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Inscribed in Liberalism: racism in International Relations and abolition of slavery in Brazil

Inscritos no Liberalismo: racismo nas Relações Internacionais e a abolição da escravidão no Brasil

Inscritos en el Liberalismo: racismo en las Relaciones Internacionales y la abolición de la esclavitud en Brasil

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Abstract: The beginning of the 20th Century was a moment of great transformations, amongst which the first impulse to institutionalize a field of knowledge of International Relations. A structural change that happened 30 years after the abolition of slavery in Brazil. Despite the fact of being unrelated historical phenomena in objective terms, I argue that the possibility of analyzing them in tandem widens the critique to the racist premises of liberalism, a powerful ideological motivator in both events. The vitality of critical studies in IR has helped denounce the premises upon which the discipline is grounded and the definition of what is within the scope of its interest. The disciplinary critique is reconstructed in the first section and, in the second, I present the marginalization inscribed in legal norms of late 19th and early 20th Century Brazil. The technique of developing conditions for the segregation of a sector of the population disguising it from full-citizens by granting conditional-citizenship to formerly enslaved people is a sophisticated use of liberalism. Such use not only presents in full the critique of structural racism developed by the critique to this political project, already advanced by IR scholars, it also presents another discussion that has yet ground to cover in the field: the unchallenged premise of homogeneity within political communities.

Keywords: Racism / Liberalism / International Relations / Brazil

Resumo: O princípio do século XX foi um momento de grandes transformações, dentre as quais a institucionalização do campo de conhecimento das Relações Internacionais. Uma mudança estrutural que ocorreu 30 anos após a abolição da escravidão no Brasil. A despeito de serem eventos históricos objetivamente autônomos um do outro, esse texto argumenta que a possibilidade de tratá-los de forma relacionada amplia a possibilidade de crítica às premissas racistas do liberalismo, um motor ideológico poderoso para ambos acontecimentos. A vitalidade dos estudos críticos em Relações Internacionais ajudou a denunciar as premissas nas quais a disciplina se baseia e a definição daquilo que é de seu interesse. A crítica disciplinar é reconstruída na primeira seção e, na segunda, apresento a marginalização inscrita na legislação brasileira do fim do século XIX e princípio do XX. A técnica de desenvolver as condições para discriminar um setor da população disfarçando isso de garantia da cidadania para um grupo de pessoas previamente escravizadas é um uso sofisticado do liberalismo. Esse uso funciona não apenas para evidenciar toda a crítica do racismo estrutural desenvolvido pela crítica à esse projeto político, que já avançou com pesquisadores de RI, como também para apresentar uma discussão que ainda tem espaço para avançar no campo: a premissa não questionada da homogeneidade dentro das comunidades políticas.

Palavras-Chave: Racismo / Liberalismo / Relações Internacionais / Brasil

Resumen: El principio del siglo XX fue un momento de grandes transformaciones, entre las cuales la institucionalización del campo de conocimiento de las Relaciones Internacionales. Un cambio estructural que ocorrió 30 años después de la abolición de la esclavitud en Brasil. A pesar de eventos históricos objetivamente autónomos el uno del otro, este texto argumenta que la posibilidad de considerarlos de una manera relacionada amplía la posibilidad de crítica a las premisas racistas del liberalismo, un motor ideológico importante para los dos eventos. La vitalidad de los estudios críticos en Relaciones Internacionales ayudó en la denuncia de las premisas en las cuales la disciplina está envasada y en la definición de lo que es de su interés. La crítica disciplinar es reconstruida en la primera sección y, en la segunda, presento la marginalización inscrita en la legislación brasileña de fines del siglo XIX y principio del XX. La técnica de desarrollar las condiciones para discriminar un sector de la población disfrazando esto de garantías de la ciudadanía de para un grupo de personas anteriormente esclavizadas es un uso sofisticado del Liberalismo. Ese uso funcionava no solo para dar evidencia a toda la crítica del racismo estructural desarrollado por la crítica a este proyecto político, que ya avanzó con pesquisadores de las Relaciones Internacionales, como también para presentar una discusión que aún tiene que avanzar en el campo: la premisa no cuestionada de la homogeneidad dentro de las comunidades políticas.

Palavras-chave em espanhol: Racismo / Liberalismo / Relaciones Internacionales / Brasil

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1 INTRODUCTION

Stanley Hoffman (1977) has had an important role in the discipline of International Relations when, by publishing his landmark text, stated what, though obvious, was not articulated previously: IR is an American Social Science. The only issue, though, is that he takes a narrow meaning of "American": "An US Social Science: International Relations" seems to be a more precise title to this piece that played an important role in gate-keeping the field. Robert Vitallis (2015) - almost 40 years later would situate this discussion in a wider frame by arguing that the formation of IR as a field solemnly ignored the contribution that black intellectuals were developing in thinking about the international. Vitallis inserts this trend in a dynamic of academic politics that resulted in IR, Africana Studies and Political Science as three different fields, therefore strengthening the differences rather than the common tropes that bring the three together.

It must be said that in his reconstruction of the heritage of black intellectuals to the discipline, Vitallis maintains the narrow understanding of "American" as solely US. In this text my goal is to expand this view by relying on Brazilian experience with racism. The idea is less to focus on intellectual trajectories and lineages, but rather to see that there are social experiences that challenge the parameters of State homogeneity that are inscribed in International Relations' Eurocentric state-centrism and that feedback to patterns of normality and politics. In order to reach this goal, the text is divided in two sections. In the first part I offer a tour de force through the literature on racism in Liberal IR, a body of literature that is foundational to the discipline. Following that, I look to the transition from slavery to a free society that happened in Brazil at the end of 19th Century to see how the particular experience of offering formal citizenship to a group of people that - to the previous day - had not even their humanity recognized can offer a perspective that can enrich this critique.

It is important to say that, reading both of these texts (Hoffman's and Vitallis) from Brazil there is something that they keep in common: the US centrality of the discipline. When I first read Hoffmann, I agreed with him in the sense that the discipline was actually founded as a consequence of US politics, thus, it only made sense. After reading Vitallis, though, it struck me that in his important denouncement of IR's disciplinary racism, I could see tropes of an historical process that preceded the discipline, but that shared with it premises and main actors: the Brazilian Republican coup and the white rich men who implemented it.

Just as the connection between IR and Liberalism is well documented – the subject to in the first section of the paper - the same can be said about Liberalism and the proclamation of

the Brazilian Republic. The effort of reproducing US institutions - even the flag - is a hint to the Liberalism that was inscribed in the political project, but that is always understood as a matter of domestic politics due to the crisis that hit the monarchy internally (BASILE, 1990, ALONSO, 2015). What if the two phenomena could be read in tandem? Not through a cause-relation relationality, but investigating where the two were relatable. Or, put in another terms, was there anything universal from the endogenous political transformation in Brazil? As it has been discussed at length (FERNANDES, 2021, COSTA 2010b, ALBUQUERQUE, 2009, GONZÁLEZ, 2016c), racism was a central issue in the construction of this Republic. And here is the point of contact between the two phenomena: liberalism worked in order to naturalize both racisms.

