

Modern Brazil: Essays and ideologies



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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents an expository picture of some of the main essays that carried out the work of interpreting modern Brazil. To expose the ideologies rooted in this genre used by Brazilian

intellectuals in the twentieth century, the text points to the different Brazils imagined by scholars such as Gilberto Freyre, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Caio Prado Junior, Antonio Candido, Raymundo Faoro, Dante Moreira Leite, Celso Furtado and Carlos Guilherme Mota, who dedicated to the discussion and critical reflection on the formation of the Brazilian people concerned with the construction of their identity in Brazil as a Portugal's colony, during the empire and as a republic in the process of social and capitalista development. Along the way, cultural, political, and economic ideologies were shaped, which masked some of our fundamental contradictions.

Keywords: Essays, Ideologies, Brazil.

1 INTRODUCTION

The understanding of the essay as a form of knowledge relevant to the process of analysis and understanding of modern Brazil demands the delimitation of the time in which it was used as a heuristic tool in the interpretation of Brazilian culture, morals, economy and politics, especially from the period in which it was conventionally accepted to read the country in terms of its entry into modernity. Considering that by modernity we mean the economic and social framework fed by the development of the productive forces of capitalism, by the technical advance provided by the industrial revolution, we chose the 70s of the nineteenth century as the period that records how "the Brazilian transition to modernity had a privileged and contradictory moment" (FREITAS, 2011, p. 25).

For Marcus Vinicius de Freitas (2011, p. 16), in his book "Contradictions of Modernity: The Brazilian Dawn Newspaper", "themes related to the contradictory emergence of modernity in Brazil, such as the emergence of the scientific paradigm in a society that is still slave-owning, the romanticized permanence of literature as a space for the construction of national identity", the continuity and reiteration of the centralization of power, Despite the change of empire, the Republic and "the permanence of the conflict between the agrarian socio-economic model and the growth of the cities" will represent the existence of elements of continuity between the First Republic and the final decades of the Empire, that is, the years from 1870 to 1930.



In fact, considering that the matrix of this line of approach was inaugurated by the essayist Gilberto Freyre, in the book *Order and Progress*, we understand that the study of the contradictions related to Brazil's entry into modernity needs to start from the investigation of the Brazilian essayism of the twentieth century. To what extent Brazilian social thought, reigning in the essayistic form, was consolidated through a critique of a colonialist reading of the ethnic groups that mixed here, breaking with the positivist and evolutionist ideas that emerged in the country in 1870, in which racial models of analysis played a fundamental role in the interpretation of our reality. Next, we present some of the main ideologies ratified by some essays produced in the country.

1.1 GILBERTO FREYRE AND SÉRGIO BUARQUE DE HOLANDA

Casa grande e senzala deserves a special mention, since Gilberto Freyre was the great representative of the proposal to renounce the biologizing perspective of a racist nature in the description of the history of Brazil for an analysis that refuses to ideologically justify the "inferiority" of Brazilian culture through racial traits, as he makes evident in the preface: "I learned to consider the difference between race and culture to be fundamental" (...). "The whole plan of this essay is based on this criterion of fundamental differentiation between race and culture" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 32).

On the other hand, if we use as a premise the Adornian statement (2003, p. 35), present in his text "The essay as form", according to which "the deepest formal law of the essay is heresy" and that it, the essay, seeks to unearth "the blind spots of its objects", since "only the infraction of the orthodoxy of thought makes visible, in the thing (in the object), that which the objective purpose of orthodoxy secretly seeks to keep invisible" (ADORNO, 2003, p. 45), our approach needs to point to the crystallization of the ideology of Brazilian culture in the essays that aim to build an economic, political and cultural panel of this modern Brazil. In this way, Carlos Guilherme Mota, in his essay "Ideology of Brazilian Culture (1933-1974)", highlights the blind spots of Freyre's essay, whose manifestation of a seigniorial vision of the world presents the social, political and psychological life of the oligarchies, of the rural aristocracy of the Northeast, as a metonymy of Brazilian culture: "in the Casas Grandes it was until today where the Brazilian character was best expressed" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 45). For many ideologues of his time, the "Brazilian character" exists as a tangible reality, and not as an ideology" (MOTA, 2014, p. 97).

