The processes of configuration of the modern territorial State: elements to rethink the conception of black communities in Colombia

Los procesos de configuración del Estado moderno territorial: elementos para repensar la concepción de comunidades negras en Colombia

Os processos de configuração do Estado territorial moderno: elementos para repensar a concepção de comunidades negras na Colômbia

Tulio Andrés Clavijo Gallego
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3737-0542
Doctor en Antropología. Profesor e investigador de la Universidad del Cauca. Popayán (Colombia). E-mail: taclavijo@unicauca.edu.co

Ronald Alejandro Macuacé Otero
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9903-2939
Doctor en Urbanismo. Profesor e investigador de la Escuela Superior de Administración Pública (ESAP) y Universidad del Cauca. Popayán (Colombia). E-mail: ronald.macuace@esap.edu.co

Verenice Sánchez Castillo
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3669-3123
Doctora en Antropología. Profesora e Investigadora de la Universidad de la Amazonia. Florencia (Colombia). E-mail: ve.sanchez@udla.edu.co

Abstract

Introduction: Colombian black communities have been subjected to various homogenization processes that, based mainly on the phenotypic and the supposedly common historically, have made their particular trajectories and needs invisible. **Objective:** the objective of this article is to reflect on the conception and production of black communities in Colombia, based on qualitative methodology, documentary, bibliographic and thematic analysis. **Reflection:** it was possible to establish the process of formation of the State/modern/territorial, making evident the isomorphic fact that has sought to maintain an equivalence between territory, community and culture. At the same time, question the notion of homogeneity of an ethnic community with different histories and contexts. **Conclusions:** localized thinking was reflected on, which results in an understanding of the territorial dynamics of ethnic groups and with them, the need for their recognition and policy measures that allow their existence to be maintained and preserved with guarantees.

Keywords: Communities; Cultural anthropology; Ethnic groups; Social science policy

Resumen

Introducción: las comunidades negras colombianas han sido sometidas a diversos procesos de homogeneización que, basados principalmente en lo fenotípico y lo supuestamente común en lo histórico, han invisibilizado sus trayectorias y necesidades particulares. **Objetivo:** este artículo tiene como objetivo reflexionar sobre la concepción y producción de comunidades negras en Colombia, con sustento en la metodología cualitativa, el análisis documental, bibliográfico y temático. **Reflexión:** se logró establecer el proceso de conformación del Estado/moderno/territorial evidenciando el hecho isomórfico que ha pretendido sostener una equivalencia entre territorio, comunidad y cultura. A su vez, cuestionar la noción de homogeneidad de una comunidad étnica con diferentes historias y contextos. **Conclusiones:** se reflexionó sobre el pensamiento localizado, lo cual redunda en una comprensión de las dinámicas territoriales de los grupos étnicos y, con estos, de la necesidad de su reconocimiento y de medidas de política que permitan mantener y preservar con garantías su existencia.

Palabras clave: Antropología cultural; Comunidad; Grupo étnico; Política de las ciencias sociales[1]

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1 Los términos clave han sido recuperados a partir del Tesauro de la Unesco (Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades).

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Resumo

Introdução: as comunidades negras colombianas foram submetidas a vários processos de homogeneização que, baseados principalmente em fenótipos e no que é supostamente comum historicamente, tornaram invisíveis suas trajetórias e necessidades particulares. **Objetivo:** o objetivo deste artigo é refletir sobre a concepção e a produção das comunidades negras na Colômbia, com base em metodologia qualitativa, análise documental, bibliográfica e temática. **Reflexão:** foi possível estabelecer o processo de formação do estado/moderno/territorial, evidenciando o fato isomórfico que tem procurado sustentar uma equivalência entre território, comunidade e cultura. Ao mesmo tempo, foi questionada a noção de homogeneidade de uma comunidade étnica com diferentes histórias e contextos. **Conclusões:** foram feitas reflexões sobre o pensamento localizado, que resulta em uma compreensão da dinâmica territorial dos grupos étnicos e, com isso, da necessidade de seu reconhecimento e de medidas políticas que lhes permitam manter e preservar sua existência com garantias.

Palavras-chave: Antropologia cultural; Comunidade; Grupo étnico; Política de ciências sociais.

