

Refused States: The Effect of Culturalism on Nations with a colonization history

Estados recusados: o efeito do culturalismo em nações com histórico de colonização

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses the formation of minority states — following Deleuze & Guattari (1997) —, the effect of culturalism in nations with a history of colonization — as proposed by Souza (2019) —, and the influence the economic system has in this process — as per Mandel (1998) as it also acts as an agent of purity — according to Bauman (1998). The culmination of this process divides countries and their populations into two castes, the Europeanized elite and the populace, in a movement that spirals and feedbacks. The elite sees itself as distant from the population and occupies the main information positions in a country, spreading culturalism to all layers of the population.

Keywords: Colonization, refused State, minority, culturalism, social division

RESUMO

Este estudo analisa a formação de Estados de minorias com Deleuze & Guattari (1997), o efeito do culturalismo em nações com histórico de colonização proposto por Souza (2019), além da influência que o sistema econômico tem nesse processo com Mandel (1998), atuando também como agente de pureza de Bauman (1998). A culminação desse processo divide os países e as populações em duas castas, a elite europeizada e o populacho, num movimento que se espiraliza e se retroalimenta. A elite se enxerga como distante da população e ocupa os principais cargos de informação no país, alastrando o culturalismo para todas as camadas da população.

Palavras-chave: Colonização, Estado recusado, minoria, culturalismo, divisão social

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ALBERTO FERNÁNDEZ, THE president of Argentina, made a statement that, viewed in the light of sociology, philosophy and economics, may indicate more than he himself expected. When he exclaimed: “The Mexicans came from the Indians, the Brazilians came from the jungle, but we Argentines came by boat. And they were boats that came from there, from Europe”, the Argentine president revealed a sentiment that not only permeates his country, but is also reflected in countries with a history of colonization, especially since this statement was made to the then Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, during an event with Argentine and Spanish businessmen on June 9, 2021.

The president’s speech generated a lot of negative repercussions for him, who has already retracted it, saying that he used the interpretation of the Mexican writer and Nobel Prize winner Octavio Paz. However, the sentence attributed to the writer is quite different, as it does not even mention Brazilians: “Mexicans are descendants of the Aztecs; Peruvians, of the Incas; and Argentines of the ships “.

The phrase actually comes from a song by Argentine musician and composer Litto Nebbia, who sings the line spoken by the president in his song “Llegamos de barco”. In an interview, the president declared himself a “Europeanist”, referring to his last name, Fernández.

The president’s statement reveals some identity problems on the part of his country and its people, problems that can also be observed in other countries whose history is marked by European colonization, becoming capitalist. The President of Argentina makes a mistake and takes responsibility for his mistake, but we have identified in this work that this mistake may not be a mere coincidence, but a reflection of a stigma that affects not only Argentina, but all of South America. There are countless examples of similar content that we can extract from the former president of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, such as when he made a statement calling Brazil garbage¹ or when he saluted the flag of the United States².

In this way, the leaders and representatives of these nations imprint a sense of inferiority in relation to the *center* countries, a concept defined by Deleuze & Guattari, who bring important reflections on the subject.

THE FORMATION OF NATIONS

The formation of a country depends exclusively on the creation of a majority state, which Deleuze & Guattari conceptualize as the *White State*. Although the relation of the denomination of a majority does not exist only in the absolute numbers of the population as a kind of count, it functions in the constitution

¹ In video, Bolsonaro calls Brazil “garbage” and says the Amazon “is no longer ours” - Accessed on 07/04/2023 available at: <https://revistaforum.com.br/politica/em-video-bolsonaro-chama-brasil-de-lixo-e-diz-que-amazonia-nao-e-mais-nossa/>

² Bolsonaro receives award, salutes the flag and changes the catchphrase - Accessed on 04/07/2023 available at: <https://www.metropoles.com/mundo/politica-int/bolsonaro-recebe-premio-bate-continencia-a-bandeira-dos-eua-e-troca-bordao>

of the state as a question of the identity of the majority and its relations with the minority or minoritized groups.

