

ARTICLE

Indo-African American Critical Thought: trajectories, identity traits and implications for research in Social Work

Pensamiento Crítico Indoafroamericano: trayectorias, rasgos identitarios e implicancias en la investigación en Trabajo Social

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to approach different trajectories of thought, intertwined with each other as a unit of meaning, which have historically configured a matrix that I call Indo-African American Critical Thinking. This way of thinking not only differs from other forms of critical thinking, but also has implications for research in Social Work. The fundamental premise is that this matrix alludes to a complex political-epistemic framework - transdisciplinary construction - of pluriverse trajectories of thought, ideas, categories, concepts, theoretical and philosophical formulations, social practices, historical experiences and artistic and cultural expressions, which mutually feed each other in a critical, interpretative and transformative way, inscribed in processes of liberation and emancipation. This paper is organized in three sections. In the first I briefly address the trajectories of Indianism, 'patria grande' and continental unity, national-popu-

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lar thought, Indo-African American socialism, dependency theories, liberation theology, liberation pedagogy, liberation philosophy, decolonial option and Indo-African American feminisms. In the second, I summarize some identifying features that characterize Indo-African American Critical Thought and differentiate it from other forms of critical thought. In the third, I link this matrix to Social Work research, discussing some implications in relation to the relevant issues and questions that arise from this critical approach, the methodologies whose development could be useful and interesting for the collaborative and participatory co-construction of knowledge, the types of research designs that would contribute to this co-construction and the modes and forms of socialization that would contribute to the debate and dissemination of the co-constructed knowledge.

Resumen

El propósito de este trabajo es el abordaje de distintas trayectorias de pensamiento, imbricadas entre sí como unidad de sentido, y que fueron configurando históricamente una matriz que denomino Pensamiento Crítico Indoafroamericano. Esta forma de pensamiento no solo se diferencia de otras formas de pensamiento crítico, sino que tiene sus implicancias en la investigación en Trabajo Social. La premisa fundamental que sostengo en este artículo es que esta matriz alude a un complejo entramado político-epistémico -construido transdisciplinariamente-, de trayectorias pluriversas de pensamiento, ideas, categorías, conceptos, formulaciones teóricas y filosóficas, prácticas sociales, experiencias históricas y expresiones artísticas y culturales, que se retroalimentan mutuamente de manera crítica, interpretativa y transformadora, inscriptos en procesos de liberación y emancipación. El trabajo está organizado en tres secciones. En la primera, abordo brevemente las trayectorias del indianismo, la patria grande y unidad continental, el pensamiento nacional-popular, el socialismo indoafroamericano, las teorías de la dependencia, la teología de la liberación, la pedagogía de la liberación, la filosofía de la liberación, la Opción Decolonial y los feminismos indoafroamericanos. En la segunda, analizo resumidamente algunos rasgos identitarios que caracterizan al Pensamiento Crítico Indoafroamericano y lo diferencian de otras formas de pensamiento crítico. En la tercera, vinculo esta matriz con la investigación en Trabajo Social, discutiendo algunas implicancias en relación a las cuestiones y preguntas relevantes que surgen de este enfoque crítico, las metodologías cuyo desarrollo podría resultar útil e interesante para la co-construcción colaborativa y participativa de conocimientos, los tipos de diseños de investigación que aportarían a esta co-construcción y los modos y formas de socialización que contribuirían al debate y difusión de los conocimientos co-construidos.

Palabras Clave:
Pensamiento
indoafroamericano; crítica;
emancipación;
investigación;
trabajo social



Introduction

The matrix of thought that I call Indo-African American Critical Thought has a long trajectory in Our America². When I refer to critical thinking, I do so in a broad sense, as an axiological-anthropological conception or philosophical conception of the world and life, based on the search for liberation and emancipation and the rejection of all forms of oppression, domination or exploitation of human beings and nature. In this sense, I agree with Franz Hinkelammert (2007), for whom not all thought that criticizes something is therefore critical thought, but that whose point of view from which the criticism is made is human emancipation.

