


DEVELOPMENT, POLITICS, AND RACE IN BRAZILIAN SOCIAL THOUGHT: AN ANALYSIS BASED ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GILBERTO FREYRE, CLÓVIS MOURA, CAIO PRADO JR., FLORESTAN FERNANDES, AND FERNANDO HENRIQUE CARDOSO¹

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ABSTRACT

The article aims to discuss the ideas of development, politics, and race in Brazil through Brazilian social thought, analyzing the contributions of the authors Gilberto Freyre, Clóvis Moura, Caio Prado Jr. and Florestan Fernandes, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. These authors discuss the formation of Brazilian society from culturalist and critical thinking. The methodology of the research was qualitative and bibliographic, opting for authors who unveil the economic, social, political, and racial formation of Brazil. The analysis of Brazilian society states that the concept of race and racism have conditioned social, political, and economic development, generating social and racial inequalities.

Keywords: Brazilian Social Thought. Development and Policy. Race and Society.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to discuss the ideas of the development of Brazil through Brazilian social thought, analyzing the contributions of the authors Gilberto Freyre, Clóvis Moura, Caio Prado Jr., Florestan Fernandes, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and Rugai Eliede Bastos, who weaved discussions on the issue of social, political, cultural and economic development of Brazil present in Brazilian social thought. As a methodology, we used a literature review of the Brazilian classics: *Casa-Grande & Senzala* (Freyre, 2003), *Sociology of the Black Brazilian* (Moura, 2019), *Dependency and Development in Latin America: Essay on Sociological Interpretation* (Cardoso, 1977), *The Bourgeois Revolution in Brazil* (Fernandes, 2005), in addition to the articles *From the origin to the hegemony and crisis of southern Brazilian cotton in the twentieth century* (Gonçalves; Ramos, 2008) and *Actuality of Brazilian social thought* (Bastos, 2011).

These authors and their respective works revisit the history of Brazil in its respective period, understanding its structure and the way of life of the Brazilian population, in addition to perceiving the contributions of its people to the national identity, as Freyre does with the work *Casa-Grande & Senzala*, discussing economy, religiosity, work and racial issues during the colonial period in Brazil and Clóvis Moura who brings black populations as peoples of resistance, highlighting the formation of quilombos as these spaces of refuge and struggle.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto discuss the idea of dependence and economic development, in which countries maintain a relationship of interdependence with economic centers, in a relationship of exploitation, which is also a way to achieve the so-called and desired development. This relationship of interdependence is present in colonial relations due to Brazil's dependence on Portugal, as well as in the contemporary period with the dependence of Latin countries on the international market.

Meanwhile, Rugai Eliene seeks to understand Brazil's problems that are still so current through the study of the issues most seen by the social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s: emancipation, the right to differences, freedom, dignity for the Brazilian people, exclusion and enslavement, and dictatorships.

Each author used in this article seeks to understand and discuss Brazil from a certain perspective, contributing with a fundamental analysis of Brazil's development, either taking into account ethnic-racial issues or discussing its industrialization, economy, and relationship of interdependence in Latin countries.

A LOOK AT THE THOUGHT OF GILBERTO FREYRE

Gilberto Freyre's (2003) thought on Portuguese colonization in Brazil points to three fundamental pillars that profoundly marked the construction of Brazilian society: miscegenation, latifundia, and slavery. His sociological work "Casa-Grande & Senzala" describes how colonial life was essential in the construction of a mestizo national identity, composed of the fusion of Portuguese, indigenous, and black. The story – often permeated with romanticizations – highlights constant antagonisms, such as tensions between Catholics and heretics, European and African cultures, African and indigenous cultures, Jesuits and farmers, as well as the central relationship between masters and slaves.

According to Freyre, the African influence profoundly shaped Brazilian society, manifesting itself in behavior, music, cuisine, and even intimate relationships. A highlight is the role of wet nurses, who by breastfeeding white children created lasting psychological and affective bonds, often reflected in the future dynamics between men and women. The example of the young man who could only be aroused by the smell of the cloth of his former wet nurse illustrates these psychological marks.

