

‘The Way of Progress and Civilization’: Racial Hierarchy and US State Building in Haiti and the Dominican Republic

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Abstract

US state building interventions represent a core contradiction of US hegemony. The United States has repeatedly violated the sovereignty and self-determination of other states while claiming to uphold these same liberal order principles by constructing new institutions of domestic governance. The discrepancy between US actions and its liberal ideals depends on the degree of hierarchy established during US state building, but scholars have yet to explain why hierarchies vary across interventions. In this article, I employ practice theory to demonstrate how the intensity of state building hierarchies is a function of racial dispositions held by US policymakers. In particular, I examine the early 20th Century US occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the context of its emergence as a regional hegemon and its attempt to reorder world politics on the basis of liberal internationalism. Rather than create a new form of international relations that eliminated empire, the United States blended liberal principles with a Eurocentric logic of stratification that matched its own racialized identity. Overall, I demonstrate how Haiti experienced the most intense subordination due to its perceived racial inferiority compared to not just the United States but also the Dominican Republic.

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Keywords

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Introduction

The emergence of American unipolarity at the end of the Cold War along with the post-9/11 occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq led to a deep reassessment of the core assumptions of international relations (IR). Many scholars no longer take for granted that sovereign and autonomous states exist in an equal relationship to each other within a system of anarchy. Instead, they acknowledge that hierarchy is pervasive in world politics. Although this revival of interest in stratification is partly a reaction to neoconservative rationales for American primacy,¹ it has resulted in a wide range of research on various aspects of hierarchy. These include the politics of US overseas basing (Cooley 2012), the internalized stigmas of defeated non-Western nations (Zarakol 2010), and the application of imperial forms of control to domestic politics (Barder 2015). More broadly, scholars have begun a fundamental reassessment of international history and recognize a persistent set of hierarchical sub-systems within a broader system of anarchy (Hobson and Sharman 2005).

However, one aspect of hierarchy in international relations remains critically understudied. These are state building interventions, in which a sovereign state (or states) occupies another to administer its territory and reconstruct its state institutions.² Although they appear to meet the definition of informal empire (one state's control of another's domestic politics despite sovereign recognition), some state building interventions are quite short and involve relatively moderate forms of hierarchy, while others are seemingly indefinite and attempt a complete transformation of the target society via intense forms of hierarchy.³ But existing theories of hierarchy do not provide us with a convincing explanation of variation in authority relations enacted during state building. Contractual and normative theories of hierarchy assume that consent is the source of authority, but these approaches do not account for pre-existing systems of stratification that constrain actor choices. Conversely, macro-structural frameworks which focus on the production of actor subjectivities tend to ignore individual agency and the contingency of choice. Precisely how dominant and subordinate actors make sense of their

¹ See Ferguson (2004), for example.

² This definition is drawn from Miller (2003: 205, 218) and Pei, et. al. (2005: 64-65).

³ For example, the first US occupation of Cuba from 1898 to 1902 is relatively short compared to the seemingly indefinite occupation of Bosnia from 1995 to the present. We can also contrast the Western allies treatment of Konrad Adenauer as a near-equal (Schwartz 1991) with the US imposition of a constitution on post-invasion Iraq (Arato 2009).

unequal rights and responsibilities, while nominally recognizing each other as sovereign, remains an unexplored puzzle.

In this article, I argue that the degree of hierarchy established during state building, or the intensity and duration of control over a sovereign state's domestic politics, depends on how the social construction of difference shapes the practices of dominant and subordinate actors. More specifically, I employ a practice theory approach inspired by the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu to show how US policymakers embraced the practical logics of paternalism and offensive racial control in its occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the early 20th Century. These interventions were essential for the establishment of US hegemony in the Western Hemisphere because they enabled it to be recognized as a great power and an agent of civilizational progress. However, the United States legitimated these occupations not solely by invoking its own liberal principles, but also long-standing hierarchies organized on the basis of racial difference. Through primary and secondary sources, I demonstrate how racialized US dispositions informed (but did not necessarily determine) how policymakers responded to the challenges of building new state institutions as well as violent and non-violent resistance to their modernizing project. Overall, racial hierarchy best explains why the United States withdrew from the Dominican Republic rather quickly while it consolidated long-term control over Haiti.

