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The spirit of the Brazilian racial developmentalism

O espírito do desenvolvimentismo racial brasileiro

El espíritu del desarrollismo racial brasileño

Marcelo Paixão*

ABSTRACT

This paper connects the issue of Brazilian racial formation to the country's economic development model, commonly referred to as developmentalism. To fulfill this goal, it introduces two complementary concepts. The first is the "Legend of Enchanted Modernity," which encompasses a set of ideas played out by sectors of Brazilian social thought that, explicitly or implicitly, identify the exceptionalism of Brazilian society in comparison to the world, based on the supposed absence of instrumental agency among Afro-Brazilians. The second concept is "racial developmentalism," representing a development model aligned with the principles outlined by the Myth, which renders these same agents either content with or resigned to their position within the social hierarchy. Thus, the racial developmentalist model positions Afro-Brazilians simultaneously as an obstacle, due to their concentration in low-productivity subsistence sectors, and as a lever for economic growth, whether through their condition as underpaid labor or as precarious holders of natural and cultural resources that can be expropriated according to developmental needs. The article concludes with further reflections on racial neo-developmentalism, characterized by Brazil's new incorporation into global markets, which features the export of commodities based on intensive exploitation of natural resources, and the contemporary sociopolitical context marked by the rise of the far right in that nation.[1]

Keywords: models of economic development, racial capitalism, coloniality of power, Latin American developmentalism, racial hierarchies.

* University of Texas at Austin, Texas, United States of America.
Associate professor at the Department of African and African Diaspora Studies and Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS), The University of Texas at Austin.

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RESUMO

O artigo conecta o problema da formação racial brasileira e o modelo de desenvolvimento econômico deste país, definido como desenvolvimentismo. Para tal, apresenta dois conceitos complementares: o primeiro é o de "Lenda da Modernidade Encantada" que compreende o conjunto de ideias que, explícita ou implicitamente elaboradas por setores do pensamento social brasileiro, identificam a excepcionalidade da sociedade brasileira perante o mundo, fundamentada na suposta ausência de razão instrumental por parte dos Afro-Brasileiros. O segundo conceito é o de "desenvolvimentismo racial", representando um modelo de desenvolvimento articulado com os princípios apontados pela Lenda, o que torna aqueles mesmos agentes contentes ou resignados com a posição que ocupam na pirâmide social. Portanto, o modelo desenvolvimentista racial torna os Afro-Brasileiros ao mesmo tempo que um obstáculo, por atuarem nos setores de subsistência de baixa produtividade, igualmente uma alavanca do crescimento econômico, seja por sua condição de portadores de uma força de trabalho sub-remunerada seja enquanto precários donos de recursos naturais e culturais expropriáveis de acordo com as necessidades do desenvolvimento. O artigo é concluído com reflexões adicionais sobre o neodesenvolvimentismo racial caracterizado pela nova inserção da economia brasileira nos mercados globais marcada pela exportação de produtos baseados na intensiva exploração de recursos naturais e no novo contexto sociopolítico caracterizado pelo avanço da extrema direita no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: modelos de desenvolvimento econômico, capitalismo racial, colonialidade do poder, desenvolvimentismo latino-americano, hierarquias raciais.

RESUMEN

Este artículo vincula el problema de la formación racial brasileña con el modelo de desarrollo económico del país, definido como desarrollismo. Para ello, presenta dos conceptos complementarios. El primero es el de la "Legenda de la Modernidad Encantada", que comprende un conjunto de ideas elaboradas por sectores del pensamiento social brasileño que, de forma explícita o implícita, identifican la excepcionalidad de la sociedad brasileña frente al mundo, basada en la supuesta ausencia de racionalidad instrumental entre los afrobrasileños. El segundo concepto es el de "desarrollismo racial", que representa un modelo de desarrollo articulado con los principios señalados por la Legenda, lo que lleva a que estos mismos agentes se muestren conformes o resignados con la posición que ocupan en la jerarquía social. Así, el modelo desarrollista racial sitúa a los afrobrasileños como un obstáculo – por su actuación en sectores de subsistencia de baja productividad – y, al mismo tiempo, como una palanca del crecimiento económico, ya sea por su condición de fuerza de trabajo su remunerada o como poseedores precarios de recursos naturales y culturales susceptibles de ser expropiados según las necesidades del desarrollo. El artículo concluye con reflexiones adicionales sobre el neo-desarrollismo racial, caracterizado por la nueva inserción de la economía brasileña en los mercados globales como exportadora de mercancías basadas en la intensiva explotación de recursos naturales y por el contexto sociopolítico contemporáneo marcado por el avance de la extrema derecha en Brasil.

Palabras clave: modelos de desarrollo económico, capitalismo racial, colonialidad del poder, desarrollismo latinoamericano, jerarquías raciales.

Introduction

This paper examines the role of racial formation in the theoretical debate regarding models of development. More specifically, we focus on Brazilian developmentalism, which integrates ideology and a set of public policies designed to promote Brazil's industrialization and address what a significative part of the mid-twentieth-century generation of Brazilian economists and onwards identified as the primary cause of underdevelopment: the dual structure of its economy and its subaltern integration into the international division of labor (Bielschowsky, 1988, 2014; Cardoso, 1978).

While internally varied, "center-periphery" approaches agree on that subordinate capitalist nations, such as all Latin American countries, engage in the global economy in a dependent role regarding trade, financial flows, technology, and cultural consumption patterns. In parallel, according to Furtado (1968, 1972, 1986), theorists of dependency (Cardoso & Faletto, 1984; Gunder Frank, 2009; Mantega, 1995; Marini, 2022) and the Regulation School (Aglietta, 2015) define the particular interactions between production and consumption patterns as an economic model. In the Brazilian case, the domestic production primarily serves the upper-middle class sectors, as a result of the regressive income distribution policy implemented by successive authoritarian regimes (Fernandes, 2010, 1976). This implies a particular model of development in the Global South – particularly in Latin America, and Brazil –, which is distinct from the experience of the most developed nations (Furtado, 1968, 1969, 1972, 1986).

Therefore, regardless of several theoretical variants, all "center-periphery" approaches foreground wealth and income distribution patterns, which are essential to determining a model of development. Hence, through the mediation of the State, the "class struggle" is orchestrated by means of successive dealings, agreements, and curtailment, determining different allocations of capital accumulation among distinct consumer layers, bestowing a coherent accumulation pattern (Aglietta, 2015) for a specific time span, regardless of the contradictions of the market society in other spheres. Latin America's socioeconomic and (geo)political conditions have led the region to take a specific historical trajectory characterized by clear income and wealth asymmetries as compared to Europe or the United States (De Ferranti, 2004; Furtado, 1968, 1969). However, at the core of those theories, the emerging question is the

place occupied by racial formation in that theoretical framework, which hardly goes beyond its historical general reference to colonial slavery (Freitas, 1983; Gorender, 1985, 2016). In this sense, whereas "classic Marxists" (Anderson, 1976) from the beginning of the twentieth century – such as Hilferding (1985), Luxemburg (1985), and Bukharin (1986) – only focused on the economy and the class struggle to discuss imperialism, few contributions accentuated the racial construction of the international division of labor that relegated the dark-skinned Global South to the role of raw material supplier for the developed world (Balibar & Wallerstein, 2011; Grosfoguel, 2005, 2008; Quijano, 2008).