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Introduction

Disciplinarity tends to take as given the traditional definitions and procedures that establish and define the object and method of study, which limits the elements of observation and basic relationships (Daneshpour and Kwegyir-Afful, 2022; Lawrence et al., 2022; Yazdani et al., 2020). This often happens because, despite the overcoming of some foundational myths and the supposed weakening of binary thinking, it persists and is maintained over time per se (Mead et al., 2021; Nguyen and Mougenot, 2022; Ortiz and Climent-Gil, 2021).

Black communities in Colombia have historically been subject to discrimination, spatial segregation and, in particular, poverty (Silva, 2022; Vásquez Padilla, 2023; Zuluaga et al., 2021). All this is a product of institutional practices, which have been established in the educational imaginary, accompanied by policies and public policies by action or omission that have led to their perpetuation over time (Cely-Santos and Hernández-Manrique, 2021; Georgi, 2022; Koopman, 2020; Oslender, 2008).

In this sense, it is necessary to recognize the circumstances in which intercultural relations with Colombian black communities, precariousness, poverty and marginalization have occurred and continue to occur. It also highlights the limited impact of state efforts and international projects to favor their inclusion and improve their quality of life.

In this order of ideas, the importance of the conception of black communities and of the identification of their contexts and realities is evident. Studies aimed at these realities should be able to dimension the real problems of these communities, as well as to give an assertive response to their unfortunate conditions.

To support the discussion, the starting point is one of the most relevant foundational myths, such as the modern/territorial/state. Using it is a reference to contextualize the question that summons the article:
how are black communities produced in a statified multiculturalism?

In this sense, the article aims to reflect on the conception and production of black communities in Colombia, a situation that allows us to dimension what lies behind them. It also seeks to contribute to the opening of lines of discussion on the erratic nature of homogenization processes and the need for recognition and heterogeneity.

The research was framed within the qualitative approach. This type of research is interpretative, as it focuses on understanding what the actions of individuals and institutions represent or symbolize, from their lived experiences and perspectives. Therefore, an exhaustive, in-depth and thematic analysis was carried out, with a holistic approach and concern for the triangulation of sources, authors and the researchers' own discussion. In order to operationalize the study, documentary analysis, biographical review, and the preparation of reviews and files were used. On this basis, conceptual/contextual elements were structured to understand and dimension the phenomenon.

The discussion on the State makes it analytically possible to approach relevant categories and to consider some topics concerning them. With these elements, the article is structured in six sections after this introduction. In the first section, the origin of the State/modern/territorial with

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the perspective of identifying its main characteristics and tentative arrangements. The second shows the role that cartography has played as an instrument of representation and domination for the fulfillment of the purposes of the State.

The third section discusses the processes that lead communities to be imagined and how these conceptions affect them. In the fourth, the importance of multiculturalism as an element of recognition of the contexts and trajectories of ethnic communities, as well as of the policies that are constructed for them, is discussed.

In the fifth section, we come to the crucial point of the discussion, which is due to state multiculturalism and the processes of ethnization, which shape and configure the conception of black communities, as well as the scaffolding for their recognition and attention. The sixth section offers some closing elements on the State/modern/territorial and black communities in Colombia.

2. REFLECTION

The configuration of the State

In the Cauca region, the process of settlement in the Colony was associated with mining, which led its people and places to be linked in various ways to the different commercial circuits, many of which are still visible in their imprint (Dimyati et al., 2021; Kaufmann and Côte, 2021; Ruette-Orihuela et al., 2023; Vélez-Torres and Vanegas, 2022). In this context, the project of nation-building in the 19th century marked the trajectory of a heterogeneous population in search of a referent capable of uniting and unifying it, which was given by miscegenation (Múnera, 2010). This process allowed the founding rhetoric to speak of national unity and, therefore, of a national community. Later, in the twentieth century, some notions of plurality emerged, which made possible the specific recognition of other forms of diversity.