Ours is becoming the age of minorities. We have seen several times that minorities are not necessarily defined by the smallness of their numbers but rather by becoming or a line of fluctuation, in other words, by the gap that separates them from this or that axiom constituting a redundant majority. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 469)

The majority axiom is the catalyst of the white state, even if it does not reflect the majority of the population. In Brazil, the example is clearer, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the country has a population of 56.22% black (considering the black and ‘pardos’- brown population), according to data from the first quarter of 2023:

Table 1

Table 6403 - Population, by color or race			
Variable - Population (per thousand)			
Brazil			
1st. quarter 2003			
Color or race			
Total	White	Black	Brown
215.046	91.706	22.577	98.319

Note. IBGE - Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua Trimestral

In this context, we observe a country with an absolute black majority, but with very low representation in the government. The 2020 municipal elections broke records for black participation in power, with 32% of the total. Although it is an absolute majority, blacks are a minority group in the country, a contradiction that the authors also theorized: “A minority can be small in number; but it can also be the largest in number, constituting an absolute, indefinite majority.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 469).

From this perspective, what defines a minority is not its number, but the internal relations of that mass of people. A minority can even be infinite, in the same way as a majority. The difference is that the majority, however numerous, is always a numerable whole, whereas the minority is not. In fact, what characterizes the innumerable is the connection that occurs between the elements of this minority. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005).

Brazil is thus a state in which the majority of the population is a minority. The reason for this apparent incongruity lies in the very genesis of capitalism as a builder of societies in which the realization of a minority state is impossible:



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It is hard to see what an Amazon-State would be, a women's State, or a State of erratic workers, a State of the "refusal" of work. If minorities do not constitute viable States culturally, politically, economically, it is because the State-form is not appropriate to them, nor the axiomatic of capital, nor the corresponding culture. We have often seen capitalism maintain and organize inviable States, according to its needs, and for the precise purpose of crushing minorities. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 472)

So it becomes a challenge to understand how a state can be formed mainly by the refused, the minorities. A capitalist state exists only as a majority, white state, so that it can connect with the other capitalist states, or center countries, represented by the rich countries of the northern hemisphere (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). According to the authors, the states of the different poles do not cancel each other out, but enter into a process of metamorphosis, assuming a new meaning that starts from models of realization of this world axiomatic, generating a global market that has as dominant culture, or axiom, the Eurocentric model.

The prescription of this axiom has the effect of rejecting what is genuinely national in peripheral countries. There are countless cases in which national culture, such as cinema, has been abolished or disregarded by both the state and the population (Miranda & Freitas, 2013). But other forms of art also suffer from this stigma, in which foreign cultural products are valued, and the elite refer to them as having high value, or high culture, while national products are of low value, or popular culture.

More recent bourgeois cultural criticism has undoubtedly become too cautious to follow them [the Athenians] openly on this point, although it secretly cozies up to the division between high culture and popular culture, between art and entertainment, between knowledge and uncompromising worldview.³ (Adorno, 2002, p. 53)

Popular culture itself was questioned by the author, who came to a simple but highly synthetic conclusion: "What has ever been called popular art has always been a reflection of domination". (Adorno, 2001, p. 195), and therefore almost always repressed by the police force. What is relevant for this repression to take place is not necessarily the situation that would constitute a crime, but the use of the poor person's body for any activity other than work (Adorno, 2001). It is worth highlighting the tragic case that occurred in the neighborhood of Paraisópolis, on the suburbs of São Paulo, where nine people were trampled to death in a police action on December 1, 2019. In the press coverage⁴, a mother of one of the deceased young people even pointed out that this was a war against the poor, that if the event had occurred in Jardins (an upper-class neighborhood

³ All translations were made by the authors

⁴ Nine people trampled to death in riot after police action during baile funk in Paraisópolis, SP - accessed on 04/07/2023 available at: <https://g1.globo.com/sp/sao-paulo/noticia/2019/12/01/perseguido-e-tiroteio-em-baile-funk-em-paraisopolis-deixa-ao-menos-8-mortos-pisoteados-em-sp.ghtml>

of the city), the result would have been different, because even the way the police approach is different there.