The question here is not related to naturalizing or essentializing "race," which is definitively a social construction (Du Bois, 1989; Hall, 2018a, 2018b; Omi & Winant, 2015). What we point out is that in the Global South, particularly in Brazil, people with different physical appearances receive different treatment by society, either reducing or increasing their odds of upward opportunities (Hasenbalg, 1979; Santos, 2002; S. S. D. Soares, 2000). Could these different treatments have another source than the systemic resistance against people with that physical appearance? A resistance that, among other sequels, blocks their access to opportunities and social upward mobility. Upon reproducing Cedric Robinson's (2000) or Stuart Hall's (2018a, 2018b) acute question, if the labor class consciousness is a historical "formation," could their ordinary common sense about nationality, ethnicity, and race be straightforwardly discarded from the analysis? Could these social attitudes and behaviors not affect the characteristics of the development model?

This paper draws upon two alternative theories to answer the above questions, although economists have not necessarily developed these approaches. The first is the "racial capitalism" theory, initially presented by Robinson (2000) and subsequently deepened by successive scholars (Bledsoe *et al.*, 2022; Dorries *et al.*, 2022; Engle & Lixinshi, 2021; Leong, 2013). It refers to the interaction between race, racial expropriation and exploitation, and the dynamics of capital accumulation. It means that, since its birth, the capitalist system bears a bourgeois racial-cultural identity that, while endeavoring to convince others of its self-defined universality, dehumanizes dark-skinned others and deprives them from their natural resources and freedom.

Quijano's "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2008, 2000) is the second approach that inspires this paper. While the concept of racial capitalism

is applicable to the general conditions of constitution (which naturally included the successive colonial invasions over time) and subsequent evolution of the capitalist world, retrieving the terms of the center-periphery and dependency theories, that system's dynamics and reproduction laws are not the same for the distinct parts of the globe. Upon criticizing developmentalism, dependency theory and its variances, the coloniality of power's approach highlights the Eurocentric perspectives on capitalism evolution and the supposed universalism of this cosmovision. Grosfoguel (2005, 2008) foregrounds the multiple global hierarchies based on ethno-racial identities in worldwide division of labor, political power, and epistemologies. On the other hand, Quijano and Wallerstein connect their approach with the "World System Theory," focusing on the nation hierarchies and the racial characteristics of different parts of the globe (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992; see also Balibar & Wallerstein, 2011).

Nevertheless, while "racial capitalism" and "coloniality of power" guide the current paper, its central goal is to discuss the racial grounds of Brazilian developmentalism. Whereas racial capitalism refers to the white racial ethos that characterizes that system in general, upon focusing on the global regions' hierarchy, the coloniality of power approach does not always make clear that, internally to some Latin American nations, there exist not only regional sub-imperialisms (Mantega, 1995; Marini, 2022) but also domestic racial hierarchies, although usually covered up by narratives of mestizaje, cosmic race, and racial democracy.

Incorporated into the international division of labor until the half of the twentieth century as a raw material exporter, Brazil stood out among the world's capitalist nations for its high economic growth rate in the second part of the 1900s, led by the manufacturing industry (Centro de Documentação e Disseminação de Informações, 2003). In this sense, Brazilian developmentalism was also grounded in ideological repertoires like nation-building (Bielschowsky, 1988; Cardoso, 1978); the principal argument is that the Brazilian developmentalist narrative, even if implicitly, contains a racial model of formation. While the verification of this hypothesis often requires employing works borrowed from other social sciences fields, the current goal is to take steps to show that besides race relations being a constitutive part of an economic model, the racial characteristic of the Brazilian developmentalism led to a pattern of capital

reproduction grounded in systemic racial disparities. It means that, whereas nation-building will inevitably lurk the discussion, the central issue is to dissect the consequences of the constructed narrative of what we define as "racial developmentalism" for the properties of the Brazilian model of development, including the ongoing reproduction of asymmetries.

The debate about racial formation and development in Brazil needs to consider its history. In the twenty-first century, pervasive ideas such as racial democracy and cordiality no longer shape the Brazilian imagined character as before, and other contradictions and problems have emerged in Brazil's society since these ideas' publication, especially the collapse of the previous developmentalist model (Guimarães, 2002). Therefore, in the post-development era, this question must incorporate the complementary voices that understand Brazilian society as holding positive qualities stemming from its racial formation peculiarities, which make Brazil an exceptional nation in the "concert of nations" even if featuring a "big paradox" as defined here in the next section.

Methodologically, upon discussing developmentalism, this paper faces a fair complication resulting from the usual explicit absence of economists' concern over racial formation. Therefore, readers should not be surprised by the development of this study, which summoned scholars from different fields beyond the economist's boundaries. In this sense, if it is true that the origin of the Brazilian political economy was the controversy between Roberto Simonsen and Eugenio Gudin (Mantega, 1995), indeed, Brazilian economic thought seldom recognized the "modernists" and their particular way of discussing Brazil's people formation. Although intellectuals such as Arthur Ramos (Campos, 2004; Ramos, 1942, 1988), Gilberto Freyre (Burke & Pallares-Burke, 2008; Freyre, 1999, 2004), and Sergio B. Holanda (Avelino Filho, 1990; Holanda, 1995a) are still influential to the Brazilian national repertoire, with their respective ideas of acculturation, cultural and racial hybridism (and, by extension, "racial democracy") and "cordial men", their corresponding pervasiveness over the developmentalist discourse is seldom remembered. If these intellectuals contributed to shifting the narrative from race to culture to understand Brazilian society's deadlocks, paradoxically, even this change did not set aside "race" from the core of their interpretation. Can someone take seriously that a supposed "racially" democratic country does not have "race" as the axis of their concerns? Moving beyond these ideological influences over

nation-building, we define these implicitly racial grounds that ideologically sustain the Brazilian economic modernization and their consequences for the reproduction of inequality as "racial developmentalism."

This paper consists of four sections in addition to this introduction. The second part discusses the cornerstone in the contemporary debate on racial formation in Brazil, problematizing what we define as a "big paradox" that characterizes the interpretation of this model, which combines racial tolerance and hierarchies. In the third part, we envision and problematize what is defined as a "big paradox" by analyzing the Brazilian scholars' appropriation of Max Weber's disenchantment theory and its connection with the racial formation issue in that country. The fourth section explains the concept of the "Legend of Modern Enchantment" (Paixão, 2014) as the theoretical backbone for the definition of racial developmentalism. In conclusion, we contrast this discussion with the analytical references that guided this paper and add some comments about the options of development model. Summing up, instead of an undesirable subproduct of virtuous racial formation, racial inequality is placed at the core of the developmentalist ideology.