The realization that these two phenomena are inscribed in Liberalism, though with such distinct focuses, carries weight in highlighting the complex web of events intertwined within the scope of what we came to call Liberalism in the years prior to the consolidation of socialism as a challenger to some of its premises. This complexity operated in the construction of the structures of power that allowed for the maintenance of the already powerful, camouflaging in the discourse of possibilities and equality, the premises of differentiation in which they relied.

The exercise of looking to Brazil in thinking in terms of racism in IR is a way of reading the consequences of the Middle Passage and the enslavement of African peoples in the country that received the larger contingent of people kidnapped from Africa and that has built to itself the historiography that the abolition of slavery followed a trend of progressive advancement of freedom by way of legislation. Consequently, offering an understanding that the abolition was handled by the elites and ignoring the resistance to slavery that is as old as the system itself. The intersections between the narrative on liberal IR and this liberal understanding of Brazilian historiography, I argue, can advance with insights to think in terms of race and racism in International Relations, that used similar rationale to disguise racial dynamics of the field.

By pushing forward the experience of the first colony to be built upon the trans-Atlantic trade of enslaved people in the Americas, that became the last country to abolish slavery in the continent one can see how, a unitary State with a homogenous elite created the perfect disguise to the narrative of legal advancement of freedom. A context completely different than in the US where the Federal government fought state governments to end enslavement and to end segregation. The lack of equivalent dispute between political structures in Brazil relegated slavery and the incorporation of formerly enslaved people as a non-political debate, creating the conditions for the narrative on racial democracy in Brazil. A dynamic that can resonate with the disciplinary context, in which the homogeneity of the field inhibited any discussion

on Race and Racism, despite the name of the Journal *Foreign Affairs* originally being *Journal of Race Development* (ANIEVAS; MANCHANDA; SHILLIAM, 2014, p. 2). Just like in Brazil abolishing slavery with no policy towards former enslaved people except criminalization, in changing the name of the Journal IR sees itself as correcting its wrongs of the past as if the change in the name of the publication would have also rectified racist premises developed in tandem with the Journal.

This paper is inscribed in this discussion of "what is IR" by challenging Hoffman's idea of the discipline, but also showing the necessity of advancing further than Vitallis'. Though it is necessary to account for the division of politics in the terms he presents, the acceptance that the discipline grew larger than its origins should point to the fact that it is imperative to consider other references than those of US and Europe. If the core of the discipline is the question of difference, as proposed by Inayatullah and Blaney (2004), then, the discussion should focus less on the origins of the distinction, and more on the technologies of enforcing it.

2 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND RACISM

The conclusion of Robert Vitalis' *The Graceful and Generous Liberal Gesture* (2000) begins by quoting a conversation he had with a friend after a presentation on the exclusionary system that the oil production by US nationals creates in current Saudi Arabia. His friend would have confronted him, asking what he had expected to occur. This interaction added to his reading of Brian Schmidt's The Political Discourse of Anarchy (1998), lead him to the conclusion that "race is already known, banal and commonplace, not worth noticing. Race is 'really' something else. Race is a 'language that most would today find offensive and inappropriate'" (VITALIS, 2000, p. 353).

Vitalis' anecdotal example represents how the discipline has naturalized exclusion on its racial narrative departing from a pre-established perspective that it analyzes fall on subjects whose race is unimportant. However, the truth of the matter is that these attributes were made invisible in the process of analyzing. This notion is aligned with the premise of not distinguishing between IR as a set of practices and the intellectual endeavor, as if one would be distinguishable from the other, as if there would be no resonance of "the real world" with theoretical reflection. Built as a space of denial of what is not domestic by classical theories and as a space of difference by critical approaches, the international, as a phenomenon, plays a large role in creating silences. Most of the time, these silences entail the violence perpetrated against – or hidden by – narratives and by the theoretical approaches that make these narratives legitimate.

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For Vitalis, this violence is not new since he engages with the racial discussion in International Relations through the work of Du Bois and his notion that racial segregation is established by a color line that differentiates spaces of belonging as a reflection of phenotypes. While doing so, it establishes the productive power of laws that hierarchize (VITALIS, 2000, p. 343). Du Bois was a pioneer in using the categories developed to address racial segregation, as he observed the experience of black people in the US as an instrument to interpret other hierarchized racial relations after his visit to the Warsaw ghetto (ANIEVAS, MANCHANDA, SHILLIAM, 2018, p. 6). Du Bois shows how universal this concept is and how it offers a key to interpreting international events. As any other concept, the color line has the potentiality of informing narrations on world phenomena, not needing to rest encapsulated in national narratives as representation of specificities typical of black reality in the United States. Universality can also be proposed by black authors.

Vitalis (2000) relies in Stanley Hoffman's (1997) definition of International Relations as a United States discipline to argue how the white supremacy idea was important to the constitution of International Relations and, specifically, of its historical narrative that developed from this field that, as he points out, did not have any prominent black author in the year 2000, thus making this supremacist argument actually a distinguishing aspect in the field (VITALIS, 2000, p. 336). This racial marker of the discipline defines the point of departure and establishes the rationale from which it will operate and the parameters with which it will make possible to reckon with violence and the standards of normality, as it happens with humanitarianism and its paternalistic institutions (VITALIS, 2000, p. 338). Within Vitalis' rationale, the disciplinary role played by Woodrow Wilson is exemplary. To the discipline, Wilson was a statesman that opted to join the great war of his time in order to defend freedom and, more importantly, proposed another logic to the future of international politics through envisioning the League of Nations. This disciplinary founding father – honored with the first chair of International Relations being named after him in the University of Aberystwyth – was also the responsible for the exhibition of *The Birth of a Nation* in the White House, an apologetic piece of Ku Klux Klan propaganda (BENBOW, 2010). The convenience of building histories of adjectivized politics – international/domestic – is not confronting the eventual consequences that derive from the points of contact between liberalism and racism.

Vitalis' argument is in the sense that a discipline that naturalizes violence is extremely useful as a form of power, and International Relations fits very well in this profile, since it represents a specific kind of violence that is naturalized: the ever distant and rationalized dispute between states at war. The white traditional narrative (exemplified in the sorts of WALTZ,

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1979; GILPIN, 1981; MEARSHEIMER, 2004) acknowledges wars as a typical aspect, inseparable from international politics. At the same time, this same IR narrative that is silent on any form of discrimination (VITALIS, 2000, p. 334-5). However, to the extent that these two narratives – domestic and international – are disciplinarily differentiated, there are traces that show how they can be approximated if the language adopted is carefully chosen. The central point here is the language adopted in dealing with politics, and how non-neutral it is. By reinforcing war and great Power Politics, thinkers aligned with more conventional IR will not allow for the rupture of the silences generated by this scholarship. The gravity of this understanding – and its consequences – is reinforced if one considers that it operates within the specter of Du Bois' (2007) double-consciousness: "this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (DU BOIS, 2007, p. 8).

