

Social and educational strategies of inclusion and exclusion of indigenous peoples in Latin America

Germán Vargas Callejas

University Santiago of Compostela

María Verdeja Muñiz

University of Oviedo

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15595692.2024.2365178>

DIASPORA, INDIGENOUS, AND MINORITY EDUCATION

Summary

The presence of indigenous peoples in Latin America continues to be a profound problem for nation states which, despite the accelerated population and cultural decline of these groups, continue to debate what to do with indigenous peoples. This article systematises the multiple social and educational strategies applied, from colonisation to the present, for the inclusion or exclusion of indigenous peoples as citizens with rights in the region. These strategies include: marginalisation and self-exclusion devised to protect themselves from the colonial and republican yoke; the forced cultural destruction of native peoples (genocide); assimilation as a form of cultural dissolution; mestizaje as a strategy of integration without participation; and, in a more favourable direction, the valuing of diversity for real participation in the construction of intercultural and inclusive models of life and the establishment of indigenous autonomy to ensure the survival of indigenous cultures. A set of strategies of inclusion and exclusion that have used institutional, school and social education as the means best suited to their purposes.

Keywords: indigenous education, indigenous culture, inclusion, exclusion, Latin America

Introduction

The indigenous issue is an unresolved problem in Latin American nation states (Stefanoni, 2010; Canales, 2014), all of which continue to struggle between the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion of native peoples. In this context, the reality of poverty and marginalisation of indigenous peoples is evident (ECLAC, 2020) who, despite legislative advances and the development of inclusion strategies, have not experienced a substantial improvement in their living conditions (World Bank, 2015; United Nations 2021), especially in terms of cultural promotion, access to quality education and economic and social strengthening in order to assert themselves and face the subjugation of globalisation and its neoliberal capitalist model in the 21st century. This is a historical period in which indigenous nations continue to be stigmatised as a burden and an obstacle (IIDH, 2009) to the consolidation of modern states.

From a general perspective, the indigenous reality in Latin America has not changed substantially or uniformly, for example, in Bolivia, their situation has improved significantly in terms of political participation and poverty reduction, especially for majority groups such as the Quechua, Aymara and Guarani, but almost all minority indigenous peoples are in a serious situation of cultural extinction (ABI, 2022). This reality is replicated throughout the region, where, despite apparent attention to the well-being and promotion of indigenous rights, the COVID 19 pandemic, climate change, self-interested political practices and chronic inequality have worsened the living conditions of a large part of indigenous people in Latin America.

According to the World Bank report (2015) entitled "Indigenous Latin America in the Twenty-First Century", in 2010, approximately 42 million indigenous people inhabited the region, of which 80% (34 million) were distributed in four countries: Mexico, Guatemala, Peru and Bolivia. The report highlights that one of the most critical problems for most indigenous people is poverty, which affects 43% of the native population, 24% of whom live in extreme poverty. This information shows that, compared to the non-indigenous population, indigenous groups run a greater risk of being trapped in the vicious circle of poverty, as they are part of impoverished households, with fewer opportunities for health care and fewer possibilities of accessing quality education that takes into account their culture and, at the same time, facilitates access to universal knowledge. This impoverished reality is aggravated by the unfair exploitation of their labour force, the abusive - extractive - use of their natural resources, the subjugation of their communities and, in most national states, by the lack of formal recognition of indigenous territories and the delay in the establishment and effective functioning of indigenous autonomies.

The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC, 2014) in the report "Indigenous peoples in Latin America: progress in the last decade and pending challenges for guaranteeing their rights", in addition to highlighting significant achievements, also points out aspects that need to be addressed and improved. In this regard, it indicates that indigenous peoples are not a priority for public investment in the provision of services, especially education and health services, and that their participation in the economy is centred on the informal dimension, which reduces their options for economic development. It also highlights their difficulties in accessing justice and their limitations in political participation, a set of factors that restrict their real and effective participation in the framework of national decisions. A reading of the ECLAC (2014) and World Bank (2015) reports, without underestimating the achievements, leads to the conclusion that the living conditions of indigenous people remain critical in the region.

The current reality of inequality and marginalisation responds, to a large extent, to the social and educational strategies employed by the colonial administration and, subsequently, by the respective national states to facilitate their inclusion or force their exclusion as citizens. A set of strategies that, from a negative point of view, have been based on the use of force, deceit, contempt, racism and exploitation, and, in a positive, inclusive sense, through the extension of citizenship practices, respect for diversity, the dialogic exchange of knowledge, the establishment of inclusive educational systems and, in general, through the construction of democratic states centred on respect for cultural diversity and the rights of indigenous peoples.