Brazilian racial formation: the big paradox

Racial formation theory states that race, rather than belonging to natural sciences, is a social construction whose meaning and boundaries are in permanent transformation (Barth, 1998; Du Bois, 1989; hooks, 2015; Omi & Winant, 2015). Applying this conceptualization to Brazil's racial formation led to a duality or a deadlock.

Like a nation-building narrative, a model of development, especially in Brazil, employs ideological resources to encourage and legitimize its constitution and dynamics (Bielschowsky, 1988, 2020; Cardoso, 1978). However, economists rarely acknowledge racial formation when considering a model of development. Lessa (2000, 2001) and Benjamin (2004) are remarkable exceptions, either implicitly or explicitly recognizing Freyre's work as pivotal to Brazilian developmentalism, especially for claiming Brazil's people as culturally and racially mestizo and rejecting the rough terms of the scientific racism that discursively condemned that country to eternal underdevelopment (Schwarcz, 1993; Skidmore, 1993; Wade, 2017).

Indeed, Freyre's ideas dissemination throughout the second half of the twentieth century – to a great extent favored by his progressive conservatism as expressed by his adherence to the Salazarist regime's Luso-tropicalism and the 1964 Brazilian military regime (Anderson *et al.*, 2019; Falcão, 2001) – did not help a more complex assessment of his work. Conversely, under the influence of dozens of publications and statistics criticizing the ongoing racial injustices and violence since the 1950s Unesco's research on Brazilian interracial contact (Fernandes, 1978a, 1978b; Florestan, 1972; Silva, 1980; Hasenbalg, 1979; Gonzales & Hasenbalg, 1982; Oliveira *et al.*, 1981; Chor Maio, 1998), it would sound at least risky for a contemporary social scientist to say that the white society treated Afro-Brazilians fairly and free from not only prejudice but also racism (Alberto & Hoffnung-Garskof, 2018; Guimarães, 2021; Hordge-Freeman, 2015; Kopkin & Mitchell-Walthour, 2020; Smith, 2016).

Hence, it is empirically verifiable that the norms of Brazilian racial formation facilitate the perpetuation of racial asymmetries in terms of access to school (Cavalleiro, 2022; Coelho & Dias, 2020; Dávila, 2003), to the health system (Chehuen Neto et al., 2015; Garcia & Souza, 2010), to the labor market (Campante et al., 2004; Chadarevian, 2011), and of vulnerability to violence (Cerqueira et al., 2021), among other variables linked to socioeconomic condition and social status. Therefore, this sum of evidence leads interpreters to conclude that Brazilian racial democracy is a myth, which means it is inexistent, does not correspond to reality, or is farcical (Telles, 2004; Silva & Paixão, 2014; Hanchard, 1999; Theodoro, 2022; Fernandes, 1978a; Hasenbalg, 1979; Carneiro, 2018). This view was decisive in propelling the 2010s Brazil's adoption of affirmative action for Afro-Brazilians through quotas for undergraduate seats in public federal universities (Johnson & Heringer, 2015). After a decade of implementing that policy in Brazilian public universities (whose legislation was passed in 2012), few voices have spoken up about terminating it (Mena, 2000). This could cause some readers to conclude that this controversy is already over. However, what invites us to revisit that debate is that, despite the fact that it began in the academic setting, the core of the social scientists in favor of racial democratic myth was either explicitly or implicitly influential in other realms of social life, particularly in the field of development policies, nowadays incarnated by the language of the neo-developmentalism (Benjamin, 1994, 2004; Bresser-Pereira, 2024; Costa, 2003; Lessa, 2000). It means recovering the logic that backed the reasoning

of influential Brazilian social scientists – here defined as neo-culturalists – who bitterly opposed that measure.

So, following Freyre's reasoning, the Brazilian racial formation developed unique characteristics due to singular origins incomparable to other countries' social and demographic conditions. In synthesizing those features, Brazil should embody the possibility of friendly dialogue between peoples of different origins and racial appearances within various social contexts, leading to a society featuring cultural and racial hybridism (Alberto & Hoffnung-Garskof, 2018; Fry, 2007; Harris, 1974; Hertzman, 2013; Schwarcz, 1999; Sheriff, 2001; Souza, 1997b; Vianna, 1995). However, the "neo-culturalist" approach does not entirely match with the Freyrean matrix.

Scholars from the 1930-1950's culturalist tradition – Boasian and Human Ecologists – such as Freyre, Herskovits, Pierson, Frazier, and Wagley – defined Brazilian society as an actual racial democracy. Indeed, none of those scholars ignored the multiple evidence of racial inequality. But they gave to reasons for that phenomenon: that it was due to the relatively short term since the slavery abolishment and that all sorts of Afro-Brazilians' misfortune was caused by "social prejudice" (Freyre, 1986; Guimarães, 1999; Herskovits, 1943; Pierson, 1967; Wagley, 1952). However, "neo-culturalist" scholars feature another perspective. They shift their lens from the realm of social reality to that of desire (Fry, 1996, 2000, 2007; Hertzman, 2013; Schwarcz, 1999; Sheriff, 2001; Souza, 1997b). In this view, little importance is placed on the fact that Brazilians of color face real discrimination and racism. It becomes more relevant to foreground a collective national imaginary that projects a collective willingness to racial interaction without discrimination or a dream of racial equality (Fry, 2001; Hertzman, 2013; Reis, 1997; Schwarcz, 1999; Sheriff, 2001; Souza, 2000).

Freyre's scholarship contributed to defeating racial eugenics supremacy and to opening an optimistic spirit among Brazilian intelligentsia and policymakers, by amplifying their horizons regarding that country's economic potentialities. However, as an aristocratic intellectual, the Brazilian sociologist was focused on the sugarcane patriarchal values (Burke & Pallares-Burke, 2008; Pallares-Burke, 2005), which, among other attributes, implied the strength of a social order rooted in the parameters of social and racial hierarchies, notwithstanding that partially "corrupted" by the unbridled white male desire for dark-skinned captive females' flesh and the mestizo infiltration in the

intermediate or even upper rungs of the social pyramid (Freyre, 1999, 2004). Hence, recovering Araújo's interpretation of Freyre's work, the meaning of "balance of antagonisms" is not between intimacy and equality or equity but between intimacy and hierarchies (Araújo, 1994). While some interpreters can be lured into the idea that the Brazilian racial formation model projects a collective desire for "equality" or "equity," it sounds nonsensical to Freyre's scholarship, often foregrounding the civilization importance of the colonial and patriarchal sugarcane world dominated by white Portuguese and their offspring light skin color males. Did Freyre's interpreters ignore those notions? It does not seem to be true. Even contemporary scholars who believe in that "myth" also acknowledge the barriers blocking Afro-Brazilians' equal inclusion in that country's society due to the color tone of their skin (Fry, 2000, 2001; Schwarcz, 1999; Souza, 1997a). Therefore, what is at stake is not the notion that the myth of racial democracy implies corresponding racial hierarchies. The kernel of this question, whose logic will be straightforwardly related to the model of development, rests upon a trade-off. As expressly defined by Souza (2000), in the face of, on the one hand, the rough reality of a racial abyss and, on the other hand, a oneiric view of its opposite, the latter should be prioritized at the expense of practical measures that could overcome that reality. So, inequality and violence are the prices to be paid for a supposed collective desire for racial harmony. In the end, is this trade-off sufficiently well-founded to support the weight of such optimism? Indeed, these questions do not invite easy answers.

