions of existence are and to how the economic system and the political system function, and it shows the link there is between them, both in terms of the internal scenery and in terms of the external scenery.

The book’s merit could be thus summarized:

The comparative discussion of the sociopolitical crisis of the Latin American societies in the period of “expansion outwards” was based on the concepts of “situations of national control of the productive system” (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Colombia), vs. “situations of enclave economy” (Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Peru, and Central America). It came as a renewal in the interpretation of Latin American history. At the same time, it suggested the need for encompassing “the new character of dependence” – the internationalization of the markets – through opening the internal markets to external control, via the admission of foreign capital. (Liedke Filho, 2003b).

In Latin America, there were disagreements in the relation between the military governments and the academic, scientific, and technological development. Brunner and Bairois (1987: 42) argue that

... the military authoritarian governments – even though they could be extremely different from each other, as in the cases of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, on the one hand, and the case of Brazil, on the other – would affect the higher-education institution, deemed everywhere to have a pivotal role in the education of the elites, in the reproduction of the more sophisticated culture of the nation, in the social mobility of the social classes, in the distribution of professional and semi-professional staff among the various segments of the labor market, and in the political socialization of the youth.

In the Brazilian case, after professors, researchers and university teachers were expelled from various institutions, both in 1964 and in 1968, scientific and technological development was incorporated to the model of development and geopolitics that had been adopted, especially after 1975, in a phase called “gradual transition.” In Argentina (1966-1983), Chile (1973-1989), and Uruguay (1973-1985), a repressive and destructive authoritarianism prevailed in the universities in the area of social sciences (GARRETON, 1983, 1984).

V- Authoritarianism, democracy, and social exclusion (1983-2000)

After the Argentine example in 1983, the processes of re-democratization in the other countries (Brazil in 1985; Chile in 1989) outline new social processes, and in sociology the principal debate tackles authoritarianism, democracy and social exclusion, as the works of the Chilean sociologist GARRETON demonstrates appropriately (GARRETON, 1995, 2000, 2003).

It was then possible to scatter the ALAS Congresses throughout Latin America and the Caribbean Islands. In 1985, the 16th Congress was held in Rio de Janeiro, under the supervision of Theotonio dos Santos. In 1987, it was Montevideo’s turn to host the ALAS Congress in its 17th edition, when Geronimo de Sierra was elected President. In 1991, the 18th Congress was the only ALAS event ever to be held in Cuba; in Havana, Luis Suárez Salazar was elected President and wrote:

It is high time we should take a critical look at everything our peoples have done so far, as well as their political actors, the new and the old social movements, so that we may give leverage to the construction of a more just life, of a space of autonomy in the current excluding world system that oppresses us, all of us in the same way. (Salazar, 1992: 13)

Among the various debates, the question of the State in Latin America was summarized in three aspects by Marini (*apud* Suárez, 1992: 177):

The first question relates to the modes of participation of society in the structures and in exercising power, that is to say, to democracy. The second one relates to the ability this society will have to develop policies and to endow these policies with instruments of power that would cater for its own interests, and this concerns the economy, and consequently, dependence. The third and last question is based on our prospects for the future of Latin America, within the context of the changes the world has been going through in these last years of the 20th century.

The same topic was discussed by Calderón and Dos Santos (*apud* Suárez, 1992: 185-213), their work having been published as a book, with twenty theses suggested for a new State order in Latin America, with a theoretical foundation.

In the restructuring of the world’s economy and in its influence on the region, there is a prominent sociopolitical component, and not merely economic, for it is false, the automatic association “crisis - structural adjustment” ... The new historical cycle is characterized by the combination of a process of democratization of the political regime that will veer towards political inclusion with a process of modernization of the State that will veer towards social exclusion. (Calderón and Dos Santos, 1991: 15, 20)

The following Congress was held in Caracas, in 1993. On that occasion, sociologist Heinz

Sonntag was elected President of the 19th ALAS Congress (Sonntag and Briceño-León, 1998). The more outstanding debates tackled the following subjects: the viability of democracy in Latin America in the 1990s; models for alternative development and for social policies; culture, modernity, and cultural tradition; and democracy, citizenship, and representativity.

During that period, it was noteworthy the density in the theoretical and interpretive contribution of sociologists, in different countries from Latin América. In Peru, for instance, there was José Matos Mar, Aníbal Quijano, and Julio Cotler (*Clases, Estado y Nación en el Perú*, 1978). And we have already mentioned the sociological production in Chile, with Enzo Faletto, José Brunner, Norbert Lechner, Sérgio Gómez, and so many others. In Brazil Florestan Fernandes, Octavio Ianni, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, José de Sousa Martins, Gabriel Cohn, and a brand new generation of young sociologists, many of them having just completed their doctoral studies at the University of São Paulo, at the University of Brasilia, at IUPERJ- Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro - or else at universities abroad (mainly France, the UK, Germany, the USA, and Mexico) in the 1980s and the 1990s.

