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TOWARDS ANOTHER COSMOPOLITANISM: TRANSNATIONAL ACTIVISM OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA

POR UM OUTRO COSMOPOLITISMO: O ATIVISMO TRANSNACIONAL DE MULHERES INDÍGENAS NA AMÉRICA LATINA

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Abstract
Throughout the 2000s, Indigenous women became leaders in the struggle of their peoples for their lands and rights. They began by occupying positions of power in local organizations and, more recently, gained prominence on the national, regional, and global levels. Brazilian Indigenous female leaders have followed the path established by other movements of the Indigenous women in Latin America and also have framed their human rights claims. Their proficiency in the language of human rights has allowed them to speak and to be heard in different arenas, such as in the rights of women and Indigenous peoples and also in the environmental aspect. This article is based on Seyla Benhabib's cosmopolitanism approach, particularly on her conception of democratic iteractions with the aim to argue that, by using the human rights language in order to translate global norms into local contexts, Indigenous women have become mediators between the local, national and global levels. In addition, their cosmopolitanism lights up and pressures the traditional liberal cosmopolitanism at the same time. We propose a theoretical article with an empirical support which is resulted from a qualitative field research developed within the years of 2014-2018.

Keywords
Rights of women; rights of Indigenous peoples; cosmopolitanism; transnational activism; political theory.

Resumo
Ao longo dos anos 2000, as mulheres indígenas tornaram-se líderes na luta de seus povos por suas terras e direitos. Elas começaram ocupando posições de poder em organizações locais, e mais recentemente ganharam projeção nos níveis nacional, regional e global. Lideranças indígenas brasileiras seguiram o caminho aberto por outros movimentos indígenas latino-americanos e moldaram as próprias demandas por direitos humanos. Sua proficiência na língua dos direitos humanos lhes permitiu falarem e serem ouvidas em diferentes arenas, seja na dos direitos dos povos indígenas, seja na ambiental, seja na dos direitos das mulheres. Baseamo-nos, neste artigo, na abordagem de Seyla Benhabib do cosmopolitismo, em particular de seu conceito de iterações democráticas, para argumentar que, usando os direitos humanos para traduzir normas globais em contextos locais, as mulheres indígenas se constituem como mediadoras entre o local, o nacional e o global. Seu cosmopolitismo, ao mesmo tempo que ilumina, pressiona o capitalismo liberal. Trata-se de artigo teórico com embasamento empírico resultante de pesquisa de campo realizada entre os anos de 2014 e 2018.

Palavras-chave
Direitos das mulheres; direitos dos povos indígenas; cosmopolitismo; ativismo transnacional; teoria política.

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Introduction

On the 9th of August 2021, the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples from Brazil (APIB) filled a statement before the International Criminal Court (ICC) and denounced Jair Bolsonaro for genocide and crimes against humanity. The organization requested the ICC prosecutor to examine the crimes perpetrated against Indigenous peoples by President Bolsonaro since the beginning of his term in January, 2019. It was the first time that Indigenous peoples stood before the ICC. Indigenous lawyers represented them before the court with significant participation of Indigenous women in the development of coalitions and in the gathering of support to the Indigenous litigation.

The rise of Indigenous women in the public leadership positions has been relevant to this process. In 2018, Joenia Wapichana (Rede Sustentabilidade political party) was the first Indigenous woman elected for the National Congress and Sonia Guajajara (PSOL), executive-coordinator of APIB since 2013, ran for vice-presidency that same year. She had gained national visibility in 2017 when Alicia Keys, a famous pop singer, feminist and environmentalist, called her onto the main stage of Rock in Rio while she was singing *Kill Your Mama*, a song about the destruction of the planet. Sonia stepped up wearing an Indigenous headdress and reported a federal bill that intended to legalize mining in an Amazonian reserve known as Renca (UOL, 2017). Gisele Bündchen, a Brazilian super model, also appeared onstage alongside Alicia Keys at Rock in Rio to defend the rights of the Amazonian Forest.

Sonia's appearance alongside Alicia Keys and Joenia's election is partly resulted from decades of the activism of Indigenous peoples in Brazil, especially their engagement in transnational campaigns in order to promote their rights as Indigenous and women, as well as their people's ecological concerns. From 2018 to 2022, President Bolsonaro's anti-environment, anti-gender and anti-Indigenous agenda unlocked new opportunities for their activism. They have promoted strong mobilization in the public sphere, from the Acampamento Terra Livre ("ATL" or *Free Land Camps*) to the March of Indigenous Women, as well as press and media interviews, protests and pressure for the implementation of the constitutional and international Indigenous rights (MACHADO, VITALE and RACHED, forthcoming).

This article analyzes the emergence of the activism of Indigenous women in Brazil from a cosmopolitan perspective. Its main argument is that the normative concept of cosmopolitanism (BENHABIB, 2006 and 2011) contributes to the understanding of the prominence of Indigenous women in the public sphere. The article aims to evidence how their prominence is connected to their role as mediators between the local level of their villages and the global level of the universal language they speak. Although postcolonial and cultural studies have devoted attention to the issues of Indigenous peoples and women, it is argued that these issues can also be conceptualized in terms of cosmopolitanism. Postcolonial and cultural studies have contributed to the understanding of the problem and to the academic literature by shedding light on what universalism has once obliterated. This article also tries to evidence how the analysis of the activism of Indigenous women can contribute to the discussion

of universalist approaches reflected on postcolonial settings. To encompass the contribution of these approaches to the (post)colonial challenges, the article will focus on Benhabib's input to the discussion on cosmopolitanism in general and also in the relationship between particularism and universalism. Benhabib's contribution sheds light on the democratizing potential of this process. As the Indigenous women mobilize universal frames and access international institutions, a coherent theoretical perspective may reconcile the tension between universal human rights and private identities.

The article is divided into three sections. The first, "Revisiting Cosmopolitanism," addresses the intricate relationship between particularism and universalism through the theoretical category "cosmopolitanism". The category entails a normative commitment, however, political players act regardless of theoretical concerns. Indigenous women are responsible for mobilizing heterogeneous resources crossed by local and global fragments in contemporary Brazil. Benhabib (2004, 2006 and 2012) approaches the phenomena through the category "democratic iterations," by arguing that, in democratic spheres, public opinion is shaped through the circulation of global norms appropriated in local contexts, where they gain particular meanings. The use of global norms in transnational processes involves reframing, empowering social agents and opening spaces for reshaping expressions along civic instead of ethnic lines (BENHABIB, 2006).