This example is emblematic because, although it can be argued that the police action was carried out to repress the use of drugs, both legal and illegal, during the Baile Funk, we do not see the same approach in the neighborhoods of the more privileged classes, as pointed out by the mother of one of the victims. This does not mean that the parties held in these areas do not involve the consumption of legal and illegal drugs in the same way, although this second use does not arouse the same anger from the population or the *need* for police intervention. This example is echoed by Andrés (2023, p. 61) “State action in the cities has always been marked by selectivity, based on the assumption that there are first and second class groups.”

The structures of capitalist states thus invoke a morality that can exert influence over both citizens and government, providing the elite with guidelines on what should be valued in economic and cultural terms.

THE CULTURALISM

The social sciences are endowed with paradigms that change from time to time due to the increasing complexity of the studies or simply because they become obsolete given the new contexts of the moment in which they are inserted (Giddens & Sutton, 2017). It is important to remember that not so long ago the dominant paradigm of the social sciences was the racist paradigm, as Souza points out (2019, p. 16):

Until the 1920s, phenotypic racism based on skin color and physiognomic features was recognized as a science both internationally and nationally. This made clear, for example, the fundamental difference in the development of different peoples.

The author explains that, over the years, the question of why some peoples are more developed than others, or even what this development would be could no longer be answered by this racist paradigm. After all, the skin color of the body of the people who inhabit it cannot justify their behavior or their social condition.

Therefore, a new argument would have to be created to explain such differences. If we are all human beings who possess equal abilities, what is it that makes some people live in misery while others have fortunes greater than those of entire countries? Superficially, the first answer that may arise in the reader’s mind is: cultural difference, there are simply countries where the culture is oriented towards development, while in others it is not.



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The explanation that the cultural stock comes either from the heritage of the colonizing countries or from a historical structure of the dominant countries has quickly gained academic and common sense, has been absolutely normalized and now constitutes the majority of society. It is to this paradigm that the author Souza (2019, p. 17) has given the name *culturalism*:

The golden moment of culturalism was the enthronement of the theory of modernization, which was produced primarily in the United States in the second postwar period and spread throughout the world. It explained exactly why some societies were rich and advanced and others poor and backward. The United States was thus transformed into an exemplary model for the world, and empirical comparisons with other countries were made on a massive scale to demonstrate that it was paradise on earth and that all other countries were imperfect realizations of this model.

We can observe part of this culturalism in several studies. We will highlight Almond & Verba (1963, p. 474), who were fundamental in this process:

Recent studies of political behavior call the rationality-activist model into question, for it is becoming clear that citizens in democracies rarely live up to this model. They are not well informed, not deeply involved, not particularly active; and the process by which they come to their voting decision is anything but a process of rational calculation.² Nor does this model accurately represent the civic culture we have found in Britain and the United States. It is true—and this point is both substantively important as well as indicative of the usefulness of comparative data—that the informed, involved, rational, and active citizen is more frequently found in the successful than in the unsuccessful democracies. The characteristics of the rationality-activist model of democratic citizenship are indeed components of the civic culture; but the point to be stressed here is that they are only part of that culture.

In this fragment, it is possible to see that only the democracy of Great Britain and the United States fit the model of civic activity proposed by the authors. Such studies were central to Western society's understanding of the success of democracies. Moreover, at the root of this thinking was the individualistic Protestantism of the United States as a foundational paradigm for the constitution of wealthy, democratic societies. These studies were funded by the U.S. government in much of the world, including and especially in South America (Souza, 2019).

It is part of this international common sense that to this day guides institutions like the World Bank and the IMF with their *moral hazard*⁵ (Freitas & Prates, 2002), as well as rooting misperceptions about the economy and the model of each country. Thus, when a theorist concludes that individualistic Protestantism produces more intelligent, productive, and morally superior individuals, it is clear that even culturalism is extremely racist in the sense that it creates castes of people and divides them into superior and inferior.