Much work was carried out in the field of agrarian studies, and they were written from a critical viewpoint – in the sense that they overcame theoretically the concept of modernization, they interpreted the changes in the social classes in the agrarian milieu, they acknowledged the political presence of the peasants in the Latin American societies, and they evaluated the social changes in the agrarian milieu (Gomez and Echenique, 1988; León Lopez *et al.*, 1999). After the monumental collection coordinated by Pablo González Casanova on the *Historia Política de los Campesinos Latinoamericanos* (1984, 1985), as well as after Roger Bartra's (1974, 1981, 1982) work on the Mexican peasants and political power in Mexico, and after the same theme showed up in José de Souza Martins's work in Brazil, the presence of the peasantry as a social force in Latin America was once again a topic in sociological studies, and these include the socio-historical studies by Arturo Warman, Jacques Chonchol, and José Bengoa. At the same time, there was a boom of studies on the possible configurations for a “new ruralism” that would be heterogeneous and polysemic (Giarraca, 2001; Gomez, 2002; Pérez, 2001).

The changes in contemporary societies imposed new challenges to sociology in Latin America after the global crisis that took place between 1989 and 1991, thus calling to an end a short 20th century (Hobsbawm, 1994). These new challenges were specially acute in the beginning of the 21st century, a historical period one may very well call “the worldization of social conflictualities,” characterized by the globalization of economy, by an intensification of the speculative capital, and by post-modernity taking over as a cultural form.

One of the main challenges all sociological collectivities from Latin America had to face from that period on was that of putting together an identity of its own, independent, as wrote Castañeda SABINO (2004: 306), in reference to sociology in his country: “Mexican sociology, in order to advance, must put together an identity of its own, independent of both society and State.”

VI- The institutional consolidation and the worldization of Latin American sociology (after the year 2000)

In the process of worldization of Latin American sociology, the social dilemmas take on new configurations:

... the current debate on possible alternatives due to the divisions of the globalized world: defensive unawareness, self-isolation *vis-à-vis* the appeal to violence; entrenchment in a tradition based on authority and hierarchy, fulfilling pre-established norms *vis-à-vis* a democratic dialogue that faces increasing demands for social participation in public spaces. (Liedke, 2003: 15)

This is the period when political democracy was steadily constructed in Latin America, with specific processes of re-democratization: the peace treaties in the countries of Central America (Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador), and the construction of a lawful democratic State, with

increasing claims for human rights, social rights, and all sorts of collective rights – or the so-called right to difference, aspiring to an extended social democracy and to constant and full practice of citizenship by all citizens. This is a time for theoretical debate involving different notions of State, social classes, and new social movements (Larangeira, 1990; Medeiros, 1989; Scherer-Warren and Krischke, 1987), complete with discussions on modernity, post-modernity, and a not yet defined “neo-socialism” (Domingos, 1999; Ianni, 1996, 2000; Pierucci, 1999).

In current sociology, “there is a constant concern with the ever bigger social exclusion and there is an attempt to find models that will allow for practices and actions of social inclusion” (Barreira, 2003: 15). The ALAS Congresses in the 1990s manifested this concern.

In 1995, the 20th ALAS Congress was held in Mexico, and Raquel Sosa was elected President. The congress’s theme was “Latin America and the Caribbean Islands: prospects for their reconstruction,” and at that time a critical review was carried out of the bibliographical production in sociology. The responsibility of sociologists was ratified: “We, Latin Americans, derive strength from our history and from our identity to cope with adversity. Therefore, we intend to carry on a sure and long-term struggle for the re-construction of our countries” (Sosa, 1996: 5).

The main social and political questions discussed at that Congress were the following, according to Sosa (1996: 6):

the contemporary challenges to the Latin American social thinking, globalization, the integration of Latin America into the new world scenery, the question of migrations and frontiers, the demographic transition, problems of the transition to democracy, political culture and the media,¹² political violence, the agrarian/urban crisis, the prospects for recovery of the environment and the design of a program for sustainable development, the problems of gender and autonomy for the different ethnic groups.