Observing the geographical prism, the agrarian coast was the main space of African influence. Blacks considered more adapted to agricultural work than indigenous people, played a crucial role in the slave regime, bringing with them complex cultures and skills useful to the colonial economy. Freyre points out that African societies, especially the Sudanese, contributed significantly to Brazil's economic and social bases, which were considered biologically and culturally more prepared for the tropics. While blacks were seen as extroverted and adaptable, Indians were portrayed as introverted and averse to regular work. This difference in profile would have influenced the preference for the use of blacks in agricultural work and in the formation of quilombos, often composed of Africans and escaped indigenous people.

The African cultural contribution was remarkable, especially in cuisine, music, and religiosity. The balanced diet and eating habits of blacks shaped Brazilian cuisine, while African religious practices, often associated with Islam, influenced the customs of the slave quarters and even the big houses. Freyre observes that many African slaves were literate and brought technical knowledge, which contrasted with the reality of many illiterate white settlers. Some groups, such as the Sudanese and Bantu, were predominant in certain regions, contributing to cultural and social diversity.

When addressing issues of race, Freyre discusses the scientific theories of the time, which often reflected prejudices and attempted to justify racial differences based on biological or anatomical characteristics. Anthropologists and scientists debated the origin of blacks and their supposed aptitudes, but these approaches often reinforced stigmas and discrimination. Despite this, Freyre emphasizes the intellectual and organizational qualities of blacks, often neglected due to the condition of slavery.

Slavery in Brazil was marked by dynamics of oppression and violence, but also by complex social relations. Mucamas, for example, occupied an ambiguous place as they were simultaneously exploited and valued for their beauty and domestic skills. Sexuality was deeply intertwined with the slave system, with practices that often involved abuse, exploitation, and economic goals, such as forced reproduction to increase the "patrimony" of masters.

We realize that Freyre reinforces cultural aspects of the African influence, which was also manifested in the popular imagination, linguistic traditions, and children's stories. Folkloric characters and stories told by wet nurses shaped the childhood in the big house, creating a cultural legacy that persists to this day. The Brazilian language, less formal and softer than European Portuguese, was also influenced by the interactions between settlers, blacks, and indigenous people. In the religious context, the church played a role of integration and control, converting slaves to Catholicism and promoting festivities that brought masters and captives closer together. However, African religiosity, especially in Bahia, resisted and mixed with Catholicism, creating syncretic practices. Festivals such as Carnival and celebrations of black patron saints, such as São Benedito, illustrate this cultural fusion.

Gilberto Freyre proposed a vision of Brazil centered on the ability of the northeastern oligarchies to accommodate conflicts, contrasting them with those of the Southeast. He argued that northeastern "plasticity", the ability to reconcile tensions of class, race, and region, would be crucial for national unity. This plasticity, according to him, would allow the convergence of rural and urban elites, consolidating patriarchal power at the national level. Freyre saw the coffee oligarchies of the Southeast as less apt for this conciliation, due to a less patriarchal structure. For him, the Northeast, the cradle of Brazilian patriarchy, should assume a central role in the country's leadership.

Freyre's proposal depended on the control of land and labor, aiming at a strategic alliance between the oligarchies. This alliance would seek to harmonize the Southeast, in

an accelerated process of industrialization and with growing labor conflicts, with the Northeast, predominantly agrarian. The control of rural property was fundamental to influencing the flow of workers and delimiting the scope of labor laws, containing the modernization of social conflicts. In this context, the rural exodus from the Northeast would serve as an escape valve for social tensions, especially the *cangaço*, and as a moderating force in the urban centers of the Southeast.

This exodus, however, would not be spontaneous, but coordinated by a centralized state, acting as a patriarch, according to Freyre. The State would be responsible for implementing and disseminating the patriarchal culture of the Northeast, based on the construction of consensus that preserved the power of the elites. This perspective was connected with the debate on the implications of the displacement of rural masses to urban centers, which would alter the racial and cultural composition of cities, intensifying social tensions. Freyre, therefore, proposed adaptations in the methods of selection and control of the working class, especially the black class, to maintain patriarchal control.