Replacing the racist paradigm with the culturalist one also establishes a layer of scientificity that seeks to reproduce and validate old prejudices is also established, as Souza explains (2019, p.19): “Superior beings would be more democratic and more honest than inferior ones, such as Latin Americans, for example”. This process ignores the collective learning of nations and is capable of creating naturalized and definitive distinctions.

Culturalism, with its scientific premise, plays the same role as its racist predecessor. It generates a moral superiority and distinction for the countries in a situation of domination, in a way that legitimizes their position of domination through a meritocratic discourse.

Today, in Europe and the United States, there is absolutely no one who does not feel superior to Latin Americans and Africans. Among the best Americans and Europeans, those who are not consciously racist, there is a politically correct effort to treat an African or a Latin American as if they were effectively equal. This very effort shows the effectiveness of the prejudice that divides the world into people of greater and lesser value. (Souza, 2019, p. 20)

Culturalism works particularly well for countries in a situation of domination for two reasons. First, it creates a mechanism for legitimizing their social system among their own people, who should not criticize the system as they are superior to others. Second, the discourse, properly understood by all countries, serves as a facilitator for the exploitation of poorer countries, since it is easier to appropriate and manage the wealth of a population that is perceived as inferior and dishonest⁶.

The legitimacy of this discourse has become an unreflected dimension of social and expressive-artistic behavior that is not only limited to relations between countries, but also functions in a relationship between classes within the same country (Zocca & Martins, 2021). In this sense, there is a division between different social stratum within a given population, characterized by an *Europeanized elitist* caste and the most marginalized layer, baptized by Souza (2019) as the *populace* (*populacho*).

⁵ Moral hazard: a term often used in the analysis of the effects of insurance. It refers to the idea that the very provision of insurance increases the probability of occurrence of the event insured against. This is because insurance reduces the incentives for the insured party to take preventive measures. At the IMF, the term is mostly used for emerging economies or peripheral countries.

⁶ Adrilles says US must annihilate inferior cultures, accessed 07/07/2023, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBNnwNYnH38&ab_channel=MeteoroBrasil



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⁷ Cala a boca, accessed on 06/07/2023, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_5ARGXCnpg

The *populace*, which represents the absolute majority but a political minority, is the target of constant devaluation by the Europeanized class, which literally does not feel like an equal and tries to distance itself with various arguments ranging from those learned in school through culturalism to ancestry. There is an anecdote in Brazil, very well represented by the group Porta dos Fundos⁷, which captures the need of people of European descent to express this descent.

It is precisely in the desire to differentiate themselves from the populace that the constant reaffirmation of this distance lies, as if they were better people, with *purier blood* and therefore less prone to dishonesty, in addition to having a more refined cultural tastes like Europeans. The spiralization of this discourse penetrates so deeply into the identity of these countries that even the most peripheral layers of society try to differentiate themselves from others in similar situations, in a cycle that seems to have no end (Souza, 2019).

This association is based on an idea that is quite common today, but which has already usurped the public spheres in an overwhelming way and reached the leadership of some nations in the recent past. It was the idea of purity that, among other consequences, strengthened extremist movements such as Nazism and Fascism by stimulating a perspective of social purity.

Purity is a vision of things placed in places different from what they would occupy, if they were not led to move to another, impelled, dragged or incited; and it is a vision of order - that is, of a situation in which each thing is in its proper place and in no other. (Bauman, 1998, p. 14).

According to the author, it is the *location* of things that acts as a catalyst for this impurity, not their characteristics per se. Those who seek purity establish order within an idealized system.

Once idealized, when an individual opposes this order or refuses to be in his *proper place*, a conflict is generated. The capacity for understanding and discernment of those who seek order is too small to accommodate those whom the author calls *disrupters*. Even relocating them is often insufficient, leaving only one option. The purity movement becomes dangerous at this point, when only the elimination of the threat seems to be sufficient (Bauman, 1998).

