Universalisation of liberal democracy, American exceptionalism and racism

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1 Introduction

Historically in international relations there has been a dispute between realists and liberalists based on the primacy of interests or values in international politics. Whereas the latter underscore the importance of giving a central place to values, the former insist that they should be put aside in the establishment of the Foreign Policy.

When George W. Bush campaigned for the presidency of the United States (US), he did it based on a realist platform. The terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 on the World Trade Center changed this policy. The administration's response took the form of a "Global War on Terror" (GWT) that made possible the intervention of US all over the world[1]. However, following Deleuze and Guattari, there is no de-territorialization without a consequent re-territorialization (2004). The GWT thus had its battlefields in the Middle East region. After invading Afghanistan to retaliate against those who had harbored the Al-Qaida suspects of the 9-11 terrorist acts, the US policy targeted Iraq. We will not analyze the reasons behind these two invasions, but we will use them as paradigms of the ultimate expression of a global liberal governance of which the US is its most steely bearer. Indeed, as Foucault argues, "American liberalism [...] is not [...] a mere economic and political election formed and formulated by the government or in the governmental circle. In America, liberalism is a whole way of being and thinking. It is much more a type of relationship between governors and governed than a technique of the former destined to the latter" (2007: 254). That is why we can hold that liberalism crosses the entire political spectrum of the US. Actually, we will study the questions of liberal democracy, US exceptionalism and racism, putting aside existing differences between Democrats and Republicans. Thus we intend to establish what we call cultural racism not as an ideological matter, but as a necessary mechanism of the liberal way of global government as "general framework of biopolitics" (Foucault, 2007: 40).

What the Bush administration criticized about previous forms of power exercise in the Middle East region (including that of US) was the tolerance of authoritarian governments throughout history, favoring stability over freedom[2]. From this point of view, such a situation generated resentment and anger. Therefore, was identified as the root of terrorism, which – it was said – fed on the absence of democracy in the region. At this point, US' interests and values coincided. Indeed, to put an end to terrorism, the expansion of freedom was a must (observe that this discourse homologated freedom and democracy). This was accompanied by a construction of the terrorist enemy not as a political enemy but instead as a danger to the population, excluding the terrorist subjects from the field of the political.

The Bush administration thus established a linkage between security and freedom/democracy conflating interests and values and eliminating contradictions between the two. The US national interest would be achieved through the expansion of US values (constructed not as particular and historical, but as universal

[1]This article will be based on the interventionist policies conducted by the Bush administration. We think, nevertheless, that its theoretical framework could be used to think the contemporary intervention in Libya as well.

[2]It is important to note that in the administration's speeches what was criticized was the tolerance, the acceptance of authoritarian regimes, eluding talking about the active participation of the US in the imposition of those governments. The clearest example of which is the coup organized by the CIA against the nationalist government of Mossadegh in Iran in 1953. But we should add that the CIA participated actively in the coup that put Aref in power (in 1963) and finally led to Saddam Hussein's government, as well.

and necessary). Condoleezza Rice (National Security Advisor and Secretary of State) dubbed this the "uniquely American realism" (2008). The GWT thus appeared as a liberal war *par excellence*: a war based on values that were presented as universal, making them non particular, nor political; fought against absolute enemies posed as dangers for the (global) population; at the center of which were at the same time freedom and security. If, as said, liberalism is conceived as "general framework of biopolitics" and, following Foucault's thought, in a biopolitical technology of power, sovereign power, that is to say the power of making die, exerts itself through the inscription of racism in state's mechanisms, talking about some sort of liberal racism is actually possible.

The unilateral and aggressive policy of the Bush administration -the demonstration of US absolute power- made possible its demonization. In fact, there was an attempt to construct it as an exception in the history of the US. However, we affirm that the universalisation of particular values (e.g., liberal democracy) has deep roots in the idea of American exceptionalism and can be explained as a form of racism as a characteristic mechanism of the liberal way of global government. If we have chosen the Bush administration as our empirical terrain that is because, even as we recognize its discontinuities with respect to previous administrations, it is our intention to point out regularities and return it to the history of liberal government.

2 Interests and values in International Politics

The complex relationship between the political and the moral is not an issue that is unique to IR. From the beginnings of Western political thinking, starting with the Greek philosophy, ethics and politics have been intensely interwoven. With respect to this, Kant proposed to establish a distinction between the moral politician and the political moralist (Kant, 2000). While, according to Kant, the first one is someone who adheres to moral principles and tries to combine them with the practice of politics; the second one is someone who forges an *ad hoc* moral following the interests of the statesman. This forms the basis of the liberal thinking which privileges the moral above interests.

Carl Schmitt was one of the fiercest critics of liberalism and his thinking is on the basis of the realist school. The core of his criticism was the apolitical discourse of liberal politics and its denial of the political (not its elimination, just its denial). The German jurist saw in this ideology a dangerous enemy which had to be fought *politically*. The dangerousness of liberalism stemmed from its apolitical discourse which facilitated talk of universality (Schmitt, 2006). In this way, liberal thinking is based on the invisibilization of its political being and, therefore, of its particular (and, thus, historical) identity. This explains the marginalization of power relationships in the analysis of the schools based on it. The invisibilization of politics in the liberal discourse has its corollary in the emergence of the moral discourse as the main feature of liberalism. The implicit relationship between universality and ethics makes this moral discourse deny particularity and transform it into universality. In other words and moving to the field of IR, particular interests are invisibilised while actions are carried out in the name of a moral –and, hence- universal cause.

