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DECOLONIAL STUDIES: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF GLOBAL HISTORY*

Abstract: Global history seeks to go beyond the study of history traditionally framed in nation states in order to take into account the phenomena that occur beyond its borders and also go beyond history traditionally written from the perspective of the West and about the West, in a journey that attends to the analysis of diverse spaces and actors as well as relationships and exchanges that globalization has given rise to. However, in its development, this new history is considered as a continuation of occidentalocentrism and political and cultural parameters that sustain it.

From Latin America, decolonial studies can contribute to the debate on global history from its formulation as a corpus of ideas that, on the one hand, seeks to understand the historical structure of a Western power with global projection and, on the other, the ways through which the emancipation of space and actors from their perspective is possible. In this line, the paper addresses decolonial studies in dialogue with global history.

Key words: DECOLONIAL STUDIES, LATIN AMERICA, GLOBAL HISTORY, NATION-STATE, EUROCENTRISM

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Global history has its origins in the framework of the post-Cold War, the “triumph” of liberalism, democracy, international law and the market; the weakening of borders as barriers between states; the growth of communication and transportation networks; the increase in immigration and mobility of people, as part of a dual process: on the one hand, globalization and, on the other, multiculturalism. It arises in the Anglo-Saxon academy (Valero Pacheco, 2017: 149) and its main scenarios are the United States, Europe, Africa and Asia (Grecco, Schuster, 2020; Levi, 2018: 24; Hausberger & Pani, 2018:177) while Jürgen Osterhammel, Sven Beckert, Christopher Alan Bayly, Kenneth Pomeranz, Timothy Brook and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, among others, stand out as representatives.

The “new” history includes, among its topics of study, migrations, intellectual networks, exchange of objects or ideas, plagues and epidemics, transnational organizations, cross-border religious phenomena, world trade, civilizations, center-periphery relations, globalization itself or the globalization of a historical process (Grecco, Schuster, 2020: 426; Valero Pacheco, 2017: 152) and is based on a multidisciplinary approach in which converge, among others, geography, economics, anthropology, international relations and urban studies (Valero Pacheco, 2017: 153) to the point of raising questions before the relevance of a historian to address a history of such characteristics (Crossley, 2021). In this line, it seeks to overcome the study of history traditionally framed in nation states² (Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 177) taking into account the phenomena that occur beyond its borders and, also, overcome history traditionally written from the perspective of the West and about the West in a path that attends to the analysis of spaces and actors “without history” as well as the relationships and exchanges to which globalization has given rise (Levi, 2018: 24; Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 187-188).

As a global projection, localized historical processes, with global scopes or international/global character (Grecco, Schuster, 2020: 426), are the ultimate object of study, thus gaining prominence, interactions, exchanges and flows across borders of nation states, regions, continents and cultures (Kocka, 2012: 4) that translate into networks of relationships in a plot of structural/global character (Levi, 2018: 25-26; Carzolio, 2020). The approaches are directed, in some cases, to the study of global histories, focused on a transcontinental or transoceanic space, with the aim of identifying interconnections and patterns of interdependence, i.e., they postulate and delimit a sphere of connectivity, whether the universe, the planet as a whole or one of its parts is in question. In others, relational or related histories are presented, which trace in time, across a broad space, certain interactions, but which, a priori, do not define a world or a universe that functions on a macro-scale (Acuña Ortega, 2015: 23).

As an overcoming of a Westernist perspective (Osterhammel, 2014), history aspires to adopt “a global point of observation that plays with the very diverse ways of seeing,

2 However, while the state scale dominated in the analyses, there is also a trans-state history from Herodotus, Polybius, Sim Quian, Ibn Khaldun, Otto Hintze, Fernand Braudel, Eric Hobsbawm, Pierre Renouvin, Arnold Toynbee, Imanuel Wallerstein, Gunter Frank, Giovanni Arrighi, Aldo Ferrer, Theotonio dos Santos to Yuval Noah Harari.

and puts on the table the question of who writes and for whom" (Valero Pacheco, 2017: 159). In this way, the field of sources becomes more complex, not only because of the expansion of space, actors, themes and interrelations, but also because in this expansion, diverse cultures and testimonies also come into play, written or recorded in their own languages and modes that preserve the memory of the past in different ways and interpret it from different models or worldviews (Levi, 2018: 27-30; Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 183; Valero Pacheco, 2017: 154).

Therefore, space-time, which for global history means an analysis of a trans-state, transnational or global nature, requires the choice/selection of new geographical areas taking into account that Europe is not the center and that it does not always produce the changes in history but can be influenced by external processes or events (Conrad, 2016: 119-120). It also implies the recognition of different conceptions of space (Rau, 2019) and a globalized and contemporary historical regime where the synchrony of the diversity of human experiences is registered (Fazio and Fazio, 2018: 16).