For Ziegler (1987, 2003), the emergence and consolidation of the modern state is the major legacy of the French Revolution in the latter part of the eighteenth century, due to its main characteristic: territorial delimitation and subsequent sovereignty. This is because the modern state is, first and foremost, territorial and sovereign. As a result, these particularities were subsequently inherited to the experience of the Fourth Continent and to the independence processes at the beginning of the 19th century, which attempted to build ethnically and culturally homogeneous nation-states, with a population enclosed within the borders of the State, in line with the European experience (Cárdenas, 2023; Rojas Herrera and Dessein, 2023; Spike Peterson, 2021).

The territorial and the sovereignty of the State have been key aspects in the mediation processes that have included the production of the "other" as an ethnic subject within the framework of the State. This is due to the fact that a substantial part of these two arguments is supported by the reproduction of the territorial/state logic, which, despite generating the illusion of autonomy, does not renounce control and sovereignty (Haesbaert, 2021; Kau-fmann and Côte, 2021; Saglam, 2021).

In positing the chronology of the emergence and development of the modern state, one finds the necessary

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connotation of "modern", since its interpretations are multiple (Restrepo and Hall, 2014). In this sense, an approach based on its essential configurations and qualities, which have been part of its recent history, is fundamental, since one of its most emblematic features is the territorial limitation of its contours, as well as its sovereignty. Therefore, its borders are that natural container of the state territory.

Its constitutional principles, laws, agreements and treaties function, at least in theory, only in this environment, defined by spatial geometry, but less clear and assertable in terms of the relations generated within it. The state has gained its character of centrality and geometric contour containing a sovereign terri- torium, i.e., it would seem that the object of analysis state plays a dual role by its simultaneous nature, being real and illusory (Džankić et al., 2023; Keil and Stahl, 2023; Mitchell, 2015; Salamey and Katoul Rahbani, 2023).

In this regard, it is necessary to address four conceptual aspects, at least tentative, about the State. The first is its historical character. This should be understood as the different forms of organization that have been generated among humans (Restrepo and Hall, 2014). Of course, these forms of organization have changed over time, just as the notable decline of the more conventional forms of the nation-state stands out. This historical evolution denotes regressive processes towards basic national identity stages, characterized by their defensive and racially aggressive extremes.

The second is its territorial character. Although it is not a characteristic of the modern nation-state, given that territorial expansion and delimitation correspond to previous moments of organization and control regimes, it is necessary to explore its conceptual implications. This is because in its modern stage it acquires an essential strategic character, which moves from the geopolitical to the aesthetic (Lika, 2023; Oonk, 2022; Routray et al., 2020).

In this regard, the geopolitical aspect is due to the fact that the knowledge, location and distribution of the State's own resources, as well as the mechanisms for knowledge and access to the resources of other States, are transcendental for its permanence in time and its external and aesthetic image. On the other hand, cartography is used as a support and representation of the idea of nation, as well as through this representation the map creates the illusion of being the nation and is installed as a logo-symbol that supports nationalistic ideas (Moreno-Quintero et al., 2021; Ulloa, 2022). Both qualities are key pieces in the most transcendental moments in which their more traditional forms are at risk, leading to frames of tension, dispute and confrontation (Cely-Santos and Hernández-Manrique, 2021; Lobo and Vélez, 2022; Orihuela, 2021; Vélez et al., 2020).

Third, its character of power. It should be pointed out that this characteristic is not characteristic of the modern State, since power has been a tool to guarantee deployment, sovereignty, containment and territorial control. This has undergone changes in history in the forms in which it has been exercised, ranging from practices capable of achieving scenarios of consensus and democracy, to absolutism and authoritarianism.

Fourth, its delocalized character. Distancing oneself from the classical perspective in which the power apparatus is at the center, and moving to the levels of agency and institutionality enables a dis- aggregated and versatile vision of the State (Martínez Basallo, 2013). This perspective becomes more complex when analyzing the State as an entity that is produced separately in terms of the processes of the society that shelters it.

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What supports this historical shift is the attempt to construct a boundary that explains the degree of independence of one from the other, since state theorists failed to account for the separation between political system/State and society (Midzain-Gobin, 2021; Mitchell, 2015). This boundary should not be reduced to a form of external demarcation, but, on the contrary, should be seen as a system of networks capable of producing and maintaining the distinction between state and society and, in turn, as a mechanism of power.