The second section, "Democratic Iterations in the Transnational Spaces of Indigenous Women," focuses on the development of the Movement of the Indigenous Women. It is especially based on a description of the experience of the Sarayaku's people from Ecuador. The section analyzes how the Movement of the Indigenous Women uses the language of universalism in different stages, from the Inter-American Human Rights System to the United Nations (UN) Climate and Biodiversity Conferences. The section evidences the importance of activists by acknowledging universal approaches and establishing international institutions.

Finally, the third section of the article, "Democratic Iterations in the Brazilian Indigenous Women Emerging Movement," analyzes how the movement has been shaped in Brazil as well as how Indigenous women have tried to act in the gaps of an asymmetric configuration in order to impose the Brazilian state to change its policy vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples. It strategically operates and deploys global venues and artifacts, which on the one hand, reinforces the legitimacy of UN channels, and on the other, strengthens the Indigenous movement itself. The national Indigenous movement has been contentious and targeted to neo-developmental policies of international judicial institutions, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Methodologically, the forth section is based on documentary data collected on websites and mainly on YouTube between 2017 and 2018, as well as in fieldwork developed between 2014 and 2018 in Brasilia, Manaus, Salvador, as well as in New York, Geneva and Quito. This field research consisted of an active observation in formal and informal meetings, in addition to semi-structured interviews with Indigenous female leaderships, environmental leading

activists and international human rights law authoritative interpreters.[1] In 2018, one of us also participated in sessions of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights concerning Indigenous rights in the United States of America. Overall, the fieldwork was aimed at collecting data which enabled us to have a clearer understanding of the Brazilian Indigenous movement from its early organizations in the beginning of 2000 until the elections of 2018, when it was addressed to more institutionalized approaches concerning the problems of the Indigenous peoples and women within a context of a shift to radical right-wing politics.

1. Revisiting Cosmopolitanism

Contemporary political theorists associate the category "cosmopolitanism" and its correlated "human rights" or "republic" with abstract rationality, to the transformation of original lands into territories without history and, eventually, to a history of uninterrupted progress built on colonial oppression. Historically speaking, these categories have indeed led to the generalization of abstractions, to the uprooting of the subject and to the obliteration of the human beings' irremediable sociality.

Due to the liberal or Western tradition of thinking, it is possible to justify the validity of norms in terms of this abstract subject. Critical theorists of liberalism, such as Judith Butler (2009) and Nancy Fraser (1996) argue that the Western tradition of political thinking ignores power asymmetries and also contributes to perpetuating them. First, it hides the fact that some people participate in the establishment of laws which they must obey, while others are not entitled to do so. It results in heteronomous individuals who usually cannot criticize their own lack of autonomy. Although this sort of criticism is more common among non-liberal theorists, some liberal minds such as Hannah Arendt and Seyla Benhabib share the same opinion. Non-liberal critics of liberalism, such as Jürgen Habermas and Nancy Fraser remain faithful to the ideal of emancipation –understood as the autonomy in the context of interdependence. Their strategy is to identify and remove blockages, whereas for post-modern theorists such as Butler, it is believed that the field of power limits the potential for emancipation (BUTLER, 2009; CYFER, 2009).

1 The meetings took place at the I World Forum on Indigenous Issues held in the New York City, 2014, at the X Session on the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Geneva, 2017, as well as at the World Social Forum and the Indigenous in Salvador, 2018. The interviews were carried out with social-environmental and Indigenous NGO specialists, such as Confederation of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), Confederation of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB) and Socio-Environmental Institute (ISA), as well as with Indigenous women leaders, members of the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues and members of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The field research was partially supported by CNPq and Fapesb projects.

Normatively, the revival of the concept of cosmopolitanism has provided a significant lens through which it is feasible to evidence global complexities. Many scholars have made great efforts to analyze and reformulate Kant's original proposal of a cosmopolitan law and a cosmopolitan order developed in *Perpetual Peace* (KANT, 2006). Following the path settled by the Stoics on the Greco-Roman thinking, Kant develops the idea of "a citizen of the world" introducing a third type of law, the cosmopolitan law (*ius cosmopoliticum)*, which coexists with state (*ius civitatis*) and international law (*ius gentium*). He was inspired by Stoicism, especially by Cicero and Seneca, who argued that citizens dwelled two parallel communities: the Community of Birth, which is territorially bounded, and the Community of Humanity, which is ruled by the universal reason. Kant advocated a project of a cosmopolitan order based on a federation of states, all free and sovereign republics. States should coexist in this permanent alliance as in a "permanent congress," based on voluntary moral obligation (NUSSBAUM, 1997).

Habermas (1998) clarifies this notion in "Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace: At Two Hundred Years Historical Remove", by evidencing that, when the *Perpetual Peace* was written in 1795, Kant could not predict a project of a constitutionally organized international community, on a legally binding basis, as the constitutional state was still the exception rather than the rule.

Based on Habermas's ideas, Benhabib presents consistent proposals to root and embody the individuals, while retaining the conditions for their emancipation, as well as justifying the universal validity of international human rights norms. Throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, Benhabib (1992, 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2006) addressed the idea of socially located individuals that emancipates themselves through action. She concedes that, although the individual is shaped by a community of belonging, the community and its social norms do not actually exhaust herself/himself (BENHABIB, 1992 and 1999): as the individual relates, acts and judges the others, including herself/himself (BENHABIB, 1992), she/he can strongly retain her/his autonomy. In *Situating the Self*, Benhabib (1992) formulates a double dimension of her narrative self in terms of a Concrete and Generalized Other. Concrete Others are those with whom the subject actually relates, and Generalized Others are those she imaginatively relates to, by evaluating norms from a moral perspective, i.e., from a universal point of view.

To envisage social change and understand difference without compromising the possibility of identity and the individual's capacity to judge herself/himself and others, Benhabib develops the idea that the individual has a moral and narrative dimension. Based on Arendt (1968 and 1998), Benhabib (1999) defines the narrative self in terms of a person's capacity to tell her/his own story, infusing speech and a meaningful deed, even if a different story is told each time. It does not really matter which story the individual is telling, as long as she/he is the only one who tells the story and relates it to the stories of others, weaving what she called a web of interlocutions (BENHABIB, 1992 and 1999). Drawing on Arendt and Habermas, Benhabib asserts that her individual is rational, however, in a dialogic manner.