However, in this paper I am not referring to Eurocentric critical thought, but to another form of thought, constructed from another locus of enunciation and another socio-historical-political reality. In this sense, in relation to this other way of thinking, I write this contribution from my condition as a salaried research professor and intellectual of a public university, a mestizo descendant of the great Tupi-Guarani nation and native of one of the most impoverished and relegated provinces of Northern Argentina. From this place, I identify with the Decolonial Option that has been building the “Modernity/Coloniality collective” (Palermo, 2019) and I also adhere to the struggles and political-epistemic proposals of Indo-African-American feminisms and, more specifically, of community feminisms.

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This work is inscribed in a context of enormous deepening, expansion and intensification of social inequalities generated by the colonial-modern-capitalist-patriarchal order, built from the bloody invasion of 1492 and currently sustained and reproduced by neoliberalism and financial governmentality (Agüero, 2013). In this context, today the need and urgency of critique is more important than ever, but not a critique that is limited to interpreting the world from a European-Western vision that excludes all exteriority, but a critique capable of questioning this colonial-modern-capitalist-patriarchal order from a decolonial, anti-imperialist, non-capitalist, feminist and deeply Indo-African-American point of view.

² Expression taken from Nuestra América, work of the revolutionary Cuban poet José Martí, published on January 10, 1891 in New York (Rojas, 2015, p.27)..



Trajectories that make up Indo-African American Critical Thinking

In this first section I refer to each of the ten trajectories of thought mentioned above. Indigenism, today known as Indianism, emerged in the first half of the 16th century with Bartolomé de las Casas, Bishop of Chiapas, who defended the Indians against the Spanish colonizers. In Europe, Francisco De Victoria, professor at the University of Salamanca, then the most prestigious in Europe, shares the same position. Both influenced the sanction of the Laws of the Indies in 1542, which recognized the Indians as free human beings and placed them under the direct protection of the Spanish Crown.

In the 1960s, a critical movement began in Bolivia, which Fausto Reinaga Chavarría called indianismo and which criticized indigenism for its colonialist stance, claiming the integration of native peoples and knowledge into European modernity. However, Ladislao Landa Vásquez of Peru argues that, towards the end of the 19th century, several white authors were already proposing Indianism, but it became invisible and resurfaced only in the 1960s, this time proposed by authors of the native peoples themselves. Fabiola Escárzaga highlights the relevance of Fausto Reinaga Chavarría, Guillermo Carnero Hoke and Guillermo Bonfil Batalla in the indianism of Bolivia, Peru and Mexico (Escárzaga, 2015). Other Peruvian indianists are José Carlos Mariátegui and Virgilio Roel Pineda.

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One of the great ideas that sustains and animates the struggles for American emancipation is that of *patria grande* and continental unity, based on freedom, independence, sovereignty, and therefore, opposed to all forms of domination, colonialism and imperialism. The phrase “let us be free and the rest matters nothing” (Galasso, 2000) summarizes the spirit of the liberating deeds of José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar in the second and third decade of the 19th century. Bolívar warns very early about the imperialist interference of the United States when he asserts that “The United States of America seems destined by providence to plague the whole of America with misery and hunger” (Bolívar, 1982, p.260). José Martí also warned in 1895 that “We must prevent in time, with the independence of Cuba, the United States from spreading through the Antilles and falling upon our lands of America” (Martí, 1971, p.189). For Simón Rodríguez, Bolívar’s teacher, the way forward was public education, with the purpose of forming citizens. For his part, Manuel Ugarte spreads the idea in “La Patria Grande” published in 1924. This author highlights the figure of José Gervasio Artigas, who created the Union of Free Peoples and the Federal League, and opposed all European colonial rule.