Vitalis' book *White World Order, Black Politics* (2015) examines this divide between domestic/international politics and its artificiality by looking at the development of departments of International Relations in influential US universities and the constitution of Africana departments. The lack of intersection between the professorship and the students of these two courses demonstrates how, despite the Harlem Renaissance movement being the first opportunity in which International Relations was theorized in the US (VITALIS, 2015, p. 9), its legacy was constrained into Africana studies, as if to mean that it dealt exclusively with domestic politics. The institutionalization divide is thus created:

> Political scientists typically understand the tradition of international relations scholarship to be race blind. States, not races, have always been the discipline's basic unity of analysis. The 'security dilemma' leaders confront is the timeless problem that constitutes international relations as a discipline, based on ideas the practitioners now routinely trace back to the ancient wisdom of Thucydides and Machiavelli, unaware that the genealogy is an invention of the Cold War years. The specialists contend, further, that if people of color are not read or taught it is because they have not written books and articles that shaped the field or that matter to others working in it now. It cannot be because the hierarchical structures Americans have built, including the discipline itself, using the biologically false idea of race, are to blame (VITALIS, 2015, p. 19).

15 years after his article, to some extent Vitalis is still dwelling with the fact that IR is a US discipline. However, it is a discipline that is made white, somewhat intentionally, to the extent that it reflects a more widespread racism. This marginalized thought of International Relations is called Howard School by Vitalis after the DC area University that polarized much

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of the US black intelligentsia that made it through PhD programs in other prestigious – albeit white – universities, later to become faculty in Howard. The first generation – the pre-Howard generation, so to speak – included W. E.B. Du Bois.

The first edition of *The Souls of Black Folk* was published in 1903 and contains the powerful passage quoted above on double consciousness. The book has a beginning that is even more telling of Du Bois's view on International Relations:

> Between me and the other world there is ever an unasked question: unasked by some through feelings of delicacy; by others through the difficulty of rightly framing it. All, nevertheless, flutter around it. They approach me in a half-hesitant sort of way, eye me curiously or compassionately, and then, instead of saying directly, How does it feel to be a problem? They say, I know an excellent colored man in my town; or I fought at Mechaniscsville; or, Do not these Southern outrages make your blood boil? At these I smile, or am interested, or reduce the boiling to a simmer, as the occasion may require. To the real question, How does it feel to be a problem? I answer seldom a word (DU BOIS, [1903] 2007, p. 7).

Du Bois anticipates Inayatullah and Blaney in more than 100 years in elaborating the problem of difference, an embodied difference since he already realizes that the borders are defined not in the rigidity of geographical terms but instead in the much lighter – though perhaps more effective – veil that stands between the two worlds and the two languages that the black people must dominate.

In the introduction to their edited volume *Race and Racism in International Relations: confronting the global colour line* (2015) Alexander Anievas, Nivi Machanda and Robbie Shilliam recuperate Du Bois' conceptions on double consciousness, the veil and the colour line. The authors contextualize Du Bois and his research agenda more as a preoccupation with the politics of differentiation than as an effort of making it a conceptual project aiming at translating the experience of a particular community. It is interesting to notice that, contrary to the mainstream IR lexicon, Du Bois' proposition of instruments of analysis centers the experiences of the marginalized, not the abstract discourse on State politics. The recognition of Du Bois as an author fit for Africana departments is a statement in itself not only by making evident that the discipline recognizes or ignores authors as it sees fit, but in so doing, defines whose voices can theorize universally and who is allowed to speak about specific realities.

The creation of the distinction between IR and Africana passed through the definition of who were the refereed subjects of each discipline. As any other effort of definition of belonging, it is mainly a process of exclusion. It is not about priorities, as a potential gentler way

may indicate, rather it is an option on the visibility provided by the theoretical framework and historical narrative. Visibility is a choice of the writer that gives form to the world. Part of the process of turning certain people invisible in the discipline has to do with the precedence that the State has over the people as a category of analysis. Persaud and Walker (2001, p. 373) frame this issue in the following way:

> The theory of international relations has shown a famous aversion to complex and multiply contested concepts. It has been especially silent about race, as about many other practices that cannot be quickly reduced to claims about the necessities of states in a modern state-system.

Persaud and Walker's critique is a way of reading Charles Mills' *Racial Contract* (1999) to International Relations. Departing from a critical view on contractualism as a State theory, Mills identifies the racist premises on which the State, immersed in a European political tradition, resides. For Mills, this movement is a form of building bridges in such a way as to make possible the mutual comprehension between political theory and minority groups that are part in this state politics (op. cit.: 4). That is important to highlight, although what Mills calls racial contract is not a substitute for the social contract as a whole, since "The 'social contract' is actually several contracts in one." (MILLS, 1999, p. 9), it is only one side of it. This perspective, together with his overall perception of racism as a project that organizes societies in terms of whiteness, points towards his perception that it is possible that this racism operates in a hierarchy different from that of the State. In Mill's words:

> [I]n all cases 'race is the common conceptual denominator that gradually came to signify the respective global statuses of superiority and inferiority, privilege and subordination. There is an opposition of us against them with multiple overlapping dimensions: Europeans versus non-Europeans (geography), civilized versus wild/savage/barbarians (culture), Christians versus heathens (religion). But they all eventually coalesced into the basic opposition of white versus nonwhite (MILLS, 1999, p. 21).

Errol Henderson (2015) developed a critique of Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism departing from Mills' concept. Having the notion of anarchy inherited from the contractualists as the center of the theoretical engagement with the discipline is a way of inscribing in the theoretical development that would depart from its racial prejudice. This racialization of the debate departs from the understanding of the classics on what anarchy meant and who were seen by them in contexts of anarchy. Henderson recuperates the dualism pointed out by Mills that is also present in Du Bois: "There is one set of assumptions for whites and another for nonwhites." (HENDERSON, 2015, p. 29).

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This dualism is relevant because it indicates how important it is to navigate the color line itself, since it is not enough to tell the history of the people enslaved without acknowledging that slavery was also a set of political decisions enforced until 1888 by white people. Navigating through this insurmountable frontier demands the recognition that the silence on the importance of enslavement to the construction of the modern world encompasses the silence of the supporters/sympathizers of enslavement who, most of the time, are seen as "men of their time". Racism – as the saying goes – is a problem of white people, so in order to deal with it, it needs to be denaturalized as a "trace of the time" and racists have to be referred to as racists – especially in the case of a racism which finds its way into naturalization in contractualist liberalism, as Mills (1999) and Henderson (2015) point out.

The idea of "men of their time" is a relevant one in discussing racism, as it offers a glimpse into the universalization of certain individualities. To relate to a treat of personality that is now considered abusive and violent by way of naturalizing it with this expression is a form of saying that there was a time in which that was not offensive, when, in fact, it was. The color line is not constructed in retrospect, it was built, and enforced, since when enslavement was enforced by – and against – men and women of their time. The naturalization of racism as having a time in which it was accepted does not come out of the blue, it is inscribed in a broader picture that enforces the idea of the US as the parameter of universality that naturalizes and invisibilizes racism.