However, partly as a result of its Anglo-Saxon origin, but also as a reflection of a concept of globalization associated with the American hegemonic model, global history is seen by its critics as a "reflection" of Western globalization. In this way, a paradox is presented in the global world because the fight against Eurocentrism contributes to its survival (Adelman, 2017; Stanziani, 2018). In this line, although it is true that studies incorporating different spaces of the globe have increased, those located in former colonies and areas of political and economic intervention of the great powers have dominated (Valero Pacheco, 2017: 151; Adelman, 2017). Finally, in an attempt to achieve global cohesion, English has become a global language, a hegemonic narrative that also turns against the original purposes (Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 190).

Thus, global history continues to construct metanarratives that explain the organization of the world into centers and peripheries (Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 181-182). As Adelman points out,

"we need narratives of global life that consider disintegration as well as integration, the costs and not just the spoils that interdependence brings...if we are to agree on deep histories of global transformations, we need, to remind ourselves of one of the historian's tasks and to listen to the other half of the globe, the tribalists here and abroad" (2017).

For his part, according to Sebastian Conrad:

"Numerous other approaches-ranging from comparative and transnational history to world and big history, to postcolonial studies and the history of globalization-currently compete for scholarly attention. Just like global history, they endeavour to come to terms with the connectivities of the past" (2016: 5-6).

Moreover, for the same author:

“Each of these different paradigms comes with an emphasis of its own [...]. However, one should not exaggerate the distinctions between them; there are also many commonalities and areas of overlapping” (6).

In this sense, from Latin America, decolonial studies can contribute to the debate on global history from its formulation as a corpus of ideas that, on the one hand, seeks to understand the historical structure of Western power with global projection and, on the other, the ways through which the struggle for the emancipation of the spaces/actors dominated/exploited by it has been fought. In order to achieve this objective, the paper addresses the axes of decolonial studies in dialogue with global history. Therefore, it starts from the characterization of decolonial studies in global history to consider then, in its potential contributions, such history in terms of overcoming the statocentric vision and occidentalocentrism through its object of study, forms of inquiry and spatio-temporal matrices.

Latin America and Decolonial Studies in Global History

Latin America faces a double limitation: on the one hand, from the region, the focus on national histories (Valero Pacheco, 2017: 150; Lima Grecco and Schuster, 2020: 425), even though there is a growing number of works on the transnational dimensions of international history and politics (Chenou and Quiliconi, 2020; Figallo and Henríquez, 2020; Fazio and Fazio, 2018; Riojas, 2018; Deciancio and Miguez, 2020; Deciancio and Tussie, 2020; Deciancio, 2016); on the other hand, from global history, its marginality, either as an object of study, or as recognition of its body of research (Adelman, 2004: 400), despite having been the first extra-European territory in which the universalist claim of Western civilization was deployed (Hausberger & Pani, 2018: 189) and despite the fact that there has been an intelligentsia that has contributed, throughout history, to the political and sociocultural problematization of reality, beyond nation states, from Gilberto Freyre (Brown, 2015: 13) to Latin American structuralism and, already in the context of global history itself, decolonial studies.

While postcolonial studies are mentioned as a contribution to global history or in addressing it (Chakrabarty, 1992: 337ff; Kocka, 2012; Kuru, 2020: 233), decolonial studies, in most cases, have had a marginal place (Brown, 2015; Valero Pacheco, 2017) or have been questioned for constituting victimization of the Latin American past and of the periphery in general. However, in some cases, they have also been valued as a counterweight to global histories that tell the stories of those who won globalization (Brown, 2015: 24-26) and in the last decade they have begun to be incorporated for their conceptual and cartographical contributions to the analysis of a global world (Tucker: 2018).

In the face of globalization and reading of global history questioned by its vices of

Westernism, the Global South is presented as a sphere – not necessarily spatial – of solidarity, historical community and contemporary challenges of postcolonial countries that in their particular realities face similar challenges (Miranda, 2019: 176) in terms of economic development, social justice and demands for an international system aimed at overcoming power politics. From this perspective, it is the place where liberation from the rhetoric of the West must be realized (Mignolo, 2011: 165ff; Levander and Mignolo, 2011: 3-4)³. It is, in this sense, the place of knowledge made invisible by modern science (Araújo Menses, 2017: 72).

In this line, it raises the need for a revision in the ways of knowing the marginalized histories of the traditional theoretical currents of the social sciences to explain the real situation of the Global South (Miranda, 2019: 181-182) in the key of its relationship with the global sphere. In this sense, as David Held and Alec Mc Grew point out, at the beginning of the 21st century,

“The intensity of the debate about the nature, extent and impact of globalization, (...), corresponds to the reinvigoration of the political debate about resisting, combating, managing or adapting to global forces, and how to do so. It is clear that “globalization” far from bringing about the end of politics, as some fear, is once again illuminating the political arena” (2003: 115).