In the same direction, and following the idea of a large homeland and continental unity, national-popular thought developed in the continent. It is being built with contributions from many political figures, intellectuals, artists, leaders and revolutionary leaders. It vindicates the people as protagonists of their own history and as subjects and recipients of emancipation. In Mexico, Emiliano Zapata leads the peasant revolutionary movement of 1911 and, 15 years later, Lázaro Cárdenas, with the slogan “Mexico for the Mexicans” implements a policy of nationalization, agrarian reform, secular, free and compulsory public education and defense of workers and peasants. In Nicaragua, Augusto César Sandino rebelled in 1927 against North American domination. He vindicated the anti-imperialist struggle and the defense of the native peoples. He is assassinated by order of the North American Embassy (Vázquez, 2015, p.132).

In Peru, Víctor Raúl Haya De La Torre develops his ideas influenced by the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó, the Mexican José Vasconcelos and the Argentine Manuel Ugarte. He assumes the presidency of the Student Federation of Peru from the National University of San Marcos. Later, he becomes the first rector of the Universidad Popular del Perú, founding the magazine *Claridad*, of which José Carlos Mariátegui was interim director. Inspired by Vasconcelos, he creates the Indo-American flag. In 1926, he founds the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana, as a “Latin American anti-imperialist revolutionary party” and “Latin American autochthonous movement without any foreign intervention or influence” (Gullo, 2015, p.141). It proposed democratization, industrialization, nationalization and integration as its pillars.

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Also important is the trajectory that I call Indo-African American socialism, because it is rooted in the collective ways of life and communal modes of social organization of the peoples of Abya Yala³. In the 1920's, the Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui raised

³ Name originating in the American continent recognized by the II Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala, held July 21-25, 2004, in Quito, Ecuador (Bonilla, 2004).

the need to build a thought situated in the Indo-African American reality, which is not a copy but an original creation. He distanced himself from European Marxism and its local reproductions and founded the Peruvian Socialist Party, vindicating the indigenous, Afro-descendant and mestizo peoples as subjects of the revolution and of the profound changes to be carried out.

In the 1960s, in Colombia, sociologists Orlando Fals Borda and Camilo Torres founded one of the first Faculties of Sociology in the Americas. Fals Borda harshly criticizes intellectual colonialism and recovers the action-research method invented by Kurt Lewin in the 1930s, transforming it into participatory action-research. He adopts from the Colombian peasants the word *sentipensar*, which expresses the need to combine reason with passion, body and heart (Fals Borda, 2009).

In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the Argentine philosopher Rodolfo Kusch lives with Aymara communities in Bolivia to learn about the thinking and way of life of what he called *América profunda*. Another Argentine, Juan José Hernández Arregui, proposes a socialism interpreting Peronism as a popular movement, from Marxism. Also, John William Cooke vindicates the revolutionary character of Peronism and defends the nationalism of the working class and other popular sectors, arguing that the liberation of the homeland and the social revolution are one and the same thing. Likewise, Norberto Galasso vindicates the struggle against imperialism from the national left and in numerous publications reflects on the national question and the idea of an Indo-African American socialism.

On the other hand, there are several very important historical experiences of Indo-African American socialism. The Cuban Revolution is the most emblematic case, due to its long trajectory and validity, which has been in force for more than 60 years. Another extraordinary experience is the democratic government of Salvador Allende, in Chile, between 1970 and 1973, which was violently interrupted by a civil-military coup. Also relevant is the experience of the revolutionary government of Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru, between 1968 and 1975.

Another very important trajectory of Indo-African American Critical Thought is represented by the theories of dependency, which combine theoretical production with political action. They are built from the 1960s onwards as a critique of developmentalism, capitalist modernization, the classic theory of imperialism and colonialism. These theories are built by: Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Celso Furtado and Theotonio Dos

³ Nombre originario del continente americano reconocido por la II Cumbre Continental de los Pueblos y Nacionalidades Indígenas de Abya Yala, desarrollado del 21 al 25 de julio de 2004, en Quito, Ecuador (Bonilla, 2004).