Tamis Parron (2020) reconstruction of the constitutional process in the US provides a good account of how the understanding of universalism was built in the country. In this account, US pioneering in the development of a constitution enshrining main principles that were to rule the country created an important precedent in the liberal movements of the 19th Century. The exceptionality of this historical precedent relates with the prior move of declaring independence (ARMITAGE, 2008) and with the notion of American exceptionality that would be built after independence and that would be synthesized in the figure of the frontier men. The idea of these unafraid men that braved the west, fought the Indigenous nations, the Mexicans/Hispaniards and granted US a significative part of its current territory became embroiled in the imaginary of US population and came to an apex with the Spanish-American war and Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders.

In the turn to the 20th Century, in 1898, the conflict that sealed Cuba's formal independence and granted US supremacy in the continent was covered by the US press granting importance to the role of the voluntary regiment assembled by Theodore Roosevelt (GERSTLE, 2017, p. 14-43). The representativeness of Roosevelt's participation in this war is significant,

especially due to the fact that less than 3 years after arriving from Cuba he would assume the presidency. The cautious construction of the regiment of the Rough Riders is telling of the way in which the 26th president of the US would see the racial composition of the US. It was white only, with deliberate efforts of effacing black populations from society. This argument offers a direct link with Nikhil Singh's (2017) argument that wars in which the US engaged worked conjunctively with racial segregation within its borders. Consequently, blurring the line between domestic violence against minorities and the engagement in wars elsewhere.

It's curious that it felt to Woodrow Wilson to be remembered as the founding father of IR. Unlike Roosevelt, the 28th president of the US was no enthusiast of war (KISSINGER, 1994). The isolationist that joined the war out of international constraints and the adventurous war enthusiast are representations of "men of their time" could not be more similar: both old white racist men that may not have seen war with the same passion, but both that shared the racial rationale to justify US participation in the wars that marked they political carers (GERSTLE, 2017). At the end of the day, Roosevelt and Wilson are both founding fathers of IR. If the latter was incensed as the representative of disciplinary Liberal Idealism, the first can only be understood as an ideal type of classical Realism.

I find it telling that it is so widely spread the critique of the racist tropes embedded within this Liberalism that we call disciplinary home. If the liberal subject and Liberalism in the form of the State were forms of making other people whose histories can be the point of departure for other internationals invisible, it is possible to argue that the racial contract stands for the guiding abstract logic inscribed in this liberalism. The racial contract stands for as the diffuse liberalism articulated loosely throughout the 19th Century Atlantic Space political lexicon. To put it bluntly, the racial contract would represent to Atlantic formed by Slavery what the idea of the Liberal Contract would represent to the 19th Century state[1].

This proposal dialogues with Lucy Mayblin's 2013 text, in which she observes the development of liberal thinking and of the conception of humanity itself throughout the 19th Century via the debates in British Parliament on the issue of the abolition of slavery. Her analysis shows that despite the fact that the humanity of the enslaved people was no longer questioned, the system of thought that developed in the justice system and in the interpretations of law did not account for this change and were still largely influential on the political thought that followed.

1 I find it relevant to state that by situating politically the social contract in the 1800s I am not saying that they were developed in this period. Here I am supported by Mills who is not situating his concept temporally and is articulating the contractualist tradition as one. Personally, I am situating the social contract in the intersection between Liberalism and Contractualism as the focal point of my critique, specifically on the Second Treatise of Government, by John Locke.

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I believe that these critiques go hand in hand in the questioning of the prevailing narratives of the discipline. Those which we can call traditional International Relations theory (liberalism and realism) center the State mainly due to two reasons. The first is that these theories actually emulate the suppression of what they see as anarchy – as a consequence of their focus on power measurements – and set the scene for the constitution of formal hierarchies that would, eventually, substitute the State. The second aspect is that, despite aiming at the suppression of the State, the State is still, disciplinarily, the main object of analysis. Debra Thompson (2013) adds to these critiques by pointing to the fact that "[r]ace was born in the transnational realm and bred to be central to discourses of modernity, empire and capitalism." (THOMPSON, 2013, p. 139). By relating the issue of racism to the rise of the nation-state, the Atlantic trade of enslaved people and the formation of capitalism, Thompson accuses the transformation of the phenomenon of racism. For her, the transformation of racism took place from an international practice to a nationalized dynamic, not only in the sense of internalizing it through the discourse of self-sufficiency that derives from the maintenance of slavery – even after the abolition of the Atlantic traffic of enslaved people, but also as a way of manifesting easily in practices naturalized due to the constitution of the State as a racist structure that seeks eugenics (THOMPSON, 2013, p. 146). Debra Thompson (2013, p. 146) closes her text by saying that the issue of race is so strong that it is constantly re-articulating itself having the State as its point of departure. This relates to Charles Mills' critique that the racial aspect reinvents itself in the Racial Contract, and that the white supremacism has established itself as a cornerstone of US development replicated in the international insertion of the country in Robert Vitalis' (2000) view.

Roxanne Doty (1993) talks about how the debate on race in International Relations still suffers with a supposed connection of this concept with a perception of physical appearance, in an interpretative effort that is still strongly connected to the inheritance of enslavement and imperialism (1993, p. 452). Doty proposes a detachment from this immediate linkage of the racial inequality with a phenotype. For her, the racialization, which emerged in the Atlantic enslavement, is manifested in more sophisticated ways, namely because of other dichotomies that are only possible as a consequence of racist premises that create hierarchies and multiple exclusions (DOTY, 1993, p. 460). Doty's (1993) critique of racism operates in a logic that does not seem worried with the distinction between what would be considered internal politics and what would seem like international politics. Politics would be less constrained by borders; it would be constituted in the intersection between different actors and the limits imposed by this diffuse racism.

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These contributions point to a group of concepts and practices that had been constructed in the wake of the enslavement of African populations and which are central to International Relations. In light of its notions such as nation-State, Theory of International Relations and Capitalism relate with the late 18th Century Liberalism. The question is: How do they relate with the disciplinary silence on the Atlantic enslaved trade? The emergence of these concepts and practices that had been traditionally related to the liberal logics starts to make more sense when comprehended as a manifestation of racism embedded in the theoretical construction that tries to explain these social phenomena. The narrative of the international capitalist contemporary order detaches itself from an origin and development in British liberalism and is dislocated to the ocean and the movements of people that cross it.

Thus, it is important to reinforce Robbie Shilliam's (2012) argument that, also reading into the slavery in 19th Century Atlantic, challenges the origin of contemporary economics in British Liberalism:

> Within the archives of eighteenth century English and Scottish thought, freedom – or 'liberty' was a crucial concept in so far as it clarified the promise of Enlightenment as an escape from slavery in both its social and natural determinants. As part of this clarification, Enlightenment thinkers often paid special attention to the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the American colonies. Yet curiously, contemporary scholars of political economy tend not to follow the prompt of their archival interlocutors (SHILLIAM, 2012, p. 591).