Even some scholars who understand that Brazilian society regards dark-skinned people as second-layer citizens recognize that Brazil's racial formation contains a particular dynamism distinct from different nations, such as the United States or other parts of Latin America (Bailey & Telles, 2006; Paschel, 2016; Telles, 2014; Wade, 2010). So, particularly in peripheral areas, people from distinct skin color shades socialize more freely, as statistically expressed by lower segregation indexes in low socioeconomic neighborhoods, higher rates of interracial marriage, or fewer barriers to setting up friendships and intimate relations among people of different physical appearance. Sansone (2003) defines these social interaction zones as soft and hard; Telles (2004) employs horizontal and vertical social spaces. Lamont *et al.* (2016) classify this paradox between a porous boundary and rigid racial hierarchies.

Nevertheless, acknowledging the warp and weft of a particular reality differs from normatively defending its terms. Alternative researchers foreground the subtle discriminatory mechanisms that pervade the intimate spaces of social interaction, conceding higher social status to fairer light-skin color appearance in terms of physical features (Hordge-Freeman, 2015; Sheriff, 2001; Twine, 1998). They also highlight the asymmetric distribution of family resources between children of different racial traits in favor of the lighter-skinned ones, especially in the field of education (Cavalleiro, 2022; Telles, 2004), and the multiple misunderstandings undergone by interracial partners in their contact with their families, friends and neighbors (Osuji, 2019), with natural consequences for the reproduction of racial inequality. It means that the asymmetry grounded upon shades of skin color penetrates even the intimate and affective space of intersubjective contacts.

As mentioned above, one of the principal contributions brought up by the culturalist tradition was replacing race with culture to explain a society's evolution, problems, and contradictions. Regardless of other divergences, it matches the developmentalist tradition and its concern about overcoming underdevelopment, which is focused on historical causes of underdevelopment and the burden of a landowning oligarchy. Albeit this tradition usually disregards the cultural variable in explaining societal dynamics, favoring the "structural" component, through different pathways, structuralists and culturalists converge about the pivotal importance of patrimonialism (which in Freyrean culturalist tradition is defined as patriarchalism) as one of the most distinctive aspects of the Brazilian society. This convergence conjures up the work of Max Weber, an intellectual who has significant influence over Brazilian intelligentsia and is regularly mobilized to problematize modernity and its dilemmas. In the last instance, we believe that recovering aspects of how Brazilian social theorists apprehended the German sociologist in their approaches will help to understand the ideological basis of the Brazilian model of development, built upon racial grounds.

Max Weber: modernity and disenchantment

Max Weber's *Economy and Society* (2019) has traditionally inspired Brazilian social scientists in considering questions related to backwardness, through which the "traditional type of legitimate authority" is associated with land concentration, patrimonialism, and hardline political regimes, the last being the military dictatorship (1964-1985). Vianna highlights two critical analytic veins of the German sociologist in Brazil's social thought. The first derives from Raymundo Faoro's *Os donos do poder* (The Owners of Power) and Simon Schwartzman's *Bases do Autoritarismo Brasileiro* (The Grounds of Brazilian Authoritarianism), which depict Brazil's underdevelopment as an effect of an exceeding role of a patrimonial State over the civil society and the consequential suppression of economic and political freedom. The second interpretation originates from authors like Florestan Fernandes' *A Revolução Burguesa no Brasil* (the Bourgeoise Revolution in Brazil) or Maria Sylvia de Carvalho Franco's *Homens Livres na Ordem Escravocrata* (Free Men in the Slaveholding Order) – all of whom shifted their investigation into the problems of authoritarianism and underdevelopment from the state to the enormous power and status enjoyed by traditional landowning aristocrats in comparison to the relative fragility of public power (Vianna, 1999).

Weber's patrimonialism concept and its corresponding application for analyzing Brazilian authoritarianism were well-received by scholars from different ideological orientations but who were united in the same opposition to the military dictatorship (1964-1985). However, running parallel with nonconformist interpretations, another Weber is also pervasive in Brazilian social thought, paradoxically pointing toward the advantage of backwardness (DaMatta, 1997a, 1997b; Souza, 1999). It leads again to Vianna and his theory of "passive revolution in Brazil," (Vianna, 2004) implicitly eliciting inspiration not from Weber's *Economy and Society* (Weber, 2019) but from *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber, 2012) with its gloomy omen for the future of modernity: "the iron cage" of instrumental reason and loss of the collective life meaning.

In the "Spirit of Capitalism," Weber traces the homology between Calvinism and the rise of capitalism. Material prosperity through work was considered a sign of salvation. It required control over worshippers' impulses and the adoption of an ascetic and frugal character in daily life, as

well as the rationalization of both production and the entire social life for efficiency's sake. Over time, this leads to an increased puritanism of customs mixed with a complete rationalization of social organization, disseminated categorization of interpersonal contact and increasing bureaucratization of collective life. Under the priority of a world entirely dominated by technique and instrumental reason, society becomes imprisoned in the "iron cage." So, modern society makes everyone "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart." (Weber, 2012, pp. 115–116). Upon ostensibly offering alternative pathways for addressing modern disenchantment, Brazil could be viewed as a veritable "laboratory of civilization" (Bilden, 1929).

As with the patrimonialism hypothesis, some influential Brazilian scholars read Weber's prophecy of society's disenchantment with life with the same concern about the nation's modernization and respective consequences (DaMatta, 1997a, 1997a; Holanda, 1995b; Merquior, 1972; Souza, 1999). Would this process doom Brazil to lose its "authenticity" by importing the collective psychological disease and mental paranoia from the most advanced world? Paradoxically, while the patrimonial theory tended toward a pessimistic view of the burden of the past, the "Spirit of Capitalism" inspired a fraction of the domestic intellectuality to see its benefits. Upon recovering the original Gramsci's formulation, while "passive revolution" means the structural transformations undergone by a national reality in the absence of social revolutions (Fernandes, 1976; Gramsci, 1971; Vianna, 1999, 2004), that same theory could be assessed positively, indicating the cultural backdrop that would coordinate the modernization process allowing every nation to embrace the modernity conditioned by the strength of the cultural heritage handed down by the (colonial as in the Brazilian case) past.