Santos from Brazil; Aníbal Quijano from Peru; Edelberto Torres-Rivas from Guatemala; Agustín Cueva from Ecuador; Antonio García from Colombia; Pedro Paz, Alfredo Eric Calcagno and Alejandro Rofman from Argentina; Enzo Faletto from Chile; Héctor Malavé Mata from Venezuela; Gerard-Pierre Charles from Haiti; Pablo González Casanova from Mexico, among many others (Borón, 2008, p.28-29).

At that time structural-functionalism, which defended capitalist modernization, Stalinist and Trotskyist Marxism, which also defended modernization and development to stop being archaic societies as a path to socialism, and the developmentalism of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), which proposed import substitution as a way to overcome underdevelopment and achieve capitalist modernization, were disputing hegemony in the continent. The authors of the dependency theories take very different and even contradictory positions on these paradigms. Celso Furtado and Raúl Presbisch formulate the structuralist economic theory and defend industrialization and import substitution as ways to overcome underdevelopment. Fernando Enrique Cardozo and Enzo Faletto defend development within dependent capitalism. They do not criticize either functionalism or liberalism, but they do criticize ECLAC developmentalism and Marxism.

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Theotonio dos Santos, for his part, criticizes ECLAC developmentalism, Parsons' functionalism and traditional Marxism. He reinscribes in the Indo-African American reality the theses of Marx on the structure and development of capital, of Lenin on unequal development, of Rosa Luxemburg on primitive accumulation and of Trotsky on unequal and combined development. He criticizes North American imperialism and vindicates continental unity and socialism as ways to overcome dependence. He defines dependence as: a) a situation where the economy of a group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which its own economy is tied; or b) a historical configuration of the world economic structure where certain countries are favored to the detriment of others, determining the possibilities of development of the latter (dos Santos, 2020).

Three other very important trajectories of Indo-African American Critical Thought are liberation theology, liberation pedagogy and liberation philosophy. They emerge in the 1960s. Liberation theology developed in a climate of profound changes promoted by the Second Vatican Council. Hugo Assmann from Brazil, Gustavo Gutiérrez from Peru and Leonardo Boff from Brazil stand out, as well as emblematic figures such as Helder Câmara, bishop of Recife, Brazil, and Camilo Torres, a Co-



lombian sociologist priest, who died in combat as a guerrilla fighter. In Argentina, Juan Carlos Scannone, Lucio Gera and Rafael Tello, founders of the theology of the people, the Argentine version of liberation theology, stand out, as well as Gerardo Ferrari and Carlos Mujica (Scannone, 2009)..

Liberation pedagogy was developed in Recife, Brazil, as a movement of popular culture and adult education, led by Paulo Freire, for whom liberation is a painful labor that gives birth to a new man. He conceived education as a process of conscientization. The 1964 civil-military coup, which overthrew João Goulart, truncated Freire's project. For its part, the philosophy of liberation develops towards the end of the 1960s, with the debates between the Peruvian Augusto Salazar Bondy and the Mexican Leopoldo Zea, joined in 1971 by the Argentines Juan Carlos Scannone and Enrique Dussel. Mario Casalla (1973) coined the category universal situated as a philosophical, political, historical and social category. For Alejandro Auat (2011) this does not imply renouncing the abstraction of concepts or the pretension of universality, but thinking-in-situation or from a locus enuntiandi that singularizes the universal. Enrique Dussel proposes an ethics of liberation and also a method that he calls analectics, which he proposes as a method of the philosophy of liberation.