The same period, relatable subjects, and yet a discrepancy in the archives helped create a form of an economic liberalism that detached from an economic perception of liberalism. Concepts of liberty or freedom circulate in both, but when translated to history, it is possible to see how the worlds portrayed have different populations. The issue here is: even though – more faithfully to the spirit of Enlightenment – the political thinkers acknowledged the matter of slavery, in doing so, were they committed to slavery or to freedom/liberty? I argue that they were in fact committed to the former, and this may point that these two – supposedly – different traditions may be condensed more easily than it would seem possible at first glance.

When the Liberal rational and sovereign man (ASHLEY, 1989) is no longer seen as truthful, but as a theoretical abstraction, that is, when the liberal premises that ground the idea of the autonomous individual all-aware of his actions are questioned, and the analysis becomes centered on the enslaved people, the change goes deeper than seeing capitalism as a project that does not grant freedom for all. This is to accept that capitalism is a political structure based on dynamics of constant reinvention of the patterns of differentiation and exclusion

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(SHILLIAM, 2012). As Blaney and Inayatullah (2010) had already pointed out, it is the constant reinvention of exclusions. This capitalist order only makes sense when systemic practices of violence and of the subjectivities constituted by these practices are considered.

3 RACISM: INCLUDING THROUGH EXCLUSION

Wlamyra de Albuquerque (ALBUQUERQUE, 2009) is a Brazilian historian that used an interesting image in discussing the contours of race dynamics in Brazil after emancipation. She speaks of a chess game: there are only two sets of pieces in the board – the whites, and the blacks – though the way and the timing of their movement through the board is not dependent on the colour of the piece alone. There are other constraints that play their part in conditioning the movements.

In discussing the racism inscribed in the Liberalism that is constitutive of IR it is inescapable to consider the idea of universality embedded in the US trajectory. As discussed in the previous section, such universalism spelt over to IR due to the fact that IR is "an American Social Science" (HOFFMAN, 1997). From this, it is possible to extrapolate that one can situate oneself in understanding the movement of the white and black pieces from a US positionality and figure how their correspondents would move in Brazil. However, such extrapolation is false to the extent it misses the specificities of the historical processes that took place in Brazil and framed its own experience with Liberalism – the particularities of the pieces.

The study of slavery is a rich vein to develop the intersection between identity studies and Marxist analysis on the role of labor to wealth production. The debate of how the transition from slavery to free labor in Brazil can offer new insights on how these two trends of critique can be articulated together and, consequently, can function as an alternative point of universalization able to compete with US experience can be fruitful to thinking the historical constitution of the Atlantic. Having framed the case study in 19th Century Atlantic, this correlation is made even clearer to the extent that labour was profoundly racialized, and if one considers that IR is laconic – to say the least – regarding Marxism and the role of labour to wealth production and accumulation (GARCIA, 2019), what can be expected about discussions on racialized labour?

In the next pages I will discuss how racism became not a form of exclusion rather, a technology that oriented the way which people would be incorporated in society. This is a discussion centered in the Brazilian experience, no doubt, however, considering that Roxane Doty

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(1993) pointed out that racism is a feature so profoundly dependent on Atlantic experience with enslavement and the centrality of Brazil in this terrible network, Brazilian experience can easily be universalizable. The change that operated in Brazil between May 13th, 1888 to May 14th, 1888, when enslaved people became citizens is a radical one, and racism is the mechanism that mediated this transformation securing the interests of the Brazilian elites.

The name of this section is a nod to a passage by Giorgio Agamben's "Homo Sacer: "Bare life remains included in politics in the form of exception, that is, as something that is included solely through an exclusion." (AGAMBEN, 1998, p. 11). Agamben belongs to the biopolitics tradition that Achille Mbembe read and joined in contributing with his concept of Necropolitics. However, this concept of "bare life" does not resonate profoundly with the experience of 19th Century Slavery, to the extent that it fails to deal with the dimension of labour present in it. Agamben is looking to the Holocaust and he is addressing the forms of dehumanization developed in the concentration camps: absolute forms of exclusion in which all that is left to people is the identity of exclusion, not even labour exploitation is of interest of the perpetrators of violence, it is bare life: the minimum of the minimum. Nevertheless, this idea of including through exclusion is a play on words that resonates with the experience of 19th Century slavery. It accounts for the tension and the contradiction experienced in the slavery States in which there were those who were included via their citizenship, and those who were included by way of slavery. The latter were people that were included in the social context in abject conditions, however indisputably included to the extent that their labour was essential to the production of space and culture.

This tension I aim at addressing the end of slavery in Brazil and how the project of including through exclusion lingered even after the abolition. The afterlife of slavery in Brazilian Society is a prolific subject, and Florestan Fernandes is an important reference in thinking through this inheritance:

> The extinct regime did not completely disappear after Abolition. It lingered in mentality, in behaviour and even in the organization of men's social relations, even of those that should be interested in a complete subversion of the *old regime*. It is difficult to emphasise enough the sociological meaning of this complex reality. It shows us that the black person and the *mulato* were, so to speak, cloistered in the state[2] condition of "freed" and in it they remained a long time after the legal disappearance of slavery (FERNANDES, 2021, p. 269). [author's translation]

2 Here the word "state" is used in the sense of sections of a society in which the boundaries of belonging are clearly marked between portions of the society.

This “complex reality” to which Fernandes points is what I am calling the inclusion by exclusion. Such incorporation by denial is a way of denouncing the project that would derive from the inevitability of that people and the need for their work, or at least their existence as potential workforce in the new country while profoundly rejecting them. At last, the goal is to propose a history of the institutions centred on the figure of the enslaved people, rather than the other way around.

Clóvis Moura wrote, in the 1970s, a book entitled *O Negro: de bom escravo a mau cidadão?*[3](1977). In it, he analyses the process of not incorporating the former enslaved people in the labour force after the abolition of enslavement and he argues that the colour line that marks the labour force that is privileged in the last decades of the 19th Century in Brazil: European migrants. These constituted the industrial workforce of the factories that began to open in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, while the black people were coming to the main cities living precariously and struggling to find job positions.

It is important to notice that the last decade of the 19th Century to which Moura is referring is also the first decade of the Republic in Brazil. A year after the abolition of slavery in the country, thus in 1889, a military coup led to the deposition of D. Pedro II and allowed for the foundation of a new Republic, the United States of Brazil. The republican movement is understood to have its roots in the Republican Manifesto from 1870, published in São Paulo as the ignition that would result in the Itu convention, in 1873, the first time the party would assemble (SCHWARCZ; STARLING, 2015, p. 302).