Finally, he recognizes slavery as an inhumane institution but argues that it was central to the formation of Brazilian society. Miscegenation and cultural exchange between whites, blacks, and indigenous people gave rise to a unique Brazilian identity, although marked by deep inequalities and historical scars. Freyre's work seeks to understand these complex interactions, highlighting both the contributions and the tragedies resulting from the slave system.

THE ANTAGONISM OF CLASSES AND RACE IN CLÓVIS MOURA

Based on Karl Marx's theory, Clóvis Moura analyzed the dynamics of the class struggle in the context of the Brazilian slave system, opposing the perspective of Gilberto Freyre who attributed to blacks a passive role in history. Moura argued that blacks were not submissive or accommodated, emphasizing the various forms of resistance, especially the organization of quilombos, as an expression of the struggle against slave oppression.

Clóvis Moura's analysis points to a Brazil based on a slave social structure marked by antagonism between two classes: the dominant, composed of slave owners, and the dominant, formed by the enslaved themselves. While the latter were responsible for material production and wealth generation, the masters held control of the means of production and property. With the abolition of slavery, the class that effectively built the

country's economic base – blacks – was excluded from access to property, despite their fundamental contribution to the accumulation of wealth in the slave period.

We have, therefore, a counterpoint between the ideas of Clóvis Moura and Gilberto Freyre, since Freyre saw the slave society from a paternalistic perspective, very clear in his way of approaching the relations established between enslaved blacks and masters, presenting a romanticized perspective, permeated by the kindness of the oppressor towards the oppressed and vice versa.

In his work "Sociology of the Black Brazilian", Clóvis Moura sees that the myth of racial democracy constitutes an ideology that not only legitimizes racial discrimination but also attributes to blacks the responsibility for their social marginalization. By blaming the victim, this ideology serves as an effective mechanism to perpetuate racial inequalities and justify historical and contemporary violence against the black population. The work arises in a context of reevaluation of the role of blacks in Brazilian society, especially after the abolition of slavery. The author seeks to understand the historical roots of marginalization and racial inequality, questioning the passivity of a large part of society in the face of this problem. He says:

Hence our concern is to raise some questions that may explain their situation of marginalization, poverty, discrimination, and social rejection by large segments of the Brazilian population. We do not write, therefore, because of a so-called commemorative fashion (even because there is nothing to celebrate), but as a material for reflection for all those who have not realized the importance of the subject, and, by recognizing it, can make a critical analysis of the alienated behavior of a large part of our nation that blacks have created with their labor during almost four hundred years as slaves, and, later, with one hundred years of free labor (Moura, 2019, p. 35-36).

According to Moura, the construction of an ideological apparatus during the slavery period in Brazil was crucial for the formation of a racist social thought that persists to the present day. This ideology, by dehumanizing blacks and justifying slavery, contributed to the construction of a narrative that minimized the tensions between enslaved people, masters, and the State. By displacing blacks from their humanity, this ideology theoretically sustained an oppressive and unequal system.

There is also an analysis of the first Brazilian studies on the racial issue that reveals a tendency to reproduce preexisting racist ideas. Thinkers such as Perdigão Malheiro and Nina Rodrigues, for example, adopted European evolutionist perspectives to justify national backwardness, attributing it to the black presence. Later authors, such as Arthur Ramos

and Gilberto Freyre, although they made an effort to offer more complex interpretations, ended up reinforcing stereotypes and naturalizing racial inequality. Freyre, for example, idealized the relations between masters and slaves in the "Casa Grande & Senzala", minimizing violence and exploitation. Oliveira Vianna, on the other hand, with his defense of the "Aryanization" of Brazil, expressed an explicitly racist and eugenicist view. Together, these works contributed to the construction of a social imaginary that legitimized racial discrimination and made it difficult to overcome racial inequalities.