In the early 1990s, Aníbal Quijano takes up the thought of José Carlos Mariátegui and proposes the Decolonial Option as a critique of the Eurocentric vision of the world based on modernity/coloniality, patriarchy and capitalism. He constructs the categories matrix-modern-colonial of power, modern-world-system, coloniality of power, colonial difference, among others. Towards the end of the same decade, the Modernity/Coloniality collective was formed, composed of Quijano, Dussel, Arturo Escobar, Walter Mignolo, Edgardo Lander, Ramón Grosfoguel, Catherine Walsh, Zulma Palermo, María Lugones, María Eugenia Borsani, Santiago Castro-Gómez and Nelson Maldonado Torres, among others. Lander proposes the coloniality of knowledge, Maldonado Torres the coloniality of being, Lugones the coloniality of gender and Walsh interculturality as a critique of multiculturalism, among many other transdisciplinary contributions of the group.

Also, in the same decade, Indo-African-American feminisms began to develop with pluriverse trajectories (Martínez, 2019a), although they coincide in the rejection of patriarchy, capitalism, coloniality and the universal homogenization of the categories of women and gender (Villarroel Peña, 2019). They also coincide in the rejection of Eurocentrism and the pretension of hegemony of white, academic and middle-class feminism (Medina Martin, 2013). In addition to these rejections, these

feminisms make very important and pluriverse contributions. In this sense, the social struggles, political approaches and theoretical and epistemological contributions of black, Chicano, mestizo, indigenous, autonomous, decolonial, communitarian, popular and dissident feminisms, among others, stand out (Moore Torres, 2018).

Unity of meaning and identity traits of Indo-Afro-American Critical Thinking

In spite of the differences that we can observe between the different trajectories briefly discussed in the previous section, there is a common thread with which these paths were woven beyond their differentiation; to understand this fabric, in this section I analyze the mutual imbrications, the historical, political and epistemic interrelationships that allow us to see not loose trajectories nor detached from each other, but intertwined, forming a construct with unity of meaning.

Indo-African American Critical Thought is being built over a period of more than 500 years from 1492 onwards. It is configured in a continuous and dialectical process, which is enriched - on the one hand - with a lush production of theologians, philosophers, thinkers, intellectuals, historians, economists, sociologists, pedagogues, political scientists, artists, writers, poets, musicians, among others. But it is also built - on the other hand - with a long history of popular, peasant, military, workers, students, native peoples, women, political and social leaders who take up the cause of liberation and emancipation and dedicate their lives and even give their lives heroically to this cause.

Therefore, a first identifying feature of this matrix of thought is its collective construction process. That is to say, it is a matrix of thought whose historical construction is not attributable to an individual subject but to a collective subject, which is also historically constructed. This identifying feature differentiates it from other critical thought matrices such as Marxism or the Frankfurt School, where this collective production of thought is not so evident, nor is its attribution to a collective subject that is historically constructed. The ideas that shape the Indo-African American Critical Thought cross each other, influencing and feeding back mutually, forming a multicolored collective fabric. Ideas such as those of patria grande, continental unity, independence or liberation, for example, traverse national-popular thought, theories of dependency and the theology, pedagogy and philosophy of liberation, but in turn, through these, they underlie the Decolonial Option and feed back into it and Indo-African American feminisms. The trajectories developed above also show other identity traits that are reflected in



the richness, originality and pluriversity of their approaches. These characteristics also distinguish Indo-African American Critical Thought from other forms of critical thought. The originality lies in the fact that it is a thought constructed from the singularity and specificity of the historical, political, economic and cultural reality of Our America. It is neither a copy nor a replica nor an adaptation of other forms of thought, as proposed by José Carlos Mariátegui in the 1920s when he founded Peruvian socialism based on the native communities, the mestizaje and the black Peruvian population. Later, in the 1960s, Orlando Fals Borda, Camilo Torres and Rodolfo Kusch, among others, also proposed it. Years later, in the 1990s, it was also proposed by Aníbal Quijano, when he constructed the Decolonial Option, which was joined by Walter D. Mignolo, creator precisely of the category pluriversity (Mignolo, 2011).