Here rests the critique of Carl Schmitt against the notion of Humanity. According to him, by refusing to recognize its political character, liberalism acts in the name of humanity. But by doing so, it takes the risk to convert a political enemy into an absolute one, that is, an enemy of humanity, who is thus a non-human. It paves the way for de-humanization and, therefore, for the possibility of wars of extermination (Schmitt, 2006). It is important to keep this point in mind, because it will be re-considered in our discussion of Foucault and his notion of biopolitics and, consequently, that of racism. Acting in the name of humanity, in the name of universality, and, therefore, not recognizing particularities, can lead to the de-humanization of the 'other' and, thus, to his extermination. Based on this thinking, some contemporary authors warn about the danger of such attempt -in the current, historical moment- of establishing a cosmopolitan order of universal inclusion. This leads to the homogenization of the world under one only socio-political model without considering particularities, looking to eliminate differences[3] (Mouffe, 2007a; Petito, 2007).

[3]Chantal Mouffe, for example, asserts that this is one of the possible causes of the emergence of international terrorism (2007b).

3 Values in US Foreign Policy: liberalism and exceptionalism

The two main ideological tendencies in US -conservatism and liberalism- share the same historical roots: they both derive from "classical liberalism" (Rosati, 1993). This explains that, while their conception of domestic politics differs (liberals defend some kind of state intervention in the country's economy, conservatives are in favor of a more "laissez-faire" economy; liberals encourage individual freedoms, conservatives try to protect the traditional institutions –e.g., the family-), in terms of Foreign Policy they can find some points in common. As a current example, we cite the interventionist policies of both George W. Bush and Barack Obama (of course, with differences that are not taken into account here) destined to protect the civilian populations of Iraq and Libya, respectively. This is expressed in "the moralization of US Foreign Policy" (Rosati, 1993: 394), based on the assumptions of innocence, benevolence and exceptionalism. The three are extremely intertwined. Indeed, from US rhetoric, the US Foreign Policy is always aimed at 'doing good', and acts are carried out in the name of Humanity. They, therefore, assume that when others damage them (in one way or another) they have become victims of evil people. This is how the US denies its power and political involvement in the world, putting their actions and those of the others outside History. In this sense, the repeated rhetorical question that George W. Bush asked himself and the Americans about why the terrorist acts of 9-11 happened had only one possible answer: evil.

> "...why would this have happened to America? Why would somebody do this to our country? These attacks are from some people who just are so evil it's hard for me to describe why. It's hard for us to comprehend why somebody would think the way they think, and devalue life the way they devalue, and to harm innocent people the way they harmed innocent people. It's just hard for all of us adults to explain."[4]

Innocence does not just imply not recognizing historical and political responsibilities, but it also has another effect: prevent critique of the self. Indeed, innocence can be defined as a constant need to put one's own problems out. This mechanism generates the closure of the totality, the homogenization of the 'We', through the establishment of a difference. It is in this sense that David Campbell argues "that United States foreign policy [is] understood as a political practice central to the constitution, production, and maintenance of American political identity" (Campbell, 1998: 8)

But the most important line uniting liberals and conservatives is the assumption of American exceptionalism[5], which -in order to put the US in the field of history- can be understood as a fervent nationalism. This assumption, which emerges at specific moments, has very deep roots, going back to 1630 and arrival of Puritans in North America. Nevertheless, the way in which they understand this constructed assumption –that reified takes the form of a fact- indicates which political impulse prevails: internationalism or isolationism. Indeed, exceptionalism can be read in two different ways. On the one hand, it can be understood in terms of uniqueness (this reading comes from Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*), in which case "America"[6] is considered a model to be emulated -"the city upon the hill"-. On the other hand, "exceptional" can be understood in the sense of being the best socio-economic model. From our point of view, both readings permit imperialist policies based on the idea of superiority that underlies American exceptionalism. Indeed, the belief in being the chosen people that accompanied the Puritans formed the basis of their "right" to kill the natives inhabiting the conquered territory. In the same sense, this led to the 19$^{\text{th}}$ century's idea of the "manifest destiny" to expand democracy from coast to coast in North America, adiscourse which had the effect of conquering Mexican territory, for example.

[4] THE WHITE HOUSE (2001), "President Launches Education Partnership with Muslim Nations" (10/25/2001). (Online), retrieved on February 2009. `www.whitehouse.gov.`

[5] "Scowcroft: (...) in the world as it is now, only the United States can exercise enlightened leadership. Not direct people what to do. But say, 'Gather round. This is the way the world community needs to go'.

Brzezinski: Amen.

Scowcroft: We're the only ones who can be the guiding light."

(Brzezinski; Scowcroft, 2008: 35). We have brought this quote to illustrate the accord that exists between Democrats and Republicans with respect to American exceptionalism.

[6] From a Latin-American point of view, that the US calls itself "America" gives a sense of imperial desire over a shared continent. That explains the quotation marks.

The meeting of exceptionalism, liberalism and the colossal US military machine is explosive. Because the idea of exceptionalism (reified as it is, not being criticized) expresses some sort of superiority that not only gives the US the "right" of lecturing other people on how to organize their societies, but also establishes a sort of hierarchy of life value, at the top of which rest American lives. If we add to this the disproportionate military apparatus and a liberal discourse affirming US action is carried out in the name of Humanity and not because of self-interest, the real possibility to carry out extermination policies towards those who do not agree with the way of life that is being imposed on them emerges. This is one way to understand a fundamental US paradox: While it has had the leading role in constructing the most complex international legal order to maintain peace, it has, at the same time, constructed a colossal military machine -without a peer competitor- that cannot be understood solely in terms of defense (of Humanity). What we are trying to emphasize is the intrinsic linkage between US democracy and violence and the danger that accompanies it when used in the name of universality, because it can lead to an exterminating violence. As Benjamin once said, this violence is not just a conservative one, but can act as a founder one (1995). And this is important too: No democracy works without violence and -we do not have to forget- violence is in the origins of US democracy. Indeed, it was built on the genocide of natives and slavery. Furthermore, must consider this an open chapter in history: in Libya, in Afghanistan, in Iraq (just for citing some examples) US is currently exercising founder violence.