FLORESTAN FERNANDES VS CAIO PRADO JR.: THE "DEEP VICES" AND THE "ISSUE OF RACIAL INEQUALITY"

Florestan Fernandes, in contrast to Gilberto Freyre, saw Brazil's colonial, slave-owning, and racial heritage as profoundly negative. For him, slavery shaped a segregated society, and the power structures, articulated with internal and external economic and political forces, perpetuated this "social apartheid". Democracy, according to Fernandes, would only be achieved by mobilizing oppressed groups, through a so-called "democratic revolution".

Fernandes argued that colonization required a rigid social structure, based on slavery, to maintain its extractivist organization. Slavery ensured the accumulation of capital for the elites and sustained the colonial order. The free population, mostly mestizo, was kept in an intermediate position between the elite and the enslaved, preventing the formation of an autonomous colony. Miscegenation, instead of promoting equality, reinforced social hierarchy, associating the "stain of blood" with manual labor, prefiguring the parallel between race and class. Fernandes highlighted the elite's efforts to exclude mestizos, indigenous people, and blacks from power.

The transition to capitalism, according to Fernandes, did not alter the essence of domination. The elites, allied with external forces, maintained their privileges, adapting segregation to the new times. The landlord became a businessman, perpetuating the exploitation of labor inherited from slavery. Fernandes saw these processes as cumulative developments of culture, in which the past persisted in the present.

Economic modernization, while expanding wage labor, did so unevenly. Whites occupied more qualified and paid positions, while blacks concentrated in precarious jobs, perpetuating inequality. Competition for jobs previously reserved for whites has intensified

racial discrimination, overriding class logic. Blacks were pushed to the margins, in precarious jobs or subsistence.

In analyzing the formation of contemporary Brazil, Caio Prado Júnior highlights the importance of understanding the weight of the colonial past in the construction of national identity. In his work, the author argues that the remnants of colonization continue to influence Brazilian society, even in a context marked by profound transformations. Prado Júnior draws attention to the persistence of "a very old reality" that coexists with "a new historical process", generating a tension that prevents the consolidation of a fully realized national project.

Presenting a problematic view of miscegenation and Indigenous genocide, the author praises miscegenation as a tool of cultural domination, in a way aligning itself in parts with Fernandes' thought, where the Portuguese minority imposes its values on a non-European majority. By analyzing the indigenous genocide, Prado Júnior naturalizes it, presenting it as an inevitable historical process, where the "superior" European culture replaces the "inferior" indigenous cultures, a vision marked by a strong Eurocentrism. Genocide appears as a consequence of the development of society.

He points out that, despite the advance of Brazilian colonization, a set of "deep vices" prevented the formation of a modern country. Among these vices, the author highlights the "hasty incorporation of different races and cultures" and "servile work". By placing these elements on the same plane, Prado Júnior evidences the belief that the cultural differences between the ethnic groups that made up Brazilian society were as harmful to the country's development as slavery. This perspective reveals the centrality of the issue of cultural backwardness in the historian's analysis of the challenges faced by Brazil.

DEPENDENCY THEORY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: VIEWS OF FHC AND ENZO FALETTO

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto in their work *Dependency and Development in Latin America* discuss economic development in countries that maintain relations of dependence with economic centers, as a way to ensure survival and sustenance through their economic support. The authors state that the relationship between developing and developed countries is marked by a cycle of dependence, which limits the growth of the periphery. In the authors' view, peripheral countries are inserted in

an international division of labor, which makes them dependent on capital, technologies, and markets of the central countries, establishing a relationship of dependence, which always contributes to the development of the center, but which also benefits the periphery, albeit unequally.

They also seek to highlight the political and social aspects of the development of the Latin American continent and affirm that the social and political structure of Latin countries undergoes changes as different classes and social groups impose their interests and gain space in society. The authors highlight the connection between economic development and social processes, and how these countries that remained dependent conquered autonomy by achieving economic development, even though they were under the dependence of hegemonic poles that managed to become nation-states.