Pluriversity has to do, in the first place, with the multiplicity of voices and perspectives that make up Indo-African American Critical Thought. There is not a single view of reality, nor a single interpretation. There is no hegemonic knowledge that marginalizes other knowledge. Nor is there only one form of knowledge, but multiple forms that come from multiple experiences and life histories. There is no canonical knowledge or forms of knowledge. Nor are there scientific communities with pretensions of sacredness, nor epistemic obedience, nor disciplines that discipline. All voices are valid and legitimate from the perspective of a critical interculturality (Walsh, 2009) and transcultural experiences (Palermo, 2019). This identity feature differentiates this matrix from other forms of critical thinking, where borders tend to be closed, dogmatic and endogenous.

The richness of Indo-African American Critical Thought lies in the enormous baggage of theoretical, epistemic and methodological contributions made from the different trajectories of thought developed in the previous section. Moreover, this wealth of contributions comes not only from intellectual, scientific or artistic production, but also from the social struggles and national, popular and communal political experiences lived in the continent. It is a matrix of thought that is being built collectively in the heat of these experiences and struggles, and that, therefore, is deeply rooted in the memory, the social imaginaries and the Indo-African-American world of life. The richness of this matrix also lies in a non-linear conception of time and history. It is a circular conception, not chronometric and not reduced to productivity and capitalist economic accumulation. Time and history are conceived as spaces of life, spaces of experiences lived collectively in the body-territories and with nature, in an integrated manner as a totality of meaning. The relationships of mutual imbrication and feedback between the different trajecto-



ries addressed in the first section configure a matrix of thought based on transdisciplinarity, holistic gaze, historicity, intersectionality and decoloniality. It is, therefore, a *sentipensar-hacer* situado that implies a profound political-epistemic rupture with Eurocentric-Western-modern-modern-colonial-patriarchal-capitalist thought. These identity traits allow us to distinguish very clearly this matrix of thought from other forms of critical thought. Moreover, they point to a very singular and specific profile.

Transdisciplinarity does not eliminate disciplinary boundaries, but it does cross and overflow them, constructing knowledge that cannot be reduced to certain disciplinary fields or interpreted exclusively from them. What transdisciplinarity builds is a multifaceted or multidimensional knowledge, which allows a broader view of reality. As the knowledge-producing subjects of each trajectory relate to each other, they produce knowledge that is enriched, as occurs with the ideas of liberation, revolution, socialism, dependence and coloniality, among others. Furthermore, knowledge is enriched with meanings that are constructed on the basis of pluriverse historical experiences. Very concrete cases are the revolutionary experiences of Fidel Castro in Cuba, Salvador Allende in Chile and Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre in Peru, among others.

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All the trajectories included in the first section have a holistic and historicist view of reality. In this sense, the idea of *patria grande* is the most emblematic, as a view of totality (holistic) and historical construction (historicism) of reality. The same is true of Indianism, theories of dependency and the Decolonial Option, to name but a few. On the other hand, although intersectionality and decoloniality are rather recent epistemic approaches (Crenshaw, 1989; Vargas Soler, 2009), the ideas that support them have a long historical construction that crosses the trajectories developed in the first section.

In the case of intersectionality, it refers to the intertwining of conditionalities that specify the social situation of the subjects, such as gender, race, class, occupation, among others. It is a view that situates social subjects in a particular place, time and socio-historical-political context and this is one of the fundamental features that runs through all Indo-African American Critical Thought. The same is true of decoloniality, which accounts for the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) constructed by modernity and sustained by patriarchy, racism and capitalism. This epistemic approach is imbricated in the long political and social struggles developed in Our America against colonialism and imperialism, as well as in the baggage of ideas and theoretical, epistemic and methodological constructions that are shaping this matrix of thought.