According to Mota (2014, p. 98), Freyre's essayism indicates "the effort to understand the Brazilian reality carried out by an aristocratic elite that was losing power". Written by a son of the old republic, this work, produced by the essayistic strand, covers, under regionalist and/or universalist formulas, "the real problem that is that of the relations of domination in Brazil" (MOTA, 2014, p. 98). In fact, without the interest in analyzing the history of Brazil from the perspective of the conflict, but attentive to the harmonies between the classes, Gilberto Freyre (2006, p.116) points out that "the



Brazilian formation has been, in fact, a process of balancing antagonisms". It is from the matrix of this reasoning that the ideology of racial democracy will be naturalized in the country.

In *Casa-grande e senzala*, when he talks about the process of Portuguese colonization, Emphasizing the cultural contact of the Portuguese with Indians and blacks, Gilberto Freyre (2006, p. 276) delimits its object, stating that, in this essay, he is only indirectly interested in the economic or political aspect of the Portuguese colonization of Brazil, since, directly, "he is only interested in the social, in the particular sense of social that coincides with the sociological. And no more important social background to consider in the colonizer Portuguese his extraordinary richness and variety of ethnic and cultural antagonisms; than its cosmopolitanism." The idea of this Brazilian thinker was to show that "Brazilian society, hybrid from the beginning, is the one that has been most harmoniously constituted in terms of race relations of all Americas: within an environment of almost cultural reciprocity that resulted in the maximum use of the values and experiences of the peoples backward by the advanced" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 160). The fundamental nucleus of this environment would be that of the patriarchal family, which governed the specificities of the relationships that determined life in the big house and in the slave quarters. The patriarchal family would be the basic social unit, regulating Brazilian society. For Elide Rugai Bastos (2016, p. 409), in an afterword written for a critical edition of the work *Raízes do Brasil*, "being the basic social unit, it is what makes society self-regulating, since the family, not the individual, nor the State nor any commercial company has been, since the sixteenth century, the great colonizing factor of Brazil".

For Gilberto Freire (2006, p. 36), "the big house, completed by the slave quarters, represents an entire economic, social, and political system: of production (the land monoculture); of labor (slavery); transport (the ox cart, the banguê, the net, the horse); religion (the Catholicism of the family); sexual and family life (polygamous patriarchy); of politics (cronyism)." In these terms, forming the structure of this society, the basic social unit, the big house and the slave quarters would not have been founded by the decisive participation of the agency, since its determinisms could be identified "in economic terms, in terms of cultural experience and the organization of the family, which was here the colonizing unit" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 34). In this work, the anthropologist highlights the social plasticity of the Portuguese as a moral characteristic that determines the sweetness of racial and social relations within this patriarchal family unit. The author outlines the history of the relations of the Portuguese with other "races" to exemplify the adaptation to Brazil of this people who constitute the victorious part of the colonization process. The personalism of the Portuguese will contribute to the organization of this family unit, as well as the plasticity of the black, naturally predisposed, according to the author, to agrarian work. This is what for Gilberto Freire characterizes the superiority of black culture over indigenous culture.



Consequently, it is in the Casa-grande and in the slave quarters that it is possible to analyze the African influence on the culture, character and eugenics of the Brazilian, the type of cultural contact that will be established between the conqueror and the conquered, between the Portuguese and the black. Impacting on the social relations that would shape the Brazilian man, the Casa-grande and the Senzala formed the unity of the "alliance of the black nanny with the white boy, of the mucama with the *sinhá-moça*, of the little *sinhozinho* with the boy" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 416), which put an end to this duality. "We have become two fraternizing halves that have been mutually enriched with different values and experiences." In this writer's view, "there was a deep fraternization of values and feelings among us" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 438). In this intercultural process, the masters contracted some habits from their slaves and in this way the superior and the inferior came closer. From this set of factors, Gilberto Freire (2006, p. 435) concludes: "we emphasize the sweetness in the relations between masters and domestic slaves, perhaps greater in Brazil than in any other part of the Americas". This is the outline of the sociological, political and scientific conditions for the emergence of the ideology of racial and social democracy in Brazilian social thought.