The authors state that the relationship between central and peripheral countries goes beyond the traditional system of exports and imports, which was predominant when thinking about economic relations between central and peripheral countries. This dynamic is more comprehensive, also involving direct investments, where central countries have invested directly in industries in the peripheries, with foreign companies establishing operations in several Latin American countries, benefiting from the products produced within these territories.

For Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, it is possible for developing countries to seek ways to overcome this interdependence and achieve their development, which comes from the relationship between groups and social classes working in harmony, generating transformations and turning these countries into truly organized and developed nations.

It is also highlighted in the work that Latin American industrialization did not occur only as a consequence of its relationship with the center, but due to a moment of global crisis that benefited the growth of Brazilian industry and was fostered by consumption, production, and commitment to internal work in Latin countries. Regarding the growth of Brazilian industry in times of global crises, Gonçalves and Ramos (2008) discuss the second cotton cycle in the nineteenth century, during the Civil War that affected the United States and marked the paralysis of its production and export of cotton to British industries, which favored Brazil exporting its cotton to these industries, developing its economy.

This path is only possible, according to the authors, when we prioritize policies that encourage industrialization, as was done in the state of Maranhão and São Paulo in the

1930s, a period when the coffee crisis in Brazil was taking place. Large and small landowners began to direct their investments to cotton cultivation, and capital was redirected to investment in the industries that grew in the country in the post-World War I period.

Such a process, although intended for the construction of a nation-state and the improvement of industry in Brazil, was not at all efficient, specifically for the poor classes, treating the population as extras despite being supported by its labor in the process of developing industry, preserving the oligarchy and its economic growth.

Gates; and Ramos (2008) discuss the measures taken in Brazil during this period for the benefit of private capital, contributing to the democratization of workers' access to land for the production of cotton, corn, and castor beans in the state of São Paulo. All worked in the service of the so-called development that benefited the industry and the elite, but also found the opportunity to conquer a portion of land to produce for the poor worker.

Cardoso and Faletto (1997) dialogue with Prado Júnior about the interdependence that is linked to a colonial model in the relationship of dependence with capital. For the authors, this model, although in a certain way, it brings benefits, generates delay because it is an archaic model of development in which capital depends on the pole and the pole depends on the hegemonic center.

The formation of contemporary Brazil for Cardoso and Faletto (1997) is related to several parts that are connected, such as cultural aspects from the various cultures that populated the country, its history and the colonization process, the interaction between the peoples and cultures that they brought with them and their practices and economic systems. Because of the various aspects, history and the elements that make up Brazilian society must be considered as part of a larger whole, which involves their interaction. In this way, the authors state that this way we can have a more comprehensive understanding of Brazil's roots.

We bring once again as an example the state of Maranhão, now in the colonial period, in which Brazilian agriculture sustained the economy of Portugal, which exploited its riches for the benefit of English industry. Capital being produced by the poles, in this period the Brazilian captaincies, depended on the hegemonic centers, although in a situation of exploitation. This interdependence prevents the periphery from developing autonomously, scrapping the economy of Maranhão, which was growing when other countries such as the United States were in crisis.

This situation is prevalent among Latin American countries, such as Brazil, which to break this cycle of dependence needs to promote their industrialization, encourage education, innovation, and economic diversification, creating autonomous development. The authors point out that to this day Brazil is a major industrial exporter, for Latin America to free itself from this interdependence a new industrial market is needed, which can only occur through changes in the political and social structure.

Given this process, we highlight the importance of being historical, political, and active subjects amid society, in this way we will gain space, guaranteeing rights as we impose collective interests, even if we are within a process of interdependence, claiming, organizing, and being critical is the way to economic strengthening so that capital is better distributed among the classes of Brazil. This is how we will strengthen our ties as a nation.

