

Latin American Critical Thought Theory and Practice

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'Critical Thought: Theory and Practice'



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CRITICAL THOUGHT**

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José Vicente Tavares dos Santos*

**CONTEMPORARY
LATIN AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY
AND THE CHALLENGES FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE**

INTRODUCTION

This article approaches the role played by Sociology in the analysis of the transformation processes of Latin American societies, following the process of construction of the State and the Nation, and in the research about the social issues in Latin America. Also, we will analyze the effects of worldization of the social conflicts, always maintaining a multiple international dialogue.

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The *new world social issues* make an intellectual dialogue with Chinese sociology possible, building up a productive agenda for the future of the contemporary sociology.

The distinctive features of the sociological knowledge in Latin America 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 (Germani, 1959; Castaneda, 2004; Chacon, 1977; Ianni, 1993; Marini & Millán, 1994).

We may identify six periods in Latin American and Caribbean sociology:

1. The intellectual inheritance of sociology (from the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century).
2. The sociology of the chair (1850-1950).
3. The 'scientific sociology' and the configuration of 'critical sociology' (1950- 1973).
4. The institutional crisis, the consolidation of 'critical sociology', and the diversification (1973-1983).
5. The sociology of authoritarianism, democracy, and exclusion (1983-2000).
6. The institutional consolidation and the worldization of Latin American sociology (since 2000).

To analyze this internationalization of sociology, it seems interesting to formulate three hypotheses:

1. The Latin American sociology forms, from the years 1930, an intellectual approach marked by the internationalism and by sociological innovation.
2. It is not possible to understand the contemporary sociology without considering the work of Latin American sociologists.
3. The legacy of the critical approach on sociology could be an intellectual method to design a dialogue with others sociological traditions, as for instance, with the new Chinese Sociology.

The outlines of the sociological knowledge in Latin America must be remembered: the internationalism, the hybridism, the diversity and the critical analyses of the social process, the social conflicts and the public commitment of sociologists. Latin American Sociology is inserted in the global space of the sociological knowledge: it has scientific le-

gitimacy, and has been recognized by the civil society and by the State as a critical conscience of the social reality. The Critical thought needs the construction of a new paradigm, in order to be able to imagine political alternatives, working with the dialectic between the sciences of the complexity and the experiences of the classes, the nations and the citizenship (González Casanova, 2004; Mejía Navarrete, 2009).

PROSPECTS FOR CRITICAL SOCIOLOGY FROM LATIN AMERICA

The twenty-first century expresses long transformations of the contemporary societies, with new forms of the social agents, others social forces, emerging new social movements and a set of social representations very diverse. The present period is marked by the post modernity as a cultural form, by the intensive use of the scientific knowledge in new technologies, by the expansion of the industrial production but with precarious labour, by the advance of the financial capital but also a global social crisis (Hobsbawm, 1996; 2000; Ianni, 1992, 1996; Jameson, 1996; Arrighi, 2007).

The Late Modernity means also the worldization of Social Conflicts and the new transnational social issues, which are analyzed by an international sociology. Indeed, a revolution within the information technology is reframing the material base of the society (Castells, 1996) but the purposes of science, technology and innovation are mostly determined by the market's demands (Baumgarten, 2008).

The new social questions are more complex: the question of social inclusion / exclusion; the relation of man with Nature, indicating the ecological issue; the transformations of urban and agrarian spaces; the fragmentation of the cities; the question of the multiculturalism and transculturalism; the dilemmas of the University, science and the technology; the changes through the new technologies; the forms of violence; the ambivalent lines of the civilizing process and the alternatives of development for the contemporary societies (Castel, 1998; Castells, 1996; Ianni, 2004; Wieviorka, 2004).

There is a deep process of social exclusion — the unemployed, the migrants, the underclass, the landless peasants, those with hunger and 'without work', and people experiencing the digital divide (De Sousa Santos, 2000). The social bonds have been broken, by means of social fragmentation processes, a mass society but with individual values (Ianni, 1996). Among the new social questions, even crime acquires new contours and the multiplicity of violence produces a process of lacerating citizenship (Tavares dos Santos, 2009).