She becomes a subject intersubjectively. The intersubjectivity characteristic of Benhabib's narrative self suggests a world of socio-cultural and legal norms. As the legal theorist Robert Cover (1983) evidences, the individual inhabits a normative world, which constrains the reproduction of certain behaviors, as well as the potential for social changes that support the growth of autonomy.

From the 2000s onwards, Benhabib (2004, 2006, 2009 and 2012) is mainly interested in the role of international legal norms in transnational activism, particularly in how international norms open new paths for action in national public spheres. Influenced by Keck and Sikkink's *Activists beyond Borders* (1998), Benhabib addresses the relationship between local, national, and international norms in the (re)constitution of the transnational. She claims that, mainly in the Americas and Europe, norms from institutions at different levels overlap. As they circulate throughout the globe in no apparent formal order, the interactions between national, international, and communitarian norms in local contexts are crossed by political, social, and cultural hierarchies. Such norms assume local meanings that are shaped by these hierarchies and the political action of non-state players. One result of the presence of global artifacts within national territories has been 'the disaggregation of citizenship', which is understood as the decentering of the national state as a primary reference for claims for social change. The displacement of the state results in its segregation from a myriad of political organs such as courts, prosecution services, and the establishment of a 'market of loyalties' in which citizenship can be a feature of particular affiliations. Another consequence has been a change of the terrain that individuals inhabit. Re-reading Cover (1983), Benhabib (2004 and 2006) argues that non-state and non-governmental players can interpret norms in ways that displace the interpretations of national and international institutions. Although those political players are not authorized interpreters of domestic or international legal norms, they can endorse their interpretations with legitimacy in the political process.

One way to approach the phenomenon Benhabib analyzes could be a discursive process involving intergovernmental, state and non-state players; a process informed by social, cultural, political and legal patterns. Considering that countries are historicized territories, reestablishing silenced voices allows for reinterpretation of their histories; as states interweaves jurisdiction and loyalty (APPADURAI, 1997), they open a space for jurisdictions and loyalties to realign. The multiplicity of overlapping jurisdictions in the same territory creates a large market of loyalties from which citizens of national states can select. Finally, although such process changes the standards for clearing the validity of national norms, it does not alter the validity conditions of moral discourses (BENHABIB, 2012). Based on Jacques Derrida, Benhabib (2004, 2006 and 2012) aims to conceptualize this issue with the category 'democratic iterations', as

> complex processes of public argument, deliberation and exchange through which universalist rights claims are contested and contextualized, invoked and revoked, posited

> and positioned throughout legal and political institutions as well as in the associations of civil society. In the process of repeating a term or a concept, we never simply produce a replica of the first intended usage or its original meaning: rather, every repetition is a form of variation. Every iteration transforms meaning, adds and enriches it in ever so-subtle ways. (BENHABIB, 2012, p. 34)

According to an ascending recent legal historiography (MOYN, 2010), human rights became a *lingua franca* during the 1970s. One consequence of their emergence as a frame for social action has been the actual interpretation of human rights in local contexts. This is a significant change. In such context, socially located individuals have appropriated and interpreted human rights along with other social norms. Benhabib (2004 and 2012) argues that contextualized interpretations of global norms change their meaning: just as reproducing a global norm in a local setting alters its meaning, it also changes the context where it is applied. Local appropriation therefore globalizes the local and contextualizes the global. Benhabib does not develop this idea, but it is obvious that when different players reproduce these norms in different settings, they produce different meanings. Similarly, repetition of an interpretation from an international institution in a local context, or from a national institution on national scale, may produce distinct meanings from those originally articulated in the international institution.

Do contextualized interpretations of universal human rights law mean that any interpretation is normatively acceptable? Benhabib responds that the validity conditions of moral discourses are the same as those used to justify democratic legitimacy. In short, the tensions around them will be resolved in the public sphere. This is an important point as non-state players have mobilized human rights in local contexts to overcome restrictions arising from applications of *local* social, moral, political or legal norms to the recognition of their humanity. Another feasible solution for this dilemma is to consider how human rights norms can prevent the *demos'* constitution from becoming an *ethnos*. To conclude, Benhabib proposes to consolidate the cosmopolitism in human rights as moral rights that enable the criticism of power and, consequently, of the constitution of the *demos*. Her proposal is based on her analysis of the cosmopolitanism foundation, its social forms, the political players that shape it, the spaces of interactions, and the mediations between them. In the following sections the article introduces some intersubjective spaces resulted of the mediation of Indigenous women and analyzes their skillful mediation on behalf of both Indigenous movements and the blossoming Movement of the Indigenous Women in Brazil.

2. Democratic Iterations in the Transnational Spaces of Indigenous Women

Studies on the participation of non-state players at the UN usually highlight the fact that the NGOs and social movements from the Global North are more numerous and better qualified

than those from the Global South (HELD *et al.*, 1999). In relation to the case of the Indigenous movement, the 1970s and 1980s registered a predominance of peoples from territories located in the Global North, in countries such as the U.S. and Canada, as well as Australia and New Zealand. However, from the 1980s onwards, Indigenous peoples from the Global South entered this *constituency*. Since then, their leaders have played an important role in transnational political processes. Amongst them, some women have been particularly prominent. Rigoberta Menchù, a Quiché-Mayan from Guatemala, and Patricia Gualinga, Kichwa from Sarayaku, Ecuador, are recognized by the international organizations and are global symbols of the struggle for Indigenous rights in Latin America.

The growing participation of the transnational Indigenous movement in UN processes during the 1980's set new spaces and emerging agendas, as well as reconfigurations which evidenced women claiming leadership positions. The previous two decades of UN meetings and conferences have been recorded as opportunities for interactions, negotiations, and collaborations that allowed Indigenous peoples to express exclusively regarding the Indigenous cause, without jeopardizing particular interests or preventing the establishment of new identities, such as those of Indigenous women and youths.

An autonomous *Indigenous space* (DAHL, 2012) began to be developed during the preparatory meetings of the former UN Human Rights Commission since the 2000s, before Human Rights Council meetings, as it was at sufficient distance from both the social constraints of their communities and the political repression of their national states. In this space, imaginary and real local claims and concerns can be concurrently reframed, relocated, and re-signified in the dialogue between distinct peoples in negotiations with their 'common oppressor', the '(neo)colonialisms.' It represents a new *locus* for action where identities, including a transnational Indigenous social movement, can be reproduced and created. It simultaneously recreate the particular identities of Indigenous peoples, who have put aside their status and became authors of rules that regulate their relations with the state (DAHL, 2012). In this intersubjective context, human rights are interpreted based on local experiences. This same process of reframing and re-signifying occurs in the local level, in a continuous flow. The bridges are built by social players who act as cultural mediators in the democratic iteration processes.