To our knowledge, the conservative Gilberto Freyre never read Marxist Gramsci. Still, his theory of a "third social time" or "*tempo tríbio*" (Bastos, 2002; Freyre, 2000a) contains an analogy with that same matrix. That is a social modernization process that combines different times, tempering the socioeconomic structural transformations toward a capitalist society with the old hierarchical values that structured the Brazilian colonization process (Burke & Pallares-Burke, 2008; Freyre, 2000b). Merquior understood the late 1960s youth rebellion as a demonstration of discontent against the rational, bureaucratic modern world. However, rather than a leftist, revolution-oriented movement, inspired by Freyre he identified affinities

between those riots and the ethos of old Brazilian colonial society. Merquior grounds this surprising interpretation on the supposed patriarchal moral contradiction that counterposes rigid hierarchies and their opposite, "espírito de avacalhação" (demoralization spirit), represented by the white male patriarchs' unbridled sexual desire for the dark-skinned bodies subject to their subjugation. Some readers might rebuff this reasoning, but the logic behind the idea that Brazilian culture was able to avoid the Weberian "iron cage" is precisely that.

As known, the evolution of the world system since the 1600s has placed Anglo-Saxon nations as leaders of scientific and technological progress (Arrighi, 2010; Hobsbawm, 1989). In contrast, Iberic nations became progressively marginalized among the hegemonic imperial powers (Anderson, 1962; Anderson *et al.*, 2019). The same contrast is applicable when comparing the United States and Latin America. Until the nineteenth century, the Eugenics mindset categorized Mediterranean nations as inferior to the Septentrional ones (Banton, 1998; Fitzgerald & Cook-Martín, 2014; Stepan, 1991; Wade, 2017) and, until the 1920s, across relevant fractions of Latin American elite, an idea has prevailed that the cause for this region's backwardness, alongside the low score of their mestizo people, was the poor quality of Iberic colonizers (Carvalho, 1990; Hochman & Lima, 2010; Oliveira, 1990). The Belle Époque contrasts Septentrional Europe, supposedly efficient, rational, and forward-minded, and the Mediterranean one, which featured Catholicism and its consequential inefficiency, superstition, irrationality, and backwardness. However, this mindset started being questioned by new Latin American and Iberic nationalist movements that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century (Bomfim, 2008; Oliveira, 1990; Wade, 2010).

Decades after the Scramble for Africa and the imperialist conquest of the global South, two world wars in 1914-1918 and 1938-1945, and a global slump in its interregnum showed the limits of the Western instrumental reason, while the Nazi horrors and genocide made clear the Eugenics' potential tragic consequences (Benedict & Weltfish, 1943; Chor Maio, 1998; Davis, 1999). In Latin America, throughout the twentieth century neo-Lamarckism progressively won over the application of Weissman's germ plasm theory to demographic policies, especially in Brazil, the champion of Eugenics society in that region (Stepan, 1991). So, the populational

improvement was associated with the idea that people's potentiality was not conditioned by biological inheritance but by genetic adaptation to the environment, which meant demographic whitening through the melting pot under the tropical reality (Freyre, 1986; Schwarcz, 1993; Skidmore, 1993; Stepan, 1991; Wade, 2017).

Although Comte's positivist philosophy, by and large, set up a cause-effect relationship between whitening and the "scientific stage of human evolution," some of his mature writings opened the door to alternative interpretations, associating African people with greater sensitiveness (Alberto, 2011; Carvalho, 1998). According to Vasconcelos, the fifth race, which resulted from the fusion of the original "four human races," originated from the true love between the forebears, which the Mexican educator contrasted with the instrumental relationship between Anglo-Saxon ancestors guided by rational Eugenic principle of pure races (Vasconcelos, 2014). Writing decades later, Morse (1988) highlights that, since the Protestant Reformation, Western European societies bifurcated, both philosophically and religiously, between the Protestant, liberal culture of individualism and the Iberian Catholic worldview, which tended to be more communitarian and holistic. While Anglo-Saxon societies benefitted from scientific and technological conquests, the Iberic world, including Latin American nations, could preserve the density of human relations and, through this pathway, through socioeconomic transformation toward modernity, could avoid entering the "iron cage."

Returning to Freyre, one of his most distinctive concepts about Brazilian tropical colonial society was that it featured a "wealth of contradictions" (Freyre, 1986, 1999). While, for a long time, the geographical determinism pointed toward the tropics as an ecological zone of abundance leading to little stimulus to hard work, the Brazilian sociologist eulogized Portuguese colonizers and their wisdom to create a "civilization in the tropics" surrounded by a luxuriant ecology, however, plenty of paradoxical excesses that combined vast natural resources with humidity, heat and diseases that were mortal to European settlers. Either explicitly or implicitly, it meant that the traditional Cartesian logic would not be applicable to Brazilian conditions, implying that only an alternative format of European colonization, grounded upon principles such as plasticity, miscibility, and racial tolerance, could make that undertaking possible (Freyre, 1937, 1986, 2000a).

Complementary to Freyre's work (and the racial democratic narrative usually associated with his name), Oswald de Andrade's anthropophagic manifesto and Holanda's cordial man became some of the most distinguishing definitions of Brazilian character for domestic modernists (Avelino Filho, 1990; Dunn, 2001; Holanda, 1995b; Veloso, 2003). Native Brazilian nations such as Tupinambás and Caetés ritualistically practiced anthropophagy, envisioning the enemy's courage appropriation. Inspired by this history, Andrade saw connections with Brazilian's penchant for "devouring" foreign technological and esthetical innovations by adapting them to Brazil's natural and social conditions. The cordial man represents the cultural roots of a people with an "overflowing interiority featuring hospitality, generosity, and other virtues so often lauded by foreign visitors, representing a definitive quality of the Brazilian character." (Holanda, 1995b, pp. 146–147). In Brazil, the pervasive ideas of racial democracy, anthropophagy, and cordial men entailed a collective image of alternative modernity in the extreme Western, featuring happiness, swing, easy-goingness, cultural and racial hybridism, assimilation, and tolerance – all values that, according to scholars such as Freyre or Holanda (and, in some sense, Andrade), belonged to or were originated in the old patriarchal society.

Moreira (1999) and L. E. Soares (2000) rejected the idea that Brazil had found the pathway to an "enchanted modernity," referring to a patrimonial logic. In any case, neither scholar focused on racial formation and how this sphere of social life could explain the ground on which that "legend" of a "modern enchantment" could rest. On the other hand, while Guimarães (2002, 2021) identifies the bridges between *racial democracy* and *modern nation-building*, a parallel unanswered question is the connection between those phrases and the development project in Brazil named developmentalism. This connection is made in the following topic, defined as the "legend of enchanted modernity."

The legend of enchanted modernity

As observed above, Brazilian racial formation combines dialogue and intimacy between diverse racial and ethnic groups with constant preservation of profound inequalities (Lamont *et al.*, 2016; Sansone, 2003; Telles, 2004). However, the question is whether those lines follow

in parallel without any dynamic articulation with repercussions for the economic development model.