Why should we care about the causes of variation in hierarchy during state building? Because these interventions embody the core contradiction of US hegemony and its liberal internationalist leadership role in world politics. State building interventions inherently violate sovereignty and self-determination, the primary institutions of the liberal world order (Buzan 2002: 182, Ikenberry 2015: 267-271). At the same time, US officials tend to justify state building on the basis of restoring popular sovereignty and disavow "imperial" intentions to engage in conquest or annexation. Precisely how policymakers resolve this contradiction can tell us much about the liberal order's coercive or consensual aspects. Does the United States exercise meaningful self-restraint by respecting the autonomy of local political leadership in designing new governmental institutions or constitutional documents? Or does it impose its own designs consistent with its foreign policy objectives? And if the United States does the latter, what systems of intersubjective knowledge justify the most blatant forms of hierarchy otherwise incompatible with liberal order? My approach helps to answer these questions by illustrating

how the United States relied on the same categorical inequalities that made possible European imperialism when establishing its state building hierarchies. US policymakers engage in illiberal forms of rule when the target of state building is more racially different, and especially so when a subordinated people rejects the liberal “civilizing mission” of the United States as well as its own subordinate role. Or, to put it bluntly, variation in state building hierarchies illustrates how the United States institutionalized white supremacy within the nascent liberal order.

This argument sits at the intersection of multiple research agendas in both political science and international relations. It builds upon arguments made by scholars of American political development and postcolonialism who claim racial hierarchy is constitutive of both US domestic politics and the contemporary world system (Lowndes, et. 2008, Parmar 2017). It also allows us to explore how the United States first establishes regional hegemony in Latin America without relying on conventional ontologies that privilege state sovereignty (Rittinger, unpublished manuscript). Further, I incorporate relational network theory by illustrating how the United States used racial identities to maintain an imperial formation on the basis of multivocal signaling and heterogenous contracting despite sovereign equality among all three states (Nexon and Wright 2007, Nexon 2009).⁴ This article also demonstrates the limits of claims about norms and domestic politics as factors which restrain US foreign policy. I show how anti-imperial norms will be less operative when the targets of intervention are understood as racially different and inferior. Lastly, if US state building and the broader liberal order relied on illiberal forms of hierarchy on the basis of racism, then the contemporary restoration of liberal hegemonic US foreign policy ought not to be supported.

The argument proceeds as follows. First, I illustrate how the existing literature on hierarchy, liberal order, and state building has yet to fully reckon with the postcolonial aspects of modern world politics. I then apply recent advances in constructivist methodology (Pouliot 2010) to show how the practice of state building in Haiti and the Dominican Republic was informed by racialized dispositions. I further demonstrate that the degree of hierarchy varied between both interventions based on different representations of their racial identities in relation to a “white”

⁴ I build upon Nexon and Pouliot (2013), McCourt’s (2016) arguments that relational network theory and practice theory are complementary aspects of “new constructivism.”

United States. Finally, I briefly reflect on future avenues for research and the contradictions of US liberal hegemony.

Hierarchy and State Building in a (Supposedly) Liberal Order

The hierarchy and imperialism literature features a range of theoretical frameworks which have already been categorized by MacDonald (2009: 50-52), Mattern and Zarakol (2016: 628-630, Zarakol 2017) into two broad approaches.⁵ Narrow or thin approaches rely upon methodological individualism by assuming that actors in world politics are already constituted prior to their social interactions with others. Hierarchy is treated as a relational contract purposely enacted between two parties (one dominant and one subordinate) who consent to their unequal rights and responsibilities and could theoretically withdraw their consent at any time (Lake 1999). These relationships are presumed to require legitimacy and can be secured on the basis of a rational logic of consequences (Lake 2009), or a normative logic of appropriateness (Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990). Narrow or thin approaches build upon Doyle's classic definition of imperialism, in which one state controls the domestic politics of another through indirect rule. These hierarchies are generally associated with the economic exploitation of colonies or tributaries and the creation of closed spheres of influence (Doyle 1986).

Individualist understandings of hierarchy and imperialism are consistent with mainstream accounts of US foreign policy and state building interventions. According to Ikenberry (2001) and Meiser (2015: 20), the United States embraced more hegemonic restraint than imperial expansion during the first half of the 20th Century due to its decentralized institutional structure along with its liberal strategic culture. Both logics of consequences and appropriateness were operative: liberal democracy made US policymakers conscious of the costs of empire and made the recognition of other nations' sovereignty normatively appropriate.⁶ The result was a "hierarchical order with liberal characteristics" (Ikenberry 2011: 160) in which the US purposely accepted limits on its power within consent-based multilateral institutions and promoted an open international economy. The core principles of this order, sovereignty and self-determination, rendered imperial domination obsolete once they became globalized and contributed to the

⁵ These approaches are largely consistent with the various forms of power identified by Barnett and Duvall (2005).