Part of this hatred of the impure is created because the *disrupters* have the ability to control their own location, so they mock the efforts of those who seek purity. This movement naturally reveals the fragility and instability of the idealized order (Bauman, 1998).

Although it sounds like the exclusivity of some individuals, the author points out that the sense of purity comes from the human being's own ability to

memorize. And it happens all the time, as we learn how the world is managed, generating patterns that are conserved and that change from one time to another or from one region to another, it is natural in all human beings some degree of search for the pure.

According to Geertz (2008), humans are animals that live suspended in *webs of meaning* and, as such, depend on a set of concepts and preestablishments, or symbols, that serve to striate and understand the world as it functions. This constant effort to create our own safe version of the world often goes unnoticed, so that the use of these symbols becomes commonplace and we do not even realize that they are symbols, for example, the universal symbol of money.

As well as symbolism, the *dream of purity* (Bauman, 1998) is also learned and grasped in everyday experience. However, it can be dangerous when the creation of these senses reaches the point of judging another human being as dirt or impurity, a movement that opens spaces for extremism and totalitarian regimes such as those mentioned above, the association between purity and hygiene is not mere chance.

The growing accumulation of capital that we are witnessing today, which we will examine in the next section, causes populations to stagnate in their social classes, making it very difficult to move up. This stagnation of the social position of people in relation to the market is configured from the perspective of purity and generates idealizations of *meritocracy*.⁸ of the social status they possess. The implication is that it is possible for all pure people to ascend, but people do not do so because they are not *worthy* of such ascension.

In fact, the dream of purity directed at the economy generates an apparently or superficially justified rejection of the poorer stratum of the population, and the repercussions, like culturalism or even as part of it, are entrenched in entire societies (Adorno, 2001; Bauman, 1998). Highly naturalized, the dream of purity operates even among the poorest stratum themselves. In other words, they are rejected for not being pure enough, in a cascade effect.

⁸ Why this angry audio sums up the Brazil of meritocracy - Accessed 05/07/2023, available at: https://www.vice.com/pt_br/article/wj9max/por-que-este-audio-pistola-resume-o-brasil-da-meritocracia

CAPITALISM AS A DRIVER OF DIFFERENCE

In order to correlate the above-mentioned speech of the presidents of Brazil and Argentina, and the positioning implicit in it, we seek to contextualize capitalism not only as a concept, but also as a way of thinking about society. For this purpose, we are based on Deleuze & Guattari (2005), but also on the history of capitalism with Mandel (1998) and on the specificity of this model in Latin America with Souza (2019).



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Capitalism, as a system, operates through enunciations that establish the semiology of capital itself (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). Such enunciations do not derive from theoretical propositions or even ideological formulations, but only from flows of axioms that are not necessarily interdependent. It is this amnestied character of capitalism, free of its own axioms but functioning as a flow of independent and elusive axioms that can lead it to evolve without limits. Such evolution contributes to the configuration of the *wild* structure of contemporary postmodern capitalism.

In addition, there is a division between what are considered to be the *center countries* and the *peripheral countries* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005) in an amorphous but interdependent relationship. The history of colonization leaves some organizational gaps in developing countries. By constantly reporting of the activities and outputs of the colonized countries to the colonizing nations, whose affairs often covered the internal and hierarchical structure of these countries, left little room for the colonized countries to develop their own regulatory and political systems. In addition, the imposition of the purchase of manufactured goods from the colonizers contributed to the absence of an organized domestic industry and market. (Mandel, 1998). These gaps were then opportunistically filled by axioms chosen by the center countries.

At first it was the colonizing country that dealt with this dictate. Subsequently, the forms of domination were gradually replaced by the division between the capitalist and the socialist world, and then a single global market was forged, or the ethics of aesthetics, which tends to standardize consumption, as Maffesoli points out. (2002, p. 16).