Fry (1996, p. 134), Souza (1997b, p. 34), and DaMatta (1997c, p. 75) converged around the idea that Brazilian "racial democracy" is an exciting or valid myth. Why? Because it supposedly projects ideas of racial equality and tolerance, which more than compensate for the other side of racial asymmetry and violence. However, DaMatta (1997b, 2020) points out the Brazilian society's resistance to equality, conflict, and free competition above the paternalistic networks, which also comprise the field of racial relations, as developed explicitly by that scholar in his "Fable of Three Races" (DaMatta, 1987). Therefore, under the hegemony of the old authoritarian patriarchal world, Brazilian society resists assimilating the values of the Western liberal individualistic approach, a situation that, according to DaMatta (1997b), comes to the fore during conflictive social interactions where the well-off pole imperiously imposes itself on the worse-off one through the infamous "do you know who you are talking to?" In interracial interaction, as long as these asymmetries are not interrogated, multiracial sociality remains friendly, intimate, and, to a large degree, non-hierarchical. Or as a last resort, during a conflict between people of different skin color shades, the offended light-skinned individual could reestablish the racial hierarchy by playing the card of racial insult.

Atkinson (1983, 2008) devised an index for social inequality, one of the main components of which is the level of "inequality aversion." Although its numeric development does not matter for this explanation, its content fits into this discussion. So, combining the views of the British economist (Atkinson) and the Brazilian anthropologist (DaMatta) in a theoretical framework, Brazil shelters a society with a low aversion to social and racial inequality. We are not saying that in that country, people accept overt racial discrimination – an attitude condemned by the mestizaje ideology. Nevertheless, as tellingly exemplified by scholars who point out a trade-off between racial inequality and cordiality, the second term would be prioritized at the expense of the first (Fry, 1996, 2001; Schwarcz, 1999; Souza, 1997a, 2000) – as an "interesting myth," racial democracy strength cannot stem from any supposed "dream of equality," as some scholars who are sympathetic to the Brazilian "style" suggest. This choice means (at least) a reasonably low aversion to racial asymmetry. However, what

can we say about the second term related to supposed racial integration, tolerance, and intimacy?

As earlier seen, multiple scholars acknowledge the double standard of the Brazilian "model," as they identify a conflictive zone (hard, vertical, rigid racial stratification) coexisting alongside a non-conflictive side (soft, horizontal, porous racial boundaries). However, Hordge-Freeman (2015) research with multiracial families from Salvador, Brazil, shows that racial hierarchies also permeate the "porous boundaries," penetrating even the most intimate and non-categorical field of social interaction. In contrast, Telles (2004) shows that twins of different skin colors obtain asymmetric educational attainment in some sense, suggesting uneven family investments in their kids based on their physical appearance. So, it is possible to assert that the most distinctive aspect of the Brazilian racial formation is to maintain a low level of overt racial conflict amidst a widespread scenario of cumulative disadvantages for Afro-Brazilians.

Returning to Atkinson's approach, the emerging question is, who is the guardian of those low levels of aversion to racial inequality? Those better positioned in the social and racial pyramid, the light-skinned Brazilians, can enjoy their privileges in both the categorical (hard, vertical, racial pyramid) and non-categorical (soft, horizontal, porous) fields of social interaction. Conversely, as they are not summoned to renounce their most favored position, naturally, the other side of that relationship is supposed to do that, at the risk of endangering the entire social structure if they do not behave accordingly.

Indeed, to better explain this reasoning, we will recover aspects of two significant contributions from different intellectuals whose trajectories and scholarly scopes are separated by several decades. To avoid misunderstanding, to our knowledge, these authors were not influential over the Brazilian developmentalists. The goal here is to present their respective lines of thought to help us understand the connection between the model of development and racial inequality.

In the nineteenth-century, Joaquim Nabuco felt an uncanny longing for the period of slavery despite his genuine abhorrence of that socioeconomic system. So, in his autobiography, the old Brazilian abolitionist synthesizes the foundation of this antagonism pointing out that, after the end of slavery, he started feeling "nostalgia for the slave," with arguments that, decades after, Freyre would re-employ to draw his *The Masters and the Slaves*: "the

role of the master is unconsciously egoistic, just as the role of the slave is unknowingly generous. Slavery will remain a national characteristic of Brazil for many years" (Nabuco, 1947, pp. 160–161). This means that, in Nabuco, instead of running in parallel, asymmetry and intimacy were mutual conditions necessary for the very social relationship under non-conflictive bases. So, if there is a dream, it is that of eternal racial hierarchy, a primordial assumption for the existence of warm zones of intersubjective interactions among people of different skin colors and corresponding uneven social positions.

Indeed, it is possible to find affinities between Nabuco's captive nostalgy and Fry's approach to the Brazilian gay movement from the 1970s to the 1980s (Fry, 1982). In Brazil, mainly in worse-off districts, there is a regular practice among males of establishing sexual relations, differentiating the active and passive partner in the relationship. So, penetrator males do not see themselves (and are not seen) as gays but as macho, whereas the penetrated males consider themselves and are known as homosexuals. In his ethnography of the Brazilian gay movement, Fry criticizes their leading organizations when they claim to unify active and passive peers under a shared gay identity.

Through an understanding not so distant from the one he would employ to criticize the Brazilian black movement years later, the scholar questions if such a social consciousness would not make unfeasible the "possibility and the acceptability of sexual relations between individuals of the same sex." (Fry, 1982, p. 94).

> As in the case of black empowerment movements, which hold internal ideological debates surrounding the politically established notion of racial democracy, homosexual movements, among other confrontations, face a corresponding challenge of establishing themselves within a sexual democracy in Brazil (Fry, 1982, pp. 107–108).

So, once labeled, as their passive partners, under the same gay condition, Brazilian active homoerotic lovers could refuse to establish gay relationships with the passive pole. So, the precondition for interaction is asymmetry between partners.

This means that, rather than staying alone conversing with a parrot, stroking the fur of a cat, or walking a dog, it would be much better if people

in relatively privileged and affluent stances could find voluntary subalterns, always amenable, friendly and disinterested in questions of money, status, and power, as in the old captive of Nabuco's nostalgia, or the full of horny macho when "eating" their male passive partners. In all cases, which also comprehend the male-female family, based on the old-style gender relations, the possibility of a dense relationship between different human beings relies upon one of the poles of conscious sadistic submission. That is the secret of a "legend of enchanted modernity." Intimacy requires hierarchies.