From this manifesto, two sentences tell the most. The first is the sentence that made the document famous “We are from America and we want to be Americans.” (MARINHO et al, 1870) [author’s translation]. Being “America” the substantive used to refer to the continent is also used to refer to the country creates a play on words that is interesting to see, especially considering the migration of Dixies after the end of the Civil War to São Paulo specifically (HORNE, 2007). In any case, it attests to the perception of the negative exceptionality of Brazil as a monarchical regime in a continent of Republics that rose, following the independence of the US, once the Spanish colonies began to declare their independence.

The second quote from the document is the last paragraph prior to the conclusion, which reads: “It is thus that the dynastic principle and the lifelong duration of Senate terms are two flagrant violations of national sovereignty, and constitute the main flaws of the 1824 Constitution.” (MARINHO et al, 1870) [author’s translation]. The document is completely silent on the matter of slavery (or “the servility question”, how it came to be known at the time), while

3 In English, “The Black Person: from a good slave to a bad citizen?”

the duration of terms and the succession of the emperor were seen as the main issues to be addressed. Schwarcz and Starling (2015, p. 301) argue that the silence on the issue of slavery was on purpose, not to compromise the potential support of the plantation owners to the cause of the Republic. It is a way of tacitly arguing that slavery is a problem of the Monarchy and that the republicans would not need to address.

In another text, I argued that the anteriority of slavery to Brazil seemed to legitimized the justice system and legislation as the realm in which the battle for liberty should be thought, while it actually served as a legitimation of violence (BEZERRA, 2020). The argument I intend to deliver in this section follows the same rationale: the Republic, following so close the abolition of slavery, and the understanding that they represent aspects from the same crisis – as if slavery was inherently connected with the Monarchy, allowed for slavery to be understood as a done deal by the time of the inauguration of the first president. Florestan Fernandes' (2021) argument goes this way in his analyses of social inequality in Brazil. He focuses on the city of São Paulo, whose growth is linked to the Republican period and with the development of "a competitive social order" (2021, p. 271).

> As paradoxical as it seems, it was the *omission* of white men – and not their action – that resulted in the perpetuation of *status quo ante*. It seems that, as the "white men" were only able to apply a small section of the techniques, institutions and social values inherent to the competitive social order, and even so in more restricted and confined sectors (…), the field was left open to the strong survival of patterns of social behaviour variably archaic. Amidst these patterns of behaviour, norms of old etiquette of racial relations passed to the new historic era and revitalized themselves (…)" (FERNANDES, 2021, p. 271). [author's translation]

The myth of the racial democracy in Brazil would emerge as a consequence of the inaction of engaging with the consequences of the abolition of slavery in the country. The law that abolished slavery did not address, within its two articles[4], the incorporation of the former enslaved people to the society. The proximity between the abolition and the proclamation of the Republic helped to create this mismatch between what Florestan Fernandes called "racial order" – marked by the divide between "white men" and "black men"[5] and the mulato – "and social order", characterized by the nominal equality of "white" and "black" men in face of the law – "of the class society" (FERNANDES, 2021, p. 287). These two orders and the construction of the myth of the racial democracy walked hand in hand in the perpetuation of inequality in Brazil. Speaking about racial democracy in Brazil, Fernandes states:

4 Article 1: Slavery is declared abolished in Brazil from the date of this law; Article 2: All dispositions to the contrary are revoked. (Brazil, 1888)

5 Fernandes uses quotation marks when referring to racial tropes.

> The myth in question had some practical utility, even in the moment in which it emerged historically. It seems that this utility was made evident in three distinct dimensions. First, generalized a self-righteous state of mind, allowing to claim responsibility for the incapability, or for the irresponsibility, of the "black men" to the human drama of the "population of colour" in the city, to which they vouched with indisputable indexes of economic, social and political inequality in the ordain of racial relations. Second, exempted "white men" of any moral obligation, responsibility or solidarity, of social scope and of collective nature, towards the sociopathic effects of the abolitionist spoliation and of the progressive deterioration of the socioeconomic situation of the black person and the *mulato*. Third, revitalized the technique of focusing and evaluating the relations between "black" and "white" people by exteriorities or appearances of social adjustments, forging a *false conscience* of Brazilian racial reality (FERNANDES, 2021, p. 276). [author's translation]

This dual transformation that happened between May 13rd 1888 and November 15th 1889 is profoundly constitutive of the experience with slavery in Brazil, if nothing else, because it was framed as a problem of the Monarchy from the beginning. And, with it being addressed in the twilight of the Monarchy, seems to have been the perfect excuse for white men in power in the Republic just not to care about it. If we compare, for instance, the two articles of the abolition law with the broad array of elements dealt with by the Land Law (from 1850), it becomes patent that regulating land ownership was a subject that allowed for a minutia detailing that found no equivalence in the importance given to the future of enslaved people[6]. Actually, the fate of former enslaved people would be defined in its minutia with the arrival of the new regime. This is how, just like in 1822 the independence of Brazil began with the *de facto* distinction between people who were enslaved and citizens, in 1889 the United States of Brazil was inaugurated with formal equality for everyone in the country.

At this point, it is important to stress the fact that the historiography of slavery and racial relations in Brazil is strongly marked by comparative efforts of seeing it in relation to the US[7]. The Jim Crow laws marked a clear distinction between rights among US citizens. With the formal recognition of equality between white and black people in Brazil, along with studies

6 Angela Alonso (2015) argues that this is a sign of how contentious the subject was: even this vague two--articles law was approved by a thin margin, given that anything else would not have made it through the threshold.

7 Emília Viotti da Costa (2010a; 2010b) texts attest to this fact, even with the drawing of a definition of the schools of thought on the matter. It is interesting to notice that one of the chapters is entitled "From slavery to free work" and it deals exclusively with slavery, whereas not a word on the navigation of the free labour environment and how to adapt to these new dynamics was mentioned, only reinforcing my argument that the abolition and the Republic came at the same time a concomitance that helped in the erasure of the black slavery past. Just as argued by Chalhoub (2011, 30- 31), the urbanization of Rio de Janeiro during the early years of the Republic aimed at erasing the black memories of the city.

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that pointed to the marked difference when considered the equivalent situation in the US, the status of black people in Brazil was understood as more favorable. No matter in which of the historiographical waves one would be situated, the general consensus is that the formal discrimination observed in the US did not happen here. This is a statement I disagree with. In fact, I argue that the legal mechanisms of segregation adopted by the new Republic were actually more effective in segregating than the experiences of the US South, not only for achieving the same goal, but also because they did so without the embarrassment of publicly and openly acknowledging it. Firstly, it is important to have clarity on a few legal aspects of the Brazilian Republic.

In its Article 70, the Constitution of the Republic (BRAZIL, 1891) defined those who were entitled to vote in national or state elections. In it, the document defines that homeless and illiterate people, along with the lowest ranks of military and members of religious orders, were not granted this right. Moura (1977, p. 30-2) talks about the extensive migration which took place from the countryside towards the cities following abolition. The people arrived in São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro with possibly no networks and lived in precarious situations, perhaps even becoming homeless. Also, it is reasonable to infer that the people enslaved would mostly be illiterate.[8] At last, this is what is possible to infer from an analogy with the Navy in the same period, a branch of the military in which the majority of the low ranked sailors were black (SCHWARCZ, STARLING, 2015, p. 331).