Considering the theoretical contributions regarding the situation of social and educational inclusion and exclusion of indigenous people in Latin America, the content of the article is based on the historical, global and holistic reading and analysis of the indigenous reality, from the colonial period to the present day. The dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are approached from a general understanding - social, community and school - of education, understood as a communicative and socialising process of teaching and learning, which facilitates coexistence, social transformation and the acquisition of knowledge and values that promote the development of capacities and competencies for the achievement of better conditions of existence and, consequently, for the realisation of a dignified life for all.

The aim of this article is therefore to systematise the multiple social and educational strategies applied, from colonisation to the present, for the inclusion or exclusion of indigenous people as citizens with rights in the national states of Latin America. Along these lines, the article invites us to rethink the strategies developed to integrate or exclude indigenous people in their respective states, to understand their current

situation and to discover the old and new obstacles that prevent or, where appropriate, facilitate coexistence and the exercise of full citizenship. The strategies presented are analytical and interpretative in nature and are subordinated, in global terms, to the description of the social and educational relations between pre-Columbian indigenous communities with the colonising agents and, since independence, with the institutions developed within the framework of the republics. It is not a question of specifying the level of inclusion or exclusion, but of highlighting the strategies of resistance and cultural continuity linked to the educational question, which underlie and explain the current reality of these peoples and their prospects for achieving better living conditions.

Among the most relevant social and educational strategies - institutional and non-regulated - of inclusion and exclusion in Latin America, the following stand out: marginalisation and self-exclusion devised to protect themselves from the colonial and republican yoke; the forced cultural destruction of native peoples (genocide); assimilation as a form of cultural dissolution; mestizaje as a strategy of integration without participation and, in a more favourable direction, the valuing of diversity for real participation in the construction of intercultural and inclusive models of life and the establishment of indigenous autonomy to ensure the validity of indigenous cultures. All these strategies of inclusion and exclusion are approached from a complex perspective, especially in social and educational terms.

Marginalisation and self-exclusion

In colonial times, many indigenous peoples were intentionally marginalised, ignored and forgotten by the colonisers because they were not relevant for their economic and power purposes, or because of the vastness of the territory, which made it difficult to subjugate and administer the most remote peoples. This reality was replicated in the republics, which only turned to the indigenous peoples in times of national need, for example, to recruit young men to serve as soldiers for the defence of a nation whose existence they were unaware of (Author, 2005). The reality of marginalisation of indigenous peoples followed three strands, the first, due to their remoteness and uselessness for colonial and republican interests; the second, of self-exclusion, as a strategy of escape from colonial exploitation and slavery (Fausto, 2013) or from the tax rapacity of the republican period; and the third, of the indigenous reservations or reductions that, at the beginning of the 20th century, were established, for example, in Chile (Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009), the latter practice being scarcely disseminated in Latin America. These three forms of "integration" led to the same reality of exclusion, which limited the possibilities and opportunities for

improving traditional living conditions and restricted integration into the cultural and economic dynamics of the colony and, later, of the nascent republics.

From a reading of self-exclusion, some indigenous peoples, in order to maintain cultural cohesion and avoid the destruction of the community during the colonial period, moved to remote and in some cases inhospitable places, where the presence of the colonising agents was almost impossible (Fausto, 2013). This situation allowed, to a large extent, the safeguarding of the indigenous culture with a high level of fidelity to the original tradition. Self-exclusion, as a flight to safeguard one's own personal and community existence, had profound consequences, especially because of the fracturing of fluid connections for cultural and economic exchange, and existence in conditions of clandestinity, which hindered cultural exchange and access to resources that, in the long term, within the framework of the republics, condemned these peoples to underdevelopment. A situation that is still visible today in the living conditions of many indigenous people whose lifestyle has hardly changed from the beginning of the colony to the present.

Due to their spatial, cultural, economic and political marginalisation, many indigenous people did not acquire a sense of nationality or citizenship, considering themselves alien to their own states (Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009). This situation led to the implementation of parallel educational models: that of the indigenous people, which followed the ancestral tradition of creating and transmitting knowledge, and that of the colonisers, later reconverted into the republican school model which, for the majority of indigenous people, until the 1950s, was an almost inaccessible educational resource.

At present, some indigenous communities persist in voluntary isolation as a cultural survival strategy, especially among those who have experienced limited contact with Western culture. This is the case of some uncontacted indigenous tribes in the Amazon, who insist on living outside the influence of the global culture whose educational, cultural and economic structure is seen as a source of exploitation, poverty, domination and racism. This dynamic of marginalisation has given rise to the preservation, with a high level of originality, of the cultural traditions, language and values of these communities, whose isolation is being fractured mainly by the capitalist economic system that has disseminated the idea of business in the farthest reaches of Latin American territory and, of course, by the irruption of new means of transport and communication, and by the need for natural resources to promote national development (Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009) based on extractivist logics.