Implications for Social Work research

The trajectories of thought developed in the first section and the reflections made in the second, now allow us to address some very important implications for research in Social Work. I have no doubt about the enormous potential of Indo-African American Critical Thinking, not only for professional training and the production of knowledge in Social Work, but also for social intervention, taking into account that these three areas of the profession are nothing more than mutually intertwined and implicated dimensions of each other. It is more than evident that professional training is implicit in all social intervention and that we cannot separate one from the other, even if we tried to do so. The same is true of research, although it seems that this needs to be explained a little more because sometimes it is not so obvious.

First of all, I cannot fail to mention that many ideas constructed by Latin American Critical Thought had a great influence on the period known as the reconceptualization of Social Work, whose peak occurred between 1965 and 1975. Of course, this movement was not unrelated to the social struggles, political experiences and scientific, intellectual and cultural productions that were shaping Latin American Critical Thinking, as I pointed out in the previous section. The contributions of reconceptualization were very important for Social Work, because they meant an attempt to break the crystallization of conservative and reactionary ideas and practices that were reproduced under the name of “social work” in Our America.

Some of the implications for Social Work research that I would like to highlight in this section are: a) the type of research proposed by Latin American Critical Thinking; b) the relevant issues and questions that arise from this matrix of thought; c) the purpose of knowledge production; d) the methodologies that may be useful for this type of research; e) the research designs that would be recommended; and f) the forms of socialization that would contribute to the debate and dissemination of knowledge. It is worth noting that these implications also apply to professional training and social intervention, although I will only refer to research for the sake of the length of this article.

In relation to the type of research, Indo-African American Critical Thinking proposes a collective, collaborative and participatory co-construction of knowledge, crossed by a multiplicity of historical, political, ancestral and popular processes, experiences and knowledge, interpreted not by supposedly seasoned experts, but by the protagonists themselves within the framework of the meanings of their lifeworlds and their daily lives. The relevant research questions and issues are not



raised out of thin air, but arise from this specific context of long memory, loaded with meaning and shared meanings. They do not arise from theoretical or speculative lucubrations, but from accumulated experience, everyday knowledge, popular beliefs and practices, and wisdom derived from shared stories and experiences.

In the research space that is built from this matrix of thought, convictions and political commitment are not left aside, behind a supposed value neutrality of science. On the contrary, the research task is sprinkled by the collective project, by the struggles and the daily construction of horizons of meaning. The purpose of research is not, then, mere knowledge for the sake of knowledge; it is not mere curiosity or personal or institutional interest. The purpose is the search for the deepest meaning and the appropriate ways to collectively transform reality. Research is thus transformed into a deep reflective look, focused on the problems of the popular sectors, the peasantry, native peoples, afro-descendants, mestizos, commoners, immigrants, as well as marginalized, excluded, stigmatized, racialized and invisibilized populations. It emphasizes those who, for Indo-African American Critical Thought, are the protagonists and recipients of emancipation.

Useful methodologies for this type of research are all those that can construct a broad view from a particular place (Harding, 2004), not only to understand and interpret reality but, fundamentally, to transform it. Methodologies that allow the analysis of power structures, dependence, domination and oppression, with a situated and rooted view of the other, of social subjects and of historical, political and social processes, are useful. In this sense, positivist, neopositivist, falsificationist, systemic-functional, quantitative and hypothetico-deductivist methodologies, among others, are not useful. On the other hand, undisciplined methodologies are useful, centered on a situated feeling-doing and that generate processes of depatriarchalization, decolonization and intersectionality, such as participatory action research, collaborative research, feminist research, performative ethnography, collective historiographic research, research with significant images, among others.

The research logics inscribed in Indo-African American Critical Thinking are always constructivist, open, flexible, and this also includes the design of research projects, as well as the socialization processes through which knowledge is legitimized and validated. In this sense, in this type of research, not only the production of knowledge, but also the socialization of its results are always collective and, therefore, political processes. Both the production and the dissemination and discussion of knowledge are political acts that are carried out in the knowledge of the power that all knowledge generates and the possibilities it implies, whether in terms of domination and oppression or liberation and emancipation.



