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CONSTITUTION AND EMERGENCY OF BOLSONARISM IN BRAZIL: FROM COLONIALISM TO THE PRESENT

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Abstract: This work aims to analyze the psychosocial bases of Bolsonarism, focusing on the relationship between colonialism and the aforementioned political category. The central assumption is that political movements are products of mass movements that have developed collectively throughout history. The methodology used was cartography, a concept that monitors the processes of subjective productions. The study focuses on aspects of colonialism, uprooting and construction of national character to understand how Bolsonarism was constituted, strengthened and sustained in Brazil. It is concluded that Bolsonarism is the result of the composition and overlapping of psychosocial layers, reflecting the dispute over the imaginary and subjectivities in Brazilian society. The emergence of Bolsonarism occurs from the emergence of new problems, requiring new concepts and statements.

Keywords: Bolsonarism, colonialism, uprooting, Brazil.

INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on the analysis of the problematic of Bolsonarism, a political movement that brings in its discourse anti-PTism, anti-partisanship and anti-leftism (SOLANO, 2019). We seek to understand the factors that enabled the rise of this political movement and how it is collectively validated. By exploring the psychosocial movements engendered by Bolsonarism and the emergence of this political current, the study examines the construction of the collective subjectivity that sustains it. The fundamental assumption is that political movements are products of historically produced mass mobilizations.

In short, this article aims to analyze the psychosocial bases of Bolsonarism, focusing on the relationship between colonialism and the aforementioned political movement. The interrelationship between methodology and

object of study is crucial in this research. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2008) offers an epistemological reflection on the crisis of the modern paradigm and the emergence of new forms of knowledge. The cartographic method, inspired by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1995), is relevant to the investigation, allowing to follow the historical and social connections of the object of study, Bolsonarism, which emerges in the midst of capitalist and sociocultural crises. Through a bibliographic nomadism, critical authors are explored to create epistemologies aligned with resistance to imperialism and coloniality.

The relevance of this work lies in producing a bibliography that aims at the appropriation of Brazilian history, in a movement of disalienation from culture itself, by bringing to light what has been erased and violated, by looking at the psychosocial traumas in question. For the construction of more egalitarian social processes to be possible, it is necessary to be always attentive to the repetitions and crystallizations of ways of acting and being in the world and their chronifications. Thus, the research's ethical-political commitment is to promote social transformation and inclusion of marginalized groups.

METHODOLOGICAL, EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL DISCUSSION

For this research, it is essential to approach the interrelationship between the methodology and the object of study. In this sense, the reflection of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2008) helps us by focusing on the crisis of the modern paradigm and the emergence of new forms of knowledge production. Modern rationality, influenced by the Enlightenment, emphasized the separation between individual and nature, favoring individualism and the search for

freedom. These conceptions emerged in a context in which mercantile relations began to strengthen in the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe. This perspective resulted in the development of modern science, marked by the quantification, measurement and categorization of nature.

In the 20th century, the modern paradigm entered a crisis, as questions that escaped causal categorizations began to be considered. This occurred in the midst of systematic crises of capitalism, which made it possible to question traditional explanatory models. The insufficiency of these models to explain human and nature problems began to be discussed. The analysis of social and cultural conditions in scientific research gained importance in epistemological reflection. In this context in which the notion of “laws of nature” is being re-discussed, objects are being understood and interpreted with increasingly less defined boundaries, and concepts such as system, structures and processes are emerging (SANTOS, 2008). This last aspect is of special interest for this work and, therefore, the cartographic method influenced by the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari (1995) is pertinent.

Methodological historicization is fundamental to understanding Bolsonarism, which emerges in a context of capitalist and sociocultural crises. The use of cartographic methodologies allows questioning the insufficiency of traditional scientific systems and building new epistemologies. The objective is not to provide definitive answers, but to welcome and understand the anxieties, wounds and psychosocial traumas that erupt in the crisis.

This work focuses on the study of the Brazilian historical constitution to understand how social entanglements culminated in the emergence of Jair Bolsonaro. It explores the production of subjectivity, which is built and builds Brazilian society over time.

A bibliographic nomadism will be carried out, which consists of immersion in the production of several authors who address the same theme. This approach will allow the construction of a theoretical reasoning about the psychosocial emergence of Bolsonarism, using cartography references.