In other words, three categories of sociological topics were discussed in the Mexican ALAS Congress:

(1) questions of theory, methodology, ethics, values and how they relate to our knowledge of Latin America; (2) a review of the major renowned interpretations of the region’s problems ...; (3) the social sciences when faced with these new problems, categories, institutions and different forms of social, political and cultural movement and participation in Latin America. (Olivier, 1996: 5)

The production of new knowledge after the social struggles and movements, in circumstances where we have once again criticism against the neo-liberal hegemony – e.g., as in the Zapatist Movement – was taking place, according to González Casanova (*apud* Sosa, 1996: 24),

in small zigzags, just like fractals – real or utopian –, and expresses itself with implicit meanings containing strong elements of ambiguity and confusion, meanings which become precise and explicit as the social and political movements act on the struggles for immediate purposes; as reflection on our practical experiences are shared, our imaginative experiences are shared, the experiences with our daily-life struggles are shared, until they can be accepted and internalized as one thought only, pervasive in and common to the movement.

The question of the prospects for democracy in Latin America was the big issue at that moment, as Dario Salinas (1999: 10) pointed out:

It’s no big news that politics has changed; this can be easily verified. The

¹² Cf. Crovi Druetta, 1996.

problem stems from checking whether this change is positive for the people, for their establishing their participation in the fundamental issues of society, and for the solution to their problems of well-being.

The following ALAS Congress, the 21st, was held in 1997, at the University of São Paulo, in the city of São Paulo, and Emir Sader was elected President. The final Declaration of the 21st Congress establishes a clear analysis of Latin America at the threshold of the 21st century:

There are representative-democratic regimes in most of our countries today. In those, one can spot a struggle between concepts, projects, forces, and tendencies of diverse nature. On the one hand, an option is presented which favors an increasing concentration of power both political and economic, exclusion of the majority, and the existence of programs that reinforce social control, secure governability, and limit the people's participation in public life. On the other hand, democracy has in fact expanded the presence of the collectivities, the creation of horizontal networks not only of cultural and political organizations but also of social movements; democracy has also encouraged (and made deeper) the changes in both forms and means of the public activity, the establishment of new relations and means of alternative communication, the establishment of principles for a participative institutionality and for a democratic culture. ... It is notorious, the richness of democratic experiences and propositions that have emerged in these last few years. The Latin American Sociology Association ratifies its commitment to that drive for a Latin American thought in its own right: non-colonial, identified with the problems and struggles of the majorities, with the purpose of arriving at a democracy from everyone to everyone, with no exclusions, with no one excluded from it.

The book written by Emir Sader (1988) restated that “the Latin American societies experience one of the most daunting social crises of its history,” something that requires from the social thought not only diagnoses on what the roots may be for this crisis, but also political responsibility to present proposals and contribute in such a way that alternative solutions triumph over the neo-liberal policies. Octavio Ianni wrote in Sader's book an article that summarizes his contribution to the sociological explanation of the “era of globalism.”

Globalism reveals itself as a totality that is not only geo-historical, but also socially, economically, politically and culturally comprehensive. It actually means a complete totality: heterogeneous, uneven, contradictory, integrated and fragmentary, where individuals and collectivities, social groups and social classes, tribes and nations both settle down and move about. (Ianni, *apud* Sader, 1998: 17)¹³

We were living a heralded neo-liberalism, the generator of a process of economic globalization, the generator of an “original” thinking and of increasing social inequalities, the generator of a “world of poverty” in “violent times” (Boron, Gambina, Minsburg, 1999). The Cuban experience was facing the challenges brought about by the changes in its insertion in the world economy (Cips, 2003; Suárez, 2001). In 1999, the 22nd ALAS Congress took place in Concepción, Chile, and Eduardo Aquevedo Soto was elected President. Based on the Congress's theme (“Which way is Latin America headed?”), the final Declaration stated the following:

From our stand, the alternative should be based on the reinforcement of the democracies at the national level, of the alliances between and of solidarity

¹³ IANNI, Octavio. *A Sociedade Global*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1992. IANNI, Octavio. *A Era do Globalismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1996.

among all the countries in the continent and those countries in the periphery of the planet, excluded as they are from the mega-markets of the rich countries. In the first place, one should be aware that, while experiencing the crisis of the neo-liberal models, it is a must that alternatives that contemplate a sustainable development be designed, and such alternatives must articulate productivity and social equity. This will only be possible with the expansion of the internal market and with policies that are efficient in terms of redistributing the national income. Moreover, we, the sociologists here assembled, accept as our duty and will contribute to the promotion of a new vision of the continent based on the development of a scientific and technological infrastructure that is adequate in terms of the demands from our societies. We do believe it is possible to actually contribute with our work to liberate the social energies contained in the movements of the youth, of the women, of the Indian peoples, in advocating their rights to freedom, justice, cultural diversity, sovereignty, and environmental sustainability, to name but a few.