Decolonial studies, inscribed in the reading from the Global South, originated in the 1990s in the framework of the advance of the end of history (Francis Fukuyama, 1992), the hegemony of liberalism and globalization, which states that the world order responds to a new logic in which space-time barriers have been overcome, but also provokes the challenge of reviewing through history, spaces and times in the search for the recognition of “other worlds” that are “hidden” under the domain of the global. As Octavio Ianni states,

“During the 1990s, while globalization processes changed the profile of economic and social actors, the national state and international relations, the concept [civil society] came to occupy an important place in the analysis and strategies of development and democratization, but also in the strategies of redefinition and deepening of already consolidated democracies” (Ianni, 2005: 25).

With the passing of that decade and, clearly in the first quarter of the 21st century, to the binary image state (authoritarianism), civil society (liberal democracy) is incorporated a diversity of demands that result from criticisms to the process of neoliberal globalization, and at the same time reflect different readings of the world and the very plurality

3 Marin y Vera Lugo plantean tres perspectivas desde las cuales puede definirse el Sur Global, la primera como un “agregado geográfico y socioeconómico de ciertos países”, la segunda, como un “territorio metafórico o alegórico”; y la tercera como un “marco condensador de pensamiento propio” (2013: 15). Cfr. Levander and Mignolo (2011: 3-4)

and conflictivity of society (Tonioni, 2018: 17). In this context, an alter-globalization resistance emerges, represented in various movements of an anti-capitalist or anti-systemic character. The Zapatista uprising in the Mexican southwest (1994) inaugurates this trend (Pleyers, 2018: 15) followed by the “Battle of Seattle” (1999) which poses a new binarism:

“that of two opposing visions of globalization: the vision conveyed by the WTO, spokesman of total liberalization, and that of fairer globalization respectful of the environment and the human, defended by the ‘alterglobalists’ ” (Bin and Marin, 2013: 274).

The protests in Cancun (1999 and 2003), Prague (2000), Barcelona (2001 and 2003), Genoa (2001) and Porto Alegre (2001 and 2005) are part of this process.

Decolonial studies are distinguished by an interdisciplinary approach to reality, where anthropology, history, philosophy and sociology converge mainly. Although the eidetic origins can be found in Salazar Bondy, Fanon and the philosophy of liberation, from a theoretical point of view, they are inscribed in the perspective of the World System (Wallerstein (2011 [1974])), Latin American structuralism (Serulnikov, 2020: 157) and poststructuralism, in the latter case, through Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. The first formulation comes from Aníbal Quijano with his proposal of necessary epistemic decolonization (Dussel and del Valle Orellana, 2018: 171) and together with him, soon after, Walter Dignolo, Ernesto Lander, Santiago, Castro-Gómez, Santiago Ramón Grosfoguel, Enrique Dussel, Nelson Maldonado Torres and Arturo Escobar, among others, joined in.

Decolonial studies are located in a reading of reality from the periphery (Dussel, 2007: 15), those spaces and actors marginalized from history in the function of the power policies that, from the West, established the modes and rules at world level through the “first globalization” (Dussel, 2007: 150) from the conquest and colonization of America to the present, where the configuration of power has a global scope (Dussel, 2007: 20 political liberation). Although its focus is on America, partly because of the place of enunciation and the reality it seeks to know, this is considered a constitutive and inherent part of the structure of world power from its very origins. It is a systemic-structural vision that, at the same time, presents two levels of analysis: on the one hand, the relationship between the West and the periphery and, on the other, that which exists within the periphery itself. These spatio-temporal dimensions, in turn, refer to the exercise of power and the resistance to it (Dussel, 2007: 15-16) through the identification of the economic, social, political and cultural forces that participate in both, as well as the actors that represent them.

The reading from the periphery translates into understanding that history is global (in terms of the matrix of the colonality of power imposed since the sixteenth century (Quijano, 2000a, 2000b) but from a distinction between the spaces that constitute the global order, from where the differences and inequalities between the Global North and the Global South are discovered (Lander and Rodríguez, 2019: 22). For Aníbal Quijano, although America, and in particular Latin America, was the first new historical

identity, heterogeneous, of the coloniality of power and its colonized populations the first “indigenous” of the world, since the eighteenth century the rest of the planet has been conquered by Western Europe. Its current emergence, from resistance, represents a movement of society whose development could lead to the global coloniality of power, that is, to another social existence, freed from domination /exploitation/ violence (Quijano, 2014 [2000]:786 and 793).

Therefore, history played a key role in justifying a modern invention, represented by the creation of functional systems for the West. Then, through history, cartography was designed, in which the maps of time were drawn and the milestones of humanity were marked. This history that is hegemonic, requires another counter-hegemonic history as a tool for humanization and emancipation (Ramallo, 2014: 45). In Dussel’s terms:

“The Eurocentric vision of the history of politics must definitely be overcome in a truly global vision of political philosophy” (Dussel, 2007: 84).