Whether the exceptionalism is understood as an example or as a right and a duty to impose particular values on other people, both meanings shed light on the sense of superiority that permeates US identity. We can affirm thus that American exceptionalism is no more than a form of racism. This assertion deserves further development.

4 Biopolitics and liberalism as a technology of government

To start talking about racism in Foucault's terms, we need to make a short reference about the framework in which Foucauldian racism works: biopolitics. The definition of this technology of power by the French philosopher is done with the background of sovereign power. Sovereign power has as a fundamental feature the right (belonging to the sovereign) to make die and let live. As Foucault argues this right is exercised in an unbalanced way, always on the side of the death. Actually, the sovereign exercises his right over life from the moment in which he can kill. In other words, the power over life is a passive power, one that derives from the fact that the sovereign decides not to kill, that is to say, decides not to exercise its right to 'make die'.

Biopolitics radically changes this sovereign power (which does not mean –we will see it- that this one disappears). Instead of a sovereign having the right to make die and let live, the subject and object of biopolitics is the population, understood as a mass of biological individuals. And the new technology of power has as object and objective the life of population this way constructed: it has to make it live. Let's remember that Foucault does not understand power in economic terms, that is, as something that is possessed and exchanged, but as something that can be only exercised. So, when he affirms that biopolitics has the power to make live, he is saying that it is a power that is exercised only through the promotion of life.

This improvement of life which is the main feature of biopolitics supposes a different understanding of Foreign Policy in relation of that designed by the governmental rationality of the reason of state (*raison d'État*), hinge between the sovereign power and the new technology. Indeed, it supposed a balance of power that entailed the coexistence of a plurality of states (which would be nostalgically remembered by Carl Schmitt) based on an understanding of international politics as a zero sum game (the realist thesis). This way, the state had a limited objective in relation of its foreign policy, whose other side was an unlimited domestic policy (the "police state").

The advent of liberalism would change this conception and postulate a game where sum is different from zero. That is to say that liberalism conceived the improvement of one state (the state-centered objective of the reason of state remained the same) as linked to the improvement of the others. Neoliberalism, for its part, adds to this the necessity of intervention. Kant's *Perpetual Peace* fit in this context. Following the German author, perpetual peace would be guaranteed by the globalization of commerce. During the decade

of 1990s a similar thesis took force: The so-called 'Democratic Peace Theory' postulated that perpetual peace could be achieved via the globalization of democracy. George W. Bush administration would take this thesis as its own and argue that imposing democracy (on Iraq) would make the world safer and more peaceful, implicitly arguing that US democracy is the best socio-political model. Finally, such voices would also be specially heard during the first weeks of the still ongoing Arab uprising. Homologated with freedom, liberal democracy appears (mainly in liberal powers' discourses, but not just there) as a universal claim of people all over the world, thereby becoming a necessity of history (claimed once by Fukuyama), and justifying, once more, interventionist policies in its name.

Democracy, Human Rights and Freedom, as we will see, have been homologated. Clearly different and Western notions have been thus mixed, confused and universalized. Freedom, as a governmental *technique*, is at the center of the liberal practice. Indeed, liberalism -understood not as an ideology, but rather as a technology of power- is characterized as a freedom-consuming practice. That is to say that it can only function if some liberties exist[7]. In consequence, if liberalism has a need of freedom, then, it is obliged to produce it, but, at the same time, to organize it. In other words, it is not only a producer of freedom, but also an organizer of it: its administrator. This administration of freedom leads to the necessity of securing those natural phenomena (i.e.: population) and, with that objective, to interventionist practices. The fact that the police device be dismantled, Foucault asserts, does not mean that governmental intervention ceases to exist. On the contrary, this is an essential feature of liberal government.

Production and organization of freedom. Production and limitation of it, in consequence. It is here, then, at the level of the freedom's production costs, where the notion that unfailingly accompanies it comes into play: security. It is a macro security framework that permits that the society's vital process in the whole unfolds with a minimum of obstacles. And, thus, another fundamental notion of liberal government as understood by Foucault enters the game: the notion of danger. The game between freedom and security functions, indeed, in connection with it: it is about the prevention of danger. That is what explains the formidable extension of control and coercion procedures that Foucault detects as counterbalance of freedom and that he groups under the name of disciplinary *techniques*. This is the repressive side of control, but it does not function only this way; instead, control and intervention are used to *increment* freedom.

Although the advent of liberalism implied the frugality of government in face of an omnipresent police state, the limitation of state intervention was not absolute. Indeed, there was a large field of possible and even necessary interventions with the aim or the development and improvement of the population. The concept of intervention takes a new impulse with the advent of neoliberalism. Rapidly, according to Foucault, neoliberalism is not a renewed or an increased liberalism. Indeed, it supposes an important difference in the conception of both market and state, and its relations. The problem of liberalism was: given an already existing state, how to limit the government so market forces can develop. On the contrary, the problem of neoliberalism[8] is: given the inexistence of a state, how to create one based on market mechanisms. The fundamental point is the conception of the market. While liberalism conceived of it as a natural fact, neoliberalism departs from its artificial character. Thus, government intervention is permanent and has as objective the constant construction of market mechanisms.