In 2001, the 1st Regional Conference of the International Sociological Association (ISA) made manifest the worldization in sociology in Latin America. It was held in Venezuela, coordinated by Roberto Briceño-León, hosted by the Venezuelan Sociology Association. Briceño-León (*apud* Romero Salazar, 2001: 54, 61) elaborated on the following analysis of sociology:

It seems to us there are three main features this sociology must keep and cherish in this new century we are now entering: its empiricism, its eclecticism, and its commitment. ... The eclectic response that Latin American sociology will eventually give is based on the very mixed ancestry of the continent, both as a reality to be explained from its own distinctiveness and as a political posture that focuses on integrating those excluded.

Concern with the social responsibility of sociology in Latin America was already a topic of discussion in a previous text by the author (Sonntag and Briceño-León, 1998: 24):

We must be aware of the peoples, of the distinctiveness of our societies; one must not under any circumstances let go of that sympathizing vocation to hurt with another's pain, ... nor one should abandon the ideas of social changes and of what sociology can possibly contribute to transform the unjust and underdeveloped societies in which we live. However, we must also tackle current times with all the scientific tools available to us ...

Assuming the analysis developed by Hobsbawm on the end of the 20th century, the Age of Extremes, one may define the 21st century in its first period (which has begun in 1991) as the period of the process of worldization, characterized by a globalization of the capitalistic activities, by the global crisis, and by the hybrid cultures in Latin America (Calderón and Santos, 1995; Garcia Canclini, 1989; Ianni, 2000; Strasser, 2000).

During this 10-year period, we arrived at a worldization of analyses, discussions and debates on some of the new global social issues, mainly through conferences sponsored by international organizations like the United Nations: there was the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989; the Rio Earth Summit (Eco-1992), in Brazil, to discuss the question of the relation men-environment; the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, in 1995; the World Summit for Social Development, in Copenhagen, in 1995; the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to discuss issues on housing, held in Istanbul, in 1996; and the World Food Summit, in Rome, in 1996.

In the mid-1990s, a new wave of protests is set off against the effects of the globalization process – a process that molds social forms marked by the effects of exclusion derived from the neo-

liberal policies, thus giving rise to new social conflicts, sometimes establishing limits to the consolidation of democracy in the countries peripheral to the capitalistic world. Examples are many, from the Zapatist movement (Jan. 1994) to the demonstrations against the meetings of the international financial organizations. In other words, as Theotonio dos Santos (2004: 5) wrote:

We have tried to demonstrate ... how the neo-liberal doctrine was imposed upon the contemporary world, and how the economic policies derived from it have produced terrible inequalities in the world economy, leading us to a general discomfort into which we have plunged because of the contemporary society.

Against such discomfort of the contemporary civilization, a world process has been developed of debates on “another world possible,” something which has been taking place since the First World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, in 2001, until the Fifth World Social Forum, again in Porto Alegre, in 2005. The new century in fact has begun in Porto Alegre: another world is possible. A world where we would have no foreign debt; where the poor countries of the Southern hemisphere would play a more important role; where there would be an end to structural adjustments; where a Tobin tax could be applied to foreign exchange markets; where there would be no such thing as a fiscal paradise; where aid to development would increase and no models from the Northern hemisphere would be adopted, because they are ecologically unsustainable; where there would be a massive investment in schools, housing, and sanitation; where some 1.4 billion people would finally have access to potable water; where the struggle for the emancipation of women would be taken seriously; where measures of precaution would be taken against all genetic manipulation; and where the current privatization of life would be slowed down, eventually coming to a halt. (Cattani, 2001; Ramonet, 2001; Seoane and Taddei, 2001)

The social questions, focusing on work issues since the 19th c. (Castel, 1998), now become complex and global questions, for many are the dimensions of social issues that are now socially questioned – among them the question of social ties. The changes in the working world, given the technological transformations that bring about scantier and more uncertain work opportunities, provoke a crisis to the labor unions, unemployment, and a process of social selection/exclusion (Cardoso, 2003; Sierra, 2001; Sobral Fonseca and Porto Grossi, 2001; Larangeira, *apud* Tavares-dos-Santos, 1999).¹⁴

Among the current social conflicts, the phenomena of diffuse violence have increased. They have acquired new characteristics, and now are pervasive in the entire society (Pinheiro, 1982, 1983, 1998; Preciado, 2004; Revista Delito y Sociedad, 1992-2004). One finds multiple forms of violence in the contemporary societies – ecological violence, social exclusion, violence between the genders, racism, violence in school, – and this comes to prove that citizenship is going through a process of dilaceration (Briceño-León, 2002; Sosa, 2004; Tavares-dos-Santos, 1999). Throughout the planet, the option expands for an increase in the police functions of social repressive control, with a systematic appeal to the use of illegal and illegitimate violence, thus bringing about a “State of social penal control.”¹⁵ In other words, we face contemporary forms of social control that are characteristic of a repressive State plus a crisis in the welfare State: “What is in question here is how and why the democracies we know take some of the blame for this terrible picture of inequalities and this growing inequality we have in front of us today” (Strasser, 2000: 14).