⁶ The logic of consequences is more prevalent compared to the logic of appropriateness in Meiser's work, but both logics are prevalent in Ikenberry's.

collapse of empires after both world wars (Ikenberry 2015). Since state building is consistent with these principles, it is a categorically unique and less exploitive form of intervention compared to imperialism and territorial annexation (Miller 2013: 5; Mandelbaum 2009: 76-80). According to Donnelly (2006: 155), recent state building interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Kosovo are best understood as establishing sovereign protectorates (states which control their domestic politics but not their foreign policy) rather than dominions (peripheral elements of an informal empire that possess sovereignty) except for the short-term period after an intervention is initiated and before a new indigenous government is formed.

Other scholars reject these accounts of US hegemony and state building and instead focus on the operation of thick global structures and the broader set of relationships in which actors are embedded. Whether hierarchy is organized on the basis of a world-systemic division of labor (Wallerstein 1980, Arrighi 1994) or the drawing of social boundaries and representations of identity (Doty 1986, Weber 1994), these historical contexts constitute the very existence of dominant and subordinate actors by producing their subjectivities. From these perspectives, consent-based theories of hierarchy fail to acknowledge how deep structures limit actors' ability to choose among various kinds of relationships, even supposedly "sovereign" states. Hardt and Negri's (2001) poststructural analysis of a diffuse post-Cold War US empire is the most well-known version of this claim.

A more precise structural theory of imperialism focuses on the meso-level configuration of social ties which link cores to peripheries. These scholars argue that all empires possess a hub-and-spoke structure and are defined by two dimensions: 1) autonomous central authorities and 2) heterogenous contracting between the center and peripheral segments. The success or failure of empires is thereby dependent upon the ability of central authorities to enact divide-and-rule strategies (Motyl 2001, Nexon 2009). Relationalists criticize individualist accounts of hierarchy for assuming that such contracts are durable and uncontested once made – as if international hierarchies formed to "escape the anarchic state of nature" (Lake 2007) are like domestic hierarchies. Instead, MacDonald (2018) argues that hierarchy-amid-anarchy is unique. When sovereignty is ambiguously shared by dominant and subordinate actors, it requires orchestration. Both a dominant actor's ability to maintain authority and a subordinate actor's ability to resist depend upon their embedded relational position in a network configuration.

These systemic and relational frameworks are employed by many scholars to illustrate the more coercive nature of US foreign policy and suggest that state building has imperial qualities. Acharya (2015: 40-42) and Parmar (2017) argue that liberal restraints on the use of force were never adopted by the United States in its relationships with Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Nexon and Musgrave (2013a) argue that US interventions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq are instances of a “stealth” informal interstate empire because they all possess the relevant relational dynamics (see also Nexon and Wright 2007). Chandler (2006) extends poststructural analyses by showing how US state building in Bosnia relied on a modernizing discourse of capacity building to legitimize its extensive authority over a democratically elected Bosnian state. All these extensions of broad/thick theories of hierarchy reinforce Musgrave and Nexon’s (2013b) claim the American impulse to enlarge the liberal order can often result in imperial relationships. State-building-as-empire fits neatly into these frameworks.

These debates about hierarchy, liberal order, and state building leave us with important questions: how can we account for the degree of hierarchy established during state building interventions? Answering this question should help us evaluate existing debates about the benevolence of US hegemony and its commitment to restraint on the basis of sovereignty and self-determination. As others have argued (Krasner 1999: 22, Staniland and Naseemullah 2013), sovereignty may be simply a *de jure* legal title which enables indirect rule by a foreign power rather than denote meaningful self-rule with a minimum of external interference. State building may include either form of hierarchy. Based on the framework established by McConaughey, et. al. (2018), state building approximates an asymmetric federation when target states grant intervening states authority over their domestic governance. But in the absence of such “vesting” of authority by subordinate actors, state building interventions will more closely resemble empire. To determine if state building interventions respect the autonomy of sovereigns or simply sidelines them, we have to look at specific cases and explore variations in stratification. Thin/narrow theories of hierarchy rightly focus on dominant and subordinate actors, but their individualist assumptions about agency fail to capture the unequal capacities of each actor within broader relational and discursive structures of world politics (Zarakol 2017: 9). And while thick/broad theories (especially Hardt and Negri’s work) do allow us to explore how systems of inequality make possible actor subjectivities, their focus on diffuse discursive processes often

leaves agency out of their analyses (Thompson 2005: 77-78). They also tend not to conceptualize how unequal subjective positions are articulated by dominant actors as a means of ensuring heterogenous contracting.