As a consequence, the delocalization of the State provides elements for the strengthening of local processes and the resurgence of localized identities, which have been victims of the processes of homogenization and standardization in the search for national unity. The idea of a construction that required full and defined identities is highlighted, resulting in the invisibilization of historical, cultural and racial processes (Bockelman and Erbig, 2020; Padilla, 2021).

The emergence of the State/modern/territorial, as well as its provisional arrangements, make it possible to identify the elements that shaped its existence, which is why it is a concept that maintains an important presence in the development of society. Although it is a complex construct to approach, it provides clues for understanding the different dynamics that occur in the territories, with their particularities, contexts and heterogeneities. In this sense, below are some aspects that show the different forms of representation of the State and how it has participated in the development of society.

The State and its graphics

The nation-states began their modernization process during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and progressively and selectively incorporated their characteristics into the national conformation of the Fourth Continent. To this end, ethnic and cultural homogenization was maintained as a hallmark in the configuration of new territorial projects, a situation that raised questions and problems (Cruz, 2021; Zaragocin and Caretta, 2021).

The consolidation of the State/modern/territorial required a representation support that was materialized through cartographic language. In the transition of the century, the gaps in the map- mundi were gradually filled with an image that assigned to each new national entity a nominal and toponymic conglomerate. Nor can it be overlooked that the expeditions with cartographic purposes oriented to fill the gaps advanced with preeminence in Europe, the territories that in America were "detached" from the colonial regime due to the processes of independence also aroused great interest.

The Corographic Commission was recognized as a major initiative of the nineteenth century, to dimension, through cartography and watercolors made by illustrators, the diversity of a territory that was beginning to rediscover itself and, for the first time, to be systematically captured under the cartographic imprint. Despite its vicissitudes and the fact that its leader did not manage to see the end of this feat during his lifetime, the results of a decade of tireless labor finally bore fruit in an avant-garde exercise in terms of classification, territorial projection and planning (Appelbaum, 2017).

It is necessary to understand that the Corographic Commission was not only interested in contributing through cartographic composition to the consolidation of the State/modern/territorial, but in the thinking of its promoters there was always the interest of a representation that would show the harmony and consistency of a unified country project. However, these initiatives were lost in time, while the work for the provinces advanced year by year.

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The homogenizing interest that was attempted to impose in the new national configurations gave way to the consolidation of a population with high qualities and the need for a diverse scenario, a fact that generated the apology of the benefits of a white skin, which was later identified as hierarchical geographies of race (Múnera, 2010, 2024). The nation represented for the thinking of the time a project in formation that idealized and legitimized some schemes that, despite considering within itself the learning as a constitutive element in the process, obeyed more to the substitution of ethnic communities and its consequences can be seen today (Araque Geney, 2023).

Cartography encompassed a great value, from the moment of the field survey to the final processes of editing and publication. In particular, nineteenth-century cartography in Latin America played a dual role in terms of appropriation, since, on the one hand, it appropriated the knowledge and labor of the population as a practical exercise in the drawing of maps and, on the other, it was carried out to provide the State with natural resources and labor (Appelbaum, 2017).

With these elements, it is hardly recognizable that cartography was an instrument that cemented the notion of national projects under construction and represented the territories with unified homogenizing guidelines, despite the fact that field work showed diametrically opposed results. Despite this, it is indisputable that this scaffolding provided a context and scientific support to the limits of the nation-state which, through its political and intellectual leadership, continued to pursue the ideals of whiteness as a synonym for the longed-for progress.

The paradox of the matter is that these ideals, rather than disappearing, were fixed and naturalized in the subconscious spirit of national life, which is why they persist over time to the present day (Halvorsen and Zaragocin, 2021; Lees et al., 2023). Some aspects of transcendental importance for understanding the processes of imagination of communities and, therefore, of the establishment of prejudices, which determine their development, are discussed below.

The imagined community

To begin this section, it is important to ask who imagines the community, in direct reference to Anderson's work (2007), which undoubtedly presented a reading of the constructions of the state/modern/territorial and provided a significant reference to later works. Precisely, these new referents have taken his reflections a step further and have placed them in tension and in contexts different from those he dealt with. It is not by chance that, despite the passing of the years and the epochal difference to which his contribution is exposed today, he asks himself about community and the origins of nationalism.