As a result of the opportunities provided by UN participation, delegations of Indigenous peoples, together with their developing leaderships, created a platform of action called The Global Indigenous Caucus. It was established in the 1980s and relied on the preparatory meetings of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the caucus has served as an informal space for debate about the interests and concerns of Indigenous peoples struggling to develop strategies and articulate consensus. The ability of caucus to promote consensus development, despite the diversity among Indigenous peoples, has rendered it their principal interlocutor with the UN agencies. Its heterogeneous composition lead to regional caucuses, such as the one for Latin America. The emergence of other interfaces prompted

the establishment of identity-based caucuses such as Global Indigenous Women and Global Indigenous Youth.

The increasing prominence of women in the transnational Indigenous movement must be emphasized. Although they are a minority in the UN system, and few play leadership roles in local Indigenous organizations, Indigenous women have taken an active part in several caucuses in UN agencies, gaining reputation for the quality of their leadership. Their rise within the transnational Indigenous movement is a phenomenon that demands explanation. Although women are designated guardians of Indigenous traditions, a key feature of Indigenous identity, poverty, as well as the substantial discrimination by being female and Indigenous exposes them to more violence and distress from sexual abuse, prostitution, trafficking, etc. The invisibility of their cause within Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies, even within the feminist movement, has rendered international visibility an important asset (DAHL, 2012).

The movement grew slowly throughout the 2000s. Gender was always an issue of concern in the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, established in 2002, as it attracted more attention on special dates and commemorative years. In 2014, for instance, the UN Women and the United Nations Development Program (PNUD) organized several side-events during the I UN World Congress on Indigenous Peoples held in New York, ultimately adopting a joint agenda for Indigenous peoples and women. Besides this initiative, many civil society organizations have had overlapping agendas such as the Ford Foundation, the COICA, the Foro Internacional Mujeres Indigenas, created in 1995 during the Beijing Conference, the Just Associates (JASS), and the Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN International). Finally, in 2015, Goal Five of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reinforces gender equality as a crosscutting issue.

The practices of Latin-American Indigenous women's leaders have evidenced their work as cosmopolitan mediators (BENHABIB, 2006). One of the most recognized is Patricia Gualinga, a Kichwa leader of Sarayaku, who has obtained a landmark victory at the Inter-American System of Human Rights against Ecuador, in 2012. Due to the fight against a petrol project in Sarayaku's peoples land, Patricia Gualinga and other Indigenous women started a long and increasing trajectory through the international institutions. In 2017, at the Conference of the Parties of UNFCCC (COP 23) in Bonn, the Conference President spotlighted Gualinga, who was representing WECAN International. At the microphone, the Kichwa leader demonstrated great knowledge of the UN procedures and calmly spoke in an environment that she had once described as too formal (YOUTUBE, World Conference on Indigenous Peoples).

> My name is Patricia Gualinga and I come from the Kichwa People of Sarayaku in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

> Our peoples fight for Mother Earth. Governments and the private sector only distracts from the reality of climate change with their false solutions.
> Climate change is not a business! Carbon markets, REDD + and geo-engineering are nothing but distractions and attempts to maintain the system.
> We represent the grassroots communities and Indigenous peoples of the world and we have the real solutions. From the people of Sarayaku to Standing Rock, from the Ogoniland to Lancashire to the Ende Gelände movement here in Germany – we are all fighting against destruction and for a decent life.
> We are fighting for Climate Justice! We must keep fossil fuels in the ground!
> We demand a profound transformation of the energy system and no new extraction.
> We demand a transition to a 100% safe renewable energy for everyone. We have had enough with the financing of fossil fuels and false solutions.
> Our struggle is for life, for justice, for Mother Earth. For women, youth, our children and their children. For our future! (PATRICIA GUALINGA, 2017)

The powerful speech of Patricia Gualinga combines climate and development issues in a critique of a model of development and governance that "deploys false solutions to distract from the reality of climate change." It both critiques and identifies solutions, such as a pro-found transformation in the energy system, a transition to "100% renewable energy for all". Her speech identifies it as a matter of justice which grassroots movements and Indigenous peoples should embrace, while governments and the private sector support a model based on fossil fuel extraction, attacking life and the "mother Earth". Her struggle for climate justice is presented as both a struggle against destruction and for a decent life for women, for youth, for "our children" and "their children".

By deploying these elements, Gualinga's speech clearly illustrates the cosmopolitanism of Indigenous women. Although it was presented at previous UN Conferences on Women, the Indigenous women's identification within transnational feminism must have actually begun at the 1995 Beijing Conference, which also ratified the idea of mainstreaming a gender perspective (CHARLESWORTH, 2005). It meant to evidence the concern for gender equality an organizing principle of UN activities rather than an only complement.

In the 2000s, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reinforced the notion that gender is a cross-cutting issue for policies and programs developed in the UN system. Since then, analysis of relations between gender, environment, human rights and development has been strengthened, whether by the action of international agencies and funds, or by the complexity of local problems in which these dimensions are interfaced, and challenged in their entirety. The UN, cooperation agencies and academia have considered Indigenous peoples as partners and stakeholders regarding climate issues and biodiversity. Therefore, Conferences of the Parties (COPs) continue to highlight the attention and efforts of Indigenous

peoples, either formally as a constituency evidencing their legitimate voice, or informally in the organization of the side-events and speeches to the world press.

Gualinga also appears as a cosmopolitan Indigenous in other areas. At the UN Conference, she introduces herself by her name: "my name is Patricia Gualinga", then adds the name of her people, "the Kichwa people of Sarayaku", who are located in the Ecuadorian Amazon. She thus appears, in a global arena, as an Indigenous woman from a huge forest situated in a peripheral country. She belongs to a group of Indigenous peoples of the Global South and is committed to global causes and ideas such as climate change, environmentalism and sustainability, and also demands renewable energies and defends women and children. As a set of abstract ideas about the relationships between humans and nature, they would be unrelated to Indigenous peoples (DESCOLA, 2015), although their compatibility legitimizes Indigenous voices in the public debate for environmental and development issues.