We live, from the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the sixth period of this long intellectual history: the institutional consolidation and the internationalization of the Latin American Sociology. So, it is possible to enunciate a set of questions:

1. Which is the significance of the Latin American Sociology in the age of worldization of social conflicts?
2. How to develop a cosmopolite dialogue with others national sociologies, from the North to the South, from the West to the East?
3. How to express the Latin American social diversity in the spectrum of the new worldwide social questions?
4. How to construct the recognition of the Latin American sociological thought in an international sociology?

I. THE INTELLECTUAL INHERITANCE OF SOCIOLOGY (FROM THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY)

The intellectual inheritance of sociology in Latin America was outlined by authors who were concerned with 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 Latin American nations until the beginning of the twentieth century. 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, Comte's positivism, and Spencer's evolutionism (Liedke Filho, 2003).

In Brazil, the intellectual milieu was marked by the Modernist Revolution (1922), a blossom of ideas that grew in 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); *Evolução Política do Brasil*, by Caio Prado Junior (1933); and *Raízes do Brasil*, by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1936).

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) and Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre (1895), *El Imperialismo y el APRA*; 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) (Romero Salazar, 2001: 21). In Mexico, the following books had been published: *Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales*, by José Vasconcelos and Andrés Molina Henríquez; *Las clases sociales*, by Mariano Otero, and

Evolución Política del Pueblo Mexicano, by Justo Sierra. In Argentina, as early as in the nineteenth century, *Facundo o civilización y barbarie*, by Sarmiento (1811-1888), published in 1845, (Sarmiento, 1994).

The major result of social thinkers contribution was the gain of legitimacy of a certain discourse on society, one that defined the intellectual as an interpreter of the meaning of the national society construction (Brunner, 1988: 37). In other words, the formation of the Latin American thought can be seen as the history of the idea of a Latin America, i.e., the 'national question' was its basic issue and this question refers to how a nation is formed and transformed (Ianni, 1993: 32).

II. THE 'SOCIOLOGY OF THE CHAIR' (1890-1950)

The academic institutionalization of sociology took place in terms of the so-called 'The Sociology of the Chair', a period which began, in the Latin American countries, towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the disciplines of sociology were introduced in the Schools of Philosophy, Law, and Economy or, as in Brazil, in the Secondary Schools for Teachers (Liedke Filho, 2003: 226). This phase was characterized by the publication of handbooks 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, immigration, illiteracy, and poverty.

In Brazil, in the 1930s, some schools were founded in the higher 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, 2009). 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.

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 Bagú's work, *Economía de la sociedad colonial* (1949), was a milestone in the interpretation of the Latin American history.

In México, 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 sociolo-

gists are Isaac Ganon (*Estructura social deI Uruguay*, 1966) and Aldo Solari (Rural Sociology). The Instituto de Ciencias Sociales is created in 1958, and the Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH) is founded (Universidad de la República, 2000; Filgueira, 1979; Pinheiro, 1988). In Chile, the Facultad de Filosofía y Educación of the University of Chile was organized in 1931, and Astolfo Taipa Moore was 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 founded during the First World Congress of Sociology, organized by the International Sociological Association (ISA), 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, which presented papers in Rio de Janeiro in 1953, in Quito in 1955, and in Montevideo in 1959 (Germani, 1971: 13; Germani, 2004: 133).

In 1957, in Santiago, Chile, where the 4th ALAS Congress took place, the sociologist Astolfo Taipa Moore 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 Graciarena, and Torcuato Di Tella; later on, Sergio Bagú and Tulio Halperin Dongui joined the faculty.

In Mexico, the National School of Political and Social Sciences was founded in the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM) in 1951, and the Centre 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 sociological work of Florestan Fernandes (1920-1995) is the major expression of sociology in Latin America, mainly being concerned with 'sociology in an era of social revolution' (Candido, 2001; García, 2002; Liedke Filho, 2003b; Martins, 1998). 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 Sodr , and Guerreiro Ramos (Ramos, 1965; Lippi Oliveira, 1995). 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 professors who had had their education in Law or Economy, as well as having graduated from Medical School, as it was the case of Thales de Azevedo, from Bahia (Barreira, 2009).