Forced cultural destruction

During the colonial and republican period in Latin America, many native peoples have been persecuted, subjugated and destroyed by states and economic agents - public and private - interested in the resources and economic potential of indigenous territories (Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009). These practices of physical elimination, territorial subjugation and cultural destruction were exercised in the colonial and republican systems, in the form of genocidal interventions (Verón, 2017), undertaken to dispossess indigenous peoples of their resources and territories, under the justification of power and force or under the cover of the idea of national unity and economic development.

At present, the dynamics of genocide and cultural destruction of indigenous peoples continue in some Latin American countries, where, beyond their cultural assimilation, their physical destruction is sought, based on political measures that fail to protect their languages and territories, as well as through deficient medical care, the destruction of their life-sustaining resources (contamination of rivers with mercury in gold mining), or by means of frontal attacks on the physical integrity of indigenous people, promoted by some loggers, cattle ranchers, miners, landowners, drug traffickers, etc. In this context, despite the constitutional recognition of indigenous rights (ILO, 2014; United Nations, 2007), in most of the constitutions of Latin American countries, actions to destroy indigenous life and culture are still in force, a kind of low-intensity, calculated and disguised genocide that, in most cases, responds to a mixture of racist ideologies associated with economic interests. This explains, for example, the invasions of indigenous territories in Brazil by loggers, hunters, land speculators, miners and illegal fishermen to exploit their resources, in complicity with governments such as that of Jair Bolsonaro (Verdum, 2022), who during his administration relaxed the rules protecting indigenous communities and territories in order to facilitate corporate advancement and exploitation, intentionally disregarding the rights of indigenous peoples in order, in the name of order and progress, to eliminate the original inhabitants and appropriate the resources of their territory.

Another factor currently affecting the forced disappearance of some indigenous peoples is the expansion of organised crime, especially drug trafficking, which has taken root in indigenous lands in Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia and Peru, where coca cultivation, drug manufacturing and the cartels' struggles for control of territory have transformed the native inhabitants into victims who perish or are forced into displacement as a result of the violence in their living environments. These processes of subjugation and forced physical and cultural elimination are generating a significant setback in the recognition and exercise of the rights of indigenous peoples. From an educational perspective, this situation implies the denial of any possibility of original and ancestral cultural creation and transmission, as well as the impossibility

of accessing the national school education service. The inhabitants of these peoples find themselves in a kind of diaspora, their main concern being the preservation of life and daily survival. A dynamic of transit and violent displacement that denies any possibility of a future for these peoples, who have no opportunities for education, the cultivation of knowledge and cultural construction.

Assimilation for disintegration

From a more institutional and sustained perspective, the purpose of integrating and culturally assimilating the indigenous people took shape in the period of consolidation of the nation states (Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009), the idea that the indigenous people were the cause of the backwardness in the cultural, economic and social development of the new nations, a problem that had to be overcome by assimilating the peoples who resisted civilisation, was disseminated. This is how Faria de Vasconcelos put it in 1919 in the prologue to his work "The Education of the Indian", in which he argues that it is "necessary to call these forces, these dormant races, into national life, to bring them out of their unproductive lethargy" and assimilate them into the scheme of modern civilisation. It is a matter of "evolving" the indigenous races and their aptitudes in order to use their potential for the progress of the national state. To achieve this goal, the educational and cultural creation systems focus on annulling the beliefs and naturalistic vision of the indigenous peoples, while inculcating in them notions of civilisation in order to favour their integration as servants and proletarians in the modern state, a desire that Guillén (1919, p.121): "I am convinced that the Indian, today deprived of enjoyment and rights, will one day shake his rough mane, will advance towards us, and his rough right hand will wield the sceptre of the civilised worker who is the master of the world".

Intentionally, through the design of educational and cultural policies, states "in Latin America sought the assimilation of indigenous populations into their respective societies. The processes of "de-Indianisation", exclusion and assimilation of communities were justified in the name of national unity" (Barragán, 2008, p. 9) and the transition to modernity. The aim was to integrate indigenous peoples through the assimilation of a single language, Spanish, and the disappearance of native languages (Podestá, 1989). Likewise, the miserable living conditions of the indigenous people were justified as a product of their ethnic, linguistic and cultural resistance, as well as their low motivation and capacity to understand and integrate into modernity. The assimilation of indigenous cultures, in most cases forced (IIDH, 2009; Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs, 2009), had to take place in terms alien to their own tradition, assuming cultural homogenisation as a condition for belonging to the

modern state (Author, 2005). Integration through assimilation was at its height until the mid-twentieth century, but its remnants are still significant today.

Cultural assimilation generated unfavourable situations for indigenous peoples, including low self-esteem and contempt for their own culture, which had negative effects, first, in the devaluation and consequent erosion of local knowledge and, second, in the deterioration of the cultural foundations that support identity and social cohesion. Parallel to the disdain and cultural destruction, the material poverty of these peoples was consolidated, who were integrated into the new national economies in disadvantaged conditions (World Bank, 2015), as they did not have the knowledge, training or professional skills required by modernity, and were integrated as service subjects and pawns of the new economy. This situation persists and is expressed in material poverty and limited opportunities for economic and social mobility.