There is a visibility and a notion of the importance the social struggles have against the worldization of injustice: we find new agents of resistance; we face the denial of a centralized State power acting on the social space-time, a denial that asserts a different cartography – pointillistic and procedural – in the ordering of the social world. Then, within the picture of crisis in the Latin

¹⁴ Cf. MICELI, Sérgio (org.). *O que ler na Ciência Social Brasileira (1970-1995)*. São Paulo: ANPOCS / Sumaré, 1999, vol. II; MICELI, Sérgio (org.). *O que ler na Ciência Social Brasileira (1970-2002)*. São Paulo: ANPOCS / Sumaré, 2002, vol. IV.

¹⁵ PAVARINI, Massimo & PEGORARO, Juan. *El control social en el fin del siglo*. Buenos Aires: UBA, 1995; PEGORARO, Juan. Inseguridad y violencia en el marco del control social, in: TAVARES-DOS-SANTOS, José Vicente (org.). *Violências no tempo da Globalização*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1999.

American cities, it would be possible to consider the construction of a transnational or world citizenship, one that would be marked by the conceiving of social, juridical, and symbolic practices that were innovative and global (Joseph, 2005; Ribeiro Torres, 2004).

Processes of social exclusion are unleashed: the landless, the social-classless, the computerless, the homeless, the foodless, the workless, at times being harder on the young (Balardini, 2000; Tavares-dos-Santos, 2002). A new world social space of conflictualities is delineating itself in the spaces and times of the “era of globalism” (Beccaria and López, 1996; Ianni, 1996; Mazzei, 2002, Minujin, 1995; Souza Martins, 2002). Being against a normative and programmed society (resulting from a power technology centered in life itself) and against a State guided towards social penal control, social forces of resistance have emerged in this still very young 21st century; examples range from the *protestas* to the social movements, all of them seeking alternatives to “imperialism” (Almeyra, 2004; Borón, 2002; Cels, 2003; Giarracca, 2001; Scribano, 2003; Seoane, 2003).

In 2001, the 23rd ALAS Congress took place in Antigua, Guatemala. On that occasion, Eduardo Velásquez was elected President. The participants in the event expressed themselves thus in their final document:

We, the social scientists gathered in Antigua by ALAS, reiterate our commitment to a humanistic and critical thinking that engages in justice and peace, fights the various forms of oppression that crush our peoples today, pursues the consolidation of a Latin American identity, aims at restoring integrity and dignity, aims at the economic, social and cultural integration of our peoples, and seeks an active participation in the construction of a better and peaceful world.

The 24th ALAS Congress was held in Arequipa, Peru, in 2003, and Jordan Rosas Valdivia was elected President (Zeballos, Salinas, Tavares-dos-Santos, 2005). Its central theme revealed the moment the continent was experiencing: “Civil Society: actors and organizations.” The final Declaration stated:

As social scientists from this region of the world, permanently committed to its obtainment, we can contribute with vocation, creativity and initiative in this and in the next period, so that these new possibilities for development may become sound and solid to the benefit of society as a whole. We take this opportunity to ask that our critical part in this may once again show all its energy and strength.

Much was discussed, in Arequipa, about inequality, poverty, and exclusion in the Latin American societies, in all of its many aspects: scarcity and instability of work opportunities, urban poverty, the new poor, and the rupture of social ties. On the other hand, some heartening experiences start to blossom – albeit extremely difficult and painful – in terms of a reconstruction of sociabilities, in terms of social struggles and movements, in terms of demonstrations and political participation. One can perceive, then, that the excluded are, in fact, including themselves, in a new step forward in history. Alternatives can be foreseen: the renewal of forms to generate income, the reconfiguration of the social capital through solidarity networks, and with an underlying vulnerability, the processes that allow for the emergence of collective actions which apparently are strong enough to inspire hope in those excluded by the hegemonic model of globalization (Díaz and Cattani, 2004).