Anderson (2007) proposed understanding the nation as a large imagined community, sedimented through a series of themes shared by its inhabitants. In other words, as a shared sociocultural space whose boundaries are constructed from common narratives and participatory processes. The idea of sharing is fundamental, as it supports the possibility of disseminating symbols and the confidence that others will respond in the same way to this stimulus for a national spirit, despite not achieving a face-to-face relationship and, even less, sufficiently traversing and appropriating the limits and boundaries that safeguard it.

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The notion of community is given as a social group protected by a deep emotional legitimacy (Anderson, 2007). That is, in the notion of community there is an implicit charge of fraternity that could be relativized according to the referent (Borges Machín and González Bravo, 2022; Goodhand, 2021; Kalman-Lamb, 2021; Kim, 2023).

In a complementary manner, it is relevant to highlight the promotion and legitimization that the nation-state grants to ethnic unity, by positioning itself as an agglutinating element with "positive" results as it has the support of social institutions (doctrine, laws, education) to legitimize its unifying efforts (Bauman, 2009). On the other hand, historical and emerging communities are left in a situation of dis-disparity with respect to the State, as they are subject to the institutions and power relations imposed by it, which makes it difficult to preserve their own identity.

This great national community was established and legitimized as the official community of a territory with a series of founding characteristics that could range from phenotypical characteristics to language or religious or political affiliation. To the extent that the spectrum of observation is reduced to the regional/local, this pattern enters into tension with other expressions of community that do not necessarily conform to the dominant frame of reference, much less find a fixity in the territory, but, on the contrary, determine their essence in heterogeneity, cross-border and mobility. These tensions, rather than being resolved, are concealed under the same dominant framework with a matrix of inclusion or tolerance that has been expressed in different ways in the recent history of the country, but which in the end conditions and marks an imprint from which it is difficult to distance oneself.

In the specific period that followed the processes of independence and the convulsive beginning of the republican life of New Granada, racial tensions were concealed under the myth of mestizaje, when, in reality, the conflicts remained latent and divided the national territory in other ways. On the one hand, a country project that reinforced Euro-Andean ties in a central strip that from south to north connected the population centers that were emerging as the most prominent. On the other hand, the country of the coasts, jungles and borders, the natural and distant country that seemed to welcome those other citizens who did not reach, concretely, to live under the halo of tolerance and inclusion of the mestizo nation (Múnera, 2010). Several of these trends survive and mark the struggles and social movements today, not only in the Colombian context (Ricardo Jiménez, 2022).

From very early on, the presence of black people in Colombian territory was clearly differentiated from other social sectors. More than three centuries of slavery laid the foundations for recognition and dignified treatment to continue to be a pending debt, despite the undeniable achievement of the passing of the manumission law in the mid-nineteenth century and, more recently, the demands for ethnic-territorial rights that were tied to the 1991 Political Constitution. Without underestimating the progress that may have been achieved in this area, it is not difficult to see that in the end the agreements, laws and decrees were sanctioned in a state code that, from its logic, disciplines the communities by appealing to historical memory or apparently shared pasts.

These ties of solidarity and fraternity intrinsic to this common history validate the possibility of imagining a key community, fundamentally through shared themes thanks to the revolution brought about by the printing press and, through it, the standardization of a sort of universal categories. However, despite the great analytical deployment and the profound reflections that their contributions have meant for generating a comprehensive approach to the origins of nationalisms and communities, there are still a number of problems that have not been solved.

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In this regard, it is cardinal to examine the arguments of Chatterjee (2006), who raises key questions related to who imagines these communities. In response, he argues that over time there have been certain normalizing tendencies that, through the use of a set of modular formats, have limited, oppressed and dismissed autonomous ways of imagining community. This has been made possible, according to him, by the rule of colonial difference, through which the preservation of the qualities of the dominant group is guaranteed. Thus, in the face of frames that imagine communities as sociological organizations that travel in an empty, homogeneous, isomorphic and pre-modulated time, he proposes to investigate these autonomous and dismissed forms of imagining the community and obviously of those who imagine it.