This particular character of neoliberalism leads Foucault to talk about it as a "positive liberalism" (2007:

[7]It is important to note that Foucault explicitly moves away from the idea of conceiving liberalism as an "advance", an improvement with respect to its predecessor in the way of exercising power: "I didn't mean that the amount of freedom increased between the beginnings of 18th century and, let's say, 19th century. And I didn't say that on account of two reasons, one of fact and the other of method and principle. One of fact, because does it have some sense to say, or just to ask if an administrative monarchy (...) permitted more or less freedom that a liberal regime (...)? I don't think it has much sense to measure the amount of freedom between one system and the other. And I don't see what kind of demonstration, what kind of caliber or standard could it be applied" (2007: 82-83). In this sense, Foucault refuses to postulate freedom as an universal: "freedom doesn't have to be considered as an universal which presents, through time, a gradual consummation or quantitative variations or more or less serious amputations, more or less important hidings [ocultamientos]. It is not an universal that particularizes itself with time and geography. Freedom is not a white surface that has here and there and from time to time more or less numerous black squares [casillas]" (2007: 83). This way, when he says that liberalism needs a series of liberties to function, he states specifically, "freedom of market, freedom of the seller and of the buyer, free exercise of the right of property, freedom of discussion, eventually freedom of expression, etc." (2007: 84)

[8]Foucault bases his assumptions on the post Second World War German ordoliberalism and on the American neoliberalism (see Foucault, 2007)

162). Indeed it is a type of liberalism that intervenes through regulating actions. Now, these actions do not act directly on the market, but on its *milieu* (Foucault, 2004), that is, on its framework (Foucault, 2007): They act first on the population and its institutions. Indeed, if market has to act in a way that its pure mechanisms are the regulators of the ensemble, intervention cannot act on that market laws, but on institutions. Market laws, and only them, function as the principle of social and general regulation. On that respect, Foucault asserts that neoliberalism proposes "the minimum of economic interventionism and the maximum of juridical interventionism" (2007: 199).

Although Foucault disesteemed the question of democracy in the liberal art of government, affirming that government frugality was its question and not democracy (2007), given the predominance that democracy took on the global agenda, we believe that it is a fundamental question. Indeed, last multilateral or unilateral interventions (mostly Iraq 2003 and Libya 2011), were discursively[9] aimed at the improvement of the implicated populations through the instauration of (liberal) democracy. They intended to produce a social reconfiguration aiming at the transformation of socio-political institutions and, thus, subjectivities. On the other hand, this change was supposed to be accompanied by an economic one: the instauration of free markets. In Hillary Clinton's words at Tunis: "It is not just political reform what is important here –and I want to emphasize strongly this point- it is economic change and reform too, and we are very, very focused on that. It is key to the success of these transitions to representative and receptive governments"[10].

Now, these interventionist policies of liberal democracy imposition find its conditions of possibility in the emergence of a discourse that universalizes that particular socio-political model of government. In turn, that universalisation is possible because liberal democracy was naturalized as being a human right. This is not the place to discuss the universal or particular character of Human Rights as declared in 1948, but given the fact that wars have relatively lost importance in the face of "humanitarian interventions", carried out in their name, the instauration of democracy by foreign forces is only possible if some linkage is established between democracy and Human Rights. And this one was established for the first time in the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights. Indeed, in its final report we could read: "Democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Democracy is based on the freely expressed people's will to determine its own political, social and cultural systems and its absolute participation in all the aspects of its life"[11]. What we intend to remark here is the gradual transformation through discursive practices of liberal democracy as a particular socio-political model into a human right, thus being conceived as universal. This is what makes that the imposition of liberal democracy in the name of the improvement of the population can be legitimate.

5 Racism

IR scholars that have retaken the Foucauldian concept of biopolitics and have applied it into our field, as Michael Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero, have centered their attention in security, concept which is thought in a non classical way (not being conservative, but, on the contrary, expansive) (Dillon; Lobo-Guerrero, 2008). Given the universalistic character which authors attribute to liberal government, in their analysis they minimize the question of identity and otherness construction in the biopower exercise. And, indeed, Foucault never talked about them, at least not using those concepts. Nevertheless, here we intend to introduce them and, with that end, we hope to convince the reader of its usefulness.

In addition, Foucault did not center his attention in IR: his studies are fundamentally dedicated to the 17^{th}, 18^{th}, 19^{th} French centuries. Nevertheless, since his middle 70s lectures at the *Collège de France* and in response to his critics, his researches made a turn. It is in this context that in *Security, Territory, Population* (1978) the IR issue appears, linked to the development of the *raison d'État* (Foucault, 2004). However, the

[9]Note that we talk about discourse and not about rhetoric. We intend, this way, to make emphasis on its performative and, thus, material character.

[10]WHITE HOUSE (2011), "Briefing by National Security Advisor Tom Donilon and Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes on Libya and the Middle East", 03/10/2011. (Online), available on `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on May 2011.

[11]World Conference on Human Rights (1993), "Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action", (Online) available at `www2.ohchr.org/english/law/vienna.htm`

text returns to the interior of the state and the IR question is put aside. But as long as the French author thinking offers us a "toolbox", it is worth trying to move and apply his concepts, notions and ideas to our research field. Moreover when during the following year (1979), in the lectures compiled as *The birth of biopolitics*, Foucault starts talking about US neoliberalism, a "technology of power" that has swept the societies all around the globe and which at this moment goes through an important crisis (2007).

Coming back to our specific matter, as we have sustained, according to Foucault, the power of the sovereign was based in his ability to make die and let live; on the contrary, biopower is exerted through making live and letting die. This last point is very important because, as Agamben argues, according to Foucault, the sovereignty of the nation-state implies the absorption of the *bare life* in the functions of the state (1998). Thus, here the state's role is fundamental.

In *Society must be defended*, Foucault (2008) establishes an important distinction between the noblesse "war of races" discourse and that of the liberal bourgeoisie. According to the author, the noblesse racism was a discourse that underlined particularities. It was a binary war-like discourse which affirmed that there existed two races fighting for power. The winner of that fight was the one who wrote History. That way, there was not only one big Truth: truth was the result of a battle and, thus, it was a partisan one. In other words, it was a historical-political discourse that assumed its particularity.