The following article of the constitution deals with the suspension or loss of Brazilian citizen's rights. The loss applied to those who would naturalize in a foreign country or would accept a job or pension by a foreign government. Other than these cases that could be understood as opting out of Brazilian citizenship for another national filiation, the suspension also applied in two cases as sanction: in case of physical or moral incapability; or to those found guilty in criminal offenses, while its effects lasted. The lack of details on what is understood to be "moral incapability" together with the analyses developed by Hebe Matos Castro (1995) on how the enslaved people and poor people were more often called to address the courts point to the fact that those more prone to be understood as morally incapable would be former enslaved people. Not to say that in a country where the government had an active policy of whitening the population, being black could be easily understood as physical incapability.

8 It is important to consider that the literacy referred here is Portuguese. The reconstruction of the market for al-Quoran as the best seller book in 19th Century Rio de Janeiro made by Alberto da Costa e Silva (2013) is a precious text and works well to attest the literacy of enslaved people in Arabic while allowing for an inference that other languages were also spoken to perfection by the enslaved people.

This is an analysis of the constitution alone. The Criminal Code, which became law in 1890, also offers an interesting perspective on the legal ways through which segregation became law: it had a whole chapter – its last – in which it criminalized *vadiagem* and *capoeiras*. The definition of a *vadio* by the legislation is as follows: "No longer perform profession, craft or any action that result in ways of earning a living, not having ways of subsistence and defined housing; earn a living by means of prohibited occupation or openly morally offensive" (BRAZIL, 1891) [author's translation]. The penalty for *vadiagem* was prison for fifteen to thirty days and the obligation to sign a term of adjustment of conduct in which s/he commits to finding a job within 15 days after doing his/her time. If the person were between 14 and 20-years old s/he could be committed to "industrial disciplinary establishments, where they would stay until completing 21 years old" (BRAZIL, 1891) [author's translation]. The following Article established: "In case of breaking the term of adjustment of conduct, this would mean relapse and the offender will be arrested, for one to three years, in penal colonies in sea-islands or at the borders of the national territory; to this end, existing military prisons can be used" (BRAZIL, 1891).

Capoeira, in turn, is a more telling aspect of the world divided by the colour line. Take this passage from Schwarcz and Starling:

> Through devotion, we enter in a world of dialogue. Many Africans, in arriving at Brazil, converted by the force of the system, embraced Catholicism and its saints, but changed their names, appearances and contents. On the other hand, added a new pantheon, to the extent that, without denying their kings and divinities, they discretely worshiped them during festivities in which they revered Portuguese nobility or Christian saints. The same happened with practices such as capoeira. The name comes from the bushes that grow after the native forest was torn down and the wood was cut by the slave. Nevertheless, it gained another sense. Originally a fight, in the colony it was described as a dance that helped to entertain. It is a good parody: a dance that is a fight, saints who are orixás. Slavery created a universe of disguises and negotiation (SCHWARCZ, STARLING, 2015, p. 97). [author's translation]

To this date you will find people taking capoeira as a dance when it actually is a fight developed by the enslaved populations. The term, at the dawn of the Monarchy and the beginning of the Republic was used as a substantive. "*Os capoeiras*" were understood to be the black violent men that would represent a menace to public order. The violence the *capoeiras* represented, though, were profoundly political. In the final years of slavery, with the country in the brink of social unrest, these men held their ground fighting the forces of the State (the Army and police forces) mobilized to enforce slavery as a political project (ALONSO, 2015,

p.234, p.326). Basile (1990, p. 291) talks about the *Black Guard*, a group organized after the abolition by José do Patrocínio and constituted of former enslaved people whose role was to attack republican rallies. The irony of being former enslaved people, the ones who literally fought against the Republic defending a political structure that relied on the exploitation of their labour, demonstrates how, in the end, the Republican project succeeded in framing slavery as a problem of the Monarchy that ended with that regime. That backlash of the Imperial family being understood as the saviours of the enslaved people – specially princess Isabel who signed the law in the absence of her father – was a non-issue since the Republic was not thought for the *capoeiras*. On the contrary, the political and legal structures were designed to marginalize them.[9]

Prevented from voting; dealing with the possibility of having their rights suspended due to physical or moral incapability (it is possible that being a *vadio* or *capoeira* would be enough to attest for moral incapability); dealing with the possibility of being arrested for not having a job and having to find a job within 15 days or relapsing and being sent to isolate prisons; and having its cultural features criminalized, in the form of *capoeira*. These are constitutive tropes of legal exclusion that were thought of as ways of criminalizing and segregating the former enslaved people. It is important to highlight that these were national legislations, different from the US experience, where Jim Crow was constituted as state laws with the national government eventually stepping in with the Civil Rights Act. The difference regarding the US is that, in Brazil, the façade of a citizen's Republic substituting a slave-based Empire allowed for the perception of a more racially harmonic society and helped to build the infra-structure needed to discriminate without openly saying so. This is the essence of the myth of the racial democracy.

As happened with the beginning of the monarchical rule in Brazil in terms of helping to naturalize slavery, the end of the Empire helped to grant a clean-start to segregation with (supposedly) universal rules which, silently excluded black people by not accounting for the material difference between them and white people. This is a racial contract, to bring the concept of Charles Mills (MILLS, 1999), that goes without saying and that allows for a plausible deniability regarding racism for those who elaborated it. It is built inside the project of liberal State without the expense of having to segregate. The myth of racial democracy – a Brazilian reading on the racial contract – reminded me of a quote in Lélia Gonzalez of Millôr Fernandes that ironically stated: "There is no racism in Brazil, for the black knows his place."

9 More on *capoeiras* and *vadios* can be read in Reis (2010), Santos (2004) Soares (2004) and Souza (2010).

(FERNANDES, apud GONZALEZ: 2018a, p. 235). The idea that racism is the explicit exclusion or marginalization which is vocally articulated is used as a defence of those who, inhabiting the racial contract, are rightfully and materially citizens and deny being complacent with racial discrimination. Florestan Fernandes, on this matter, argues:

> It must be understood that nothing of this was born or happened under the purpose (declared or hidden) of causing harm to black people. In the purest Brazilian tradition, such thing would not be elevated to the sphere of social consciousness; and, where one would uncover such thing (be it in the attitudes or in behaviour of certain migrants or in anachronical discriminations kept in certain institutions), from these same social circles would emerge the cry of alarm and categorical reprobation (FERNANDES, 2021, 273). [author's translation]

What these authors have been saying is that a racism which is institutionally built in the form of slavery becomes racism not as a matter of option, but as default, and to not account for that particularity is to remain within the myth of the racial democracy.