Nabuco's and Fry's respective reasonings are sound in exemplifying a possible connection between a sociological pattern framed upon systemic racial inequality combined with a central aspect of the "disenchanted modernity", that is, the social conflict referred to the fundamental principle that, in that world, individuals' social actions are conditioned by instrumental reason. However, as warned above, it is necessary to be cautious about the association between Nabuco and Fry's works and Brazilian developmentalism. No developmentalist scholar employed their works to ground their analysis of that nation's economic problems. In its absence, this group of people could be easily destitute from their collective rights, even in the face of several pieces of evidence that they are subjected to ongoing disadvantage resulting from some particularity that they carry – as in Afro-Brazilians' situation, their skin color and other corresponding physical features. Notwithstanding, as developmentalism scholars did not employ that reasoning to play out their scholarship, why is it possible to assert that the "legend of modern enchantment" corresponds with the spirit of Brazilian developmentalism?

Arthur Ramos asserted that Afro-Brazilians culturally encumbered national development due to their "pre-logical mindset" (1988, p. 297). While Fry and Nabuco could not have influenced Brazilian developmentalism, considering their corresponding trajectories and areas of interest, Ramos was an influential intellectual in the post-WWII context. Even if, after the conflict, he reviewed some of these initial stances, that particular interpretation, influenced by the French psychiatrist Levy Bhrul, was pretty well disseminated in the fledgling 1940s Brazilian academic setting (Campos, 2004; Chor Maio, 1998; Corrêa, 1998). While it can hardly be said that Brazilian economists employed Ramos in their analysis, the idea that Brazilian culture carried a burden coming from the "low mental development" of part of their population was spread enough, among others, by Furtado in

his seminal "*Formação Econômica do Brasil*:" "most of old slave population's descendant kept living within their limited system of 'necessities,' taking a neatly passive role in the country's economic transformations" (1980, pp. 140–141). While a lengthy bibliographical discussion about economists' interpretation of Furtado's scholarship could unnecessarily extend this paper, there is no register of a developmentalist scholar who condemned this interpretation like Ramos's view on Afro-Brazilians' backward mindset.

Meanwhile, in "The Masters and Slaves" (whose undeniable impact on Brazilian developmentalism was discussed earlier), Freyre suggestively uses the terms seignorial sadism and captives' masochism to characterize the most intimate aspects of colonial society (Freyre, 1986, pp. 76–77, 390, 414). In both instances, Afro-Brazilians engage in domestic society as an over-exploited segment of the labor market (attributed to the economic pre-logical mindset, as proposed by Ramos) and significant temporary holders of cultural and natural resources (fulfilling their masochistic role). In other words, even if the development model has income and wealth distribution as one of its axes, as angels of backwardness doomed to subsistence, Afro-Brazilians became very profitable for capitalist accumulation in the white world as pre-logical agents with no capability for instrumental actions.

Theories criticizing Brazil's uneven integration into the global economy usually address the nation's dual productive structure and labor market issues. In this sense, scholars affiliated with those approaches associate modern capitalism not only with manufacturing but also with European immigration and whitening (Fernandes, 1978a; Furtado, 1980). While the labor force "Brazilianization" after the 1930s made this class less white, it did not result in Afro-Brazilians' access to the most dynamic occupations (Hasenbalg, 1979; Santos, 2002). It means that throughout the twentieth century blackness and Indigenousness were customarily associated with subsistence and low productivity – an interpretation boosted by the racial makeup of distinct portions of the Brazilian territory with a hegemonic presence of dark-skinned colored people in the less developed regions (Weinstein, 2015).

Paradoxically, at the same time, the developmentalist ideology tried to overcome the backwardness and structural duality; its ideological orientation, referring to Freyre's work and his explicit defense of a cordial-patriarchal racial hierarchy, consolidated the idea that dark-skinned Brazilians would partake in the modernization process carrying the same

supposed "gratitude" feelings towards their masters that they inherited from the distant past. While for Weber, modernity means a social world dominated by instrumental reason, in Brazil, a new modern style emerged based on the principle that descendants of the formerly enslaved do not bear the attitude corresponding to an action envisioning strategic goals.

Nevertheless, while objective-structural conditions are a crucial reference in the current approach, it is also necessary to foreground the ideological component that animated Brazilian developmentalism. Grounded in a colonial mindset, imagining the "land of the future" as a Tropical Europe, Afro-Brazilians and Indigenous occupy a curious role in that rhetorical model, contradictorily acting up as agent of both backwardness and forwardness as the owner of the cheap and disposable labor force and uncertain proprietaries of economically promising parts of the domestic territory and culture (habits, artistic and religious expression, food, and creators that made "brazil, Brazil") awaiting for their actual white holders full potentializing. Although lacking racial formation concerns, Oliveira (2003) developed the idea that the so-called subsistence sector was a lever for capital accumulation rather than a hurdle to modernization. It is not hard to see that theory through the lens of racial formation, considering the usual less favorable place occupied by dark-skinned people in the Brazilian domestic division of labor.

Therefore, dark-skinned Brazilians can keep contributing to national progress from their charitable condition as people dispossessed of instrumental reason capability. While aspects of this interpretation belong to the zone of nation-building, its core is part of what we can call the ideology of development or, more appropriately, the developmentalist repertoire. So, once undergirded by that spirit, it does not surprise that the racial developmentalist model bestowed upon the future generations what was its veritable assumption: eternal racial injustices.

The spirit of racial developmentalism

Viana's "passive revolution" concept means transformation from above without radical socioeconomic and political transformations (Vianna, 2004). Recovering Freyre, the "third social time," means that the old patriarchal layer headed the modernization process. It implies a collective imaginary

that Brazilian people are ordinarily pacific and conflict-averting within a hegemonic cultural standard framed upon patriarchal paternalism. It is not ignored that, for Freyre, under the Brazilian condition, the racial line is often corrupted by the whitening racial mix. In this sense, instead of a myth, the idea that light-skinned people from this country can infiltrate the social pyramid sounds realistic. Nevertheless, if this movement has not been legally prohibited for dark-skinned Brazilians, the reality is less probable, as expressed by successive qualitative and quantitative research.

Therefore, the conflict-averting characteristic of Brazilian people is an inverted function of their corresponding low aversion to racial inequality. While anthropologically, culturally, or sociologically these definitions are full of theoretical implications, it sounds justifiable to assert that, at least for that country, racial formation is a remarkable vector for the development model. More particularly, subjected to a supposed inability to carry an instrumental reason, it happens due to a supposed Afro-Brazilian's: i) non-conflictive acceptance of lower remuneration and occupational conditions (which scholars associated with the dependency theory school would call hyper-exploitation of the labor force) (Mantega, 1995; Marini, 2022); ii) inculcation of a "glass-ceiling" depressing their social mobility horizons and corresponding invisibility of their problems and naturalization of the convergence between color and social lines; and iii) conformity to renounce their cultural and natural patrimony (Fry, 1982) on behalf of "enchanted modernity," as soon as these resources become of interest to the hegemonic markets.