To explain this social democratization in Brazil, Gilberto Freire presents "the singular predisposition of the Portuguese to the hybrid and slave-owning colonization of the tropics." For him, the Portuguese is characterized by being an undefined people between Europe and Africa. Portugal represents a plastic social whole, whose volcanic social constitution had never been completely hardened or definitively stratified; Their ethnic background does not reflect any exclusivism of kind, race or culture. Contacts of race and culture were freer and more diverse. Since the mobility of families and individuals from one class to another has been constant, it would be impossible, according to Gilberto Freire, to conclude that there were ethnic and social stratifications in a people that had always remained so plastic and predisposed to contact. After five centuries, social classes in Portugal had not been stratified into insurmountable exclusivisms. Since the Portuguese the people most predisposed to the slave labor regime, their greatest contribution would have been their plasticity. This, together with the plasticity of the African, would form the unity of our family and patriarchal organization. Therefore, constitutive of the slave system, of the big house and slave quarters, and determined by the plasticity of both the Portuguese and the black in their modes of social organization, "the technique of our economic production influences, according to the anthropologist, on the structure of societies" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 32). Here we have the structure that precedes agency, the social solidarity that supplants colonization by individuals.

As this anthropologist asserts, "colonization by individuals – soldiers of fortune, adventurers, exiles, New Christians fleeing religious persecution, castaways, slave traders, parrots and timber traffickers – left almost no trace in the economic landscape of Brazil" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 81). This colonization by individuals "remained so shallow, so surface-like, and lasted so short-lived that



politically and economically this irregular settlement did not define itself as a colonizing system" (FREYRE, 2006, p. 81). In fact, in this passage we find the sociological essay by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda. In it, agency precedes structure and the cult of personality of man Portuguese is responsible for the laxity of our social structure.

With a methodology different from that of Gilberto Freyre, the essayism of Sérgio Buarque de Holanda privileges the logic of contrasts. "Raízes do Brasil is built on an admirable methodology of opposites" (CANDIDO, 2007, p. 129), exploring polar concepts: "work and adventure; method and whimsy; rural and urban; bureaucracy and caudillismo; impersonal norm and affective impulse" (CANDIDO, 2007, p. 130). This historian brings to light the criticism of the "patriarchal" and agrarian foundations of Brazilian society. While Freyre denounced the prejudice of race, the valorization of the element of color, despite his identification of psychological predispositions of races in the different ethnic groups he analyzes, Sérgio Buarque presupposes the liquidation of the roots of our past, the adoption of the urban rhythm of life (CANDIDO, 2007).

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda's reading of Brazil privileges an analysis of Brazilian culture through its Iberian heritage. In this sense, the liquidation of our roots means the stripping of the culture of personality that shapes the agents responsible for colonization in the tropics. No people "has been able to develop to such an extreme this culture of personality that seems to constitute the most decisive trait in the evolution of the Hispanic people, since time immemorial" (HOLANDA, 2016, p. 41). In fact, the author intends to represent the way in which European culture was implanted in the Brazilian territory, making us heirs of its forms of conviviality, institutions and ideas, while making use of sociological categories in order to construct a typology of our social identity. In his work, agency (individual) precedes structure (society) and man's cult of personality is Portuguese responsible for the laxity of our social structure. Bearing fruit on the anarchic elements and the lack of social cohesion, "the initiatives, even when they were intended to be constructive, were continually in the direction of separating men, not uniting them" (HOLANDA, 1995, p. 33). In an allusion to Gilberto Freire, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda does not cling to the customs that form the tradition of the Portuguese people to find the only defense against our disorder. On the contrary, for him (HOLANDA, 1995, p. 32), "it is from this that the singular lukewarmness of the forms of organization, of all the associations that imply solidarity and order among these peoples, largely results. On land where everyone is a baron, no lasting collective bargaining agreement is possible."