The notions that configure a community from this analytical spectrum provide, in accordance with the above, possible routes to dimension from the theoretical field which would be those mediations and technologies that operate to make possible the production of black communities configured from a multiple racial base (Campion, 2023; Qoyyimah et al., 2023). Furthermore, it recognizes that in times of multiculturalism there is a marked concern and a constant effort to seek recognition as singular population groups.

This last idea is central, since in these processes people are forced to assume a homogenizing moral envelope that comes from the power structures and invalidates their collective identity by forcing them to incorporate new elements (Chatterjee, 2006). Central considerations derive from this author's arguments, such as that civil society does not exist so much as a political society of defined relations where the law is not the same for all; that the community per se exists in a heterogeneous and fragmented time in which it reinvents and reconfigures itself as a result of coexistence with simultaneous realities, especially those that are vehicles of hegemonic and normalizing powers.

Thinking the nation in heterogeneous time is undoubtedly promising and necessary, to the extent that it becomes possible to destabilize the naturalized notions that link communities to territories, for a long time conceived as immovable backdrops on which history took place and was written. In general, Chatterjee (2006), by calling into crisis the notion of homogeneous time, proposes the recognition and valuation of fragmented historicities, those that escape the processes of homogenization, that have the possibility of telling that communities do not have a simple natural pre-existence.

This implies recognizing that, in all cases, these communities have a process of historical construction, similar, at least in part, to the first agreement established on the State. In order to delve deeper into this issue, the following will address the importance of multiculturalism as a fundamental element for the recognition of the history and realities of ethnic communities, as well as a guideline for the policies that are constructed towards them.

Two ideas on multiculturalism

Often, the simplest explanations are the ones that remain in the memories and recollections for a long time. At the same time, these allow later on to make other types of analytical connections that make it possible to frame broader and more fruitful discussions. We begin with this approach, because it was the one that originated the development of this subtitle.

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Therefore, to approach multiculturalism it is necessary to start from what is multicultural or, better, to establish the difference between one and the other. So what is the difference between multicultural and multiculturalism? In this regard, societies have always been multicultural, i.e., through their mobility, contacts and diverse frameworks of historical relationships, societies have exchanged and appropriated cultural elements in different ways, which characterized them from very early on with a multicultural condition. Consequently, multiculturalism could be defined as a social and historical fact (Restrepo, 2012).

Multiculturalism, on the other hand, responds more to a framing of policies, although it is not limited to them, while alluding to the ways in which social groups deal with their cultural differences. It also obviously refers to the role that the State takes in this scene, usually manifested through rules, regulations and laws, which seek to regulate and codify difference. According to Restrepo (2012), multiculturalism articulates and comprises the set of elaborations, attitudinal positions and norms that are conceived or shape what is established as cultural difference in a shared manner.

As has been noted, there is an interest in marking on the analytical categories the character that not infrequently is assigned to them in a natural way as pre-given, pre-existent realities, a situation that not only tends to fix an immovable idea about them. This denies the possibility of achieving an approach to their historical processes of construction. It could be suggested that something similar happens with multiculturalism, since in one of its most common manifestations it tends to be associated with very definite contours to the imprint of laws, norms and state policies.

The interest in multiculturalism stems precisely from this kind of entrapment in which recognition policies as part of the multiculturalist apparatus tend to value and include difference, while at the same time freezing it and reducing it to its essence. This constitutes those particular forms of alienation between political and economic agendas, and a way of valuing ethno-racial par- ticularities, a situation that converges in what Chaves (2011) has called statist multiculturalism.

In this sense, Restrepo (2012) pointed out at the beginning of the last decade that the historiographic and anthropological analysis of Colombian multiculturalism is a vital task. However, this purpose goes far beyond the scope of this article; but it does allow us to advance in the journey through some of its problematic areas, in an attempt to understand a little more the processes of ethnization and configuration of a diverse community that assumes itself from a historically subordinated identity, such as the black communities.

If in the 1980s there were problems and tensions to think and imagine black communities as an ethnic group in a place like the Colombian Pacific (Clavijo Gallego, 2016; Restrepo, 2012), the possibility of taking this imagery to other places is much more complex today. This has been felt in that this ethnic group has been naturally adjudicated the historical presence of black people and, in addition, there were maneuvers to proceed with the subsequent processes of adjudication of collective territories, being to a large extent vacant lands of the nation.