Once again, critical knowledge had to face the challenges of interpreting the world social changes and their social and epistemological effects on Latin American sociology (Barreira, 2003; Delich, 2004; Lande, 2003; Sanchez and Sosa, 2004). In accordance with this outlook, we can find a synthesis of the more outstanding Latin American social sciences’ contributions to or reinterpretations of sociological knowledge, as it presented itself in the second half of the 20th century, in these concepts put together by Pablo González Casanova (1999: 7):

(1) Political independence. (2) Order. (3) Progress (and development). (4) Liberty. (5) Revolution. (6) Marginalization. (7) Center-periphery (and

their exchange relations). (8) Dependence (but seeking for economic, social, political, and cultural independence, with both a superseded nationalism and the acknowledgment of a global capitalism). (9) Domestic colonialism. (10) Socialist revolution and moral revolution. (11) Political systems and systems of power. (12) Informal society and authoritarian formalism, and the neo-liberal informal society (13) Exploitation. (14) The oppressed pedagogy and collective pedagogy (with both the reading of texts and the reading of the world). (15) Liberation theology (the respect accorded to the faith and the preferential option for the poor). (16) Democracy. (17) Radical post-modernism and constructing the world (with struggles and negotiation; with autonomy and networks). It is centered around the concept of “Democracia de todos,” including social groups of the various ethnic origins and the civil society.

VII- Prospects for contemporary sociology in Latin America

The 25th Congress of the Latin American Sociology Association (ALAS) to be held in Porto Alegre in August 2005 will follow the theme “Development, Crisis, Democracy – participation, social movements and sociological theory.” The central topics are: (1) the dilemmas and the possibilities of democracy in Latin America, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands – political violence vs. ethics; and (2) the theoretical challenges, both classical and contemporary, for sociology in Latin America.

Such social and sociological problems are to be analyzed and discussed in 7 conferences, 22 round-tables, 6 forums and meetings, and 29 work groups, for which we have over 1,000 communications already approved for presentation.

We may summarize the social questions and the sociological problems in an emerging agenda for sociology in Latin America:

- the development of sociology: concepts, methodologies, teaching/research institutions, and associations and labor unions;
- society’s development and crisis: rural spaces, migrations, cities, environment, and social structures;
- worldization, knowledge, networks, international relations, sustainability, and world democratic alternatives;
- processes and crisis of the institutions of socialization: family, school, and the dilemmas of both childhood and adolescence;
- productive restructuring, work made uncertain and scanty, vulnerability, and social exclusion;
- sociology of the differences: gender relations, ethnical relations, and cultural diversity;
- State and social policies: neo-liberalism, governability, social harmonizing and social management;
- social control, violence, administering justice, and human rights;
- social movements, civil society, and social demonstrations;
- hybrid cultures, political culture, the media, citizens as consumers and cultural practices, religions, and symbolism.

The circular letter inviting for the 25th ALAS Congress denotes the current concerns of sociologists in Latin America:

The ALAS Congresses held in the last ten years – in São Paulo, Concepción, Antigua (Guatemala), and Arequipa – have examined the different phases of the development of models and processes of restructuring our societies that have taken place during the previous decades, due to the so-called era of globalization and to the apex of neo-liberal capitalism. We have consequently watched work opportunities

becoming scarce and uncertain, we have watched generalized poverty, social exclusion, deterioration of the environment, and the crisis of the processes leading to democratization in the Latin American countries. On the other hand, the role of the civil society – with its peasants' movements, its landless rural workers, its citizens and its civil society organizations, as well as the NGOs – has acquired real importance within social criticism and in suggesting alternatives for economic and social development. In this context, street demonstrations and the social, political and cultural resistance of the social actors play an essential role. The social movements have grown, and the forms of social participation have multiplied in the Latin American countries, with their getting established as a central agent in the processes of democratic defense and construction. The new prospects that emerge in this beginning of a new century for the Latin American peoples lead us to consider political, social, economic, even cultural changes in the continent. And such changes must present themselves with good prospects for sustainability, equity, and social justice, in order to secure a better future for the Latin American peoples. (www.ufrgs.br/alaspoa)

Conclusion: sociology and society in Latin America

Sociology, in this still young 21st century, expresses the deep changes of contemporary societies. New manners of dealing with the social issues are being outlined now, as well as new agents and different social struggles, thus bringing about innovative social processes and very specific social representations (Tavares-dos-Santos, *apud* Barreira, 2003: 195).