For Elide Rugai Bastos (2016, p. 409), "the consequences and political-social effects of the transfer to Brazil of traces of the personalist culture" of the Portuguese are "seen differently in the work of Freyre and Holanda". If, for Gilberto Freire, "personalism is the element that allows the patriarchal family its conciliatory character and its role in ordering society" (BASTOS, 2016, p. 409), for Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1995, p. 32) it is the factor of our disorder, since, for the Portuguese, "the index



of a man's value is inferred, First of all, to the extent that you don't have to depend on others, to the extent that you don't need anyone, to the extent that you suffice. Each one is a child of himself, of his own effort, of his virtues." Centered on the individual and his personality, "the circle of capital virtues for the Iberian people is directly related to the feeling of the dignity of each individual" (1995, p. 37). The type of man who coordinates his actions according to the high deeds and the high virtues that "advantageously supply the prose of blood aspires to manifest the feeling of a true noble ethic", which would correspond to authentic nobility for the Portuguese.

In fact, this mentality will represent a great obstacle, in Holland's understanding, to the development of the spirit of spontaneous organization, so characteristic of Protestant peoples, and especially of Calvinists, which the sociologist Max Weber presents in his work "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism". The lack of a rationalization of life and of "a work morality will fit well with a reduced capacity for social organization" (HOLANDA, 1995). For the historian, this morality of work has always represented an exotic fruit for the Spanish and Portuguese. Based on the social typologies of the Weberian method, the writer of *Visions of Paradise* presupposes the existence of an ethic of work and an ethic of adventure, composing two types that are mutually exclusive in the way the conduct of the Iberian peoples are formed. It is worth remembering, as Max Weber (2016, p. 254) tells us, that "the construction of abstract ideal types does not matter as an end, but solely and exclusively as a means of knowledge". In other words, the characteristic idea of this method is to form a framework of thought, not of historical reality, and much less of 'authentic' reality. Postulating a homogeneous framework of purely ideal thought, "reality is measured in order to clarify the empirical content of some of its important elements, and with which it is compared" (WEBER, 2016, p. 255).

For Sérgio Buarque, the ethics that underlie the conduct of the Portuguese is the ethics of the adventurer, exemplified by the "desire for prosperity without cost, honorific titles, easy positions and riches" (HOLANDA, 2016, p. 66), because nothing seems to them more stupid and petty than the ideal of the worker. "What the Portuguese came to seek was, in the words of Holanda, wealth, but wealth that costs boldness, not wealth that costs work" (HOLANDA, 2016, p. 72). In this process, the ethic of the adventurer becomes decisive as a factor in our colonization, beyond the sociological conception according to which the patriarchal family would have functioned as a fundamental element of our social cohesion. In fact, as Sérgio Buarque (1995, p. 58) states, "in the urban trades, the same love for easy gain and infixity that so characterize rural work in Brazil reigned". For this author, what the Portuguese lacked in plasticity they lacked in the spirit of methodical and coordinated enterprise, in work capacity and social cohesion.

Analyzing the impact of rural inheritance on the constitution of the country's social institutions, Sérgio Buarque points to the predominance of the big-house mentality in the administrative means consolidated in the country's cities, as well as in the relations between their rulers and ruled, between



monarchs and subjects, whose principle of political economy holds that "the sovereign of each nation must consider himself as the head or head of a vast family, and consequently to support all who are in it, as its children and cooperators of general happiness" (1995, p. 85). According to him, "the predominance of ruralism, to all appearances, was more a typical phenomenon of the effort of our colonizers than an imposition of the environment" (HOLANDA, 1995, p. 92). This effort is at the basis of the model of social order bequeathed to us by the Portuguese, a model marked by a lack of cohesion, association and organic solidarity. Condemned for conduct based on an ethic of adventure, devoid of actions oriented towards an objective end, an ascetic morality, we could only offer to life in society the type of the cordial man. Alluding to the core of Gilberto Freire's work, this author ratifies his critique of the structural social processes consecrated by the effects of the patriarchal family structure and its incompatibility with the formation of an impersonal society founded on the state bureaucracy:

The state is not an enlargement of the family circle, still less an integration of certain groupings, of certain particularistic wills, of which the family is the best example. There is no gradation between the family circle and the state, but rather a discontinuity and even an opposition. The fundamental indistinction between the two forms is a romantic prejudice that had its most enthusiastic adherents during the nineteenth century (HOLANDA, 1995, p. 141).

Therefore, with Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, the social and political effects of Portuguese personalism are different, as are the modes of social order that are built by the emergence of the State bureaucracy. In this way, a consolidated economic, political and social system could not depend on the family structure, the big house and slave quarters, but on actions rationally guided by individuals with a view to the formation of an impersonal order, free of particularistic determinations, abstract, which transgresses the domestic and family order: the State. Here is the outline of what should underlie a work ethic in the modern capitalist and industrial system, here is the outline, fostered by Holanda, of the relationship that involves agency and structure in his sociological essay.

In this sense, both Gilberto Freyre and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda thematize the permanence of the conflict between the agrarian socioeconomic model and the growth of cities as we can scrutinize the contradictions of our modernity. However, as Mota (2014, p. 71) states, if "Freyre's work had the weight of a denunciation of the intellectual, theoretical, and methodological backwardness that characterized social and historical studies in Brazil", Antonio Candido (2006, p. 220) is right when he states that "the 1930s were years of political, religious, and social engagement in the field of culture" and that his "radicalization itself, critical and progressive, had as one of its most salient traits, in addition to the national consciousness, the eagerness to reinterpret the national past" (CANDIDO, 2006, p. 230).



1.2 CAIO PRADO JÚNIOR, RAYMUNDO FAORO AND ANTONIO CANDIDO

For the writer of *Formação da literatura brasileira*, "these are the books that we can consider key, the ones that seem to express the mentality linked to the breath of intellectual radicalism and social analysis that erupted after the 1930 revolution and was not, despite everything, stifled by the *Estado Novo*" (CANDIDO, 2007, p. 125). Included in this breath of radicalism in the 1930s, Caio Prado Júnior's work *Formação do Brasil contemporâneo* (*Formation of Contemporary Brazil*) is highlighted as the one that carries out a materialist interpretation of Brazil. Unlike Gilberto Freyre, who hides "the real search for the meaning of colonization and the histories of the relations of domination in Brazil" (MOTA, 2014, p. 103), as well as "the contradictions of the historical-social process, classes and estates in their specific dynamisms and their conflicts and maladjustments in the global social system" (MOTA, 2014, p. 106), Caio Prado Junior (2008, p. 29) points out that "the colonization of the tropics takes on the aspect of a vast commercial enterprise, destined to exploit the natural resources of a virgin territory for the benefit of European trade".

Since this is the meaning of colonization, the essence of our training, "we were constituted to supply sugar, tobacco, cotton, gold, diamonds and coffee for the European trade" (JUNIOR, 2008, p. 30). The effects of these open veins were long-lasting on the country's political and economic culture. Understanding that agriculture is the economic nerve of civilization, it will be from it that Caio Prado will identify "the three constitutive elements of the agrarian organization of colonial Brazil: large property, monoculture and slave labor" (JUNIOR, 2008, p. 121). By concentrating the exploitation in the monoculture of the *latifúndia*, in the large-scale plantation, where the main product destined for export "absorbs all the activities and no one takes care of food crops" (JUNIOR, 2008, p. 163), of the subsistence culture, the country's economic system creates a problem that is one of the most serious that the colonial population had to face: that of hunger.