The creation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) by the United Nations in 1948 gave rise to an important diagnosis of the Latin American economies, based on Raúl Prebisch, with a structural heterogeneity': the centre/periphery concept developed from acknowledging the existence of an international division of labour, 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; in Marini & Millán, 1994: 28). 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' (Giarracca, In Pineiro, 2000: 78). CEPAL congregated notorious economists from Latin America — Celso Furtado, An bal Pinto, Oswaldo Sunkel, among others — and gave rise to the creation of the Latin American Institute of Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) in 1962, which aimed at taking a path to planning through theories on development.

In Chile, in 1951, the Institute for Sociological Research of the School of Philosophy and Education of the University of Chile was created. 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 in-

stitutions, 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 concepts, and emphasis is put on quantitative techniques as a methodological option (Godoy Urzúa, in Camacho, 1979: 519).

UNESCO's support to the development of social sciences in Latin America materialized, at that time, in two projects: the first UNESCO project resulted in the foundation of a Latin America Center for Research in Social Sciences, in Rio de Janeiro, in 1957. Many Latin American sociologists took part in seminars at the institution, such as Luiz A. Costa Pinto, Gino Germani, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Torcuato Di Tella and Jorge Graciarena (Chor Maio, 1999: 35). The Centre published the journal *América Latina* from 1959 to 1976. Most articles discussed topics on development in Latin America. Or else they were topics concerning each of the different countries. The main bibliographical production referred to developmental sociology, from modernization to 'dual societies'. Its end, in 1976, was dramatic, abandoned by the Military Government (Lippi, 1995; 2005).

The second UNESCO project resulted in the foundation of the Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO), in 1957. Its first director was José Medina Echevarría (*Aspectos sociales del desarrollo económico*, 1959). FLACSO expanded throughout eleven countries in the following decades, and it was responsible for institutionalizing 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 formed around Orlando Fals Borda starts writing sociological analyses: their landmark is the publication of *La Violencia en Colombia*, followed by *Las revoluciones inconclusas en América Latina* (Fals Borda, 1971 and 1976). In Venezuela, Silva-Michelena and Orlando Albornoz start writing. In Guatemala, Severo Martínez Peláez publishes, in 1970, *La Patria 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 shaping 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 phase of the populist democracies: Vargas in Brazil (1950-54); Peron (1945-55),

and Frondizi (1958-62) in Argentina; Ibanez, in Chile (1952-58), followed by Alessandris liberalism (1958-64), and by Eduardo Frei's Christian democracy (1964-70). 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 centres 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 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).

At that period, 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 the 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'. In 1963, the 7th Congress took place in Colombia; in 1967, the 8th Congress was held in EI Salvador.

By the end of that period, the configuration of the 'critical sociology' was undergoing, 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 the Brazilian Luiz Aguiar de Costa Pinto, director of the Latin American Center for Social Sciences from 1957 to 1961, and editor of the journal *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 to interpreting the racial relations and the transitions that characterized societies at his time (Chor Maio & 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; in Bomeny and Birman, 1991: 37). In Argentina, as early as 1967, Jorge Graciaréna was already outlining a framework for the 'sociology of conflict' (Graciaréna, 1971: 178).

A critical approach to the 'sociology of modernization' was emerging; its exponents were Miguel Murnis, 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 (Murnis & Portantiero, 1974).

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; in Pinheiro, 2000: 212). Their 1st Congress was held in 1983, in the Dominican Republic, and their 6th Congress, in 2003, in Porto Alegre. The last one was organized in Recife, Brazil, 2011.

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 noticeable: Eliseo Verón revealed the beginning of the scientific sociology crisis. On the one hand, a certain ideological diversification is produced, with the Marxist thinking with paramount importance, but also the structural anthropology, the communication theory), and the critical US academic Sociologist, such as Goffman, Garfinkel, Becker (Verón, 1974: 45).