The first period of the 21st century is characterized by a globalization of the economic processes and by a worldization of the new social questions. Globalization may be defined, as in Therbon (2001: 125), as “being either related to tendencies in global scope, impact, or enchainment of the social phenomena, or related to an awareness that is world-encompassing among the social actors.” The social status of the populations more directly touched by globalization reveals unequal opportunities in life, i.e., an unequal access to resources and the experiencing of unequal social situations. Such situations may be summarized in eight dimensions: health and health care, housing, work and employment, education, relations of sociability, security of person, information and knowledge, and political participation. The configuration of new social questions in the world can be recognized in each and every dimension listed, due to the level of awareness of the social agents, as well as to their different positions, regarding social class, gender, and ethnic origin.

The current period, that of a worldization process, is characterized by post-modernity as the cultural form, by an intensive use and usage of scientific knowledge (now a decisive element in the process of constructing a capitalistic society), by the expansion of industrial production, by the intensification of the speculative capital, and by the world crisis. Furthermore, “a technological revolution that focuses on the information technologies has been remodeling the material foundations of society at a speedy pace” (Castells, 2000: 21).

In the last twenty years of the 20th century, science and technology – already playing a strategic role, and playing it together, having turned into a productive force – give way to technoscience, a system of efficient actions based on scientific knowledge. These actions are guided towards both nature and society, with the aim of changing the world, rather than just describing, predicting, explaining, understanding it. Technoscience means the scientific activity is now entrepreneurial and, being a relevant factor of innovation and economic development, it has become a dominant power in society as well, and its practice tends to yield to secrecy and privatization (Echeverría, 2003).

Science, technology, and innovation have proved to be again and again the propelling force of the great competition that leads to economic supremacy, progress, economic and social development.

In this context, the purposes of science, technology and innovation are directly determined by the demands of the markets (Baumgarten, 2005).

The strategic role played by science and technology in the contemporary picture, and the unequal diffusion of qualifications to produce and use science between the different nations is what puts back into the scenario the difficulty of insertion in the world economy those countries have that are peripheral and depend on knowledge and innovation that is generated in the dynamic centers of the capitalistic economy (Hassam, 1999).

The analysis of the relation between capitalistic economic development and social and environmental sustainability in the latter third of the 20th century denotes huge contradictions, both in terms of differences between discourse and practice and in terms of the action itself of the various social actors involved. The course that the capitalistic development is taking both in the world and in Latin America does not seem to be leading to a new planetary conscience and to actions aiming at sustainability, but rather to the solution of immediate problems in favor of adjusting the economy and in favor of interests of the hegemonic nations (Baumgarten, 2002; Bursztyn, 2001; Dupas, 2000; Fiori, 2003).

At the same time, the increasing impact of globalization and the lucrative characteristics of the dynamics of technoscience translate themselves into an increasing relevance of the developing internationalization of teaching/research institutions (Guadilla, 2004). The exponential increase in the intensity of interactions between the international scientific collectivities, made easier by the new electronic and communications technology, has led to the construction of networks around the Science & Technology activities. Such networks function beyond their original institutional contexts (universities, research institutes, corporate firms, governments), thus attaining an increasing autonomy (Castells, 2000).

In the context of the new century, the importance has grown of the transnational cooperation between teaching/research institutions and corporative institutions, so much so that it is now taken for granted in the developed countries. International collaboration in the southern countries, however, is numbed by their small participation in the industrial sector and by their low financial investment in research, as well as by their choosing to import ready-made technological packages, thus increasing their scientific-technological dependence (Braun, 1999).

In the current world scene, branded by global social questions that are manifested in an articulate manner but with different specificities in different societies, sociology in Latin America has been contributing to the debate on the changes that follow both the new forms of production of life material and immaterial and the new forms of knowledge in the societies.

The social transformations and the urgent matters of our collective life lead the social groups to demand from sociological knowledge that it explain the social and historical processes. Public demands are growing – through governmental agencies, – as are growing the demands from private corporations and from associations and labor unions, for sociological investigations, and this comes as an effect of the significant commotion (in terms of cognition and in terms of identity) brought about by the social changes of the present time.

The quality of the sociologist's scientific work comprises a *sine-qua-non* social responsibility, an absolute respect for human rights, and an academic attitude that is guided by justice, and these will make of him/her a social scientist who respects both the scientific merit and the social relevance of his own research work.

The new, world social questions constitute an ample set of topics to be considered and to be answered to in the sociological practice. On the one hand, these social questions refer to the intensification of relations of production and of the mercantile trade in the planetary space, to the globalization of economy, and to the restructuring of capital and labor. On the other hand, they express the diminished regulatory capacity of the national States to control the ordering of both labor and the production of goods in their own territories: crisis of hegemony, social and political violence, violations of human rights (Marini and Millán, 1996). If there are several emancipatory possibilities, there is a whole universe of social exclusion and social-spatial segregation – through social classes, gender, ethnic origin, cultural affinities, age groups – that requires a critical theory to be constructed of the contemporary society.