As an expression of contemporary mythology, science fiction films, numerous «video clips», and sometimes even advertising emphasize this relativization of free will by the supra-individual «force» [...]. It disturbs the social imaginary, ensures the success of folkloric spectacles and historical re-enactments, draws crowds to places of pilgrimage and makes initiatory novels triumph. In each of these cases, and the list is far from exhaustive, what is at stake is a collective spirit, a mass subjectivity, what the initiatory tradition calls the «égregore», that is, a social bond that no longer rests on simple reason alone, but on a global interaction in which «pathos» is omnipresent.

This standardization of consumption takes place not only in goods, but also in the form of culture, the media, cinema, popular books, the massification of streaming platforms, and so on. All these products contribute to the configuration

of the hierarchy between peoples, races and countries, and it happens so naturally that we are not even aware of it through culturalism. (Souza, 2019).

The standardization of consumption takes place, but the difference in production costs is strategically maintained, exploited by the implementation of factories in *peripheral countries*, which have lower production costs due to greater exploitation of labor, less concern for environmental issues, easier access to raw materials, among other factors. (Mandel, 1998).

The importance of the process of fulfilling the axioms by the center countries is often minimized by culturalism. Among the implications of this system is the creation of a master mentality in countries with greater economic development, which benefits them by giving them the appearance of deserving the condition they hold, and also that of a slave mentality in countries whose genesis is in the direction of obedience and subordination to the ruling countries.

Since we have never reflected on this force-idea and its consequences, it is uniquely suited to separating and hierarchizing the world in a practical way that is very different from the legal rule of formal equality. In fact, it is even much more effective than all legal codes put together. The separation not only between peoples and countries, but also between social classes, between genders and between 'races' is constructed and becomes extraordinarily effective in practice. (Souza, 2019, p. 22)

Taking advantage of this relatively arbitrary creation of axioms for its own evolution, capitalism thus becomes metacapitalism, since all the laws that govern it are exclusively immanent (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). Although capitalist praxis tries to convince us that the maximum constraints of capitalism lie in the laws of the universe, the limits of energy or the resources of the planet, we observe that capitalism only collides with its own limits, be they the gradual devaluation of capital itself or the creation of new industries with high rates of profit.

However, the authors point out that these changes, such as the creation of new industries and the creation of other forms of exploitation of capital, not only change the form of capital, but also require a redistribution of the world's resources, which will turn to the new form of exploitation. In this way, new sets of minorities are also created, the relocation of groups that become marginal to the new forms of exploitation is constantly transformed (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). This is the reason why the creation and arrangement of minorities is more related to the dominant power and not limited to population numbers alone.

Part of this constant transformation is addressed in "Late Capitalism", which explores the understanding of money as one of the great fictional narratives constructed and adapted by humanity. The metalinguistic character of capitalism has



led to its repeated narration, reinterpretation and reification over time, even to the point of being divided into three phases, as proposed by the Belgian economist Mandel (1998) in the 1970s, when he predicted the decline of economic growth experienced in the post-war period. Although he faced criticism, time proved the accuracy of his conceptions, and the book, homonymous with the concept, reached its 23rd edition in 1998, confirming his assertiveness in identifying what he called late capitalism.

This theory predicted the condemnation of capitalism itself, so that the big monopolies would grow larger and larger, creating unbearable competition for small and medium enterprises, which would be forced to exploit the workers even more and then close their businesses. The dominance of large conglomerates also influences the accumulation of wealth, which in turn tends to become even greater. This factor, combined with the precariousness of work due to the possibility of paying less and less to increasingly productive workers, as Marques (2020), points out, creates a cycle in which the resources of the majority of people gradually trickle down to a small portion of the super-rich. According to Sheidel & Friesen (2009), the gap between rich and poor in the United States already exceeds the gap that existed in ancient Rome, a society based on slave labor.

According to the UNDP report⁹, Brazil is the eighth most unequal country in the world, surpassed only by African countries: South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Sao Tome and Principe, Central African Republic, Swaziland and Mozambique. The indices show that wealth does not only flow into the hands of the richest, but that the flow also begins in the poorest countries, in both micro and macro terms.