Although she lives in a world of nation states and the UN is a member state organization, it is impressive that Gualinga does not introduce herself as an Ecuadorian, or locate Sarayaku in Ecuador, but in the forest. The forest is Ecuadorian. Her ties of loyalty and belonging are woven with the Sarayaku Kichwa, which, as a result of colonialism, is within the jurisdiction of Ecuador. Gualinga formerly spoke of these intricate relations between the Sarayaku Kichwa and the Ecuadorian state: "We have our own system of government, our own worldview, and a very specific culture. We are not city-dwellers, but settled in the jungle, with houses of hollow logs and taipa, and sometimes open houses" (PATRICIA GUALINGA, 2013).

Gualinga's own personal trajectory, likewise those of most members of Indigenous peoples, encompasses the rupture of loyalties and jurisdictions, which has been a source of tensions, disputes and acquisition of knowledge, once called by Benhabib as the disintegration of citizenship. In 2003, the Sarayaku Kichwa peoples sued Ecuador at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights: they claimed for the right to be consulted, for the recognition of the rights of public lands, and for the rights of life, personal integrity as well as individual freedom.

Their complaint addressed the Ecuadorian state's failure to protect Indigenous lands from the rising presence of employees and equipment of the consortium formed by Compañía General de Combustibles (CGC) and Petrolera Argentina San Jorge SA, partners of the Ecuadorian state-owned company Petroecuador. Another important claim in their petition has challenged the supposed strategic ignorance of the government regarding its obligation to consult Indigenous peoples, notwithstanding the International Labour Organization's Convention 169, which demands free, prior and informed consent for projects in Indigenous lands. After exhausting all domestic recourses, the Sarayaku Kichwa collected sufficient material, personal resources, and international assistance to approach the Inter-American Human Rights System and also filed a claim against Ecuador. In 2010, the Commission approved the admissibility of the request and remitted the case to the Court, which granted the victory to the Kichwa in 2012 (Inter-American Court of Human Rights 2012).

Reporting the case in an interview,[2] an activist on human rights informant highlights it as a striking action in the history of her people, the Sarayaku women and some individuals in particular. She reports how the Sarayaku's Kichwa acquired knowledge and built networks in the political process of preparing the lawsuit against Ecuador, once assisted by international NGOs. A 'boy' who won a camera and a camcorder to record the helicopters of the Argentine oil company that broke up the blockade that the Indians imposed on the entry of its employees became a filmmaker. Our informant reported that women became 'experts in international law' in their effort to understand all the events and to provide international lawyers with the necessary information to substantiate the petition. Later, they formed a handicrafts association whose products are usually bought by people from all over the world.

As "experts in international law," these women learned about the norms and mechanics of the Inter-American System. They also mediated the Kichwa, international activists, and lawyers. Using Benhabib's concept of democratic iteration, it is possible to analyze this mediation. On the one hand, it enables the community to understand the meanings of alien norms. On the other, it helps activists and lawyers document the effects of certain practices on the community, described in terms of the Earth, group, nature, and persons. In this process, the Kichwa, particularly its women, are experiencing the process of emancipation. According to our informant, in addition to community decision-making, they experience a 'democracy' that opens new paths for action against the State. The success of the Kichwa women as mediators allow them to travel the world at the invitation of people from their network. They become cosmopolitan while remaining rooted in the Amazon, by independently exploring alternate networks.

4. Democratic Iterations in the Brazilian Indigenous Women Emerging Movement

In contrast to other Latin American countries, the Movement of the Indigenous Women has arisen in Brazil more recently. However, this national and local movement has been connected to multiple spaces, both formal and informal, mutually modified. The upsurge of the Movement of the Indigenous Women in Brazil can be better understood by considering political synergies among Indigenous peoples within the larger context of transnational relations.

Although the Indigenous women activism has been evidenced before, their activism has suddenly gained public expression and general scope with the adoption of a language that

2 Interview to one of the authors during field research in Quito, Ecuador, on Feb. 2014.

larger audiences recognize as gender mainstreaming. Neither longstanding activists for Indigenous issues in Brazil, nor young women who participate in a rising Indigenous movement can explain how it has actually begun (MULHERES INDÍGENAS, 2014). Raiane, who is part of an Indigenous population of the Lower Amazon called Baré, points out:

> There is a much bigger prominence, which is something that we often assess. There are faraway communities at São Gabriel da Cachoeira, for instance, where women used to go to the meetings to sit there and wait for their husbands, but they had no voice. Nowadays they go to meetings on their own. Sometimes their husbands cannot participate as they are out for hunt or on political trips, so the women represent them, right? So it is possible to realize how advances arise. Nobody can explain why it happened, as it is still a faraway community whose life is dependent on agriculture, fishing, etc. But it does gradually arise, and nobody understands where all this feminist revolution within the Negro river is derived from.[3]

The Indigenous issues called the attention of the Brazilian state, and the debate on Indigenous policies gained evidence in the public sphere as the Ministry of Justice created the National Foundation of the Indigenous (FUNAI) in 1967. During the 1970s and 1980s, few Indigenous women participated in spaces such as FUNAI, civil society organizations, international cooperation agencies (Oxfam, German Technical Cooperation, among others) or even in the National Congress (VERDUM, 2008). The first Indigenous women's associations emerged with the democratization and the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution. It included the Association of Indigenous Women of the Alto Rio Negro, the Association of Indigenous Women of Taracuá, Uaupés e Tiquié, the Association of Indigenous Women Sateré Mawé and the Association of Indigenous Women of Roraima (SACCHI, 2003). Although it has originally focused on the promotion of income generating activities, the struggle over land and health rights, deforestation, tensions with financial institutions and governments have changed their initial mission into a more political one within the socio-environmental

3 Translated from the original version in Portuguese: "Há um protagonismo muito maior, que é uma coisa que a gente sempre vai avaliando, que tem comunidades mais longe, lá em São Gabriel da Cachoeira, por exemplo, que, a mulher, ela ia para a reunião para quê? Pra ela ficar sentada, esperando o marido dela, mas ela não tem voz. Hoje em dia não. Elas já vão para a reunião, que às vezes os maridos não podem, porque eles vão caçar ou eles tão em viagens políticas e são elas que falam por eles, né? Então você percebe como é que o avanço vai chegando. Ninguém sabe explicar o porquê disso. Porque continua sendo uma comunidade distante, que vive da agricultura, da pesca, né, e... mas vai chegando, aos poucos, e ninguém entende daonde tá vindo, né, de toda essa revolução feminista dentro do Rio Negro" (MULHERES INDÍGENAS, 2014).

movement. At the same time, Indigenous women established new gender-related concerns to the larger Indigenous agenda. Issues such as domestic violence, reproductive health, income generation and women's participation in decision-making, filled the original agenda (VERDUM, 2008).[4]