This discourse changes with the advent of liberal bourgeois historical narrative and the establishment of the nation-state. The new racist discourse is an universalistic one: "a discourse of a combat that does not have to be fought between two races, but from a race given as the real and only one, which possesses power and is the norm holder, against those who deviate from it, and those who constitute many other dangers to the biological patrimony" (Foucault, 2008: 65). Thus, war is not thought anymore as a constitutive element of society; instead, it is considered as an instrument to protect and conserve society as a whole (defending society).

In effect, in the search of making a unity of the conquered state, the notion of nation played a fundamental role because it searched to subsume differences and postulated a homogenous state. Now it is not a particular race which has to be saved of destruction, but the whole society: it is a universalistic racism. That is why Foucault argues that while the noblesse racist discourse is a conservative one, the liberal bourgeois discourse is an expansive one (2002).

What is the function of racism in the new technology of power? If biopower has the mandate of making live, if it has life as its object and objective, Foucault asks himself how does it exert the sovereign power, the power to kill. The answer is racism, inscribed in mechanisms of the state. Therefore, liberal discourse effected a rewriting of the war of race's discourse that substituted the historical war for a fight for life and a binary society for a biologically monistic society. At the same time, discourse about the unjust state is substituted for a state not considered as the instrument of one race against the other, but as the protector of the integrity, the superiority and the purity of the only one race: human race. Liberal humanitarianism is born.

It is important to note that, understood this way racism appears not as an ideological question, but as a mechanism linked with a determined technology of power (biopolitics). It is what permits establishing a separation inside the realm of life (that is, in the realm that power has absorbed and put under its administration) between what can live and what must die. The distinction between races and its organization into a hierarchy is, thus, a manner of fragmenting the field of the biological. In a few words, racism is "the means of introducing a cut in the realm of life that power took in charge: the cut between what must live and what must die" (Foucault, 2008: 230). This is understood by Foucault as the first function of racism: the function of fragmentation. It is important to withhold this fact: the first function of racism is the fragmentation of a realm that is understood as being biological and universal (thus, non political).

Therefore, when talking about racism we talk about a racist discourse constituted by a dominant logic of construction of identities and otherness that tends to the production and consequent "negation" of differences. Indeed, we are thinking about a logic that enables the possibility of extermination and exclusion (or hierarchical inclusion). So, this logic, this discourse, is articulated through different specific languages. Hence, we talk about *cultural* racism. If we assert that there is a US cultural racism is because the function of fragmentation works through cultural lines. With Étienne Balibar, we are talking about a racism without

race (Balibar, 1991a). If the concept of "human race" does not work anymore as such, racism as a mechanism defined as we did, continues validating the sovereign right of killing around other elements: cultural elements. We are stressing the existence of a structure that works through two functions, articulated around different (biological, national, class, religious, etc.) languages. In Balibar's words: "Racism is a social relation and not a simple delirium of racist subjects" (1991b: 69).

The second function that completes the Foucauldian notion of racism is that of what we call "life improvement". Basically, what this function establishes is a relationship between the own life and the life of the other. It is a positive relationship that proposes not just the survival of the warrior relationship -that is, the fact that in war I have to kill in order to not being killed-, but the improvement of the own life through the killing of the other that appears as dangerous. If we are talking about a universalistic racism, the "own life" does not present itself as being particular, but as being *the* life. All particularities are put on the Other. In Foucault's words, "The death of the other does not simply coincide with my life, considered as mi personal security; the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or of the degenerate or the abnormal) is what will make that *life in general* be healthier; healthier and purer" (Foucault, 2008: 231; italics are our own). This mechanism is able to function because the others are not understood as adversaries or political enemies, but as dangers for the population.

We add to this Arendt's thinking. For the author, particularly in IR, racism has another function: to serve as a bridge between nationalism and imperialism (1958). If nationalism refers by definition to a particularity and, in contrast, imperialism has to be accompanied by some sense of universality of this particularity, this passage is only possible through racism, that is, through the idea of "imposing a superior law upon the barbarians" (Arendt, 1958: 126). In that case, the "national interests" of imperialist policies are invisibilised and the power acts in the name of universality.

In this sense, racism as discourse entails other elements: the idea of own superiority (developed when dealing with exceptionalism) paradoxically combined with the fear of the other understood as danger for the population[12], and a specific relationship between particularity and universality. Indeed, racism is theorized by Hanna Arendt as a bridge between nationalism and imperialism because it has a complex relation with both. As Balibar argues, "Racism appears at the same time in the universal and in the particular" (1991b: 89). Racism is understood as a structural process of otherness construction that works fragmenting an imaginary homogeneity, in order to encourage the improvement of a "We" considered not as a particular identity but as universality. In other words, starting from a strong particular identity, the racist discourse denies it and transforms it into a universal one. Thus, it establishes a universal and non-historical norm, through which the others are evaluated, constructing, therefore, a hierarchy of particularities. The universal from which it starts does not enter in this hierarchization, because it is considered the standard (the good, the white, the correct, the natural), from which the other particularities have deviated or to which they have not arrived yet.