Algunas experiencias de investigación en Trabajo Social, inscriptas en el Pensamiento Crítico Indoafroamericano, que menciono solamente a modo de ejemplos, son la indagación de procesos de dominación cultural y reproducción de la desigualdad social, realizada con pequeños productores tabacaleros de las provincias argentinas de Jujuy y Misiones (Agüero, 2009); la investigación feminista de procesos de dominación/emancipación de mujeres en situación de violencia en contextos familiares, realizado en la ciudad de Posadas, Misiones, Argentina (Martínez, 2013); el estudio de la cultura popular y la participación social en el barrio de Mataderos de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (Sirvent, 1999); las experiencias de investigación, compartidas como encuentros sociales en el Trabajo Social (Gil Claros y Sánchez Rodríguez, 2020) y las experiencias con diversidades sociales desde el Trabajo Social Intercultural y Decolonial (Gómez-Hernández, 2018). También menciono a modo de ejemplo, aunque estrictamente no son experiencias de investigación en Trabajo Social, la indagación de la trama oculta del poder y las desigualdades de género en los partidos políticos (Martínez, 2019b) y las ricas experiencias de investigación con comunidades *aymaras* (Kusch, 2007).

Some research experiences in Social Work, inscribed in the Indo-African American Critical Thinking, which I mention only as examples, are the investigation of processes of cultural domination and reproduction of social inequality, carried out with small tobacco producers in the Argentine provinces of Jujuy and Misiones (Agüero, 2009); the feminist investigation of processes of domination/emancipation of women in situations of violence in family contexts, carried out in the city of Posadas, Misiones, Argentina (Martínez, 2013); the study of popular culture and social participation in the Mataderos neighborhood of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (Sirvent, 1999); research experiences, shared as social encounters in Social Work (Gil Claros and Sánchez Rodríguez, 2020) and experiences with social diversities from Intercultural and Decolonial Social Work (Gómez-Hernández, 2018). I also mention by way of example, although strictly speaking they are not research experiences in Social Work, the inquiry into the hidden plot of power and gender inequalities in political parties (Martínez, 2019b) and the rich research experiences with Aymara communities (Kusch, 2007).

Final Reflections

In this paper I have argued about the complexity of Indo-African American Critical Thought as a political-epistemic framework. My argumentation began with a brief approach to ten trajectories of thought called Indianism, patria grande and continental unity, national-popular thought, Indo-African American socialism, dependency



theories, liberation theology, liberation pedagogy, liberation philosophy, Decolonial Option, and Indo-African American feminism. Then, I argued about the mutual imbrication and feedback historically constructed between these trajectories and their interrelation as a unity of meaning, addressing in turn some identifying features that allow differentiating this matrix of thought from other forms of critical thought. Finally, I referred to some implications of this matrix of thought in Social Work research, pointing out that these implications also extend to professional training and social intervention, as mutually intertwined and mutually implicated dimensions.

This critical approach is highly topical, due to its rich contributions, its originality and its analytical-interpretative potential. As a matrix of thought, it has developed a broad view from a particular place: the Great Indo-African American Homeland. In this paper I have only presented -in broad strokes- a first approach to this matrix of thought, which requires, of course, to continue working on it, in order to broaden and deepen its content, make new contributions, enrich the look by incorporating other historical experiences, discuss other views on the Indo-African American reality, among other possibilities.

The theoretical-political horizon of long-term strategic growth of Indo-African American Critical Thought finds its greatest potential in the epistemic contributions of the Decolonial Option and the Feminisms of the South, especially the Community Feminisms of Bolivia and Guatemala. Without prejudice to this strategic horizon of long-term growth, in the short term and in the present, it constitutes a political-epistemic and theoretical-methodological matrix in which very diverse research projects, undergraduate and graduate academic training projects, extension projects and links with the territory, social intervention projects and, obviously, political projects of liberation and emancipation can live and find meaning and foundation.

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