Finally, in many Latin American countries, at this moment, 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: this country was converted in the 1970s, into a sort of cultural-ideological crossroads. 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 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 sociologists' (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), with the generalization of the theories of dependence, of Marxism, and of critical sociology (Olivier, 1996: 80).

During this period, in the 1970s, in many countries, centres for research were organized, thus giving rise to a process of overtore to new institutional possibilities for sociological work: in Brazil, CEBRAP; CEDEC; in Uruguay, the CIESU; in Chile, FLACSO and the Group of Agrarian Investigators (GIA, 1991); in Peru, the Center for Peruvian Studies (CEP); and in Argentina, the Institute Di Tella, CICSO and 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 centres for research in the various Latin American countries, thus being able to provide opportunities in social sciences, something which would secure the continuity of critical sociology in Latin America (their Executive Secretaries had been Aldo Ferrer; Francisco Delich; Fernando Calderón; Márcia Rivera; Atilio Borón and, since 2007, Emir Sader).

The consolidation of 'critical sociology' may be well characterized by its basic dimensions: an integrated analysis perspective; the historical-structural or dialectic method; the historicity of the object of knowledge; 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; in Camacho, 1979: 271-84).

The most important authors are Florestan Fernandes, Octavio Ianni, Orlando Fals Borda, Aníbal Quijano, Pablo González Casanova, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto, Miguel Murmis, among others.

One must add, to the above list, the vast expansion of a critical sociology of the agrarian social processes in Latin America (Delich, 1970; GIA, 1991; Giarracca, 1998; 1999; Pereira de Queiroz, 1973; Pinero, 1998; 2000; Brunner and Tavares dos Santos, in Pinero, 2000; Souza Martins, 1981; Tavares dos Santos, 1991).

Also, a landmark was Heleieth Saffioti's book, *The Woman in Class Society*, published in 1969, about how gender operates in class societies (Saffioti, 1969). Her study suggests that the 'explanation of the women's situation in the capitalistic society can be found via the analysis of the relations between the factor gender and the essential determinations of the capitalistic mode of production' (Saffioti, 1969: 387).

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 internationality pervasive. Moreover, one should not forget to mention the indigenous Marxism, the Neo-gramscian scholars, and the neo-developmentalists (Mariátegui, 1973; Marini and Millán, 1995; Briceno-León, 1990).

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, and 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 most important institution was FLACSO-Chile (Brunner, 1988). Norbert Lechner reflection belongs to that phase as well, for the main theme of his work is 'to explore the subjective dimension of politics' (Lechner, 1988: 13).

However, during the military regimes in the South Cone, there were brutal repression and exile of sociologists, at first in Chile, then in México, 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 Sandinista Revolution (1979-1990) was raging.

The atmosphere in that Managua Congress revealed hope in the overcoming of the Central America dictatorships. The authoritarian forms of government — Somoza family in Nicaragua (1937-1979); the permanence of the Army in the government of El Salvador (1931-1979), and the military governments after Arbenz fails from power in Guatemala (1954-1982) (Torres-Rivas, 1993: 17) — were followed by political agreements and peace treaties which left great hopes of change in Central America (Figueroa Ibarra; in Torres-Rivas, 1993: Chapter 2).

That was the period of crisis and diversification in Latin American Sociology (1973- 1983), characterized by the 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 work (*Siete tesis equivocadas sobre América Latina: sociología y subdesarrollo*), published in Mexico in 1973, represented a landmark in this critical rupture with the developmentalists and modernizing theories (Stavenhagen; in Durand, 1974). Several authors — Theotonio dos Santos, Vania Bambirria, Andre Gunder Frank and Enzo Faletto, start asking themselves whether it was possible that the socioeconomic development could be frustrated if it attempted to reproduce the processes experienced by the 'metropolitan' hegemonic countries. Basically, they start thinking that underdevelopment has its historical specificity of dependence mean. 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 'citizenship militancy' (Liedke Filho, 2003b).

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto's book (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. Their purpose was 'to explain 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 capitalist system have managed to organize themselves into becoming Nations — and, just like any other State, aspire to sovereignty (Cardoso & Faletto, 1973: 7).