Decolonial Studies from Global Axes

Decolonial studies postulate three critiques of the history “narrated” by the West that can be considered starting points for recognizing an analysis that is interwoven with the perspective of global history and contributes to its approach: provincialism, state-centeredness and Eurocentrism. On the one hand, the critique of the provincialism of history imposed by the West refers to the sense of a study that aims to explain the past in terms of its own space, crossed by significant events and milestones that are expressed as a universal history and results in the invisibility of the non-Western. Provincialism, likewise, is inscribed in a state history that hides systemic-structural power plots where economy, politics, society and culture converge, hiding a heterarchical power plot. In turn, the provincialist and stateist reading is interwoven in a Eurocentric perspective, understood as a colonial attitude towards knowledge, which is simultaneously articulated with the process of center-periphery relations and ethnic/racial hierarchies (Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007: 20). Thus, the overcoming of Eurocentrism is presented as the axis of the study of history.

From the point of view of the object/problem of study associated with the spatio-temporal dimension, decolonial research starts from a global perspective, since history is also global. Thus, the notions of modernity/coloniality, coloniality of power, Eurocentrism, modern colonial world system and frontier thinking become central. This is because they contribute to elucidate the uniqueness of history, but also its diversity and multispatiality Iconnected in 2a web by a capitalist power and cultural projections, which must be known from the margins and resisted from there.

For decolonial studies, modernity is a historical phenomenon that recognizes its origins in the bourgeoisie towards the end of the European Middle Ages, but that acquires its definitive profile through the conquest of America and the creation of

the world market, with the colonial expansion of the European powers. “For the first time” this world system places together, but in an asymmetrical relationship, a diversity of “cultures” (Castro Gómez, 2017: 267) that had previously lived separated from each other to establish over them the hegemony of a conception of understanding life, knowledge, nature and social relations, which was first Christian and seigniorial (16th-17th centuries), and then rationalist and capitalist (18th-20th centuries) (Dussel, 2015; Castro Gómez, 2017: 268). Therefore, modernity is understood as the hegemonic narrative of Western civilization, universal and imperialist in character. In this line, there would also exist alternative modernities, subaltern or non-modernities. Any of them are, therefore considered as options and not ontological moments of universal history (2015[2013]:184-185).

Coloniality is constitutive part of modernity and, therefore, the same process that has begun with the conquest and colonization of America and has perpetuated to the present. It is a pattern of power that has emerged as a result of modern colonialism, but has survived it through labor, knowledge, authority and intersubjective relations that are articulated among themselves through the global capitalist market, colonial difference and the idea of race (Castro Gómez and Grosfoguel, 2007: 19). Thus, coloniality results in an imbrication of

“multiple and heterogeneous global hierarchies (“heterarchies”) of sexual, political, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploitation where the racial/ethnic hierarchy of the European/non-European dividing line transversally reconfigures all other global power structures” (Grosfoguel, 2006: 26; Gómez Vélez, Saldarriaga Grisales, López Gil. Zapata Botero, 2017: 49-50).

Modernity and coloniality, according to the above, are presented in the framework of a world system – a category taken from Imanuel Wallerstein – understood not only as an economic-social matrix carrying a culture as legitimization of power structures, but also as a relational framework of economic-cultural processes. The conquest of America would have determined the birth of capitalism, but above all, it marked the irruption of the coloniality of power that organizes the “colonial difference” (Mignolo, 2000: 35), an assemblage of processes and social formations that accompany modern colonialism and colonial modernities (Escobar, 2003: 62). From this reading, the approach to the modern colonial world system also allows us to identify, in addition to internal conflicts – conflicts between powers with the same vision of the world – those that occur outside the borders of the modern/colonial system (Escobar, 2003: 61).

Finally, Eurocentrism is understood as the expression of the colonial/modern/capitalist power pattern, globally imposed, accepted and legitimized throughout history from its rational parameters, in terms of a world, objectively known as a universal and homogeneous totality of global projection (Quijano, 2014 [2005]: 638). Its universal character is based on “a confusion between an abstract universality and the concrete world derived from the European position as center” (Escobar, 2003: 60) since it only reflects

the European historical experience (Escobar, 2003: 62) and, therefore, it is a particular philosophy (Dussel, 2010: 132).

However, universality is considered a key factor to understand politics and a requirement of emancipatory politics, because it expresses a community of interests. Hence, it is necessary to combat colonialism and Eurocentrism through concrete universality that is built through particularity (Castro Gómez, 2017: 260 et seq.). In this same line, it is called to provincialize Europe⁴ insofar as it is necessary to inscribe its pretended universality in particularity (Dussel and del Valle Orellana, 2018: 169; Dussel, 2007: 11-13). From this geopolitics of knowledge, an epistemological decolonization is proposed that is directed to an inter-cultural dialogue, through which another rationality has to be reached that makes possible universality capable of being and being legitimized on a global level (Quijano and Wallerstein: 1992: 19-20. Vide Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Therefore, a revision of the ways of inquiring into reality through a reconsideration of concepts, sources and languages is necessary.