As we have said, many authors sustain that in a biopolitical world talking about identities and otherness does not have any place, because of the inclusive character of the biopolitical power. When dealing with the idea of normality, Foucault points out a difference between its construction in a disciplinary society and in a control one (that is to say, in the interior of a biopolitical technology of power). While in the former the norm is established *a priori* and from there subjects are divided in normal and abnormal, in the latter, it is established *a posteriori*, taking into account all the possible cases, that is to say the normal *and* the abnormal ones. This is why Foucault affirms that this is an inclusive technology of power. Nevertheless we coincide with Chantal Mouffe who postulates the impossibility of an *ad infinitum* inclusion defended and sponsored by liberal cosmopolitanism theorists. At least in the context of the actual capitalist system, based on a series of exclusionist practices (starting with the exclusion of the workers from the means of production), some sort of inclusion/exclusion game functions. This is what explains that Foucault talks of an expansive racism or an inclusive racism (2002). Furthermore, we do not have to forget that racism is the actualization of sovereign power into the mechanics of biopower. That is to say that the binary identity construction characteristic of the former may be developed in the latter. Indeed, as said, it is what permits

[12] As we have said, the notion of danger is fundamental because it is the one around which the linkage between freedom and security articulates.

that a power which has to make live, can make die. This is only possible, as said, through racism inscribed in the mechanisms of the nation-state: a universalistic racism.

6 The Bush administration and the question of exporting democracy

In this context, talking about the Bush administration appears to be almost an obligation. Indeed, after raising the WMD and the Saddam Hussein-Al Qaida liaisons questions, the discourse of the previous US administration turned to democracy. The diagnosis was that terrorism was an effect of freedom/democracy-deficit in the Middle East region; hence, the treatment implied its imposition. As we have held before, the Bush administration tried to amalgamate interests and values. Freedom and security: the two principal features of the biopolitical power strongly emerged. Indeed, after 9-11, the most important interest of US appeared to be a vital one: assuring the nation. The main value, what (it was said) distinguished US from the rest of the world, was freedom, homologated with its democratic system. Thus, security adopted not just a conservative character, linked with survival, but a multiplier one: it was not just about protection but about improvement as well.

As said, liberal democracy is expected to be fully inclusive, forgetting that it is based (as we have seen) on exclusion. Furthermore, the dialectic inclusion/exclusion still works here, with the augmented risk that exclusion takes the form of an exterminating one. That is, if liberal hegemony aspires to a universal inclusion, it takes the risk of: 1. including the other in a hierarchical way, through the negation of his otherness (thus, turning it in someone similar, erasing its differences); 2. exterminating those who do not accept being included. And it is here where cultural racism works, because it is the mechanism which permits the US or -now that the North American power aspires to play a low profile role in the interventionist moves- the liberal powers in general, to kill in the name of certain universalities: freedom and Humanity. The US policy towards Iraq and Afghanistan and (with some differences) last intervention in Libya, where many people have been killed on behalf of their own well-being, are a few examples of what we are trying to explain.

It is important to note that freedom is an ambiguous and, thus, a polysemous term; therefore, it may be fulfilled with different meanings. During the Bush's years, for example, it was even homologated with "America": "American values and American interests lead in the same direction: We stand for human liberty"[13]. From US point of view, freedom is one of an individual kind: free-trade and liberal democracy. It is important to remark as regards to free-trade that the National Security Strategy of 2002, is constructed as a moral value and not as an economic policy: "The concept of 'free trade' arose as a moral principle even before it became a pillar of economics" (NSS, 2002: 18). The moralization of a political decision strips it of its historical character of particularity and transforms it in a universal necessity, out of history. "Thus, liberal societies are not merely contingently established and historically conditioned forms of organization; they become the universal standard against which other societies are judged" (Rasch, 2003: 141).

Liberal democracy should not be understood solely as a model that gives people the possibility of participating in politics. Without discussing about the existence of a real participation in politics through voting and without regard to the low levels of voter turnout in countries where elections are optional, liberal democracy implies a certain form of subjectivation. Indeed, it implies individualism in the form of citizenship; therefore, it implies the idea of individualism as the only way of approximation to the political. The relationship between state and citizen is, thus, non-mediated, but direct. The only form of association that is permitted is through the voluntary constitution of political parties or labor unions. The ethnic or confessional solidarities are, thus, left out, being considered non-modern. This is how, in countries such as some in the Middle East where tribal identities are central to social organization (and this is a historical characteristic, not a natural one), the establishment of liberal democracy requires cutting all those social ties and transforming collective identities into individual ones. This reconfiguration of social relationships has as necessary condition the use of violence, the imposition of new ways of constructing identity. Individualism

[13]WHITE HOUSE (2003). President Bush announces major combat operations in Iraq have ended (01/05/2003). (Online), retrieved on February 2009, `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on February 2009.

is equally necessary to the establishment of an economic liberal order. Furthermore, as Balibar argues, individualism presents itself as the best way of subjectivation: "This latent presence of the hierarchical question (...) expresses itself today especially in the prevalence of the individualistic model: the implicitly superior cultures would be those who valorize and favor the 'individual' enterprise, the social and political individualism, in opposition of those that inhibit it" (1991a: 43).

This critique does not aim to support a cultural relativism that "tolerates" the other and risks to lead to a "differentialist racism" (Balibar, 1991a), but to call the attention of a practice based on racist assumptions that cancel the possibility of thinking in other forms of socio-political organization, establishing a *pensée unique*. Indeed, the universalisation of liberal democracy, understood as the best socio-political model, entails the impossibility to express any alternative to it. In this sense, Fukuyama's "End of history" -based on an absolutely liberal Philosophy of History, with the idea of history as a progress in the apex of his discursive construct- is its theorization. A fundamentally ethnocentric and racist thinking, since the own system in which the author lives is seen as the last –and, therefore, the best- system in history. According to Fukuyama, based on Hegel, the "end of history" is "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government" (1989).

Nevertheless, Fukuyama opposed the invasion of Iraq. The idea of the neoconservative American author was not that the US imposed through force the democratic model; instead, that democracy would come without any help because it was a necessity of history. A similar doctrine was in the base of all those who greeted the so called "Arab spring" as one more step forward towards the implacable establishment of (liberal) democracy all over the world. For the author, "at the end of history it is not necessary that all societies become successful liberal societies, merely that they end their ideological pretensions of representing different and higher forms of human society" (1989). He aspired, then, to a de-ideologized world, which he made equal to a liberal world, highlighting the de-politicization of liberal discourse.