The education system, through the school, was one of the most effective instruments for promoting the cultural assimilation of indigenous people in Latin America, as Guiteras (2020, p.16) states when he affirms that "despite the interest of the teachers involved in socially revaluing the indigenous population, their final objective was always their modernisation, their homogenisation and, ultimately, their assimilation into the national project". This task of assimilation and cultural dispossession was disguised as an emancipatory purpose, as a way of providing education for the exercise of citizenship rights, intentionally ignoring its objectives of cultural alienation (Author, 2006), a purpose which, at present, in addition to school systems, also makes use of information, relations and communication technologies.

Cross-breeding for integration

The aim of the assimilation strategy was the dissolution of vernacular cultures, but, given the impossibility of achieving this aim, especially incipiently from the beginning of the 20th century and especially after the Second World War, a new logic of the relationship between the national states and the indigenous peoples emerged. Ethnic and cultural miscegenation is proposed as the most appropriate option for the transformation of native cultures and their inclusion in the framework of modernity, without renouncing Spanish as the common language, but also taking into account relevant aspects of local cultures. In schools and cultural systems, it is no longer a question of eliminating the indigenous, but of generating frameworks of integration and mestizaje as a basis for coexistence and national development (Vargas, 2005). This vision coincides with the declaration and formal recognition of human rights in 1948, which also gives rise to the questioning of the injustices suffered by indigenous people and the demand for the exercise of their citizenship rights in the respective national states.

Mestizaje as a strategy for indigenous integration involves a blending of vital visions and practices with the ultimate intention of the establishment and imposition of the dominant culture. This form of inclusion was and still is practised in all Latin American countries, where for many indigenous people it constituted the most viable way to assert their citizenship rights: to blend in, learn and assume the dominant culture in order to improve their own welfare options and expand their opportunities for survival. This strategy, in institutional, educational, economic, political and social terms, implied for the indigenous people playing the role of "guests of stone", that is, being part of the national states, but without participating, with a role limited to cultural subordination, without the right or the opportunities to have a serious impact on the factors of transformation in their respective countries.

The presence of the Indian was no longer as bothersome and culturally rejected as it was in the colonial period, insofar as his strength and presence, in most cases inevitable, could give rise to new economic opportunities within the framework of the republics and, in time, to a new socio-cultural reality with few elements that refer to the original cultures. The acculturation that mestizaje entails (Fábregas, 2012) has been the path most travelled by the majority of indigenous peoples in Latin America who, faced with the disadvantages and difficulties for the survival of their peoples, opted for integration, aware of the advantages and, less so, of the loss it entailed in terms of identity and cultural vitality.

At the educational level, miscegenation as a mechanism for integration was fully taken on board by the region's school and institutional systems. To this end, educational curricula were developed that did not take into account the languages, knowledge and culture of the original peoples, but rather, almost exclusively and compulsorily, the worldview, language and culture of the colonisers and their descendants. For much of the 20th century and even today, the school system continues to be the Trojan horse for the promotion of miscegenation. Nowadays, with less racist connotations and under a logic that also integrates native cultural elements, although without the depth and relevance necessary for the reaffirmation and empowerment of the identity and culture of pre-Columbian peoples. Along these lines, integration based on miscegenation, until the 1970s and 1980s, has meant the recognition of indigenous existence and its cultural continuity conditioned by subjugation, without extending this presence and existence to real participation in cultural, political, economic and social terms.

Participation and valuing diversity

The idea of integration based on miscegenation is superseded by a more critical vision. From the analysis of the indigenous reality, it is concluded that their current situation

is the product of the historical process of cultural destruction, in the words of Podestá (1989, p. 14) "the current situation in which indigenous groups live (disintegration, isolation, poverty, linguistic fragmentation, etc.) is the result of dependence on the capitalist system and before that on the colonial system. Consequently, underdevelopment is a historical process whose goal has been to dismantle indigenous societies. Faced with this reality, from the 1970s onwards, from the indigenous collectives and external agents in solidarity with their situation, it has been proposed to take advantage of the potential of local cultures to promote fundamental transformations, to generate authentic cultural participation and to promote well-being based on the rediscovery of the possibilities of traditional production and organisation. From an educational and social reading, in the words of Vargas (2006), the objective is no longer assimilation or miscegenation, but citizen training in the values of tolerance, reciprocity and coexistence, in order to generate a productive and peaceful coexistence between the diversity of indigenous and non-indigenous agents.