Through the revision of that history, concepts that contribute to understand the heterogeneous relations and heterarchy of power in America in the broader international system are re-signified, but others are also recovered, those capable of interpreting Latin American history itself and its worldviews. Questioning the names or given belongings, such as "Latin America" or "western hemisphere", "multiculturalism" or "human rights", considered of Eurocentric matrix, are opposed to other concepts that refer to an identity that retakes the roots of an "original" past and makes visible the indigenous peoples "Abya Yala", "Sumak Kawsay", "Ayllu", "Tahuantinsuyo", "Pachamama", also associated with interculturality, reconfigure the statocentric conceptions, dominantly liberal and influenced by mercantile logic and constitute epistemologies that, in the revision of history, propose at the inter-American and global level new forms of recognition and relationships that lead to other identities, values and goals.

The sources are, in part, the traditional ones, but, fundamentally those that come from the subjects/spaces/times of resistance. Capitalist modernity/coloniality and "Eurocentric fundamentalist globalization" are based on economic and political knowledge and theories based on the Greek and Latin languages, and elaborated in the six imperial, European and modern languages (Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, for the Renaissance; French, English and German for the Enlightenment) and the very forms of resistance throughout history have been dominated by such parameters: the underdeveloped or all the societies of the world democratized through the market. In this sense, it is argued that

"From this pluri-verse of encounters, in the diversity of the Americas and the Caribbean, of North and sub-Saharan Africa, of the diversity of Asia (East, Central and South), of the diversity of what since the early twentieth century has been known as the Middle East, etc., border forms of thinking and of re-inscribing languages and cosmologies emerge" (Grosfoguel and Mignolo, 2008: 36).

⁴ Dussel cita a Dipesh Chakrabarty, D (2008): *Al margen de Europa. Pensamiento poscolonial y diferencia histórica*; Barcelona: Tusquets Editores.

In this line, languages, traditions, myths, legends, memories, beyond the West, gain importance and must be recognized considering the legitimacy of the act of narrating a story (Mignolo, 2008b: 260).

The use of concepts and sources, mediated by languages, is associated with the working methodology of decolonial studies, which, although it poses differences within them, is distinguished by the imperative of decolonizing the social sciences.

From the assumption that the first step to decolonize is to name, as Grosfoguel argues, modern colonial concepts require decolonial work that involves showing their genealogy in Western modernity and thus transforming the assertions of the supposed universal validity of concepts and turning them into historically situated and, therefore, plural concepts (Mignolo & Vázquez, 2013). However, it is also necessary to consider that every research process is a colonizing act and the researcher is a colonizing subject, hence the latter must be a mediator between “others”, a facilitator of liberating processes; research thus has to be approached as a decolonial doing that unfolds through its constitutive actions/traces associated with communal contemplating (collective feeling-listening-perceiving-observing, in which the decolonial mediator is not the only one who contemplates, but who allows himself to be observed by observing), alterative conversing (both actors dialogue to configure knowledge or live communally) and configurative reflecting (liberating predetermined beliefs) (Ortiz Ocaña and Arias López, 2019: 155 et seq.).

Based on the above, decoloniality is defined as a type of activity (thought, turn, option), of confrontation – resistance and re-existence – to the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality (Grosfoguel and Mignolo, 2008: 34). The decolonial project is not an alternative globalization (as could be other projects based on abstract universals, such as Christianity, liberalism, Marxism or Al-Qaeda’s Islamism), but proposes globalization - other, pluri-versal (36). A decolonial perspective is based on the history of coloniality (Mignolo, 2020: 10-11).

In this way, it presents a teleological vision of society, of an emancipatory character of the economic-cultural matrix of the West, which requires rewriting history. It is not a matter of identifying and explaining historical processes in order to address their possible globality, according to themes and problems observed by the historian, but of addressing power and resistance as a theme of global history. In this way, decolonial studies “return” to spatiality and temporality through the observation of historical facts/landmarks that allow us to unveil, from the margins, the problem of power and resistance in a global plot.

The space conceived from modernity is questioned for constituting abstraction and deterritorialization of history and, consequently, invisibilization of different cultures (Escobar, 2000: 69). As Arturo Escobar observes:

“The dominance of space over place has operated as a profound epistemological device of Eurocentrism in the construction of social theory. By de-emphasizing

the cultural construction of place in the service of the abstract and apparently universal process of capital and state formation, almost all conventional social theory has rendered invisible subaltern ways of thinking and local and regional modalities of configuring the world" (2000: 69).

Space, then, from this reading, must be localized and, as such, perceived from a place and temporality, in turn, linked to the concept of border thinking.

Colonial difference poses, from the colonality of power, the superiority of Western culture over the colonized (Walsh, Interview with Mignolo, 2003), turning differences into values and establishing a hierarchy of human beings, ontologically and epistemically (Mignolo, 2015 [2010]: 41). For Walter Mignolo,

"Border thinking arises from the imperial/colonial difference of power in the formation of subjectivities. Hence, border thinking is not connatural to a subject who inhabits the house of empire, but it is connatural to the formation of subjects who inhabit the house of the colonial wound" (2015: 270).