The authors bring some characteristics present within these peripheral economies that become industrialized that can contribute to their economy as well as become problems for these countries, they are: A high degree of diversification of the economy, producing several products, which reduces the chances of dependence, since when a product does poorly in its production, another one can be produced with greater intensity in the market. This measure was taken in Brazil during the colonial period, with the reduction of coffee production and the state's incentive for cotton farming; reduced outflow of surpluses, in which there is a control in the outflow of profits, instead of being distributed or sent to the center, the outflow of this capital is reduced, promoting growth in the country and the peripheral company; specialized labor is a growing characteristic within the peripheral industrialized economies, generating competitiveness, formed by workers who have experience in a specific area and adequate training to work in the industrial sector; The last characteristic is the presence of a domestic market capable of absorbing the production generated through the combination of all other characteristics, which reduces dependence on an external market and helps in the growth of a local economy.

These characteristics, when developed intelligently, can enhance the economic progress of peripheral economies, although they present challenges, if applied carefully they become efficient measures to help developing economies.

The authors consider the relationship between development, autonomy, and dependence in peripheral economies that, despite being industrialized, face considerable challenges. Although there is industrial development, this does not mean economic autonomy, as dependence can take on new forms, reflecting a subordination where

external decisions and conditions influence the local economy. Development in peripheral countries can be considered partial when observed on a large scale and compared with the economy of developed countries, as the authors themselves portray, although there is progress in some sectors, the economic structure continues to depend on external factors, such as imports of capital goods and raw materials, which remains in a zone of dependence.

The link between the national economy and the central economy is no longer just a matter of political subordination or external decisions; This relationship manifests itself in a country's domestic market, where production and consumption are influenced by global conditions. Take the case of Shein, which demonstrates how global market conditions affect local production, marketing, and consumption dynamics. The domestic market has to adapt and reformulate to meet demands, requiring the imposition of fees so that the flow of commerce remains, as well as the insertion of national stores within the application itself, generating the permanence of national companies in the market.

The ability to import products necessary for industrialization implies a dependence between countries in search of development that is linked to the global market, shaping the forms of production and domestic consumption. Defining a country as peripheral, center, or interdependent reflects the internal complexity of each economy associated with development or a state of vulnerability.

CONCEPTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Bastos (2011) in the text *Actuality of Brazilian Social Thought* talks about the need for the human sciences to study various problems that were part of the formation and current reality of Brazil in that period of the 50s and 60s, as well as of other countries that are part of Latin America. The author seeks to understand how this model of Brazil was formed by discussing problems that reflect Brazil today, among them: Rights and differences, emancipation of territories, dignity to Brazilian populations and their respective freedoms, which were linked to the themes of enslavement of people and the strong colonialism and exclusion that occurred in various contexts of the country. In addition to authoritarianism dictatorships and the social inequality present between classes.

Bastos (2011) uses Florestan Fernandes and Guerreiro Ramos, social scientists who brought different perspectives on Brazil when thinking about the issue of development. Fernandes emphasized the importance of a methodology that thought about social

relations and the power relations in which inequality is found. Only by understanding how this inequality develops in a critical analysis of the structure can one work on public policies to unite the idea of progress and economic development with that of democracy that brings equal opportunities to all.

The vision of analyzing and critically reflecting on the mechanisms that lead to inequality was inefficient for Guerreiro Ramos, who believed that this study would hinder the creation of a development plan. During this period, Brazil sought to understand itself through the social sciences, also looking at its history. It is through the construction of a social and political thought that is born through a national project that the discussion of concepts such as development, underdevelopment, marginalization, and social change becomes part of the Brazilian reality. As an example, we have the various weaknesses and the scrapping of agriculture in Brazil, because we have placed a backward view of it.

The very concept of marginality in sociology is linked to the idea of employment and unemployment, and the solution to stop being or being marginalized would be this insertion in a labor market, but that adhered to the logic of development and not underdevelopment. Thus, I would be contributing to the real notion of progress. This sociology works with the idea that underdeveloped societies if worked on, rethought, and reorganized, could also achieve this development.