The result of this process is well known, since in the process of primitive accumulation of capital monoculture came to destroy the source of the worker's survival, transforming him into wage-earners dependent on the owners of the means of production. Still in relation to the work of Caio Prado, Candido (2007, p. 127) reminds us that this "first great example of interpretation of the past in terms of the basic realities of the economy", based on a factual exposition, is entirely removed from the essayism that is striking in Gilberto Freyre and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, since it aims to convince by the quality and quantity of data and arguments. But we have already recognized the heuristic dimension of essayism, so that, as Adorno (2004) says, "the essay does not follow the rules of the game of organized science and theory", by which the well-documented unveiling of the material substrates would represent its final cause.

As a critique of the current political and social system, "the essay is a critique of ideology" (ADORNO, 2004, p.38). Once science reduces the difficulties and complexities of an antagonistic



reality to simplifying models, "the essay shakes the illusion of this simple world", an illusion that lends itself comfortably to the defense of the status quo" (ADORNO, 2004, p.33). In this sense, further away from essayism and closer to scientific, yet without simplifying the complexities of the antagonistic Brazilian reality, Caio Prado scrutinizes the social classes in the uneven development of our economy. With it, "social classes emerge for the first time in the horizons of explanation of the Brazilian social reality" (MOTA, 2014, p.70).

However, it should be noted that the duality between an archaic Brazil and a Brazil in the march of bourgeois development has been asserted in other essays. Through them, it is necessary to understand "the extent of the difference between the seigniorial perspective and the criticism of the young intellectuals of the Brazilian middle class that emerges in universities" (MOTA, 2014, p. 165). By writing an essay whose focus was political and whose objective was to criticize the owners of the country's representative power, Raymundo Faoro contemplates us with a decisive essayism, capable of teaching us that "the predominance of state bureaucracy in national politics brings water to the mill of traditional conservatism rather than represents an advance in the democratization of institutions and society" (CARDOSO, 2013, p. 228), which should not lead us to confuse our "eventual progressive modernization, even if authoritarian, with the entry of popular and democratic interests into the State" (CARDOSO, 2013, p. 228).

In his book "The Owners of Power", Faoro (2001, p. 877) points out that in Brazil "popular sovereignty exists only as a farce, concealment or deception". Throughout our colonial, imperial and republican formation, the permanence of a patrimonial state was predominant, whose bureaucratic establishment guaranteed the consolidation of political relations based on clientelism, on the relationship of favor. The distribution of honorary titles, positions, benefits and tax incentives was almost always carried out by some chief who aimed, with a view to the reproduction of a dependent society, to protect the particular interests of oligarchic groups. In fact, for Faoro (2001, p. 885), "the bureaucratic class, founded on the patrimonial system of politically oriented capitalism, acquired the aristocratic content, of the nobility of the toga and the title".

Some examples of this patrimonial practice are exposed by Raymundo Faoro in his articles published in the weekly column of *Senhor* magazine in the 80s of the last century. In the text "The truth of the economy and the truth of the facts", the author (2018, p. 37) points out that "the articulators of economic and financial policy" in Brazil strive "to demonstrate that they run the country with the support of reason, while all those who suffer the effects of inflation and stagnation merely with the support of facts", which are contingent and refutable. For the writer of "The Owners of Power", the Brazilian bureaucratic elite governs the country disregarding the democratic representative system, building an economic rationality that "is above the everyday fool", an "economy where man is not counted, the most contingent and the most irrational of beings" (FAORO, 2018, p. 39).



In "The Transition and the Resource of the Sword", Faoro points to the conservative nature of the Brazilian political transition, which, far from the concern of establishing popular sovereignty, remains obedient to the rules of the dictatorship, whose political game was against the progressive agendas, since, in this country, "with one step to the left and three to the right, one enters the territory of transition" (FAORO, 2018, p. 113), that is, of the false transition. In another article, "And the transition, what end did it take?", published in April 1986, the writer of "Machado de Assis: the pyramid and the trapeze" states that the sociologists on duty and the most respected politicians in the square "sold the thesis that, between the regime of the general-presidents and the democratic and constitutional regime, there would be a space similar to the one that existed between the Red Sea and the Promised Land" (FAORO, 2018, p. 173), in whose crossing the fortress of the past would have been dismantled, with the removal of the "authoritarian rubble". His criticism of the country's political transition process aims to unmask ideologies, showing that the New Republic was not founded.