The notion of frontier, then, acquires centrality. It represents a place outside the modern world system, the visibilization of colonial difference and overcoming Eurocentrism in order to expose diversity and otherness (Escobar, 2000: 23). Associated to the frontier, another concept becomes relevant that allows conceiving an approach that can contribute to global history, interdependence, an articulation of networks that puts on stage the diversity of cultures (2000: 310, 311; Escobar, 2003: 6). Therefore, place and localization represent the basis on which to situate oneself in history, a hermeneutic action through which the observer situates himself in a sociohistorical place, as a subject of enunciation of a discourse from where he formulates problematic questions (Dusell, 2007: 15).

Localization is inscribed in border thinking that is considered decolonial thinking (Mignolo, 2015 [2013]: 151). It occurs when appropriate conditions are in place and when the awareness of colonality originates. It implies stepping out of the categories of Western thought and experience, detaching from the colonial matrix of power – modifying the rules of the game and power relations – and return to the past space/times/invisibilized actors of history. For that reason, it is a requirement of an independent thought (Mignolo, 2015 [2013]: 177 et seq.). In other words, a border thinking is proposed as a way to critical cosmopolitanism aimed at building a world where many worlds fit (Mignolo, 2000a).

Historical analysis, therefore, in the key of the modern colonial world system from the frontiers. It proposes an approach that focuses its inquiry on interconnections and networks but in a frontier space that implies revisiting the world/global past from the centrality acquired by social actors who, from the margins of the world system, practice a thought that poses the challenge and the need to incorporate new actors, sources and languages. All this implies analyzing history from the standpoint of resistance in

pursuit of an intercultural dialogue aimed at the existence of a global order recognized as diverse and plural, polycentric, capable of achieving cultural emancipation from Eurocentrism. The “colonized by the Empire”, in the 16th century, and the “migrants in the global Empire”, in contemporary times, those conscious of a double belonging, are protagonists of border thinking. In other words,

“border epistemology is the epistemology of the anthropos that does not want to submit to humanitas, although at the same time it cannot avoid it” (2015: 176).

It conceives the modern world-system from the conflicting imaginary one that arises with and from the colonial difference (2000b: 35-39).

A diachronic review of history is then proposed, but also one of a synchronic nature in order to identify the relationships/articulations between places/actors/pluralities. Some facts identified throughout history by decolonial studies serve as an example to observe its global reading of history from the colonial difference that results in border thinking.

Decolonial studies conceive history, since the “discovery of America” – in reality an “invention”⁵ – in terms of global history intentionally constituted by European power. In these terms, Latin America is the original space and the inaugural time of a new historical world and of a new pattern of power, that of the global coloniality of power and the first “indigenized” population subjected to “racialization”, in America, Asia, Africa and Oceania, on which an identity is imposed. If there is, historically, a single global power that imposes institutions, values, beliefs and ways of knowing reality, the subjected population is heterogeneous in its histories and projects, although common, with antecedents in the colony and contemporary history, in the subversion before this pattern of power with an open historical horizon (Quijano, 2014[2011]: 857 et seq.). From this reading, it is presented as global history, as a construction of power and resistance, it is an explanation but also a prescriptive one as an ideology, from where historical analysis is also political theory and philosophy of history. Thus, global history is the result of the construction of “Global North” and the resistance of “Global South” (Quijano, 2014 [2011]: 857).

In the decolonial reading, from temporality, global history to which it gives rise recognizes different milestones that, focused on thematic keys of resistance-emancipation, account for the possibility of approaching a double perspective: on the one hand, from the historical reconstructions of processes understood secularly from the West or with Western parameters and, on the other, from the rebellions against power – some of a global nature, others of a local nature but in the key of a global reading.

In the first perspective, Enrique Dussel reviews the aspects that, from the level of peoples and ideas, should be directed to the revision of history. Thus, for example, he proposes overcoming Hellenocentrism (political phenomena have an origin prior to

⁵ This idea comes from Edmundo O’Gorman (1958): *The Invention of America: An Inquiry into the Historical Structure of the New World and the Meaning of its Becoming*.

and distinct from Greece); Occidentocentrism (the Renaissance is the fruit of the exile of the Greeks who left Constantinople because of the invasion, while Genoa, Florence, China, the Middle East, Afghanistan and India also participated in a humanist movement); Eurocentrism (achievements reached by other cultures such as the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Chinese empire, Hindustan, Islam, Mayas, Aztecs, Incas) and in relation to this, the theoretical and mental colonization of the peripheries (mental emancipation), all of which opens a way to think spatiality and temporality in history (Dusell, 2007: 156).