The theoretical production of the authors addressed in this article is unified by the research problem that is presented. Although his works have theoretical and epistemological bases and have been produced in different historical contexts, they were selected for their relevance to understanding the aspects raised in the work, by the research problem. Each author contributes in a unique way to the proposed reflections and objectives, providing a comprehensive approach to the Brazilian subjective constitution and the phenomenon of Bolsonarism.

Deleuze indicates that in each historical formation there are ways of feeling, perceiving, and saying that make up regions of visibility and fields of sayability (lines of visibility and enunciation). That is to say, in each era, in each historical stratum, there are layers of things and words. (PASSOS; BENEVIDES, 2017, p. 78).

Through the writing process it is possible to follow psychosocial processes of production of subjectivities. This does not mean explaining and unveiling reality, but understanding how intensities, power games and fields of sayability are manifested. This research is committed to human rights and social transformation, seeking the inclusion of historically excluded groups in society. The analysis was guided by an ethical-political perspective, with a view to expanding life possibilities and promoting practices aligned with resistance to imperialism and coloniality. Cartographic research strategies were used that accompanied the movements of subjectivity, plurality and mutability, seeking to resist hard lines and captures (PASSOS;

BENEVIDES, 2017).

Having understood the methodological, ethical and political decisions of this research, it is necessary to explain what were the paths experienced in this nomadic process. The reference books for this text were: **1492: the concealment of the other**: the origin of the myth of modernity, by Enrique Dussel (1993); **The Brazilian national character**, by Dante Moreira Leite (2002); and **The elite of delay**, by Jessé Souza (2019).

COVERING AND UNROOTING PROCESSES

In the book **1492: the concealment of the other**: the origin of the myth of modernity, Enrique Dussel (1993) explores how European colonizers silenced, covered up and dispossessed America's original peoples. This process began with the Eurocentric conception built by Europeans, based on Christian values and rationality. This perspective worked as a protective shield that prevented encounters and exchanges with other cultures.

When Columbus arrived in America and insisted that he was in the East, he did not conceive of the possibility of being in contact with a completely unknown culture.

Later, the original peoples were "discovered" by Americo Vespucci, but even so they were interpreted in the image and likeness of the European. America was seen as a subject where the European projected himself. This led the European to see himself as the "missionary of civilization", while indigenous peoples were treated as objects of domination and exploitation. Another covering layer involved the use of military violence to conquer land and wealth. The process of "conquest" is a military and violent act, which integrates the Other as part of oneself, denying its distinction and subjugating it to the dominating totality (DUSSEL, 1993, p. 44).

In addition to the military domain,

another covering layer occurred through the catechism, which expanded culturally, erasing indigenous symbols and stories. Christian discourse blamed indigenous peoples for their own violence and subjected them to European rule. This process of colonization of subjectivities and internalization of European values is fundamental to understanding current Bolsonarism, in which echoes of this social format can still be observed. Many subjects internalize religious values that blame them for their misery, seeking answers and solutions to their problems in oppressive figures. In this perspective, for being civilized immature, pagans and barbarians must be admonished and be submissive to the European. This is the price of emancipation (DUSSEL, 1993).

Thus, through different processes, the Other was being exterminated or Europeanized by various covering layers in the face of the European closure that produced the impossibility of meeting and exchange. Therefore, Dussel (1993) argues that what happened between indigenous peoples and Europeans was a devastating shock of indigenous genocide that will result in a new syncretic culture. However, this culture will not be the result of a cultural synthesis or alliance, but of an original psychosocial domination or trauma.

Bosi (1987) points out that the consequence of predatory conquests is the impossibility of resuming very unique formations, once they have been lost. "The dominated culture loses the material means of expressing its originality" (BOSI, 1987, p. 16), which has consequences for the entire social and subjective formation of this population.

BRAZILIAN SUBJECTIVITIES

THE BRAZILIAN NATIONAL CHARACTER

Dante Moreira Leite (2002) conducts research on the Brazilian national character and highlights the difficulties in studying such heterogeneous groups that make up the same nationality. He points out methodological and racist problems in some assumptions. Reflecting on cultural diversity within Brazil, he questions whether there is something culturally common that connects people from opposite social classes and places that are so different within the country. Therefore, he emphasizes the ideological character of the concept of nationality and seeks to understand how it was constructed.