It is no coincidence that we live in increasingly shorter cycles of crisis, in fact, even the fragments of time in which the overcoming of the crisis is preconized, are already tainted with a new crisis to come, as theorized by (Martins, 2017, p. 187): “Vertigo, crisis, risk, and the end are words that characterize the atmosphere of the age in which we live”. According to the author, this imminence of an unknown danger keeps us in a kind of state of alert that integrates us in a fast lane of constant movement, of constant running. We swim like fish in an aquarium where a shark is lurking, it is enough not to be present at a certain overtime at work, to ignore a certain e-mail or to refuse a certain phone call to be left behind and swallowed without a trace.

The acceleration of our world is such that we often do not even ask ourselves why we are in this situation, has it always been like this? Although Mandel (1998) synthesized the path that capitalism has taken, he does so in a very general way, focusing, of course, on his field, economics. Bauman (1998) also offers a critique of the precarious models that were being designed at the time of his book's

⁹United Nations (2022) Human Development Report 2021/2022. <https://report.hdr.undp.org/>

publication, as well as the pragmatic reasons that led companies to adopt such predatory practices toward their workers:

Once limited to steel and concrete, heavy factory buildings and unwieldy machinery, capital itself has become the embodiment of flexibility. It has mastered the tricks of pulling itself out of a hat like a rabbit or disappearing without a trace, with the information superhighway playing the role of a magic wand. But just as what heals some kills others, the changes that rationalization and flexibility mean for capital resonate as catastrophes at the receiving end - as inexplicable, as beyond human capacity, and as stalling opportunities at the solid wall of fate. (Bauman, 1998, p. 50)

Again, the crisis comes to the fore, it exists and gradually intensifies, reinforced by other current problems such as global warming, the pandemic, the accumulation of plastic in the oceans, etc. This constant creation of crises diverts the population from the core issues of their problems and eradicates the dream or utopia of change. (Bregman, 2018), while populations or even peripheral countries are forever tainted in their idealized positions of purity (Bauman, 1998), never fully and definitively integrated into the group of center countries:

If the two solutions of extermination and integration hardly seem possible, it is due to the deepest law of capitalism: it continually sets and then repels its own limits, but in so doing gives rise to numerous flows in all directions that escape its axiomatic. At the same time as capitalism is effectuated in the denumerable sets serving as its models, it necessarily constitutes nondenumerable sets that cut across and disrupt those models. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 472)

Although it can be perceived with greater vehemence in some specific points of the planet (Souza, 2019), the crisis seems to affect the entire globe, or at least a good part of it, with a special focus on countries with a history of colonization or peripheral (Mandel, 1998). As punctual convulsions of this model of crisis and capital outflow, also proposed by Deleuze & Guattari (2005), we include several social movements, such as the struggle for the rights of minority populations in Ecuador, severely punished by police actions, as Ávila (2023), recounts, or even the conflagration that occurred in France in April 2023, triggered by the increase of the minimum retirement age in the country, both with different approaches and successes. The prospect of a change in the culturalist paradigm through the social sciences promises to bring new perspectives and new dreams to a reality that is gradually becoming grey and naturalized, suffocating the transformative capacity contained in non-numerical groups and minorities.



CONCLUSIONS

We are faced with the challenge of understanding the way in which minority states are constituted, since this contradicts the axiom of capital, as pointed out by Deleuze & Guattari (2005). In fact, in the cases of countries that have experienced colonization in their history, there is a division between castes of the population, the so-called *Europeanized elite* and the *populace*, according to Souza (2019).