In Latin America, there were disagreements in the relationship between the military governments and the academic, scientific, and technological development. Even military authoritarian governments could be extremely different one from each other: in the cases of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, on the one hand; and the case of Brazil, on the other, they affected the higher-education institutions (Brunner & Barrios, 1987: 42).

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 were 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 (Garretón, 1983; 1984).

V. AUTHORITARIANISM, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION (1983-2000)

After the Argentinean 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 and social exclusion (Garretón, 1995; 2000).

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 held in Cuba (Salazar, 1992: 13).

Among the *various* debates, the question of the State in Latin America was summarized in three aspects. The first question relates to the modes of society participation in the structures and in exercising democracy. The second one relates to the ability this society will *have* to develop policies for its own interests. The third and last question is based on our prospects for the future of Latin America (Salazar, 1992: 177).

The following Congress was held in Caracas, in 1993 (Sonntag & Briceno-León, 1998). The more outstanding debates discussed 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 and citizenship.

During that period, it was noteworthy the density in the theoretical and interpretive contribution of sociologists, in different countries from Latin America. 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 new generation of young sociologists (who obtained their PhD at the University of São Paulo, at IUPERJ of Rio de Janeiro, and at universities abroad — France, UK, Germany, USA, Mexico) in the 1980s and the 1990s.

Much work was carried out in the field of agrarian studies, 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 (Gómez & Echenique, 1988; González Casanova, 1984, 1985; Roger Bartra, 1974; 1981, 1982; Martins, 1981). 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 'new ruralism' and the social conflicts (Giarracca, 2001; Gómez, 2002; Pérez Correa, 2001).

The changes in contemporary societies imposed new challenges to sociology in Latin America after the global crisis on the 1990s that conclude the short twentieth century (Hobsbawm, 1994). These new challenges were especially acute in the beginning of the twenty-first century: the worldization of social conflicts, the globalization of economy, the neo-fordism mode of production and the cultural post-modernity.

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. This is the period when political democracy was steadily constructed in Latin America, with specific processes of re-democratization. The increasing claims for human rights, social rights, and the right to difference aspired to an extended social democracy and citizenship. This is a time for theoretical debate involving different notions of State, social classes, and new social movements (Larangelra, 1990; Medeiros, 1989; Scherer-Warren & Krischke, 1987), completed with discussions on modernity, post-modernity, and the future of Latin American societies (Domingos, 1999; Ianni, 1996, 2000).

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' (Sosa, 1996). So, the contemporary challenges to the Latin American Sociology are: 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, 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 (Olivier, 1996: 5).

The production of new knowledge after the social struggles and movements, in circumstances where we have criticism against the neoliberal hegemony — e.g., as in the Zapatista Movement — was taking place (Sosa, 1996: 24). The question of the prospects for democracy in Latin America was the big issue at that moment, mainly to social participation in the fundamental issues of society (Salinas, 1999: 10).

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:

There are representative-democratic regimes in most of our countries today. On the one hand, an option is presented which favours an increasing concentration of both political and economic power, exclusion of the majority, and the existence of programs that reinforce social control, secure governability, and limit 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 process and for a democratic culture (Sader, 1988).

At this moment, Latin American sociologists analyse Globalism as a totality that is not only geo-historical, but also socially, economically, politically and culturally comprehensive. It actually means a totality, but heterogeneous, uneven, contradictory, and fragmentary (Ianni, 1992; 1996).

We were living a neoliberalism, the generator of a process of economic globalization, of increasing social inequalities, of a 'world of poverty' in 'violent times' (Borón, Gambina & Minsburg, 1999). In 1999, the 22nd ALAS Congress took place in Concepción, Chile. The final Declaration stated the following: 'From our point of view, the alternative should be based on the value of the democracies at the national level, of the alliances between and of solidarity 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 neoliberal models, it is a must that alternatives that contemplate a sustainable development be designed, and such alternatives must articulate productivity and social equity.