In the records of the colonial period, with the letter by Pero Vaz de Caminha being the most emblematic of them, the aspect of Brazil that is most highlighted and that starts to compose the conception of nation is that of a country rich in its nature, composed of a people inferior character. Subsequently, the colonization of Brazil by Europeans resulted in heterogeneous cities and territories. The Portuguese colonial government and the Brazilian monarchy sought to centralize the groups into a national unit, driven by the nationalist ideology of romanticism. This cultural movement accompanied the imposition of economic liberalism as a production model and the emergence of the concept of the individual. The idealized representation of the "Indian" sought to express the idealization of a past, showing him as puerile, free and courageous. This way, the romantic cultural production expressed the subjective movements that were produced at that moment (LEITE, 2002).

In the period of realism/naturalism, science gained space and legitimacy to explain social issues. The country was experiencing the post-

abolition, republican period, and was looking for hardworking labor. Whitening policies favored the entry of European workers. In this context, several theories, such as "social Darwinism" and "geographical determinism", legitimized the racial hierarchization of society. Authors such as Nina Rodrigues contributed to this vision, associating psychological characteristics with different racial groups. Oliveira Viana defended a strong and authoritarian government as a solution, an approach considered fascist by Dante Moreira Leite (2002).

The idea of racial inferiority of indigenous peoples and blacks, manifested in miscegenation, was used to argue that Brazil was lagging behind in its development. Azevedo Amaral supported the thesis that the Brazilian people were inattentive to the future, incapable of saving, managing their assets and respecting the legal order (LEITE, 2002).

These values were the basis for the development of populism and patrimonialism, two pillars of the morality of the anti-PT and Bolsonarist middle classes, as analyzed by Jessé Souza – an aspect that will be analyzed in more detail later in this article.

SUBJECTIVE CONSTITUTION OF SOCIAL CLASSES

The contributions of Jessé Souza (2019) in his book: "A elite do atraso" help to understand the constitution of Brazilian subjectivities by tracing a historical path from slavery to "lavajato" operation and Bolsonarism. For the author, the collective production of modes of subjectivation of the middle class is crucial for understanding Bolsonarism, highlighting slavery as a central element of society.

To start his reasoning, he describes the slavery social structure: nuclear white family, enslaved black people and mestizo children (born from the rape of enslaved women). These

children could be entitled to an inheritance if they assimilated the values of the elite and culturally distanced themselves from blacks. This organization gave rise to the culture of the middle class, the collusion between it and the elite against the rabble.

With the end of slavery, the exercise of power shifted from the figure of the patriarch to assume a more impersonal form, that of the state. Brazilian society underwent a Europeanization with the arrival of immigrants, adding a new layer to the social constitution of the middle class: the valued cultural capital. Thus, the interaction of historical layers in the construction of Brazilian society and the importance of understanding how these processes affect subjects and their subjectivities in everyday life are highlighted. The author Bader Sawaia (2016) emphasizes that scientific knowledge and public policies have real impacts on people's bodies and affections, producing intersubjective suffering. Gonçalves Filho (1998) addresses uprooting linked to poverty, which prevents the sedimentation of the families' past and perpetuates their condition of exclusion and social humiliation.

Jessé Souza (2019) addresses how the middle class gains social protagonism after the end of slavery, driven by the appreciation of work with a certain type of knowledge. He discusses how society domesticates and internalizes social markers, mannerisms and codes that position subjects in certain social positions. This constant production and reproduction of social identities define access to places, jobs, opportunities and the way individuals move in society.

Why do some individuals who belong to certain classes secularly play a certain type of role in productive relations? It is necessary to start, therefore, literally from the "cradle", that is, from primary family socialization, in order to understand classes and their formation and how they will define

all the relative chances of each one of us in the social struggle for scarce resources. The classes are reproduced in time by the family and by the affective transmission by the parents to the children of a given "**emotional economy**". School success will depend, for example, on effectively transferring discipline to children, prospective thinking – that is, the ability to renounce the present in the name of the future – and the ability to concentrate. Without this, children become functional illiterates at best. This "**asset of dispositions**" for practical behavior, which is a class privilege among us, will clarify both occupation and differential income later on. As each social class has a specific type of family socialization, it is in this that the differences between classes have to be found and be the object of reflection. Social classes can only be properly perceived, therefore, as a phenomenon, first and foremost, sociocultural, and not just economic (SOUZA, 2019, p. 94).

The process of social constitution occurs invisibly and silently, with the imitation of parental models, generating the false idea of meritocracy. Since colonial society, there have been movements of denial of what was considered black and inferior, resulting in the segregation of non-white cultural manifestations, which persists until today through social markers learned and unconsciously reproduced. Especially considering the history of slavery that was not broken, but reorganized in new social arrangements, this segregation is observed through social markers, such as clothing, behavior and language, which are unconsciously learned, incorporated and reproduced by all.