Already at the level of contemporaneity, Edgardo Lander and Santiago Arconada Rodríguez make an approach to the current civilization which they characterize as the scientific-technological dominion over the so-called “nature” and for which human welfare is represented by the accumulation of material objects and endless economic growth (2019: 15). Humanity as a totality is thus inscribed in a civilizational field to which is attributed a multidimensional terminal crisis of the modern-colonial civilizational pattern that is destroying the conditions that make possible the production and reproduction of life on planet Earth (2019: 9). In this approach, although the focus of analysis is the present, the structural unity of the world system and the roles of the different actors in different spaces and times are related: the power policies of states and resistances. In this perspective, the end of the cycle inaugurated with the Communist Manifesto and the revolution through the seizure of power; the failures of the progressive left in Latin America through acquiescence to the civilizational pattern; the heterogeneity of the social struggles that are inscribed in conservative preaching and criticism of the civilizational model; as well as the error of the left in attributing exclusive responsibility to the United States as a power without realizing that China is part of the same pattern.

There are also similar approaches in Walter Mignolo’s approach to the historical course of Westernization (associated with the matrix of the colonality of power), de-Westernization (the inter-state project that does not question the world colonality of power in its foundation and procedures but disputes who controls it) and decoloniality (the detachment from the WPC). Thus, for example, while the attack on the Twin Towers – September 11, 2001 – and the entry of China into the World Trade Organization – December 11 of the same year – are seen as indicators of the collapse of Westernization; the formation of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) – December 11, 2006 – is that of de-Westernization; the removal of Dilma Rousseff as president of Brazil – on August 31, 2016 – and the rise later of Jair Bolsonaro – on January 1, 2019 – are examples of rewesternization; decoloniality in general is identified through the protests and organizations of the emerging global political society that respond to, reject, and seek to “detach” from the matrix of colonality (2020: 12 et seq).

In the second perspective, the axis of analysis is focused on certain spaces/actors but in interaction with others, given by the participation in a world/modern/colonial system, the location in a frontier bearing a frontier thought and resistance, where conquest, colonial revolutions, decolonization, social demonstrations against liberal and socialist projects and social movements of the twentieth century are recognized as significant milestones.

Walter Mignolo argues that the “colonial revolution”, which occurred in the 16th century and began to restructure at the end of the 18th century, can be analyzed from two perspectives insofar as it has different meanings for colonists and the colonized. For the former, it represents the dismantling of one type of order (Tawantinsuyu, Anahuac and Mayab) and the gradual imposition of another, while for the colonized, Quechua and Aymara, it constitutes a Pachakuti, an overturning and disorder (Mignolo, 2006). This is the starting point of decolonial studies, where not only history as reconstruction of historical processes acquires protagonism but also the memory of the subjects who are part of them (Mignolo, 2015: 86). This perspective synthesizes the centrality of considering political-social-cultural phenomena from a relational matrix: the perspective of the exercise of power and resistance. In other words, it denotes the importance of the diversity of spaces-actors that at the same time live different and opposing experiences and also express the feasibility of observing the globality, in a plural sense, of history.

Nevertheless, the path of resistance dominates the analyses. Thus, for example, the first milestone, recognized as an antecedent of decolonial studies, is represented, in the sixteenth century, by the positions of Waman Puma and Ottobah Cugoana, to whom Mignolo attributes the opening of a space-other, the space of de-colonial thought,

“in the diversity of the experiences to which human beings were forced by the European invasions in these two cases, and foundations -similar to the Greek foundations for Western thought- of de-colonial thought” (Mignolo, 2008: 258).

Result of frontier thinking, the visibility of colonial difference, in the modern world, began to be noticed with the movements of decolonization (or independence) from the late eighteenth century until the second half of the twentieth century (Mignolo, 2000b: 36; Mignolo, 2015: 331-333). Indigenous rebellions and Amerindian intellectual production, from the sixteenth century onwards as well as the Haitian Revolution, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, are constitutive moments of the modern/colonial world imaginary (Mignolo, 2000b: 35).

Already in the twentieth century, a third milestone is the Bandung Conference (1955) -which decolonial studies consider as the political antecedent of the very conformation of this approach- where representatives of African and Asian states proposed decolonization as an alternative to the two dominant manifestations of modernity: liberal capitalism and the communist state economy (Mignolo, 2010: 174). However, the Bandung Conference is considered not only in its prolongation and extension, the Non-Aligned Movement, but in the events that occur at a contemporary global level and that account for the discontent to liberalism, as expression of imperialist-capitalist power, but also to that of the bureaucratic despotism of the “socialist camp”, which will give rise to the emergence of subjectivities of different social actors, manifestations of subjects beyond social classes in America, Europe, Asia and Africa until the 1970s (Mignolo, 2020: 20).