What we need is an approach which allows us to uncover how persistent systems of inequality endogenously structure the corporate identities of actors through social relations and are reproduced through their agency. A key aspect of corporate identity formation involves the social construction of difference through the drawing of group boundaries as well as the definition of their internal attributes (Daase and Cederman 2003). Since all inequalities are justified by distinguishing between Self and Other (Mouffe 1994: 105-106, Viola 2013), our approach must enable us to examine how collective identities are actively constructed by actors through exclusions that make possible unequal treatment. Such an investigation is especially needed when examining hierarchy within liberal orders. Jahn (2013: 92-95), Rae and Reus-Smit (2013: 96-97) argue that liberal orders often feature despotic or absolutist rule enacted against collectivities deemed inferior on the basis of group differences. Scholars in other fields have validated this claim by demonstrating how US evaluations of the identities of Puerto Ricans, Filipinos, and Chomorros led to the enactment of forms of rule ranging from supervised democracy to military government (Thompson 2002, Go 2008a, Go 2011). But we still lack a relational analysis of hierarchy and the construction of difference when both dominant and subordinate actors nominally recognize each other as sovereign equals. This contradiction is inherent in state building, but we have yet to explain how sovereign states justify it.

Practice Theory, State Building, and Race as Symbolic Capital

I argue that practice theory, a sociological framework inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and also Erving Goffman (1959, 1967), provides the best approach for analyzing state building hierarchies. Its object of study are social practices, or a pattern of action which performatively establishes one's social competence given its intersubjective meaning (Adler and Pouliot 2011: 6). Practices both structure the subjectivities of social actors and can reproduce or change the meanings which they ascribe to their interactions. The logic of practicality, or a commonsense of the social game, suggests how human beings can engage others in a given situation (Pouliot 2010: 35). Practices are a function of how an actor is disposed to relate to others depending on its past experiences (its *habitus*) and its unequal position in a

stratified order governed by pre-given rules (a *field* of power relations). Actors within a field compete with each other to acquire relevant *symbolic capital*, or any resource of value. As actors socially engage each other through practices, they experientially come to embody their location in the field (Ibid.,: 46). In this way, stratified orders and the rules which maintain dominant and subordinate positions become tacitly accepted by social actors while alternative relationships or rules of the game are rendered impossible by virtue of their historical experiences.

Practice theory allows us to rethink the nature of hierarchy within states, between them, and in the transnational space where one state occupies another. The power of both sovereign states and hegemons depend on their possession of “meta-capital,” or the ability to establish the value of various forms of capital (military, economic, and cultural) as well as the rates of exchange between them (Bourdieu 2015: 197-198, Nexon and Neumann 2017). When their representatives competently enact practices of governance, they structure the dispositions of subordinate actors by delimiting which repertoires of action enable the acquisition of capital and enable them to secure their position in a field or advance within it. Subordinate actors thereby reproduce competent performances as a means of enhancing their social rank or risk further subordination (Pouliot 2016: 56-57). In world politics, habits and fields cannot simply be reordered however a hegemon wants without risking being seen as incompetent (Nexon and Neumann 2017: 672). Not only can the existing rules of the game limit the degree of hierarchy enacted by a hegemon and force it to adopt more subtle forms of dominance over other states (Go 2008b: 220-221), but they can also limit the degree of autonomy a hegemon permits for other states if it strongly embodies these pre-existing and more hierarchical rules. The issue is which “theory of sovereignty” (Adler-Nissen 2012: 179) and rules of the game are practically enacted given a hegemon’s *habitus* in relation to various kinds of actors.