I have already mentioned that the bibliography on slavery and race in Brazil has been strongly influenced by the US experience and it is no novelty that the comparison between the "one drop rule" adopted in the US with the policy of "whitening the population" adopted by the imperial regime and maintained through the first segment of the Republic. Emília Viotti da Costa (2010b) addresses this twist that the Brazilian had done to the eugenics of racial theory of the late 19th Century. Faced with the extensive black population of the country and the inescapable part it played in the country, the policy adopted was a long term one: encouraging Europeans to migrate to Brazil so that, progressively, the country would become whiter (COSTA, 2010b, p. 375-6). This whitening policy would have created what Costa, critically quoting Carl Degler (1971), calls the mulato as an "exhaust valve" (COSTA, 2010a, p. 359), meaning the in between category of people that allows for the two extremes to be in contact and diminish the tension between them.[10] The fact of the matter is that this whitening policy created a society divided into a gradient of colours that hindered the self-identification as a black person and enforced a personal reading of the phenomenon, in which one would be perceived as whiter as richer s/he was. This points to two different phenomena. The first, articulated by Emília Viotti da Costa, is the "black with a white soul":

10 In this text, Viotti da Costa is addressing mainly two US authors who had put forward analyses of Brazilian slavery: Stanley Elkins (1959) and Carl Degler (1971).

> denial of prejudice, the belief in the "whitening process", the identification of the mulato as a special category, the acceptance of black individuals among the white elite strata made it more difficult for black people to develop a sense of identity as a group. In another manner, created opportunities for some black or mulato individuals to move upwards in social scale. Despite of being socially mobile, black people had, however, to pay a price for their mobility: they had to adopt the perception that white had on the racial issue and of black people themselves. They had to pretend to be white. They were 'special' blacks, 'blacks with white soul' – common expressions employed by Brazilians from higher classes every time they referred to their black friends (COSTA, 2010b, p. 377). [author's translation]

The totemization of the black person that would rise in the social ranks – together with the whitening policy – fits with the overall argument developed by Costa as to the collective experience of slavery: regulated by an ineffective bureaucratic State (COSTA, 2010a, p. 356) and mediated by a universal religion – Catholicism – which, differently from the US quaker, for example, would not see the emergence of contestation to the practice in itself (COSTA, 2010a, p. 357).

The second phenomenon can be understood as elevating the experience addressed by Costa to its extreme. The argument is developed by Lélia Gonzalez (2018a; 2018b) when arguing that the black body is seen, socially, as no more than the body itself be it by being explored labour-wise or sexually-wise. It is in the former category that the black woman who dances samba fits. She would not be a dancer, rather, a mulata and if the options that are open to her are either that of superexploitation as domestic worker or as a samba dancer, Gonzalez argues that the latter would be a better choice (GONZALEZ, 2018a, p. 232-3). The construction of the person as a body, as a totem, also plays on another level, as Gonzalez (2018c) points out: the gender divide. If the access to the higher echelons of society is a tortuous process for black people, it is even more difficult for a black woman who has to deal with sexism not only from white men, but from black men as well. The adherence to a prevailing perception on beauty that favours white aesthetics, many black men that are able to cross the income barrier opt to marry white women, in the same way as white men, thus relegating black women to the fringes of society in multiple ways (GONZALEZ, 2018c, p. 370).

4 CONCLUSION

When Inayatullah and Blaney (2004) frame IR through the problem of difference they offer an alternative to a discipline fixated on borders at a time when that which was considered to be international challenges were more complex than Great Power politics can synthesize. It

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is possible to use the lenses of difference to offer an update to Hoffman (1997): if IR is an American Social Science, it is not necessary by looking to great power politics that we are going to get an understanding of it. A deeper dive into Africana Studies can contribute to better framing phenomena of segregation and social inequality that are more deterministic to everyday life than cold war-like tensions. To look to this other perspective is the possibility of understanding International Relations as more complex and diverse than the homogenic state-centric approach tends to consider. The effort of showcasing what it actually means – or, to put it more bluntly: who it actually excludes – this homogenous idea of State inscribed in more conventional understandings of the discipline has, as the first section of the text presents, already generated some disciplinary debates. However, in such context is it not that International Relations remains an American Social Science? For if the critique is made from a US perspective on racism, isn't it that the pool of references continues to be too narrow?

Even though it is supposed to be an American Social Science, it comes as no surprise that the historical references IR adopts come predominantly from European History. From these narratives, it is clear that European countries sought to build homogenous societies through a process of nation building centered on strengthening national language and a common history focusing on great deeds and personalities. However, this trend cannot be universalized. Especially if we are to consider that there are countries whose past are marked by the expansion of Europe's will of wealth accumulation. The process of building national identity in such spaces will not follow the same paths. It is possible that there will be multiple languages, different histories and great villains, instead of great heroes.

By drawing on a peculiar moment of Brazilian History, where people whose humanity was denied - for centuries - from one moment to the other begin to be – formally – understood as citizens I advance the point that there are other forms of national identity. The formal inclusion of these formerly enslaved people, as citizens, though with profound limitations to the possibilities that were opened to them, are not failed legal efforts of inclusion, rather successful technologies of inclusion through exclusion.

I have pushed forward two arguments in this text. The first is the necessity of challenging national homogeneity as a disciplinary premise. US segmentation of Political Science in domestic, Africana and IR is easily relatable to Brazilian proclamation of the Republic intertwined with abolition of enslavement as movements that inspire the ideation of homogeneity mirroring European state-building parameters. The turn of the 19th to the 20th Century – a period of intense advancement of capitalism with wealth accumulation that relied on cheap labour – has identity dynamics of its own that, as Albuquerque (2009) argues, are complex enough on

their terms. As a consequence, it is not because people were socially outcasted that we should presume that they were deemed superfluous, as slavery has proven, they actually may have been central to the wealth accumulation process.

The second argument is on the complexity of what we came to call Liberalism and how it – and its premises – are so pervasive in contemporary society mapping the colours of the pieces in a chess board, but at the same time so evasive in defining patterns of movements of those pieces in the distinct boards. Such complex context demands that claims on universalism be challenged and different historical experiences be discussed as possible terms of comparison to other social experiences. Were we to consider the goal of Liberalism not as to create more homogenous communities, but to build forms of legally differentiating the participants of such communities according to dynamics of wealth accumulation, we could be pointing to a way of universalizing trends while acknowledging that they can have national – perhaps even other kinds of social universalization - specificities.

Therefore, just like the racist tropes in US/IR Liberal tradition, the profound racism inscribed in the Brazilian legal system in the early days of the Republic can be discussed as consequences of the experience with Atlantic enslavement. To understand slavery as the formative dynamic of the Atlantic – the *locus* of IR by excellence – pushes the question of how to define the borders between that which is considered History of IR and national History? Or: how is it that US experience can be universalized in the discipline while the dynamics of creating contours of racial democracy in Brazil are to be deemed exclusively national issues?

Perhaps, Stanley Hoffman's provocation that IR is an American Social Science still carries some weight if we consider "American" as referring to the whole continent and the equivalence of technologies of erasure between the discipline/US and Brazil.

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