7 Bush's moral crusade for democracy

The Bush administration, hit by the 9-11 terrorist acts, decided to use its colossal military machine to carry out its interests which -it was said- coincided with the exportation of its particular values. But, in order to do so, these particular values had to be universalized; identifying the US social, contingent and historical order with a necessary, non historical and universal one.

> The most powerful weapon in the struggle against extremism is not bullets or bombs – it is the universal appeal of freedom. Freedom is the design of our Maker, and the longing of every soul. Freedom is the best way to unleash the creativity and economic potential of a nation. Freedom is the only ordering of a society that leads to justice. And human freedom is the only way to achieve human rights. Expanding freedom is more than a moral imperative – it is the only realistic way to protect our people in the long run.[14]

From our point of view and according to what was mentioned above, with continuities and discontinuities regards to previous administrations (which is logical because the world changes and everybody has to adapt to such changes), the Bush administration was a staging of the liberal thinking that cross the history of the US power. Indeed, as Roy asserts, the democratizing impulse of the Bush administration cannot be understood as an exclusive idea of neoconservatives. Indeed, "this philosophy, inspired by John Locke and liberal in every sense of the word, underpins American political thinking" (Roy, 2008: 33). In the same way, Mouffe confronts certain readings that established continuities between Carl Schmitt's thought and the Bush administration's policies, arguing that the universalizing vocation is typical of liberal thinking (2007a).

Indeed, the project of Middle East reconfiguration through the establishment of democracy gained strength since the year 2004 and it entailed the universalisation of a particular socio-political system. Thus, in the speech delivered in occasion of the commencement of his second term, on January 20th, 2005, George

[14]THE WHITE HOUSE (2007), "President Bush Visits Prague, Czech Republic, Discusses Freedom", 06/05/2007. (Online), `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on February 2009.

W. Bush did not mention terrorism. Instead, he talked about the universality of democracy and associated domestic regime with external behavior. In context, it represented an effort to justify retrospectively and in idealist terms, the invasion of Iraq which from the beginning generated resistance from its people. The democratization policy did not just entail the homogenization of the Middle East region without taking into account the specificity of the countries that form part of it, but it also implied the negation of historical particularities. Democracy was presented as being a universal *a priori*, a historical necessity, as the "God's gift" to all human beings in the Earth. In this sense, the Bush administration policy was aimed not just to the physical elimination of its enemies, but to the objective of civilizing the "savages".

The idea of democratization was based on the establishment of a historical analogy between post-Second World War Japan and Germany –where "freedom" had prevailed over Nazism and fascism- and the Middle East of the beginnings of the 21st century. The analogy was based on three assumptions: 1. the establishment of democracy in Germany and Japan since 1945 had pacified those countries and had transformed them in US allies; 2. there was an analogy between terrorism, fascism and Nazism (indeed, the enemies were frequently labeled as "islamo-fascists"); 3. the fact that democracy had been successful in both countries, regardless its cultural differences, proved that it could be established universally. We cannot avoid listening the echo of the 'Democratic Peace Theory' in the first assumption, the construction of a non-political enemy in the second and the universalisation of democracy in the third.

In this point, it can be argued that the administration adopted an approach contrary to that of Samuel Huntington's *Clash of civilizations* or to that of *orientalists* as Bernard Lewis. Indeed, the administration showed itself in disagreement with those that argued that Islam and democracy were incompatible. Nevertheless, this thinking may be characterized as well as deeply anti-historical and racist, not just because of the type of analogy established, but also because of the idea of liberal democracy as being a universal value, that is, a valid value in every time and every space. Furthermore, it was seen as superior regarding other past and present forms of organization, as "the most honorable form of government ever devised by man"[15].

As we have already mentioned, the administration asserted that, in the case of GWT, values and interests were coincident, because the exportation of the freedom value through the establishment of democracy worked on the direction of generating security for the US and its allies (Rice, 2008). This idea was based on the assumption that democracies do not make war to each other (the Democratic Peace Theory).

> The U.S. national security strategy will be based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests. The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better. Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity.[16]

We have established that racism is the only mechanism that gives the possibility to bio-power to exert the sovereign right of killing. This mechanism entails two functions: On the one hand, the function of fragmentation through which the biological realm is divided in two fields, one that must live and one that must die; on the other hand, the function that not only kills in order to live, but to improve the own life.

In this sense, the last quote is really meaningful. The GWT was a new world framework that permitted the emergence of the US sovereign power; that is to say, the power to determine who could live and who must die: the power to kill. It exerted this power through a racist mechanism that, we have argued, was a cultural one. In this sense, in the first place, the administration established a fragmentation of the world between those who had to live and those who had to die. Indeed, in the famous statement that later became known as the Bush doctrine -"either you are with us or you are with the terrorists"-, what was established was a world division between those who had to live ("us") and those who had to die (*Islamic*[17] terrorists and those who provided them help or refuge). Indeed, in Schmitt's terms, the terrorist enemy was not constructed as a political enemy but as an absolute one (1966). This gave the possibility to carry out an

[15]THE WHITE HOUSE (2004), "President's Remarks at the 2004 Republican National Convention", 09/02/2004. (Online), `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on February 2009.