The participation strategy contemplates endogenous cultural development, respect for linguistic pluralism and multi-ethnicity (Marzo, 2010), which in some Latin American countries has led to the recognition of plurinational states, along the lines theorised by Kymlicka (1995). Indigenous culture is no longer rejected or labelled as a cause of national underdevelopment; on the contrary, there is an insistence on the revalorisation of indigenous language and tradition, as well as their real participation in political and decision-making processes (United Nations, 2007). Participation is not limited to integration on equal terms, but also includes the voluntary possibility of accessing a second culture and the values of universal culture without having to renounce indigenous identity or one's own cultural tradition.

From an educational perspective, applied to formal training systems, the model of inclusion through participation gave rise to the development of new strategies for the promotion of coexistence, multiculturalism and interculturalism (March, 2010), whose main idea has been unity in diversity. A framework in which participation implies coexistence between different cultures integrated into a single national state, where different cultural traditions develop, sharing knowledge and respecting each people's right to well-being. This almost idyllic idea of coexistence has been taken up in various constitutions in Latin American countries, but its realisation is still a pending task, as educational and cultural systems alienated by the neoliberal vision of economic development continue to promote indigenous cultural submission and, in many cases, the cultural disappearance of pre-Columbian peoples, who are swept away by the principles of operation and the values of global capitalism.

Under the umbrella of this vision of participation, which initially took shape in pluralist multicultural policies (Díaz-Couder, 1998), educational initiatives focused on the promotion of indigenous participation emerged, guided by the premise that it is no longer enough to be integrated; it is now necessary to "be and transform" based on one's own identity and the potential of the respective national states. This new perspective is linked to state policies concerned with popular participation, which in countries such as Mexico, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil and others is made up of high percentages of the indigenous population.

The concern for indigenous participation calls into question the relevance of previous education systems, giving rise to innovations that crystallise in the creation, for example, of policies centred on the constitutional recognition of native languages as official languages and of institutions in charge of promoting training dynamics such as Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE), understood as "an education rooted in the reference culture of the learners, but open to the incorporation of elements and contents coming from other cultural horizons, including universal culture" (López and Küper, 1999: p. 48). A training proposal that is characterised by seeking real coexistence between native cultures and the dominant culture, starting with the generation of teaching-learning processes based on the use of the various national languages and their respective cultural practices (UNICEF, 2021), giving a predominant place to values, knowledge and all the cultural practices of indigenous peoples, with the ultimate aim of guaranteeing their validity and the exchange and coexistence between pre-Columbian cultures and the legacy of the colonisers, now recognised as the cultural system of global capitalism.

While bilingual education (BE) has been implemented in an isolated manner and limited to some communities since the 1930s (UNICEF, 2021), a complex, extensive and institutionalised approach to intercultural bilingual education (IBE) began in the 1980s. According to López and Küper (2000), in 2000, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, Suriname, French Guiana, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina and Bolivia were implementing this educational modality with varying levels of progress and achievement. At present, most states with indigenous populations have gradually opted for this educational approach as a specific strategy to put into practice the educational and cultural policy demands of indigenous peoples, who see the IBE proposal and intercultural dynamics as the most effective means for peaceful coexistence (Abrám, 2004), non-discrimination and the effective participation of indigenous peoples in the shared construction - between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples - of national states, without renouncing their own identity.

Autonomy and cultural relevance

Although multiculturalism implies the recognition of the presence of indigenous cultural practices and their political relevance in the national states of Latin America, it does not satisfy the level of demand and inclusion of real participation. In this context, a qualitative leap in coexistence is promoted, beyond recognising and being together in the same territory, interaction and coexistence are sought, based on the recognition of rights, interests and shared social, economic, political and cultural expectations. Interculturality is proposed as a model of coexistence based on dialogue, respect and the creation of conditions of equality between different cultures (Tubino, 2002), to guarantee the abolition of social, economic and cultural asymmetries.

Among indigenous peoples, interculturality constitutes the basis for strengthening and valuing their own culture (Garcés, 2009), for the construction of a new popular power based on the emancipation of native peoples, who no longer demand only respect and peaceful coexistence, but also the possibility of developing their worldview and their culture in their own territories, based on policies designed according to their demands and needs, without disregarding the dialogical and fair relationship with other cultures. In this perspective, for indigenous peoples, assuming interculturality implies positioning themselves in a critical political position, characterised by the demand for the right to autonomy that "translates into the direct election of authorities, the administration of economic resources and the exercise of legislative, regulatory, supervisory and executive powers by autonomous government bodies within the scope of their territorial jurisdiction" (ECLAC, 2014, p. 20) and, in a more ambitious line, cultural self-determination within the framework of national states.