The 1990's represented a decade of civil society participation in international affairs, mainly due to the UN major conferences. Also, in the transition to democracy, Indigenous and environmentalist NGOs, such as the Missionary Indigenous Council (CIMI), connected to the Catholic Church, or even the ISA, which sought to strengthen the Indigenous movement. Their claim has been supported (VITALE, 2016) by the Brazilian public sphere and even by FUNAI. It took time for Indigenous women to gain visibility of the non-Indigenous public, however, it ended up pluralizing the feminist movement in Brazil. During the 2000s, chapters of women were developed in Indigenous organizations such as the COIAB and the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro (FOIRN) (SACCHI, 2003). Nationally, the creation of a National Bureau of Politics for Women in 2003 as well as the promulgation of the Maria da Penha Law in 2006 are considered milestones of which the Indigenous women issue was highlighted and supported by NGOs and government agencies.[5]

The influence of the national and international feminist movement as well as the so-called third wave feminism are relevant aspects in Brazil as they consider race and ethnicity as cross-cutting issues. By the end of the first decade of the 2000s, associations of Indigenous women were being established in a more endogenously way, without the mediation of NGOs or government bodies. The movement gained visibility in 2014, when Sonia Guajajara, the experienced and accomplished vice-chair of COIAB (2009-2013), was chosen to coordinate APIB, the main national Indigenous association.[6] Sonia, a petite woman with a powerful voice and great words, increased the visibility of the Indigenous cause nationally and internationally. The election of Joenia Wapichana, the first Indigenous lawyer to advocate a case before the Federal

4 Interview with the NGO environmental activist S.B. (fictitious name) to the author on September, 21st, 2017.

5 2007 meetings included Indigenous Women, Violence and Public Policy Workshop, by the Department of Women of the COIAB and the Institute of Socioeconomic Studies (INESC) in partnership with regional Indigenous chapters; The Women and Youth Indigenous National Meeting in Cuiabá/MT was organized by FUNAI; National Commission for Indigenous Policy, among others. Regional meetings in the North and Centre-South were also carried out.

6 APIB was established in 2005, during the Acampamento Terra Livre, an annual mobilization to display the Indigenous peoples' situation and claim their rights from the Brazilian State.

Supreme Tribunal (STF, 2008) as the first Indigenous congresswoman, was a breakthrough in the activisms of the Indigenous peoples and women. Women still occupy other spaces of political power, in organizations such as COIAB, which elected Nara Baré as coordinator, and Angela Amanakwa Kaxuyana as treasurer coordinator in its XI Assembly in 2017. Finally, Telma Taurepang was elected general secretary of the Women's Movement of the Indigenous Council of Roraima from 2010 to 2017 and, since 2017, she has been coordinator of the Union of Brazilian Indigenous Women. From the perspective of regional cooperation, this period has evidenced the creation of several political spaces for Indigenous women. In 2010, COICA held the workshop Indigenous Women of the Amazon in Puyo, in Ecuador, attended by 17 women from various Amazonian peoples.[7] COICA held its first Congress of Indigenous Women in July 2017, attended by 60 Indigenous leaders from the nine Amazonian countries, including Brazil.

Local conditions and transnational participation thus fostered the creation of the Movement of the Brazilian Indigenous Women. Acting as mediators from local, global and yet again local, Indigenous women based on human rights to justify their national and global audiences. For instance, they displayed the idea of women's rights to their local context and inscribed the right to collective lands in the global norms of international human rights.

As previously discussed, the genesis of the Movement of the Indigenous Women in contemporary Brazil can be attributed to the entanglement of internal political processes of Indigenous peoples, to the dynamic transnational processes imposed on them, as well as the global and regional cooperation among Indigenous Amazonian peoples such as the Taurepang and the Kichwa of Sarayaku. Concurrently, between 2015 and 2018, the UN Women, in partnership with the Norwegian Embassy, implemented the pioneering project "The Voice of Indigenous Women" aiming to create favorable conditions for them to develop a common political agenda and to enhance their most imminent demands as Indigenous and women in Brazilian society. It does not mean that the Indigenous women's leadership in Brazil is tributary of the UN Women's initiatives, but it does evidence how their meetings with international cooperation agencies have empowered them, promoted their exchanges, and also prompted their movement.

A short documentary named *Voz das Mulheres Indígenas*, by Glicéria Tupinambá and Cristiane Pankararu, was responsible for launching the project in 2015. Although it is about 20

7 The workshop has been part of the Project "Fortaleciendo las agendas ambientales de mujeres indígenas andinas y amazónicas y sus redes de interacción," implemented by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (UICN) and UN Women. Its goal was to reflect and debate on the women's organization process, leadership, priorities, and the development of their skills.

minutes long and presents only features interviews with women from groups located in northeastern Brazil, the documentary evidences empowered women of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds. Some of them are "caciques" (tribe leaders), one is divorced, and others suggest multiple loyalties. Regardless of their personal situation, they all underscore both the difficulty as well as the importance of occupying their space as women within their original societies. As Marilene Pataxó-Hãhãhãe states:

> I think that we must do that, to come after our fellow women so they can have access to information, right? We have been very, you know, it is very painful because we used to be very discriminated. We, Pataxó-Hãhãhãe women, used to be very discriminated and for us to occupy this space of ours, it has been, like, a struggle, a tough one, so we could be here today, because for a long time… Our "caciques", our husbands, we are still discriminated for them, we are meant to be cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the children.[8]

In the documentary, the Indigenous women share their perceptions, commitments, goals, and problems, such as the struggle for their territories, the violation of their rights by farmers and/or the state, the neglect and violence sanction of the state, the gender-based violence, as well as the discrimination by 'non-Indigenous society'. Despite their multiple engagements, positions, ethnicities and both collective and personal histories, it is possible to evidence that they represent common concerns.

