



## International Congress

### The Latin American social thought facing the idea of crisis

Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, September 6-8, 2018

The concept of crisis seems to be an intermittent category that, every so often, appears in the field of social thought to describe an era, or a matrix of intelligibility to think about the tensions and conflicts that shape different geopolitical scenarios. But this concept not only has served to think about cyclical aspects of the political economy of different countries or regional blocks, but has also worked with culture in its different manifestations: politics, art, and language, among others. This is why the notion of crisis encompasses problems as general as the civilization destiny of an era - with its current approaches to social inequalities, humanitarian, environmental, and representational crises - or more specific issues rooted in the political crises of a country or region.

At the same time, the concept of crisis encompasses a deep temporal dimension. It not only represents a moment of transition between one era and another. Rather, it emphasizes the unknown or open, thus implying a continuous risk of failure. Crisis appears as a liminal situation, resulting from the collapse and predominance of uncertainty, from which it is necessary to build a new order whose modalities that still do not know each other.

Regarding Latin America and the Caribbean as a place of enunciation and production of social and cultural knowledge, the concept of crisis has been present since independence, conflicts, and long processes of emancipation. From the 19th century until today, interlacing and crossings of diverse manifestations of crises that coexist. It's not just about identity or economic crises, linked to (neo)liberal models of development, or derived from external factors, such as the crisis of financial capitalism or the fall of commodities. In addition, manifestations of crises clearly derived from processes of political and social violence can be observed. Currently, the Colombian case or that of some Central American countries seem the most obvious, but they also massively resurface in countries like Bolivia, Chile, or Argentina. To some extent, some of these crises derive from the failure of homogenous nationalisms, whether from European nationalist imaginaries, or whitening attempts aimed at concealing the constitutive heterogeneities of each national or regional space in Latin America. On the other hand, there are social and political crisis specifically arising from the worsening of inequalities and their connections with the crisis of representation politics. Other crises have arisen as a result of ecological problems, produced both on a global scale and at a local level through (neo)extractive policies.

In the last three decades, varied political responses have been prepared in response to different classes of crisis in Latin America. It is useful to distinguish: (a) ideological responses, which aim to transform the models of society; (b) judicial and legal responses that reflect "models"; (c) the public policies carried out; (d) popular responses and demands.





Regarding the Inaugural Congress of the Center for Advanced Latin American Studies (CALAS), it will be interesting to investigate what crisis concepts are currently being developed and exist in Latin America and the Caribbean, both from instruments of thought and from experiences. What uses are given to the variants of crises in the current situation, and in what capacity is the use of this term? It intends to pay special attention to the different emergency cycles of the concept of crisis as a matrix explanation of a given reality, and also the way in which Latin America and the Caribbean have thought and currently think about regional and global crises. That is, it is about considering this region as a place of enunciation especially capable of producing explanations and models to manage the category of crisis, although these are often dissimilar and contradictory.

In accordance with this synthesis, the Congress will have two lines of work for which proposals are accepted:

### **1. Historical-conceptual production of Latin American and Caribbean knowledge about crisis:**

The first axis proposes a historical-political approach about the Latin American theories around the historical and contemporary crises. This means thinking of Latin America as a place of enunciation and discursive production from which models of confronting global phenomena such as crisis are produced and offer concepts and practices of thinking and managing it.

It should consist in defining what are the concepts created from Latin America to establish matrices of thinking that give intelligibility to the problem of crises, both regionally and globally. The most important here is to be able to discuss not only how Latin America has thought about itself in crisis, but how its thinking has influenced other places of knowledge and shaping Western thinking in general. That is to say, it is not about talking about "invisible" knowledge, but showing the influence that Latin American and Caribbean social thought has exerted on production of Western social knowledge.

These two large dimensions could be articulated and divided into the following sections:

- ◇ systematize and highlight reflection on the crisis as a line of intellectual concern in Latin America;
- ◇ historically place Latin American contributions around crises in their connection with global elaborations, with the needs and specificities of the region;
- ◇ contribute to identify and systematize problems, concepts, and analytical axes that have woven the Latin American reflection on the issue of crises in their different areas and regions;
- ◇ make visible the different forms of theoretical production from Latin America and the Caribbean and how these places of enunciation dispute knowledge with other regions of knowledge production.

### **2. Reflections on contemporary phenomena and conflicts of Latin American societies and the Caribbean:**

The second proposed axis will stimulate the presentation of panels and papers that explore the current places of Latin American enunciation about the crisis - that is, the ways of thinking about contemporary crises from and in Latin America.

In this line, the invitation for presentation of papers that reflect on:

- ◇ the different areas of contemporary crises and their connections;
- ◇ the role of the different actors in the crises;



- ◇ the main conflicts of contemporary crises and the role of the state, corporations, and social movements;
- ◇ contemporary crises analyzed in different global geographies;
- ◇ analytical reflections of crises from academia, cultural centers, and subaltern actors;
- ◇ the experiences of subaltern and hegemonic actors in crises;
- ◇ the theoretical, aesthetic, and political reflections on the crises of the transforming forces in Latin America;
- ◇ theoretical-methodological proposals for the study of crises and conflicts in Latin America;
- ◇ proposals for improvements and resolutions of specific conflicts;
- ◇ cultural crises, crisis of interpretative frameworks, languages, or hermeneutical crises.

### Bases

- ◇ The Congress will offer space for lectures, thematic panels, work meetings, and roundtables for dialogue and debate. For the panels, we call for proposals for **individual papers** related to one of the two lines of research mentioned beforehand.
- ◇ The call is aimed for applicants with recognized experience in the disciplines of the Social Sciences and Humanities that provide solid theoretical and empirical reflections on at least one of the topics mentioned in the call.
- ◇ To apply, please send one document (Word or PDF) that contains the title, a summary of the proposal between 300 and 500 words, and a short academic record of 150-200 words with an indication of your professional career and main publications.
- ◇ Papers can be presented in Spanish, Portuguese, and English.
- ◇ **Deadline** to submit proposals: **March 20, 2018**.
- ◇ An academic committee will select the papers under criteria of excellence. The applicants will be notified before April 20 if selected.
- ◇ It is expected that the participants of the conference send a preliminary version of their papers before August 15 to make them available to panel commentators.
- ◇ CALAS will cover the lodging expenses for all participants. In addition, there will be limited resources for travel expenses.

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