In 2001, the 1st Regional Conference of ISA, hosted by the Venezuelan Sociology Association, made manifest the worldization in sociology in Latin America, pointed the Latin American Sociology main features: its empiricism, its eclecticism, and its social commitment (Romero Salazar, 2001: 54; Sonntag & Briceno-León, 1998: 24).

Also in 2001, the 23th ALAS Congress took place in Antigua, Guatemala. The final document affirms:

We 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 (Zeballo, 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. Some heartening experiences start to blossom - albeit extremely difficult and painful - in terms of a reconstruction of sociability's, 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 them. Alternatives can be foreseen: the renewal of forms to generate income, the reconfiguration of the social capital through solidarity networks, 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 & 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, 2009; Delich, 2004; Lander, 2003; Sánchez & Sosa, 2004).

The 25th Congress of the Latin American Sociology Association (ALAS, hold in Porto Alegre in 2005, followed the theme 'Development. Crisis, Democracy — participation, social movements and sociological theory'. The central topics where: (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 (Tavares dos Santos, 2009b, 2009c).

VII. THE AGE OF WORLD CONFLICTIVENESS

Assuming the analysis developed by Hobsbawm about the twentieth century, the *Age of Extremes*, one may define the twenty-first century (which has begun in 1991) as the period of the process of globalization of social conflicts, characterized by a worldization of the capitalistic activities, global crisis and hybrid cultures in Latin America.

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, from 1989. 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 neoliberal policies, thus giving rise to new social conflicts, sometimes establishing limits to the consolidation of democracy in the countries that are peripheral to the capitalistic world.

Examples are many, from the Zapatista movement (1994) to the demonstrations against the meetings of the international financial organizations. In other words: 'We have tried to demonstrate how the neoliberal doctrine was imposed upon the contemporary world, and how the economic policies derived from it have produced terrible inequalities in the world economy'. 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 (Dos Santos, 2004; Cattani, 2001; Seoane & Taddei, 2001).

The social questions, focusing on work issues since the ninetieth century (Castel, 1998), now become complex and worldwide questions, for many are the dimensions of social issues that are now questioned — among them the question of social bond (Tavares dos Santos, 2009). The changes in the working world, given the technological transformations that bring about scantier and more uncertain work opportunities, provoke a crisis to the labour unions, unemployment, and a process of social selection / exclusion (Cardoso, 2003; Sierra, 2001; Sobral Fonseca & Grossi Porto, 2001; Mejía Navarrete, 2009b).

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; *Delito y sociedad*, 1992-2012). 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 a process of citizenship laceration (Tavares dos Santos, 1999). In other words, we face contemporary forms of social control that are characteristic of a repressive State plus a crisis in the welfare State (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 centralized State power acting on the social space-time. Then, within the picture of crisis in the Latin American cities, it would be possible to consider the construction of a transnational 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; Tavares- dos-Santos, 2009).

Processes of social exclusion are unleashed: the landless, the social-classless, the computer divide, the homeless, the foodless, the workless; and the young people crisis (Balardini, 2000; Tavares dos Santos, 2009). A new world social space of conflicts is delineating itself in the spaces and times of the 'era of globalism' (Beccaria & López, 1996; Ianni, 1996; Mazzei, 2002; Minuin, 1995; Souza Martins, 2002). Being against a normative and programmed society (resulting from a power technology centred in life itself) and against a State guided towards social penal control, social forces of resistance have emerged in this still *very* young twenty-first century; examples range from the protests to the social movements, all of them seeking alternatives to 'imperialism' (Almeyra, 2004; Borón, 2002; Cels, 2003; Giarracca, 2001; Scribano, 2003; Seoane, 2003).

The 26th Congress of the Latin American Association of Sociology took place in Guadalajara, Mexico, August 2007, oriented by the subject 'Latin America in and from the World. Social sociology and Sciences in the Change of Time: Legitimacies in Debate'. The proposition expresses the internationalization of critical sociology:

- a) The worldwide debates: the influence that they *have* in Latin American and Caribbean sociology, and simultaneously to emphasize the originality and the contribution from the Latin American thought to the worldwide social sciences debate; b) the best understanding of the original moment by which they cross our societies in his worlds of life, their local, regions and countries or even in his processes of integra-

tion and conformation of supranational identities; c) the analysis of the recent social transformations, in terms of the debate on democracy, social participation, citizenship, *government*, justice, public security, and the alternatives that are generated from the new left, and from other critics to the neoliberals; d) the subjective construction of the public ethics, like values of coexistence in the fairness and justice.