Benhabib's approach to cosmopolitanism highlights how these women present themselves and tell their histories, as the narration enables them to weave the personal and the collective, the past and present, thus clarifying it to their audiences. Both in the documentary about the women of the Northeast, and in a program with Pataxó women recorded in Minas Gerais, in southeast Brazil, the image of the 'Indigenous woman' as a warrior is recurrent (MULHERES/CONEXIDADES, 2016). According to them, 'the Pataxó woman' is a warrior because (i) she performs domestic labor and cares for her children, (ii) helps her husband with subsistence farming, and (iii) takes Indigenous claims seriously and, finally, stands in the front line in the constant armed conflict for demarcation of Indigenous lands. They also assert that they

8 Translation from the original in Portuguese: "Acho que nós precisamos fazer isso, buscar nossas companheiras, para que elas possam hoje ter o conhecimento, né? A gente foi, assim, muito, é, muito doloroso, porque a gente era muito discriminada. Nós, Pataxó-Hãhãhãe, nossas mulheres era muito discriminadas e pra nós conquistar esse espaço nosso foi, assim, uma luta, de muita luta, pra nós, hoje, mulheres Pataxó-Hãhãhãe tá hoje aqui ocupando um espaço, né, porque tinha vários… Tem os nossos caciques, os nossos maridos, ainda era discriminada, porque nós só, pra eles nós era só pra estar na beira do fogão, cuidando dos nossos afazeres domésticos e das crianças" (VOZ DAS MULHERES INDÍGENAS, 2015).

face discrimination outside their home, in 'non-Indigenous society', as they are Indigenous and suffer gender-based domestic violence. In fact, both in the documentary and in the program with the Pataxós, some women claim that 'violence against women also occurs in Indigenous societies' (VOZ DAS MULHERES INDÍGENAS, 2015).

The Pataxó and other Indigenous peoples in states of the Brazilian Northeast do not mention the 'original patriarchy' as the prevailingly non-Indigenous feminist movement does, nor do they propose a 'new epistemology', such as the anti/de/postcolonial approaches or the communitarian feminism in Guatemala, for instance. Their statements suggest that their main ambition is to strengthen the laws of the Federal Constitution and to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Subsequently, the UN Women focused on the mutual help as women and Indigenous.

Drawing once again on Benhabib's theorization on cosmopolitanism, it is possible to understand that the UN project seeks to establish intersubjective spaces through the meetings, mutual recognition, and exchange of Indigenous women: the idea is to offer them the experience of creating themselves a space where they are assured of speaking and being heard and in which they can replicate in their "aldeias". In a 2016 video (VOZ DAS MULHERES INDÍGENAS, 2016) some of those women met once again in Brasilia to discuss the project and further actions to be taken within their "aldeias." They stated that they intend to act as multipliers by sharing their experience from the UN Women exchanges to their peers as well as the feedback from their societies to the UN Women. However, they must translate all the information they collect within their societies to the UN, as well as the UN's suggestions to their peers.

The title of the 2016 workshop, "Indigenous Women and their Strategy on the Defense of the Indigenous Rights," along with the speeches of women, reveals the project ultimate commitment, i.e., to prepare them for political leadership on their own behalf and on behalf of their peoples. Their empowerment is, therefore, meaningful to the Indigenous women as well as to Indigenous men. It is committed to enable them to become peers in interactions within Indigenous societies and political players on behalf of Indigenous peoples within the Brazilian public sphere. It echoes the 1970s Latin-American feminism regarding stronger environmental concerns, a consistent cosmopolitan front, as well as a critical relationship to developmental enterprises. It has litigated in the Inter-American Human Rights System against the Belo Monte hydroelectric power plant in the *Xucuru* case (IACHR, 2009 and 2015), a product of a (neo)developmental economic policy implemented in Brazil after the 2008 crisis.

The way the UN Women has documented its formation is another interesting aspect to be analyzed. Based on that, the 2016 documentary records a language difference in comparison to the 2015 one. In the former, the political players clearly share a language in order to frame their demands and also highlight terms of "empowerment", barely heard in the documentary of 2015. Some women evidenced the benefits from the UN Women's office, located in Brasilia,

and how important it was to 'socialize a vocabulary' concerning gender. The word "empowerment" is a central piece in this vocabulary, as it represents a social agent responsible for questioning their condition before Indigenous men and the status of Indigenous peoples before the Brazilian state.

In dialogic and democratic iteration processes (BENHABIB, 2006), Indigenous women critically appropriate their status as individuals of human rights related to both gender and ethnic minorities: as members of a demographic majority relegated to an inferior position and of an ancestral minority condemned to the margins of the state, they challenge the relationship of women and Indigenous to the Brazilian state, the construction of the *demos* and the humanity (VITALE, NAGAMINE and SOUZA, 2018). In the *Mulheres Indígenas: Vozes por Direitos e Justiça* documentary, released in 2018, the political action of Indigenous women is framed as a matter of rights and justice. Sponsored by the Canadian Embassy, it displays the narrative of a non-Indigenous woman (i) the V Kuñangue Aty Guasu, or the Grand Assembly of Guarani and Kaiowá Women, in 2017, with the presence of Nadine Gasman, UN Women representative and (ii) the 2018 Free Land Camping, with the speeches of the UN director for the Americas and Caribbean and the Minister of International Development of Canada and the Francophonie.

The non-Indigenous narrator unfolds deeds and accomplishments of the independent speakers Indigenous women– in short interviews alongside UN and Canadian representatives – enlightening the meaning of the land and religious practices in their society. It is a performative acknowledgment of some Indigenous claims, which unfolds the history by speaking the 'native point of view'. It tells the history of the Indigenous women as the current collective political player. In contrast to the previous aspects, the 2018 documentary focuses on the Indigenous women's intervention, i.e., 'leadership and political participation', and their 'common national agenda', i.e., based on the demands collected by 20 'multipliers' within the "Voice of Indigenous Women", who have listened to 104 of 305 Indigenous peoples in Brazil.

According to the narrator, their political action has a prestigious place within 'traditional spheres of power' to which the UN Brazil was invited. It in fact underscores the role the UN have played in the Movement of the Indigenous Women, mentioning the Commission on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples (VITALE, 2016) and assuring their plurality and 'pervasiveness capacity'. Norway and Canada sponsored their actions and also their advocacy, by enhancing the relevance of international cooperation issues such as the Indigenous movement and gender in international relations. They also uncovered aspects of spheres wherein political action takes place.

From a critical-theoretical perspective, not only does the international cooperation constrain and reward the political players by driving their action from the Global North, but it also effectively contributes to pluralize the viewpoints and worldviews within feminism, the Brazilian public sphere, and the global arena. As the political actions of Indigenous women

indicates, the openness of global and Brazilian public arenas to the feminist agenda has been explored in order to coordinate actions and formulate an Indigenous feminist platform, as well as to promote the Indigenous movement, which acquires a more feminine public front. In a democratic iteration process, the advanced transnational gender and Indigenous norms in the UN context are reinterpreted by the Brazilian local and incipient movement, empowered by the global standard, challenging it from a local point of view.