Finally, after the identification of ideology in the cultural and political field, it is relevant to discuss the ideology of national development present in the 1950s in our essayism. In fact, in order to combat all conservative and reactionary forms of thought, Antonio Candido will outline, as Mota states, the angulation of the new Brazilian middle class in its difference in relation to the seigniorial perspective, that is, a concern with a reading of the country more linked to the processes of industrialization. In his essay "Literature and Underdevelopment", Candido reminds us that "the awareness of underdevelopment is post-World War II and manifested itself clearly from the 1950s onwards". Concerned with the problem of overcoming our cultural and literary dependence, the writer of "The Critical Method of Silvio Romero" traces the "evolutionary" line of this intended process: "From the mild awareness of backwardness, of the ideology of a 'new country', we move on to the ideology of a 'country in the process of development' (MOTA, 2014, p. 191).

However, this development does not represent a definitive break with the economic "old regime", dominated by an oligarchy dependent on the colonial complex, which "is always necessary for modernization and always feeds forms of capital accumulation that would otherwise be impracticable" (FERNANDES, 2009, p. 58). In this sense, the bourgeois revolution was never consolidated in Brazil as a process emancipated from the social and economic structures of the old colonial system and the political effects in modern Brazil can be evidenced in the practices of a bourgeoisie that instigated "proletarianization without wanting to accept the corresponding democratization of the competitive social order" (FERNANDES, 2009, p. 63). converting the idea of economic development into a compensatory illusion for social strata that benefited from dependent capitalism, sometimes positively accepting their bourgeois condition, representing the interests of big capital, sometimes taking pride "in their contribution to economic progress", as does "the salaried or



semi-salaried worker who practices saving with a view to enrichment and the passage to the business world" (FERNANDES, 2009, p. 58).

The ideology of economic development functioned as the driving force of a dependent capitalism, driven by the effects of patrimonialist political formations, which were at the service of a process of "reproduction of the privileged strata of colonial origin, to which were added the representatives of foreign firms and native merchants" (FERNANDES, 2009, p. 67). By silencing the social strata excluded from this development, marginalizing them within the dependent economy and keeping them completely out of the competitive social order dictated by hegemonic economies, dependent capitalism has generated, in modern Brazil, "economic underdevelopment and social, cultural and political underdevelopment" (FERNANDES, 2009, p. 66). In fact, the developmentalist utopia continued to be reinforced, in the 1950s and 1960s, by a bourgeois mentality that aimed to reproduce the violent nobleman's ethic of seigniorial practices, in the light of an authoritarian conservative modernization that was under the control of social circles refractory to any attempt to decolonize economic structures. political and social issues.

1.3 CELSO FURTADO AND CARLOS GUILHERME MOTA

As can be seen, the great explainers of Brazil were entangled in the dualism of modernization inscribed in the process of transition from the rural to the industrial economic model, based on the growth of the cities. Thus, the collapse of the oligarchy had succeeded a dependent bourgeoisie. With the goal of the dissolution of archaic Brazil and economic independence, a large part of the so-called progressive intelligentsia defended developmentalism, the project of nationalist reformism. Interpreting Brazil from a teleological path that presupposes an overcoming of its ideologies, Dante Moreira Leite (1983, p. 363), in his book "The Brazilian National Character", presents "the suggestion that the ideology of the Brazilian national character began to have less significance and began to disappear at the moment when the objective conditions of economic life imposed the need for a new nationalism". Entangled in this awareness-limit of his time, this author contemplates us with few examples to evidence this overcoming, showing himself to be restricted to the cases of Caio Prado Júnior, Florestan Fernandes and Celso Furtado. But access to the latter does not correspond to his global vision of the Brazilian economy, since the writer's essay on Economic Formation of Brazil that was published after his work, "The Myth of Economic Development", in 1974, was not yet on the horizon of Dante Moreira Leite's thought.