Jacques Lambert states that in Latin America there are dualistic societies that prevent a logic of development from happening. We can give as an example large landowners who coexist with small rural workers, who by producing in an "inferior" logic, present the existing fragilities in a territory, which ignore modernization, causing internal colonialism, as if Latin societies were doomed to be trapped in time from the author's perspective.

Due to this disunity between the groups that coexist, Latin societies, as is the case of Brazil, would be stuck in the classification of state, ceasing to evolve into that of the nation. According to the author's thinking, the underdeveloped part would have to yield to those who preach the idea of progress. Thus, taking into account the reality of Brazil, family farmers, and quilombola communities would have to give in to the idea of modernization preached by agribusiness, which can lead to the destruction of traditional ways of life.

For this type of thinking, democracy is flawed and is not a good path to development. What were the conditions of agricultural production in Brazil, pointing out the

weaknesses that existed when thinking about this type of project for the country, a view addressed by sociology?

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article, we analyze the contributions of several thinkers who have shaped the understanding of Brazilian society, highlighting the intersection between economic development, politics, and social issues. Among the authors addressed, Gilberto Freyre, Clóvis Moura, Caio Prado Jr., Florestan Fernandes, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso stand out for their critical analyses of the formation of national identity and the inequalities present in society.

We can conceive that Freyre, in his work, emphasizes the importance of controlling land and labor, proposing an alliance between the oligarchies of the industrialized Southeast and the agrarian Northeast. He argues that this alliance was key to containing emerging social conflicts, especially in the context of increasing urbanization and rural exodus. The State, according to Freyre, acted as a patriarch, coordinating the displacement of rural populations to urban centers, which altered the racial and cultural composition of the cities. Although he recognizes slavery as an inhumane institution, he considers it central to the formation of Brazilian society, emphasizing miscegenation and cultural exchange as elements that generated a unique identity, but marked by inequalities.

Caio Prado Jr.'s conception, on the other hand, complements this analysis, even with points to be rejected, by highlighting the influence of the colonial past in the construction of national identity. He argues that the remnants of colonization still affect Brazilian society, creating tension between the old and the new. Prado Jr. criticizes miscegenation as a tool of cultural domination, aligning himself with the view that the Portuguese minority imposed its values on the non-European majority. He also addresses indigenous genocide as an inevitable historical process, resulting from the superiority of European culture. For Prado Jr., the hasty incorporation of different races and cultures and servile work are vices that prevent the formation of a modern country.

In the thought proposed by Clóvis Moura, we have a critical perspective on the racial issue and social inequality. He analyzes how slavery and the marginalization of black and Indigenous populations contributed to the construction of an unequal society. Moura argues that the struggle for emancipation and the rights of minorities is fundamental for the

construction of a more just and egalitarian Brazil. His work highlights the need for public policies that address structural inequalities and promote social inclusion.

While Florestan Fernandes, another important thinker, emphasizes the importance of a methodology that analyzes social and power relations. He argues that understanding social inequalities is essential for the formulation of public policies that unite economic progress and democracy. Fernandes criticizes the simplistic view of development, proposing a critical analysis that takes into account the complexities of social relations in Brazil.

In the book "Dependency and Development in Latin America", Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto discuss the relationship of dependence between developing countries and economic centers. They argue that this dependence limits the growth of peripheral economies, which, despite being industrialized, still face significant challenges. Cardoso and Faletto's analysis highlights the need for a deeper understanding of the economic and social dynamics that shape development in Brazil and Latin America.

In conclusion, we focus on the complexity of Brazilian social thought, focusing on what each author contributes, through disparate and sometimes similar perspectives that are in any case unique to development and politics. The intersection between them is fundamental to understanding the roots of social inequalities and the tensions that permeate Brazilian society. We conceive in reading these classic works of Brazilian social thought that to advance toward a more just and egalitarian Brazil, a critical understanding of power relations and social structures that perpetuate inequality is necessary. The work of these thinkers offers a rich theoretical framework for the analysis of contemporary issues.

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