Indigenous women in Brazil and the UN Women have acted as mediators, connecting and producing, simultaneously, the local and the global. The enthusiasm for the contemporary forms of cosmopolitanism has been perceived as an insufficient critique of liberalism, especially its abstract universalism. Liberal universalism conceptualizes an individual who bears no diacritical marks such as race, color, sex, or gender, based on the dominant ontological hierarchies.

Postcolonial theorists base on the critiques of international relations theory to highlight how formal sovereign equality reproduces the asymmetry between states and supports the resilience of civilization as a diacritical mark. The framework of liberalism can be considered counter-emancipatory by definition, as it conceals the obstacles that liberalism poses to emancipation, despite the efforts to root and represent the liberal individual. Since postcolonial approaches assume that defenses of universalism and humanity aim to maintain the *status quo*, their theoretical efforts concentrate on uncovering the Eurocentrism and racism within liberal universals. However, based on Benhabib's contribution, the analysis of the global acting locally evidences the presence and mediation of the UN Women in Brazil, empowering Indigenous women, and challenging the post-colonial critique. Following the path of democratic iterations, human rights can be reinterpreted within the limits of local contexts.

5. Closing Remarks: Towards Another Cosmopolitanism?

The rise of a gender perspective in Indigenous societies is a multifactorial phenomenon, which is linked to the movement of leaders among their Indigenous communities of belonging, as well as different networks within and outside their countries. These leaders are connected to NGOs engaged in transnational campaigns for Indigenous rights, environmental protection, and human rights, in intergovernmental institutions, largely situated in the UN system. As a result of their international engagements, the women have become skillful mediators who appropriate local and global categories, and reframe them to understand and interpret cultural differences. Their goal is to gather support to their causes as Indigenous and as women.

Indigenous women such as Guajajara and others have become proficient in the language of human rights. This is a language of mediation which allows them to reinforce their claims in different contexts, especially to non-Indigenous audiences in Brazil and abroad. On the

one hand, Indigenous women seek to overcome limitations based on gender hierarchies with no radical change in their cultures; on the other, they address the Indigenous peoples' relations to the Brazilian non-Indigenous society, advocating for lands demarcation in a country that has reaffirmed its colonial relationship to land ownership at each historical time. Their demand for demarcation is sounder as it threats the interests of powerful economic groups, considering that Latin America countries have historically exported commodities with no commitment to the Indigenous peoples.

The magnitude of Indigenous peoples' challenge and domestic constraints lead them to act through international channels. Developed states and international entities may also have sponsored their transnational activism. Rising within the Indigenous movement as political players, Indigenous women ended up mastering the human rights language, as well as their environmental and women's rights dialects. They mobilized global discourses, norms, and categories in speeches tailored to the audience by presenting an original point of view. They represent Indigenous peoples living in Brazil to global audiences, incite the Brazilian public to widen their imagination, and set in the development of a "cosmopolitanism from bellow" with non-Indigenous Brazilians (APPADURAI, 2013). As previously discussed, it represents a modern feminism, which is more committed to inter-gender alliances, intergenerational relationships maintenance, and environmental concerns. Their speeches also present an underlying critique of unrestrained forms of capitalism such as the Belo Monte power plant, built in the middle of the rainforest, in addition to the difficulty in demarcating their lands and the militarization of some Indigenous reserves.

To advance their demands and criticisms, Indigenous women seek international litigation venues, following the steps of the Kichwa peoples, who have taken part in displaying the cases *Raposa Serra do Sol* and *Xucuru* in the Inter-American Human Rights System (IACHR, 2009, 2010 and 2015). Though acceding the regional human rights system does not validate itself in the universality of human rights, their strategic applications exceed the instrumental dimension: by appropriating human rights as a legal category aimed to support engagement in national and transnational politics, Indigenous women fashion to a particular public, which addresses the public sphere and offers an alternative and hybrid universalism. Though the asymmetry within the Brazilian public sphere remains, such competing publics enhance disruptions and might create opportunities for Indigenous peoples and women to promote a reconfiguration of it. Based on that, the Movement of the Indigenous Women has rapidly achieved significant results in prompting Indigenous women to the center stage of Brazilian politics in the 2018 elections, wherein they respond for 1/3 of all Indigenous candidates (COPIÔ CANDIDATO, 2018).

In contrast, such movement sheds light on the possibilities and limits of universalistic approaches. In Brazil, the emergence of women's issues in the *aldeias* seems to have been synergistic, and later facilitated by UN Women, gathering women leaders together to exchange experiences, expertise, and information. It also provided them with a language to

describe issues concerning women in transnational forums as well as the validation of material resources. Our conclusion is that the UN Women has broken the relationship between European governments and Brazilian Indigenous societies, while Indigenous women have acted as mediators, mastering the human rights language and some of its dialects to move freely from the UN entity and international forums to their *aldeias*. They have also allowed universal concepts to access the *aldeias* in the middle of the rainforest along the Brazilian coast, by occupying the Brazilian public sphere and competing for a place in national political institutions. In this process they are increasingly becoming peers in local and national interactions.

Benhabib's thinking on cosmopolitanism supports our analysis of these interactions. Benhabib's cosmopolitan proposal represents an advance for the analysis of transnational phenomena: it maintains the Habermasian idea on the public sphere as a space to debate the validity of norms and reasserts the political action as means to solve impasses within society. She does not relinquish the normativity of universalism; instead, she tries to modulate it by developing a kind of 'anthropological universalism.'

One way of looking at Benhabib's theoretical efforts is to identify them as an answer to postmodern critiques of modernity in an era of human rights. Benhabib responds by situating and interpreting the subject of universal legal theories and instruments in accordance with the liberal tradition, however, with no neglect of power asymmetries. This sort of cosmopolitanism is distinct from the Kantian and Habermasian versions: it comprises international, national and local institutions that mediate among distinctly situated individuals, and acts as self-mediators. Benhabib is committed to analyzing the iterations of these institutions in environments in which non-authorized players also interpret norms and propose competing meanings in the public sphere. Assuming that the public sphere is constituted through action, it is possible to assume that Indigenous women also represent competing publics, challenging the constitution of the demos by acting as equal partners in social interactions (BENHABIB, 2011).

The way that Indigenous women mobilize (universal) human rights frames and channels to advance their claims to land, environment, health, and physical integrity challenges Indigenous and Brazilian societies' dynamics. 'Another cosmopolitanism' consists of thinking through conditions for global political interactions that allow political players to respond to the production of others on global, national, and local scales.

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