[16]THE WHITE HOUSE (2002), National Security Strategy. Washington, D.C., p. 1

[17]From our point of view, the construction of the Other inside the function of fragmentation was made through religious lines, being the militant Muslims the object of extermination.

extermination policy of those who were not with "us". When democracy entered the game, this bipolarity became a cultural one. Now, the dichotomy passed through the form of socio-political organization. The world was divided, thus, into the free/democratic world and the non-democratic world[18]. The latter was compelled through force or diplomatic pressure to change. If democracy was a "God's gift" to humanity, then it was almost "naturalized". It was presented as a historical necessity, without regard to particularities. This is how fragmentation was established based on the assumption that there was a system (democracy) that was natural (that is, non particular, universal) and, hence, had to live.

But the second function, the one through which it is formulated that the "other" must disappear in order to improve the own life, played here as well. Indeed the imposition of democracy all over the world (starting by the Middle East as one of the most important regions in the world, from a geostrategic point of view) would make the world safer and better. The imposition of a particular form of socio-political organization (that of the US) supposed the improvement of the whole world, that is, of humanity. It is remarkable that during the last interventionist policy in Libya, in which the US had an important role (despite the alleged low profile), this question of the more similar to the US, the world being better, rose again. The similarities cannot be overlooked.

In George W. Bush's terms:

> The world is better without Saddam Hussein in power.[19]
>
> This country believes that freedom is the desire of every human heart. And one of the great benefits of our action in Iraq is not only going to make America more secure, but it's going to make the Iraqi people more free (...) And I believe the use of – proper use of power by America will make the world more peaceful, America more secure and, as importantly, people more free.[20]

And in Obama's terms:

> There is no doubt that Libya –and the world- will be better without Qaddafi in power.[21]
>
> For generations, we have done the hard work of protecting our own people, as well as millions around the globe. We have done so because we know that our own future is safer, our own future is brighter, if more of mankind can live with the bright light of freedom and dignity.[22]

Obviously, if it is assumed that the expansion of the American model represents the improvement of the world, in this assumption it is implicit the idea of US' superiority, entailed in that of American exceptionalism. In sum, American cultural racism, is debtor of the American exceptionalism that crosses the whole history of the US and it is clear in the assumption that "the world will be not just safer but better" if everybody adopts liberal democracy. It is important to note, as we have seen, that this form of racism is shared by the entire US political spectrum. As Krauthammer held, the Democratic critique of war in Iraq was not a critique of policy, but one of process (Krauthammer, 2004).

As Rosati argues,

> "Americans have such a strong faith in American virtue and progress that it is difficult for them to understand, let alone accept, the value of alternative paths to economic and political [I would add: and cultural] development divorced from the American model" (1993: 395).

[18]It is important to remark that this non-democratic world was inhabited by some of the most important US allies in the Middle East, as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In these cases, nevertheless, interests predominated. Effectively, even while there was some pressure on the governments of these countries to democratize themselves, these pressures rapidly abated when effective implementations of democratic practices showed that democracy would lead to Islamic governments, generally opposed to US policies in the Middle East region. In this sense, for example, the pressure on Mubarak's government of Egypt fell abruptly after the victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in parliamentary elections of November 2005 and that of Hamas of January 2006.

[19]THE WHITE HOUSE (2007), "President Bush Addresses the American Legislative Exchange Council, Discusses Budget, Education and War on Terror", 07/26/2007. (Online), `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on February 2009.

[20]THE WHITE HOUSE (2003), "President's Interview With South African Broadcasting", 07/07/2003. (Online), `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on February 2009.

[21]THE WHITE HOUSE (2011), "Remarks by the President in address to the nation on Libya", 03/28/2011. (Online), `www.whitehouse.gov` retrieved on May 2011.

[22]Ib.

If we add to this the limited interest of the American public in foreign affairs (what would suppose to know and think about foreign realities and histories), the statements of US politicians that justify Foreign Policy in certain ways and not in others (in ways that can be labeled as racist), can be accepted uncritically.

8 Some provisional conclusions

As Kant once said, it is necessary to establish a difference between a moral politician and a political moralist. Moved to the IR realm, we can affirm something similar about relationship between Foreign Policy and ethics. Liberal discourse is characterized for its apolitical language that leads it to act in the name of humanity and moral values and not recognizing the interests that are behind its actions. As Morgenthau has once stated: "We have acted on the international scene, as all nations must, in power-politics terms; but we have tended to conceive our actions in non-political moralistic terms" (1957: 21).

Accordingly to Foucault, liberalism -and its 'neo' form- function as general framework of biopolitics, a technology of power that makes live and let die and in the center of which is the production and consumption of freedom. This entails, in turn, its organization. Here is where the security devices work. Indeed, this mechanics between freedom and security works around the notion of danger for the population. We understand, thus, that the actualization of the sovereign power, understood as a power that makes die and let live, is not just possible, but necessary for exercising the killing power. This is exercised through racism. But unlike the noblesse historic-political racist discourse which was based on the particularities of the two sides (races) in conflict (remember its binary character), the liberal bourgeois discourse is a universalistic one, with the idea of nation at its center. That is what explains that racism is inscribed in the mechanisms of the state, a state that presents itself as being homogeneous and having as object and objective its population.

Racism is articulated around different languages, not just race. In this case, and talking about US Foreign Policy, we have talked about cultural racism and the question of exporting democracy. We tried to look for the conditions of possibility of an American cultural racism not just in liberalism that crosses its entire history, but in the idea of exceptionalism as well. In this sense, we find that whatever the meaning of exceptionalism is, it entails the possibility of becoming racism. That implies establishing a separation between what must live and what must die and sustaining that the death of the "other" improves life.

This became clear with the policy of establishment of democracy carried out by the Bush administration (and something similar could be said on recent liberal power's intervention in Libya). This policy killed many people, making disappear non-democratic regimes in order to improve not just the own life but -as liberalism speaks in the name of humanity- the whole world's life. This was possible because democracy was constructed not as a particular socio-political model but as "the" socio-political model. Let's remember that it was said that democracy was a "God's gift to mankind".

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