Latin American sociology has found its place within the globalized space of sociological knowledge; it has won total academic and scientific legitimacy, and is now recognized by civil

society and by the State to be a field of knowledge capable of building a critical awareness of the social reality.

The elements of sociological thinking – scientific investigation, political commitment, and sociological imagination – were built little by little on an insertion that is both tense and stimulating, uniting the formality of a research work plus critical thinking to the processes of social change in Latin America, following the epistemological ruptures of the present time:

... critical thinking has better chances to triumph when it redefines dialectics with technoscience and with the sciences of complexity; whenever it strengthens the thinking-and-doing of contradictory relations with the critical experiences of the social classes, the nations, the citizenships, and organizes them through complexes and networks in order to accomplish different goals. (González Casanova, 2004: 438)

In this sociological adventure – through social times of the past and the future, threading on social spaces that interact between the local, the national, and the planetary, – an event calls for the presence of all Latin American sociologists: the 25th Latin American Congress of Sociology, to be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in August 2005.

By reviewing some of the contributions of Latin American sociologists to the sociological interpretation in this last century – contributions which have revealed critical reasoning and significant ability in their social analysis, – we expect we may be in a way teaching the new generations about the importance of a profession's persistency: here we have sociology as knowledge acquiring the symbolic power to describe the social fact, to unveil the world, to explain history, and with audacity, to contribute in the changing of the Latin American solidarities and utopias in the 21st century.

ANNEX

CONGRESSES AND THEIR RESPECTIVE PRESIDENTS

- ALAS is founded during the 1st International Sociological Association (ISA) Congress, in Zurich, Switzerland
1. 1951 – BUENOS AIRES – Alfredo Poviña
 2. 1953 – RIO DE JANEIRO – Manuel Diegues Junior
 3. 1955 – QUITO – Alfredo Poviña
 4. 1957 – SANTIAGO DE CHILE – Astolfo Tapia
 5. 1959 – MONTEVIDEO – Isaac Ganon
 6. 1961 – CARACAS – Rafael Caldera
 7. 1964 – BOGOTÁ – Aníbal Quijano (Vice-President).
 8. 1967 – SAN SALVADOR – Manuel Diegues Junior
 9. 1969 – MEXICO – Pablo González Casanova
 10. 1972 – SANTIAGO DE CHILE – Guillermo Briones
 11. 1974 – SAN JOSÉ, Costa Rica – Daniel Camacho
 12. 1977 – QUITO – Agustín Cueva
 13. 1979 – CIUDAD DE PANAMÁ – Marco A. Gandásegui
 14. 1981 – SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Denis Maldonado
 15. 1983 – MANÁGUA – Pablo Gonzales Casanova
 16. 1985 – RIO DE JANEIRO – Theotonio dos Santos
 17. 1987 – MONTEVIDEO – Geronimo de Sierra
 18. 1991 – LA HABANA – Luis Suárez Salazar
 19. 1993 – CARACAS – Heinz Sonntag
 20. 1995 – MEXICO CITY – Raquel Sosa Elizaga
 21. 1997 – SÃO PAULO – Emir Sader

22. 1999 – CONCEPCIÓN – Eduardo Aquevedo Soto
23. 2001 – ANTIGUA, Guatemala – Eduardo Vélasquez
24. 2003 – AREQUIPA – Jordan Rosas Valdivia
25. 2005 – PORTO ALEGRE – José Vicente Tavares-dos-Santos.

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Abstract

This paper tackles the role played by sociology in the analysis of the transformation processes in the Latin American societies, in following the construction process of both State and Nation, and in questioning the social issues in Latin America. Six periods of sociology in Latin America and in the Caribbean Islands are analyzed: (i) sociology's intellectual inheritance; (ii) the authoritative-teaching sociology; (iii) the "scientific sociology" period and the configuration of the "critical sociology"; (iv) the institutional crisis, consolidation of the "critical sociology", and the diversification of sociology; (v) the sociology of authoritarianism, of democracy, and of exclusion; and (vi) the institutional consolidation and the worldization of sociology in Latin America (from the year 2000 on). It can be said that the distinctive features of the sociological knowledge in the continent have been: internationalism, hybridism, critical approach to the processes and conflicts in the Latin American societies, and social commitment on the part of the sociologist.

Key words: sociology in Latin America, Latin American societies, the Latin American Sociology Association (ALAS)

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