Inclusion based on the strategy of creating indigenous autonomies does not aim to establish new national states, but rather to change constitutional legal frameworks in order to establish the plurinationality of states with indigenous populations. The creation of indigenous autonomies, which in Dietz's (2009) terms implies "the recognition of communities as legal and political subjects with their own identity and projects, not subsumable under the old nationalist and homogenising project of mestizaje" (Dietz, 2009, p. 60). The claim and establishment of indigenous autonomies responds to educational, cultural, social, political and economic premises (Martínez de Bringas, 2018; United Nations, 2021):

- The cultural validity of indigenous peoples, within the framework of national states and global capitalism, is only possible if they have a context in which they can develop and practice their ways of "being and being" in the world. This implies the affirmation, promotion and consolidation of their own language, customs, beliefs, human relations, ways of using and transforming

resources and, in general, everything that comprises the term culture and the construction of knowledge.

- The recognition of communities as legal entities and of their inhabitants as legal agents capable of exercising rights and duties in the plurinational organisation of states and in the dynamics of community building itself, as political subjects and citizens free to participate and decide according to their principles and interests.
- The legal recognition of their territory, without which cultural continuity is not possible, let alone the development of their own identity. Territory and culture are the foundations of identity, especially in cultures whose existence is totally tied to the land, whose meaning transcends the production of resources and encompasses cognitive, ethical, emotional and spiritual dimensions.
- Self-management, which, according to the Memoria del Congreso Internacional de Autogestión Indígena held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia (DED-Bolivia 2005, p. 5), is understood as "the right and capacity of indigenous peoples to appropriate their territory and implement a process of territorial management, managing their natural resources and exercising their uses and customs". In other words, self-management implies proposing and implementing their own models of educational, cultural, social and economic development, based on the vernacular vision of the world and of life.
- Self-determination expresses territorial and legal independence and the right to organise themselves and exercise control over their own lives in accordance with their customs and traditions. It does not imply the creation of a new state, but special treatment within the framework of nation states.

Autonomy, in the educational framework, requires coexistence between indigenous communities and the state, tradition and modernity, localism and globalisation, but based on the recognition of indigenous knowledge, tradition and culture as the foundation for the creation of new frameworks for relations and cultural projection (Albó, 1999). This implies organising educational systems adjusted to the culture and idiosyncrasies of indigenous communities that, despite being integrated into the national framework, with rights and duties, promote their own way of being and being in the world, in a relationship of respect and coexistence within the framework of law, self-management and territorial, political and cultural self-determination, far from any political, economic or educational and cultural tutelage of the states (Martínez de Bringas, 2018). Indigenous educational autonomy, integrated in administrative figures such as the Autonomías Indígenas Originarias Campesinas in Bolivia, the Entidades

Territoriales Indígenas in Colombia and the Circunscripciones Territoriales Indígenas in Ecuador, seeks the construction/consolidation of their own educational systems that promote ethnic empowerment, the strengthening of the native language, cultural revitalisation and community well-being (ECLAC, 2014), which constitute the bases for the reconstruction, conservation and consolidation of indigenous identities and their historical continuity.

Along the lines of strengthening and consolidating indigenous autonomy, in countries such as Bolivia, three indigenous universities have been in operation since 2009: "(1) the Tupac Katari Indigenous University, located in the Aymara community of Warisata, in the department of La Paz, an institution where knowledge is imparted, in Aymara language and Spanish; 2) the Casimiro Huanca Indigenous University, located in the Quechua department of Cochabamba, in the tropical area of Chimoré; 3) the Apiahuayky Tumpa Indigenous University, located in Chuquisaca, in the native village of Curuyuqui, where knowledge is taught in the Guaraní language and Spanish (Vargas, 2014). These universities seek to decolonise thinking and knowledge creation strategies in order to integrate new indigenous epistemological bases for understanding and transforming reality (Eschenhagen, 2014). From a cultural perspective, the aim is to revitalise, reconstruct and develop aboriginal cultures, in addition to promoting the dialogue of knowledge in order to value the production of Bolivia's diverse peoples and generate new bases for ideological and cultural transmission and construction. In order to influence the concrete transformations of reality, at the economic level, work is being done to generate productive dynamics adjusted to local demands and the care and protection of nature, a set of purposes that are linked to political objectives aimed at ensuring the validity and legitimisation of the Plurinational State (Vargas, 2014), the consolidation of indigenous autonomies and the training of indigenous leaders for the exercise of local and national governmental power.

As in the Bolivian case, there are many educational initiatives in Latin America that aim to highlight the knowledge and culture of indigenous peoples, while presenting their political and cultural demands, including the intercultural universities in Mexico, the Universidad Autónoma Indígena Intercultural (UAIIN) in Colombia, Centro Amazônico de Formação Indígena (CAFI), Universidad Intercultural de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indígenas "Amawtay Wasi" (UAW), Universidad Indígena Intercultural Kawsay (UNIK), Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (URACCAN) (Mato, 2011). All these educational initiatives are part of the intention to ensure optimal conditions for the inclusion of indigenous peoples, based on research, promotion, dissemination and valuation of local knowledge, which is urgent and

necessary for the construction of new political, economic, social and cultural systems for fair, respectful and balanced coexistence among the diverse cultures that still inhabit the Latin American territory.