In accordance with this outlook, we can find a synthesis of the Latin American social sciences' contributions to reinterpretations of sociological knowledge, as it presented itself in the second half of the twentieth century, in these concepts: (1) Political independence; (2) Order; (3) Progress and development; (4) Liberty; (5) Revolution; (6) Marginalization; (7) Centre/periphery and their relations; (8) Dependence; (9) Internal Colonialism; (10) Socialist revolution and moral revolution; (11) Political systems and systems of power; (12) Informal society and authoritarian formalism, and the neoliberal society; (13) Exploitation; (14) the pedagogy of the oppressed and collective pedagogy; (15) Liberation theology; (16) Democracy; (17) Radical post-modernism and constructing the world. It is centred on the concept of 'Democracy for all' including social groups of the *various* ethnic origins and the civil society (González Casanova; in: Tavares dos Santos 2009b; Mejía Navarrete, 2009).

VIII. THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN LATIN AMERICA AND CHINESE SOCIOLOGY

To explain the societies of the twenty-first century, from the point of view of a critical sociology, some intellectual problems are decisive:

1. What role can sociology play in Latin America in the age of the worldization of social conflicts?
2. How to develop the multiple interlocutions in the world space, dialoguing with the diverse sociologies of the North and the South, and how to explain the homologies of the new worldwide social issues, in its national and regional contexts?
3. How to construct the intellectual recognition of the intellectual dialogue between Latin American and Chinese Sociologies?

Perhaps, a starting point could be the study of the social transformations (Li Peilin, Guo Yuhua & Liu Shiding; in Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008), and also the concept of a 'sociology of transition' could help us in this dialogue (Sun Liping; in Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008).

Still, we needed to take a step forward to organize a contemporary agenda to construct an international sociology, by a comparative ap-

proach with an international dialogue of theoretical concepts, subjects of research, comparative methodologies and an interchange of sociological interpretations (Chen Yingying; in Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008).

For the sociological agenda, we may choose some sociological dimensions that could be shared for comparative studies in contemporary society:

1. The agrarian social conflicts and the rural-urban migrations. A dialogue with the researches of Liu Shiding, Li Youmei, Guo Yuhua, Tang Un (Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008) could be quite interesting.
2. The transformations of the work, the effects of the technologies and the 'fragmented cities'. It will be worthwhile comparing Latin American studies with the researches of Li Chunling, Ton Xin, Li Peilin (Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008).
3. The diffuse social violence and the ways of violence social prevention.
4. The systems of criminal justice and the model of social control. For instance, the work of Zhang Jing (Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008).
5. The perspectives of construction of a society with respect to the citizenship, and the social diversity, in a different level of the civilizing process. This point is analyzed by Shen Yuan (Roulleau-Berger *et al.*, 2008).

In the procedures of contemporary sociology, the dissemination of the habitus of the search resides marked by diverse elements: methodical doubt, creativity, methods and hypothesis of the scientific work; use of the computer methodologies, in order to surpass the antinomies of qualitative and quantitative procedures; flexible organization of the work in research groups; ethical responsibility and the use of the sociological imagination. These elements of the sociological thought define sociology as a critical and constructivist knowledge of social self-conscience of the reality.

By this made of intellectual practice, it would be possible to construct sociology for the twenty-first century, oriented by the perspective of the transition or transformation, both of society and knowledge. A sociology of the transformation, in which the quality of scientific work of the sociologist is made up by an imperative of social responsibility, with respect to the human dignity and by an academic conduct oriented by the social justice.

CONCLUSION

The recent period of an intellectual history consolidate the internationalization of the Latin America sociology.