The PT governments sought to socially bring the middle and poorer classes closer together. This implied sharing services, occupying the same spaces and consuming the same products, reducing exploitation and disorganizing the social function and identity of the middle class. With the historically

strong alliance between the middle classes and the elites, this generated resentment.

Jessé Souza (2019) presents two pillars of the nation's hygiene moralism that support the alliance between the middle class and the elite: patrimonialism and populism. Patrimonialism consists of seeing the Brazilian State as corrupt and the population as inherently corrupt and inferior in relation to the European and North American peoples. This delegitimizes the role of the Brazilian State and favors the privatization of Brazilian wealth to the benefit of private initiatives, which are the true usurpers of these riches.

Populism is another pillar of the nation's hygiene moralism, which suggests that public policies aimed at the poorest are a form of vote buying. This view devalues the ability of the poorer classes to make autonomous decisions and suggests that only they are manipulated by politicians, while other classes are more discerning. Here, an aspect identified by Dussel (1993) and Leite (2002) is repeated, related to the European view of indigenous peoples and Africans as immature peoples who must be educated and civilized according to the values of European rationality. These are racist, classist ideas and updated symbolic violence.

And how did the processes of subjective uprooting lead to Bolsonaroism? There is a profound relationship between subjective and economic colonization. This way, the PT governments, when proposing a conciliation of classes, faced the opposition of the elites, resulting in an intense political instability. The anti-corruption discourse was used as a scapegoat, reflecting the moral values of society, which Jair Bolsonaro captured and personified in his campaigns.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS ON BOLSONARISM

The text discusses the contributions of different authors to understand the psychosocial bases of Bolsonaroism in Brazil. Emphasizes the perspectives of Enrique Dussel (1993), Dante Moreira Leite (2002) and Jessé Souza (2019), who address the silencing of native peoples, the formation of Brazilian nationality with elitism and racism, and the colonization of subjectivities of the allied middle classes to the elites. From this analysis of historical and psychosocial layers, we have resources to investigate the emergence of Bolsonaroism in Brazilian society, how and why it is used, and what it refers to.

Deleuze and Guattari (1992) discuss how a concept is formed from the articulation, cutting and overlapping of elements, resulting in a fragmentary whole that totalizes its components. This article explores how these fragments culminate in the concept of "Bolsonarism". The emergence of a concept is not restricted to solving a single problem; it reorganizes or replaces previous concepts, merging with other coexisting ideas. The emergence of Bolsonaroism takes place from the outbreak of new problems, demanding new understandings and statements.

In this article, fragments of Brazilian subjective constructions are covered. According to Deleuze and Guattari's (1992) conception of the production of concepts, the emergence of a new political category, here called "Bolsonarism", takes place from the insufficiency of previous concepts and understandings, in force until then.

From 2015, Brazil faced an economic crisis after a long period of prosperity under PT governments, which resulted in unpopular measures to reduce the welfare state. This crisis mobilized collective regressions, giving rise to conservative and hate speeches. Jair Bolsonaro emerged as the mouthpiece of

this reactionary and resentful discourse. In addition, it is relevant to highlight the impact of subjective changes resulting from social and technological transformations, such as the internet, in addition to the deepening of the systemic crises of capitalism, which challenge the foundations of liberal thought and affect contemporary subjectivities. The social crisis and the search for security are emphasized as factors that influenced the emergence of Bolsonarism in Brazilian society.

Solano (2019) conducted field research on the 2015 demonstrations, which called for the *impeachment* of President Dilma Rousseff. His research sought to capture and understand what were the dissatisfactions and agendas of that movement. The author repeated the research in 2017 and 2018 in pro-Bolsonaro

demonstrations and identified agendas such as anti-system, anti-party, anti-PT, anti-leftism and anti-intellectualism. She highlights how much the word “hope” is linked to the figure of Jair Bolsonaro.

“Bolsonarism” emerges at the moment when, in the crisis, contradictions and psychosocial traumas erupt, and it is in the figure of Jair Bolsonaro that these affections are channeled. There is a symbolic force surrounding his figure and his speech. Thus, Bolsonarism presents itself as disputing the imaginaries and subjectivities in the country, and affective communication plays a crucial role in this context, in order to become a powerful political engine that influences the perceptions and behaviors of the Brazilian population (SOLANO, 2019).

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