Culturalist theory, when assimilated as scientific knowledge, ends up becoming a rooted and naturalized belief through institutions such as schools, universities, media, and cinema. This naturalization of the culturalist paradigm makes it difficult to critique and reflect on its limitations and effects, thus perpetuating its influence almost imperceptibly. In countries such as Argentina and Brazil, we observe through the speeches of presidents elected with an essentially culturalist discourse (Souza, 2019), the perpetuation of the need to differentiate part of the population, as in the case of the anecdote of the humorous group Porta dos Fundos or the speech of Adrilles Jorge, and the tenacious devaluation of national culture (Miranda & Freitas, 2013), that the elite sees itself as Europeanized and therefore distant from its own population. In this sense, the elite that sees itself as Europeanized adheres to the pseudo-scientific racist discourse of culturalism, in which the populations of the peripheral countries are seen by those of the center as ignorant, corrupt, and impure.

If we look at the case of police violence in Paraisópolis, directed against people from the periphery, who are minorities, it is clear that the problem is not the loud music, or even the consumption of legal or illegal drugs that can occur at parties, both funk and electronic music in upper class neighborhoods, the problem is characterized by the use of the body of the poor. This use evokes a sense of purity idealized by the Europeanized elite of these countries, the body of the poor has place only as a productive unit, in this sense dancing is *impure, dirty*, deserves to be eliminated. This is the reasoning behind not only this case, but a systematic violence against minority groups in these countries.

The effect spirals from the macro to the micro so that, initially, countries with a history of colonization, here Argentina and Brazil as examples, are considered as inferior or *populace* by the so-called center countries, colonizers and holders of capital, through a pseudo-scientific argument of culturalism that has been pumping for years how much the culture and the inhabitants of these countries are inferior, justifying the poverty and injustices that exist in them.

In fact, part of the elite in these countries has also bought into this discourse, because instead of contradicting it, they support it, and the movement is reflected in how culturalism has become entrenched and proliferated. We conclude that

national art and culture is devalued because it is popular, precisely because it is part of the real population of a country divided into the two castes. (Miranda & Freitas, 2013; Souza, 2019).

The highlighted speeches of the presidents of Argentina and Brazil make this reality clear and the very fact that they were elected, often emphasizing precisely this difference between them and the populace, reveals how much this discourse and racist culturalism already constitute the formal and informal thinking of these countries.

In this way, there is an implicit erasure of national identity, in which the inhabitants of peripheral countries tend to see themselves as Europeans or Americans, blaming all the problems they face economically and culturally on a second caste of people, the populace of their own country. Through this dynamic, individuals armed with a vision of purity ascend to the most important positions in their countries, promoting a discourse that is openly opposed to their own population, which in turn does not see itself as the population of its own country, sharing and endorsing this culturalist sentiment.

In conclusion, the term spiral is used to describe the arrangement that has been architected. The center countries, historically dominant in scientific thought and publications, set the tone for the very conception of scientificity in the peripheral countries.

In this tone, which proved to be fundamental for these countries, was the presence of the stigma associated with the idea that such nations were considered ignorant and corrupt. The discourse found fertile ground for dissemination among the wealthier classes, who had the means and resources to pursue more formal education, including the possibility of studying abroad. Already possessing a certain academic or intellectual prestige, these people gain space as opinion-makers, both in universities and in the media, sometimes through their internal mechanisms, deciding on the content presented, sometimes as invited experts. In this way, culturalism penetrates all layers of the population, which now tries not to feel like the *corrupt natives* and tends to create systematic differentiations between itself and the populace.

In fact, national art is devalued because it is created by and for the populace. State enterprises become synonymous with places of illegal corrupt practices, and the only way to create some development is to imitate what the United States or other center countries are doing, even if this imitation makes no logical sense. In this way, the peripheral states open themselves up to foreign exploitation, which appears more dignified and rational, so that they will better understand what to do with the resources available. This is the mechanism that exists and works for the plundering of a country's resources, aided and abetted by the



locals themselves, who try to get closer to the foreigners by declaring themselves Europeanists or by saluting the US flag.

We hope that the critical gaze itself, which configures a convulsion in the culturalist model, will gain strength and begin to formulate a new axiom. The creation of new axioms capable of integrating the economic model, even if it is not ideal, is one of the few ways to create the possibility of breaking the crystallizations that fragment beings between first and second class, through a more humanized vision. ■

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