On the other hand, the above definition may suggest a lack of Afro-Brazilian agency. Is this group a passive victim of history? While it will be impossible to discuss this subject in this space, what draws attention is the overt resistance to any policy aimed at overcoming this reality, expressed by significant sectors of the Brazilian academy as exemplified during the debate on affirmative action in that country's higher education institutions in the 2000s. As successive Brazilian social scientists opposed to that measure have candidly articulated since the beginning of the twenty-first century, it should not be a problem if the racial hierarchy was unquestionably preserved even in the face of deep racial chasm. Sociologists characterize it as an axiological preference, while economists view it as a preference for economic policy. The convergence between skin color and the social pyramid is another way

to discuss income, wealth, social status, and political power asymmetries, and, coherently with the "center-periphery" theoretical matrix, it is an ingrained part of the development model.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the developmentalist model has entered a state of collapse, as expressed by economic indicators such as subpar Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates, hyperinflation, and subsequent social crisis (Pereira, 1992). In the following decade, the Brazilian government implemented neoliberal adjustment measures, further exacerbating labor market indicators characterized by increasing informality and unemployment. Finally, during the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers Party) terms, especially between 2003 and 2012, this situation has been somewhat mitigated by specific offset policies, such as the valorization of the Minimum Wage, the *Bolsa Família* Program, and affirmative action for poor student access to public university which have disproportionately benefited Afro-Brazilians (Paixão *et al.*, 2011). While it is acknowledged that focused social policies converge with the neoliberal approach, considering the Brazilian experience, what is at stake is whether those mentioned actions can be targeted as such.

Scholars such as Yashar (1999, 2007), Hale (2002, 2006), and Hooker (2005) embrace Zizek's (1997) concept of "multicultural neoliberalism" to refer to the post-military dictatorship cycles in Latin America and the emergence of an Indigenous movement claiming cultural recognition. That concept means that the traditional hegemonic layers accept multicultural recognition in exchange for absence of distributive policies that could reduce inequality and violence. While the relationship between minority cultural recognition, multicultural constitutions, and neoliberal policies is clear, those interpretations suggest that it corresponded to any form of "universal policy" grounded in a blind color-ethnic orientation. In this sense, the definition of "neoliberal multiculturalism" loses its robustness without considering the precedent of the moment, here defined as "racial developmentalist." Moreover, if racism is systemic, it sounds at least contradictory to see measures to overcome it as simply compensatory.

Dialoguing with the concept of "racial developmentalism" is distinct from discussing "racial capitalism" and "coloniality of power." While the latter concepts apply to the capitalist system in general, racial developmentalism refers to the condition of countries whose productive structures transitioned

toward becoming industrial economies subject to the economic domination of hegemonic capitalist nations and animated by ideological narratives grounded in mestizaje and racial democracy. It is associated with the uneven incorporation of the Global South into the world system and the corresponding role occupied by different ethnic-racial groups within the domestic division of labor and their participation in the various layers within the social pyramid.

Regarding coloniality of power, while sharing the same understanding of the multiple forms of white world domination, especially epistemological, racial developmentalism emphasizes the internal white-mestizo domination over the dark-skinned "others," which means that as important as inter-nations domination is the domestic colonialism making Indigenous, African descendants and dark-skinned mestizos of whatever ancestry as second layer citizens and economic agents in their nations. Thus, these groups are politically and economically colonized subjects inside their nations.

That is why the "legend of enchanted modernity" is the ideological grounds of racial developmentalism. It is characterized as a combination of discourses and policies that view dark-skinned individuals as less worthy or less intellectually capable of participating in Brazil's modern, industrial society. This social stratification theoretically occurs without trauma, as the lack of a "logical mindset" that prevents Afro-Brazilians from achieving this is precisely what fosters their perceived conformed bliss, both happy and foolish, to existing social and racial imbalances. This perspective sheds light on why, during the latter half of the twentieth century, many segments of Brazilian society, across various ideological lines, regarded it as usual for Afro-Brazilians to remain a small minority in the most esteemed or economically and politically influential social and institutional environments. It portrays a narrative that essentializes those people as naïve non-bearers of instrumental action and, hence, willing to establish non-conflictive asymmetric economic, political, and symbolic exchanges with their lighter-skinned superiors. It makes them passive subaltern players disposable in the public bargain on public resource allocation, social protection, and investments in their collective improvement. That is why, guided by the parameters of the "legend of modern enchantment," the philosophers of racial developmentalism were so vehemently opposed to affirmative action for Afro-Brazilians in higher

education. However, while they lost that episodic "battle," this does not mean that other disputes have been resolved.

After decades of stagnation caused by the foreign debt crisis, hyperinflation, neoliberal policies, and the displacement of the technological frontier, a new horizon to retake national development emerged, referred to as neo-developmentalism (Benjamin, 2004; Bresser-Pereira, 2024; Costa, 2003). Contrary to the mid twentieth century, when economists and policymakers dared to question the terms of the international division of labor through an active industrialization policy, the current neo-developmentalist's proposal is rather aimed at potentializing the more dynamic sectors of agriculture, agribusiness cattle raising, and mining. Contrary to the mid-twentieth century, when economists and policymakers dared to question the Brazilian traditional incorporation in the international division of labor through an active industrialization policy, the current neo-developmentalist proposal is instead aimed at enhancing the more dynamic sectors of agriculture, agribusiness, cattle raising, and mining. This new racial developmentalist model is even more reliant upon natural resources exploration, putting at risk, in an unprecedented way, the traditional communities that, across generations, have been living and protecting the environment of the sites where they have been living, such as Indigenous and quilombo communities. Ironically, while in the past those contingents were regarded by the State, corporations, and their intellectuals as semi-savages occupying their "natural places," in the jungles, nowadays, the neo-racial-developmentalism acts toward ousting them from their homes to the peripheries and slums of big metropolises. In their new "natural place," they can join their dark-skinned unfortunate country-fellows, doomed to urban violence, underemployment, and dismay.

Additionally, the twentieth-first-century's flourishing Brazilian Black movement, the adoption of affirmative actions, the passing of legislation to protect domestic service, and redistributive policies such as the Minimum Income valorization and the Bolsa Família program, which served primarily Afro-Brazilian families, met with overt white middle-class discontentment, irritated by the relative loss of income and social prestige to dark-skinned Afro-Brazilians (Paixão, 2014; de Santana Pinho, 2009; Porto, 2023).

In this sense, the crisis of Brazilian racial developmentalism was expressed through the emergence of far-right wing discourse and organizations

nostalgic with the old patriarchal, patrimonial, and authoritarian society framed upon immense social and racial distances. Therefore, if Brazil is an "enchanted modernity," this legend is grounded in an assumption of a natural and indisputable racial inequality. This is the condition for racial harmony. Instead of a "side B" of this model or an undesirable effect of a benign pattern, racial asymmetry is the paramount principle that grants the Brazilian racial formation and developmentalist model the coherence and conditions for its continuous reproduction. Hence, as an actual firewall against pro-redistributive measures, the "legend of enchanted modernity," the spirit of racial developmentalism, places the dark-skinned people's subalternity as a national utopia.

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