What other body of rules and fields of power relations might pre-date liberal order principles and make possible more intense hierarchies in state building interventions? I suspect that racial systems of inequality might do so. Postcolonial scholars, especially those drawing on Du Bois’ ([1915]1995) notion of a color line, argue that socially constructed racial hierarchies have been the essential form of stratification in world politics since the initial moments of European imperialism (Inayatullah and Blaney 2004, Anievas, et. al. 2013). Binary representations of racial differences organized around phenotypical characteristics justified the

recognition of sovereignty among “white” European states of “the West” as well as their claim to dominate the supposedly inferior “non-white” peoples of “the East” and the Global South (Said 1978, Vucetic and Persaud 2018). Racialized identities further served as the basis for discourses of civilization. Whether articulated in terms of a Huntingtonian clash of distinct transnational identities or the emergence of a universal and global civilization which could encompass all of humanity (Jackson 2006: 82-86, O’Hagan 2007), white Europeans define their own institutions and way of life as superior to others. From this perspective, all modern institutions (including liberal ones) are a function of an informal racial contract (Mills 1997) among Europeans who invented racial differences to justify the domination and exploitation of non-Europeans based on their incapacity for autonomous rule, self-discipline, and self-improvement. Once reified as ontologically real, racial and civilizational identities enabled both internationalism and imperialism through the modern era and into the 19th Century, with all these forms of horizontal and vertical relationships legitimated by international law (Anghie 2004, Dunne, et. al. 2013).

As a nation established on the basis of white settler colonialism, the United States is certainly a party to the racial contract. Postcolonialism thereby suggests that the United States did not merely create a liberal order *tabula rasa* but inherited a highly stratified racialized one. Both orders vary in terms of their theory of sovereignty – one recognizes rights of sovereignty and self-determination on the basis of the constituent power of the people while the other reserves sovereign recognition only for racial or civilizational co-equals. However, they were syncretically combined as international society became truly global in the late 19th Century when a liberal standard of civilization emerged that established the terms of sovereign recognition on the basis of “advanced” Anglo-European forms of political and economic governance (Bull and Watson 1985). These benchmarks included centralized rule by a rational-legal state, recognition of the extraterritorial commercial and property rights, and adherence to European diplomatic practices (Gong 1984). This combination made possible Western claims to enact paternal governance of other peoples based on the need to support the emergence of civilized (Western) institutions, yet the degree of paternal dominance can vary in terms of “weak” and “strong” forms (Barnett 2017: 76).

A postcolonial application of practice theory provides us with a useful framework for thinking about how the United States enacts hierarchy during state building interventions and

combines the rules of both liberal and racialized orders. To do so requires analyzing how dispositions become embodied within actors and suggests to them how they might relate to each other given a particular situation (Pouliot 2017: 123-124). Practice theory thereby enables us to analyze how macro-level deep structures are instantiated at the micro-level by delimiting the agency of dominant and subordinate actors. In this way, I can examine how the thick/broad context of long-standing discursive and relational structures co-constituted the identities and capacities of dominant and subordinate actors (Barkawi 2010: 1072-1074), and thereby inform their practical responses to moments of political contention. More specifically, practice theory allows us to investigate the civilizational politics of US state building and how its own identity as an agent of civilization is constructed transactionally in relation to its “uncivilized” targets of intervention (Jackson 2007, Bettiza 2014).

In the remainder of this article, I explore the practical logic of US state building in Haiti and the Dominican Republic during the early 20th Century. These two interventions occur between 1915 and 1934 as the United States establishes regional hegemony in Latin America and makes a first attempt to establish a liberal world order of sovereign states at the end of World War I. Both states are recognized as already sovereign prior to intervention and are subject to less intense forms of hierarchy involving formal and informal US economic controls before each military occupation begins. My practice-theoretic approach also complements the processual focus of relational network theories (McCourt 2016, see also Nexon and Pouliot 2013). By establishing how identities are constructed via difference, practice theory helps us uncover the intersubjective meanings which make possible heterogeneous contracts among United States and its targets of occupation. It further allows me to demonstrate how racial hierarchy enabled an imperial divide-and-rule strategy that allowed the United States to incorporate occupied sovereigns back into international society while preserving its dominant position in world politics.

To analyze US state building practices and responses of subordinate peoples, I use Pouliot’s “subjectivist” methodology of establishing agent understandings and logics, placing them in intersubjective context, and finally historicizing those meanings (2010, 68-78). Since I am interested in exploring how racial and civilizational identities legitimized US interventions, I reverse the order of Pouliot’s three methodological steps and examine state building practices

after establishing historical and intersubjective contexts. However, I maintain logical induction by refraining from generalizations about how racialized discourses inform dispositions and the enactment of hierarchies until after I observe the subjective interpretations of US policymakers. My evidence is drawn from primary source material gathered in US government archives and publications during the historical period as well as secondary historical sources. While I initially rely on the public statements of US officials announcing their presence and civilizational authority over occupied peoples, the strongest evidence comes from their private correspondence or writings intended for American audiences. These statements indicate whether or not American officials possessed a racialized disposition, how they perceived the field of power among themselves and other states (including targets), and suggest what kinds of actions were practical when engaging in state building.