Bandung's legacy was taken up again towards the end of the twentieth century

from the social sectors that questioned neoliberal globalization that develops within the framework of the configuration of decolonial approaches and is presented, from its formulators, as a force that proposes an epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, 2015 [2013]: 188-189). In this framework, the social movements that occurred in Europe, America and Asia stand out, in particular, the Landless Movement in Brazil or the Social Forums, because it is considered that, following the path of Bandung, they have defended human rights in the face of neoliberal globalization and restored sovereignty as the power and control of the peoples, and of the diverse subjects over the goods that are considered their own, in terms of power to be, to know and to do (Quijano, 2002).

Finally, Ramón Grosfoguel and Walter Mignolo argue that.

“In such a way that “decoloniality”, as we think of it in South America, the Caribbean and the United States, is not universal in its particularities. But decoloniality as a concept and project is the connector between thinkers, activists, academics, journalists, etc., in different parts of the world (as well as in the European Union and the United States): the connector between all those who think and do from the sense of the world and of life that arises from the awareness of the colonial wound. The project of decolonization initiated in the sixteenth century and intensified in the twentieth century urgently requires decolonial interventions at the planetary level, not to culminate the unfinished project of modernity but to transcend modernity/coloniality towards, what Enrique Dussel calls, a transmodern world” (2008: 34-35).

In this way, both authors manage to synthesize the challenges of spatialities, temporalities and the meaning of the construction of what, they postulate, must be a new epistemology through which other knowledge can be built and, from our object of study, “other history” can be written where the “interdependence” between “diverse and plural” actors on a global scale is essential in that, on the one hand, there is a pattern of dominant power/knowledge and heterogeneous and equally legitimate cultural resistance.

Final Reflections

The starting point in the revision of history, for decolonial studies, is the recognition of a colonial matrix of power exercised by the West, which started from being worldwide in the sixteenth century to become a global power in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Criticism of the narrative of history is given by the questioning of modern colonial Eurocentric globality that enables and legitimizes a universal space where cultural differences, historically marginalized, are made invisible. The opposition between Global North and Global South highlights, on the one hand, the global dimension and, on the other, the existence of differences and asymmetrical relations.

The approach of decolonial studies is thus global, with a teleological sense, because the purpose is to reveal the other face of modernity, or the strategy hidden under the promises of modernity (Mignolo, 2020, 10-11) and to highlight/promote resistance. Such resistance has its own spatial and temporal references and, therefore, diverse and plural cultural matrices. It thus contributes to global history in the thematic of power and puts modernity in global dialogue with coloniality, its own creation. In this analysis, they seek to overcome the statocentric vision, to problematize the relationship between spaces and state and social actors, as well as to overcome a Western-centric perspective, in both cases with an emancipatory intention.

The time object of study is diachronic, insofar as it traces the trajectory of Western hegemony, and synchronic because it seeks to determine contemporary forms of domination/exploitation/resistance. Space is put in epoché to delve into the meanings of places, in terms of territorialities marked by their socio-cultural particularities, while recognizing a global belonging.

The inquiry into reality and history follows similar paths. It is a matter of inquiring into the emancipatory forms of knowing and communicating. The redensation and re-signification of concepts and categories of analysis are intertwined with the ways of investigating. The intercultural dimension from the sentipensar is presented as ways of knowledge through a dialogue that requires recovering the invisibilized voices through their own perspectives, their stories, memories, histories and legends. This leads to an emphasis on the native languages of the peoples who have lived in coloniality.

Decolonial studies do not represent an example of global history, but of a search for "other" global history. Far from the point of view of global history, it approaches it in terms of the recognition that there is history beyond state borders, overcoming the Eurocentric-Western perspective. It should be part of a debate on global history and contribute to it in terms of questions and alternative paths. It is not a matter of searching for principles or goals to be transferred to global history, but to consider those aspects that can contribute to its problematization.



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ДЕКОЛОНИЈАЛНЕ СТУДИЈЕ: ПРИЛОЗИ ИЗГРАДЊИ ГЛОБАЛНЕ ИСТОРИЈЕ

Апстракт: Глобална историја настоји да оде даље од проучавања историје традиционално уоквирене у националним државама како би узела у обзир феномене који се дешавају изван њених граница, а такође и да превазиђе историју традиционално писану из перспективе запада и о западу, у путовање које се бави анализом различитих простора и актера, као и односа и размене које је изазвала глобализација. Међутим, у свом развоју ова нова историја се сматра наставком евроцентричности (западноцентризма) и политичких и културних параметара који је одржавају.

Из Латинске Америке, деколонијалне студије могу да допринесу дебати о глобалној историји од њене формулације као корпуса идеја који, с једне стране, настоји да разуме историјску структуру западне силе са глобалном пројекцијом и, с друге, начине кроз које је могућа еманципација простора и актера из њихове перспективе. У том смислу, рад се бави деколонијалним студијама у дијалогу са глобалном историјом.

Кључне речи: ДЕКОЛОНИЈАЛНЕ СТУДИЈЕ, ЛАТИНСКА АМЕРИКА, ГЛОБАЛНА ИСТОРИЈА, НАЦИОНАЛНА ДРЖАВА, ЕВРОЦЕНТРИЗАМ.