Conclusion

Understanding the strategies and experiences of indigenous inclusion and exclusion requires a holistic reading of reality; it is difficult to understand the current situation of pre-Columbian cultures in Latin America without a social, political and cultural approach that inevitably underlies and conditions the construction and consolidation of school and non-institutional - social - educational practices through which personal, community and national identities are configured; The vital expectations of collectives and individuals are shaped and the social, cultural and material reality of peoples is transformed in a concrete way. This idea justifies the constant presence of social, political and cultural arguments in the critical analysis of the multiple strategies of inclusion and exclusion experienced by the various native peoples of the region, from the arrival of the conquistadors to the present day.

The analysis leads to the conclusion, from an educational point of view, that despite the achievements in terms of recognition of rights and the creation of opportunities for the cultivation of traditional knowledge, native societies are in a downward trend and, in most cases, in serious danger of cultural extinction, With the exception of those communities that, due to their numbers or capacity for political influence, have achieved a greater degree of recognition of their citizens' rights, which, in the most optimistic cases, coincide with the affirmation of their administrative, cultural and economic autonomy, as is the case of some Quechua, Aymara and Guaraní communities in Bolivia. A legal status that responds to the demands and historical struggle of these peoples who, despite the difficulties, have not renounced their cultural continuity or their right to live according to their own principles and lifestyles.

The indigenous question is still relevant in Latin America, with greater urgency today, due to population decline, emigration, cultural assimilation, the globalisation of the Western development model and climate change, which are causing the extinction of many indigenous cultures. In this context, the majority of indigenous peoples have not exercised full citizenship in their respective national states, insofar as, in the multiple dimensions of life, including education, they continue to be considered "second-class" citizens, burdens to national development and expendable cultures whose current presence, in the framework of modernity and globalisation, responds to a negative balance, in terms of loss of local knowledge, cultural practices and,

above all, the continuous decline of indigenous dialects and languages. All this, despite the positive experiences and objective achievements in some states in the region and the theoretical advances in terms of respect for cultural diversity, the exercise of human rights and political participation.

From a practical perspective, the promotion of inclusive social and educational dynamics does not depend exclusively on the action of indigenous actors and local governments. Significantly, part of the educational strategies for inclusion have been promoted by citizens, institutions and international organisations which, at present, must also support indigenous communities in their demands for autonomy and self-determination, which constitute the models of participation and political integration best suited to the possibility of cultural continuity and resistance to the extractive and global capitalist economy which, at present, constitutes the greatest danger to the life and culture of indigenous peoples in the region.

In this context, the challenge for the national states of Latin America lies in generating new logics of coexistence that favour cultural dialogue, so that school and social education are not instruments of re-colonisation, but means that make possible a solid and sustainable endogenous cultural project that guarantees the survival of indigenous peoples. A purpose that inevitably involves the territorial, political, cultural and educational autonomy of indigenous peoples, whose emancipation and future depend on dialogue "understood as research, as debate, as the construction of a common development horizon" (Iturralde, 2003, p. 256), which favours the exchange of knowledge, material well-being and the creation of frameworks for intercultural relations that guarantee the validity of diversity.

References

ABI (Bolivian Information Agency) (5 December 2022). Bolivia identifies 18 indigenous peoples in danger of disappearing. La Razón. <https://www.la-razon.com/la-revista/2022/12/05/en-bolivia-identifican-18-pueblos-indigenas-en-peligro-de-desaparecer/>

Abrám, M. (2004). *Estado del arte de la educación intercultural bilingüe en América Latina*, IDB.

Albó, X. (1999). *Equal but different*. CIPCA.

Barragán, L. (2008). *Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas in Latin America*. FAO/OAPN. https://www.miteco.gob.es/es/parques-nacionales-oapn/proyectos-de-cooperacion/2pueblos-indigenas_tcm30-287856.pdf

Canales, P. (2014). Intelectualidad indígena en América Latina: Debates de descolonización. 1980-2010. *Universum*, Vol. 2, No. 29, p. 49-64. DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.4067/S0718-23762014000200005>

DED -Bolivia (2005). *Memoria Congreso Internacional: Autogestión Indígena Experiencias en la implementación del desarrollo autodeterminado y sostenible de los pueblos indígenas*, 14 y 15 de septiembre de 2005 Concepción Santa Cruz, Bolivia. <https://www.bivica.org/files/autogestion-indigena.pdf>

Díaz-Cuoder, E. (1998). Cultural Diversity and Education in Ibero-America. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, (17), 1-30. <https://rieoei.org/historico/oeivirt/rie17a01.htm>