The 26th Congress of ALAS, located in Guadalajara, México, in 2007, proposed the following general subjects: 'The worldwide debates: the influence that they have in Latin American and Caribbean sociology, and simultaneously to emphasize the originality and the contribution from the Latin American thought to the worldwide social sciences debate. The analysis of the recent social transformations, in terms of the debate on democracy, social participation, citizenship, government, justice, public security, and the alternatives that are generated from the new left, or from other critics to the neoliberals'. Almost the same issues have been discussed at the 27th Congress of ALAS, in Buenos Aires, 2009: 'We are determined to consolidate the Latin American intellectual movement in Social Sciences and to fortify the diverse participation about: natural resources degradation and the ecological conflict; citizenship and participative democracy; the new productive areas; and the construction of critical knowledge'.

Consequently, two key questions arise. First, if 'modernity is a disappointment', it means that another space-time perspective defies US, because the Euro centrism, the Western world vision of the modern civilization, has a serious challenge (Wallerstein, 1998). The multiplicity of social times requires what we reconstruct our theories and our methodologies, minding on historicity (Touraine, 2007; Sztompka; in Barreira *et al.*, 2006).

Secondly, there is worldization of the social conflicts that changes norms, values and produces transnational social movements, like feminism, ecological mobilizations or migrations to the big cities (Wieworka, 2008). By the way, a blossom of ideas has been produced, as it shows the World Social Forum: ('open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a society centred on the human person'), located in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2010, 2012; in Mumbai in 2004; in Caracas and Bamako in 2006, and in Nairobi in 2007; and the regional meetings in 2008 and 2009.

From Latin America, it could be possible to synthesize the social questions and the sociological problems in an emergent agenda for sociology:

1. The development of sociology: concepts, methodologies, institutions of education and research and associations.

2. Development and crisis of the rural society.
3. The big cities: immigration, housing deficit, slums, unemployment.
4. Crisis of the institutions of socialization: family, childhood, youth and school.
5. New organization of work relations, precarious work, vulnerability and social exclusion.
6. The environment issues and sustainability.
7. Sociology of the differences: gender relations, ethnical relations, and cultural diversity.
8. Social state and Policies: governmentally and social policies.
9. Models of Social Control: violence, the administration of justice and the human rights.
10. Social movements, civil society and social protests.
11. Internationalization of the knowledge by networks.
12. Alternatives of a democratic development.
13. The mode of culture: hybrid cultures, political culture, mass media, digital inclusion, the religions and the social imaginary.

In the *Age of Late Modernity*, the social transformations present this complexity of social problems, the ‘mobilization and the activism of the masses’, in a global proportion with a dynamic temporality which affects millions of ‘common people’ (Sztompka; in Barreira *et al.*, 2006: 13). In order to answer these challenges, we observe, on the one hand, the perspective of multidisciplinary or Trans disciplinary approach (Sztompka; in Barreira *et al.*, 2006: 16).

A global sociology leaves ‘of the global variability, the global connectivity and the global intercommunication’ (Therborn; in Barreira *et al.*, 2006: 83). The author proposes five departure points: 1) The systems could only be understood if we recognize that its systematic is highly variable; 2) the world is divided, ‘with many borders — cultural, social and political’. Nevertheless, it is more related and interdependent, it is also a world of real time, a world constantly connected; 3) the national and the global could be overlapping to each other; 4) the increasing regionalization of some economic flows, particularly of commerce; 5) the persistent importance of the emergent countries (Therborn; in Barreira *et al.*, 2006, p. 93; Therborn, 2006).

At this moment of paradigmatic transition, the possibility that we construct a late-modern critical theory could come if we recognize the

relation between knowledge and emancipation, or a 'decent knowledge for a prudent life' (De Sousa Santos, 2000). Because it would be the possibility that we enunciate a new common sense, a participative and re-enchanted common sense (De Sousa Santos, 2000: 107; De Sousa Santos, 1995).

The sociologists have an imperative of social responsibility, of respect to the human dignity and academic conduct founded on social justice and solidarity, oriented by the scientific merit but even more by the social relevance of his work. This pattern of intellectual work defines the challenges of the international sociology.

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