The construction of the State/modern/territorial set defined contours of power in the material and symbolic order, while at the same time conjugating a powerful isomorphism that placed a territory, a community, a culture in a direct relationship of content. This structure of the national project also inherited the idea

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of fixed borders and regions that must respond to homogeneous dynamics and behaviors, in a time that is also homogeneous and empty (Anderson, 2007; Chatterjee, 2006). From this perspective, it is possible to begin to understand why multiculturalism is represented through legal language.

From these contours, a sort of contrast was generated between the most dominant meanings that attack the concept of territory, under notions of the legal sphere, and the forms that from other logics of conception understood this concept from the cultural, legal territories and cultural territories. In this order of ideas, the legal provisions acquire immediate prominence and come to obscure the contexts of struggles and social disputes, which very often forget and ignore their own historical processes, which in the recent past have represented other possibilities of access to land.

The processes carved out in differential historical events cannot be classified or explained solely under the protection of the provisions of a law, decree or norm, because this would be a simplistic and reduced vision of events. This is due to two reasons: first, because it marks a limited possibility of access to land for black communities and because ethnic rights, in their complexity, cannot be reduced to a single model of black community.

The above does not demerit or disqualify the achievements for the organizational processes of black communities represented by the concretion and subsequent developments of Law 70 of 1993 and other post-constitutional advances in this line; but it can be a call to rethink several historical processes and promote new learning relationships and knowledge transfer (Ricardo Jiménez, 2022). Firstly, the overvaluation given to legal positions, and secondly, if legal language and its provisions are an unavoidable path in the struggle for the right to territory, they must be problematized, so as to question the homogeneous notions and the preformatted molds proposed in them, as a precondition for inclusion.

The invention of black communities in Colombia

As may be evident at this point, in the proposed discussions of the categories analyzed, there has been an attempt to problematize their most common notion, which, with the strength of the foundational myths and the support of hegemonic guidelines, has not been questioned. Previously, it was noted that part of the dominant tendency is the determination to show an isomorphism and linearity of content between the State/modern/territorial supported by a community and, in turn, as the bearer of a culture. This isomorphic reading is put in tension by Gupta and Ferguson (2008), who point out that the dependence on geography to delimit the presence of different cultures generates clear conceptual limitations when trying to explain cultural differences within the local (Few et al., 2021; Silva, 2022; Vásquez Padilla, 2023).

In this way, a necessary questioning of the approach to cultural difference is raised, which does not fail, however, to draw attention to the fact of assuming culture as something localized and "natural". To make this possible, these authors invite us to question the dominant way of assuming the spaces of cultural difference as autonomous/homogeneous, since, according to their argument, this has made the topographic invi- sibilization of power relations viable (Gupta and Ferguson, 2008).

By thinking of autonomous spaces from this logic, we lose the possibility of understanding and reading them in this way.

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the relational and multiscale dynamics inherent to heterogeneity. The line of analysis proposed to think about cultural difference from the point of view of interconnection requires as a correlate to stop assuming the community as something pre-existing, naturally given, which in turn makes visible a framework with the processes that have been necessary for the establishment of graphics and the historical grasp of places.

Understanding this construction requires a comprehensive approach to the spatial distribution o f power relations, since, although multiculturalism could tangentially insinuate how cultures have gradually lost their link to specific places, its main effort is to bring this diversity of cultures into a national identity framework (Gupta and Ferguson, 2008; Sanabria Martínez, 2022). In essence, its main effort is to bring this diversity of cultures to the reference of a national identity framework (Gupta and Ferguson, 2008; Sanabria Martínez, 2022). In addition, such plurality can be referred to in terms of "subculture", in a parallel attempt to preserve something of the differentiated cultures.

Based on this argument, what we could call the "Colombian national community" builds principles of inclusion -and perhaps more tolerance- under which the existence of other cultures (subcultures) is made viable from the legal sphere. To a large extent, then, the recognition granted to black communities in the key of legislative orders acts transversally as a control device designed by the State to accept/tolerate other cultures, a fact that is expressed today in multiple divergences and the need for a culture of peace (Mora Pontiluis et al., 2023). In spite of this, or precisely because of its existence, this device does not yield even for an instant the possibility of decision, which is redefined through a legal construct that validates itself as legitimate and to which, in the end, a final ascription is sought, either by resemblance or assimilation.