However, although he expresses the awareness that "it is the conditions of social life that determine psychological characteristics, although these can also influence social life" (LEITE, 1983, p. 365), Dante Moreira Leira presupposes an interpretation of Brazil devoid of ideological mediations, whose axiological neutrality, coming from an intelligentsia emancipated from class struggles, could



guarantee the overcoming of ideologies. Critical of this interpretation, Carlos Guilherme Mota (2014, p. 284) sees in this picture "the ideology of those who clothe themselves with an entire scientific apparatus to escape from an ideology", that is, "the ideology of overcoming ideology". In fact, it is singular that Carlos Guilherme Mota circumscribes his analysis of Brazilian essayism to the period from 1933 to 1974, the date of the first publication of "The Myth of Economic Development", by Celso Furtado. If, for him (2014, p. 328), the notion of culture served to "blur the structural tensions generated in the assembly of class society and to mask the problem of dependence", the non-incorporation of the work of the economist just mentioned may mean a turning point in this process.

Celso Furtado's work focuses precisely on these structural tensions pointed out by Mota and on the problem of dependence. For Furtado (1981, p. 60), if, on the one hand, "the growing insertion of peripheral economies in the field of international action of large capitalist companies contributes to the modernization of these states" and to a consistent autonomy of their bureaucratic organizations, on the other hand, "the orientation of economic activities, imposing the concentration of income and leading to the coexistence of sumptuary forms of consumption with the misery of the great masses, it is the origin of social tensions" (FURTADO, 1981, p. 60), because the wages paid by large companies for the labor they hire are low. Thus, peripheral countries do not appropriate the accumulated capital, which contributes to the expansion of the market reached by these companies. In this process, Furtado (1981, p. 67) reminds us, the "industrialization of peripheral countries will contribute to widening the gap that separates them from the center of the system."

Moreover, for Furtado (1981), the bureaucracies that control the peripheral states, the owners of power, do not seem to be attracted by assuming the economic orientation against the control of large companies, in order to "establish priorities according to coherent social objectives compatible with the effort of accumulation" within the internal process of development. This reading of Brazil's economic development promotes skepticism about the possibility of peripheral countries being integrated into the development logic of the central countries. This is the myth pointed out by the essay, whose hypothesis does not accept the understanding that "the current consumption patterns of rich countries tend to generalize on a planetary scale", since the current economic orientation, accepted and legitimized by local policies, excludes the great masses from the surplus value generated by the process of accumulation of these large companies. And the reasoning is mathematical: "the income level of the population of the central countries is about ten times higher than that of the population of the peripheral countries" (FURTADO, 1981, p. 71). Thus, criticizing the state of dependence in which these countries find themselves, an indispensable problem for Carlos Guilherme Mota, as we have exposed in the previous paragraphs, Celso Furtado (1981, p. 75) is peremptory:

"The economies of the periphery will never be developed in the sense of being similar to the economies that form the present center of the capitalist system. But how can we deny that this idea has been of great use in mobilizing the peoples of the periphery and leading them to accept



enormous sacrifices, in legitimizing the destruction of archaic forms of culture, in explaining and making understood the need to destroy the physical environment, in order to justify forms of dependence that reinforce the predatory character of the productive system?"

2 CONCLUSION

The process of cultural colonization promoted by the elites is denounced, throughout the last essay in question, as a means that sustains the ideology of the myth of economic development. Therefore, as seen throughout this text, the essayism responsible for the invention of modern Brazil imagined different Brazils, sometimes centered on the discussion of the identity of the Brazilian people, sometimes concerned with a country in the process of development. Along the way, cultural, political, and economic ideologies were shaped, which masked some of our fundamental contradictions. However, this essayism did not fail, at various times, to contemplate some of the purposes of its conventions: that it unearthed "the blind spots of its objects", especially when it undertook the task of carrying out the reading of modern Brazil and a critique of the ideologies that constitute it.



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