Dietz, G. (2009). Los actores indígenas ante la "Interculturalización" de la educación superior en México. *Latin American Journal of Inclusive Education*, 3(2), 55-75 <http://www.rinace.net/rlei/numeros/vol3-num2/art4.pdf>

ECLAC (2014). *Los pueblos indígenas en América Latina Avances en el último decenio y retos pendientes para la garantía de sus derechos*. United Nations. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/37050-pueblos-indigenas-america-latina-avances-ultimo-decenio-retos-pendientes-la>

ECLAC (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on the indigenous peoples of Latin America-Abya Yala: between invisibilisation and collective resistance. Project Documents (LC/TS.2020/171), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/46543-impacto-covid-19-pueblos-indigenas-america-latina-abya-yala-la-invisibilizacion>

Eschenhagen, M. (2014). The "good life" in universities: theoretical possibilities and limitations. *Integra Educativa Journal*, 6(3), 89-105.

Fábregas, A. (2012). From the theory of acculturation to the theory of interculturality. Education and assimilation: the Mexican case", *Intercultural Communication Studies XXI*, 1-8.

Faria de Vasconcelos, in the prologue to: Guillén, A. (1919). *La Educación del Indio*. González y Medina Editores.

Fausto, B. (2013). *História do Brasil*. Universidade de São Paulo.

Garcés, F. (2009). *coloniality or interculturality? Representations of Quechua language and knowledge*. Abya-Ayala.

Guiteras, A. (2020). *Warisata en la selva El núcleo escolar selvícola de Casarabe entre los sirionó, 1937-1948*. UAB. <https://raco.cat/index.php/REAF/article/view/349238>

IIDH (2009). *Educational campaign on human rights and indigenous rights: Environment and indigenous rights from the poverty dimension*. Inter-American Institute of Human Rights. <https://www.iidh.ed.cr/IIDH/media/1544/campa%C3%B1a-indigenas-pobreza-y-medio-ambiente-2009.pdf>

ILO (2014). *ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples*. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. ILO/Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---americas/---ro-lima/documents/publication/wcms_345065.pdf

Iturralde, D. (2003). Pueblos indígenas, derechos económicos, sociales y culturales, y discriminación. *IIDH Journal*, 38. <https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r06729-7.pdf>

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural citizenship. A liberal theory of minority rights*. Paidós.

López, E. and Küper, W. (1999). La educación intercultural bilingüe en América Latina: balance y perspectivas. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación* 20, 17-85.

Martínez de Bringas, A. (2018). Autonomías indígenas en América Latina. A comparative look from the difficulties for the construction of an intercultural Law. *Revista d'Estudis Autònoms i Federals - Journal of Self Government*, 28, 101-138.

Marzo (De), G. (2010). *Buen vivir. For a democracy of the earth*. Plural.

Mato, D. (2011). Indigenous universities in Latin America: achievements, problems and challenges. *Andalusian Journal of Anthropology*, 1, 63-85.

Podestá, J. (1989). Educación rural y enfoques políticos en América Latina. *Cuadernos de Investigación Social*, 28(5), 3-35.

Presidential Commissioner for Indigenous Affairs (2009). Informe de la Comisión de la Verdad Histórica y Nuevo Trato con los Pueblos Indígenas. Bicentennial Library.

UNICEF (2021). *Intercultural Bilingual Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Avances y retrocesos en el marco de la pandemia de la COVID-19*. UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/22251/file/EIB-AMERICA-LATINA-SPA.pdf>

United Nations (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. 107th plenary meeting 13 September 2007.

United Nations (2021). State of the World's Indigenous Peoples. United Nations.

Author (2005). *Education and Development in the Andes*. Peter Lang.

Author (2006). Fundamentos educativos para la construcción de un estado inclusivo en Bolivia. In: Franziska Bopp; Georg Ismar; Günther Maihold; John Crabtree; Heinrich Pachner. *Bolivien. Neue Wege und alte Gegensätze*, (pp. 327-362), WVB.

Author (2014). Vision and integration of the environmental perspective at the Indigenous University of Bolivia - UNIBOL, *Educar em Revista*, 3, 89-108.

Verdum, R. (13 June 2022). Bolsonaro's strategy to wipe out indigenous peoples in Brazil. *IWGIA*. <https://www.iwgia.org/es/noticias/4837-la-estrategia-del-gobierno-de-bolsonaro-para-desaparecer-a-los-pueblos-ind%C3%ADgenas-en-brasil.html>

Verón, M. A. (2017). Paraguay: a pluricultural nation with two official languages. *Revista de Llengua i Dret, Journal of Language and Law*, 67, 106-128. [10.2436/rld.i67.2017.2948](https://doi.org/10.2436/rld.i67.2017.2948)

World Bank (2015). *Indigenous Latin America in the Twenty-First Century*. World Bank Group. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/lac/brief/indigenous-latin-america-in-the-twenty-first-century-brief-report-page>