In light of the above, the so-called "black communities" in Colombia were led not only to their legal invention, but also to a sort of homogenization that defined them in the context of an ancestral use of the territory, a particular form of relationship with nature, traditional practices and places of habitation that were strongly associated with the Colombian Pacific basin. All of this would later become a route to collective ownership of the land. It is important to emphasize that the law was clear in pointing out Afro-Colombian ancestry as the main feature of the black communities.

When speaking of the invention of black communities, it is necessary to approach the processes of ethnization and specifically what this has meant for black communities in the Colombian context. In general, they could be understood as a production process that led to imagine these communities as an ethnic group on a shared basis of historical and origin experiences, elements that are repeated in various rural scenarios in the country (Higuera Carrillo, 2022; Ripoll Rivaldo, 2023).

In the case of black communities in Colombia, this process was strongly linked to the image of the Pacific and showed very particular forms of relationship with nature, the maintenance of traditional practices, the appropriation and management of an aquatic space and the certainty of a shared racial base (Oslender, 2008). However, this model of ethnization that has been dominant was not constructed in such autonomous ways, but rather was marked by a model of indigenous ethnicity (Res- trepo, 2013).

This is imbricated in the legal developments that made official a model or pattern of black community in which formally or tacitly a common history, a shared origin, and a common

racially unified racial base. Although Law 70 of 1993 opened a timid space for thinking about other black communities in the national territory, their recognition was clearly associated with the ascription they could demonstrate to the dominant model.

Therefore, trying to investigate and ethnograph other forms of process that do not fully respond to the dominant form and that are installed more in local scenarios, implies recognizing that ethnization is a more complex, voluble and multidimensional process than can be described a priori, hence the importance of future research and its visibilization (Gómez Cano, 2022; Ledesma and Malave González, 2022). Given these elements, black communities in Colombia can be read in terms of a differential ethnization due to the possibility of deciphering processes that mark a special interest in the political agenda. In this sense, although some elements of the conventional model of ethnization should be taken, which consciously or unconsciously leads to broader dynamics, there should also be an opening towards the dispute of an ethno-territorial recognition with a multiple racial base.

3. CONCLUSIONS

With the inquiry on some general elements regarding the conformation of the State/modern/territorial, a guiding thread was proposed to problematize the main categories of this article. Through argumentation, we insisted on the natural basis under which today many of them are marked, a situation that presents them as something given in advance and that does not require additional inquiries on their construction and historical variability.

Therefore, it is concluded as pertinent to question the idea of a community in general as natural and pre-existing. Similarly, to re-evaluate the definition of a black community as a particular form of gathering of people of African descent with a dominant phenotypic base, with certain traditional practices, is also to question the principle that community is not simply given in advance, but, on the contrary, that it is imagined and produced.

From this perspective, the production of a black community with a multiple racial base such as the Colombian one is a relevant inquiry for several reasons. First, because it leads to put in tension the idea of community as something localized and pre-existent. Second, because thinking about multi-racially based black communities not only distances us from the dominant frame of reference of what a black community means. Moreover, because it could represent a more certain moment of inclusion than has been comfortably assumed in some scenarios and multiculturalist claiming efforts, in which, apart from a slight recognition of difference, it is strategically frozen in time and space.

Third, because it questions the idea of space and appropriated space (territory) as a neutral plane, as a reminder that the lived territories are the result of a superimposition of spellings, which in turn inscribe and recall a history to which it is necessary to return. Therefore, what is developed in this article becomes more complex and enriched to the extent that it questions the idea of black community produced from the standards of the State's multiculturalist policies of a supposed inclusion.

In addition, because it explores a variant in the production of black communities.

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that escapes the pre-established standard and consolidates itself with a multiple racial base in which the phenotype ceases to be determinant and is linked from heterogeneity through a political project. Hence, it is hoped that this reflection will contribute to the consolidation of new conceptual and methodological proposals for the study of the intrinsic diversity of the so-called black communities, not from a pre-definition of their homogeneity, but from the examination of their "true" configuration.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest with third parties.

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