As I examine these instances of state building, I evaluate alternative explanations. Lake's work is especially relevant given his use of the Dominican Republic (2011: 5) to illustrate his theory of relational contracting. A practice theory approach should demonstrate the limited space for bargaining held by subordinate actors and even instances in which subordinate demands are simply ignored on the basis of racial difference and Eurocentric perceptions of incompetence. Consistent with past analyses of informal empire (Wendt and Friedheim 1995: 700-701), I anticipate that any consent is likely to be manufactured rather than willingly given. My practice theory approach can also extend and refine normative explanations of US intervention. According to Meiser (2015), domestic institutions and the anti-imperial norms characteristic of US strategic culture forced policymakers to moderate their expansionist preferences and subsequently enact less severe forms of hierarchy. My constructivist approach incorporates these domestic political factors but does so on the basis of long standing racialized identities and discourses which establish when more or less hierarchy was practical in relation to a particular target state.⁷

⁷ This approach also allows for an implicit evaluation of normative explanations of intervention (Finnemore 1996) and stratification rankings of states (Towns 2009). If we interpret sovereignty as a racialized norm, we should expect that more hierarchy will be understood as appropriate when policymakers understand a greater degree of racial difference between themselves and citizens of a target state. In such circumstances, a logic of consequences may then be applied as a means of paternalist tutelage. But normative arguments may not be able to explain the precise timing of the enactment of hierarchy or how resistance to interventions might lead policymakers to adopt more restraint. In other words, there might not be a one-to-one axiomatic relationship between the degree of hierarchy

American Hegemony and State Building in Latin America: 1898-1934

19th Century Exclusion and Inclusion in the United States and International Society

The antebellum United States was a society organized on the basis of racial exclusion. In this era, US intellectuals articulated an exceptionalist national identity based their liberal democratic institutions and the Anglo-Saxon racial origins of US settlers (Cha 2015). Liberal freedom and limited government were conceived as a product of the superior biological and cognitive traits of white US citizens. But to maintain its uniquely liberal polity, the United States had to exclude peoples of inferior races who lacked the capacity to participate in a free society. The result was an Anglo-Saxon nationalism which denied any citizenship rights to African slaves and indigenous peoples (Horsman 1986). This ethnic identity made possible a predatory foreign policy which reproduced racial exclusion in the North American region. The sovereign claims of indigenous communities and Mexico were all ignored in the drive to realize Manifest Destiny, resulting in decades of US land conquest as a means of ensuring domestic prosperity (Young and Meiser 2008). The United States also sought to preserve slavery in the Caribbean by refusing recognition of post-revolutionary Haiti's sovereignty while opposing Great Britain's abolition of slavery in its own colonies (Karp 2016).

The US Civil War led to significant shifts in both US national identity and the broader world economy. The dismantling of slavery, an influx of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants, and increasing US participation in the global economic system initially centered on Europe all necessitated the articulation of a new, more inclusive sense of self (Ninkovich 2009: Chapters 4 and 5). US leaders responded with a civic nationalism that allowed for the assimilation of non-whites into the polity as they learned Anglo-American cultural traits required for democratic citizenship. However, assimilation was extremely coercive and limited through the establishment of Jim Crow institutions across the US South and Wilson's enactment of segregation in the US civil service (Ambrosius 2007). The abolition of US slavery also increased the cost of labor involved in cotton production and subsequently forced manufacturers to seek new sites of cotton cultivation in Asia and Africa. But rather than mobilize labor on the basis of master-slave

enacted in an intervention and the identity of the target state. Practice theory enables us to explore how various logics of social action can be applied in different circumstances (Pouliot 2010: 35-38).

relationships, legal and contractual instruments were employed which enabled the extension of state power and the continued operation of industrial capitalism (Beckert 2014: 656-666).

The limited inclusion of non-whites in US society along with the global reorganization of economic relations was accompanied by a liberal internationalist project led by the United States to construct a more inclusive rules-based world order, yet one that retained Eurocentric hierarchy. The conclusion of the Spanish-American War with the Treaty of Paris in 1898 provided the US with control over island territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean, which the United States claimed on the basis of a civilizing mission (Bowden 2009, 151). President Theodore Roosevelt represented US identity in terms of civilization with his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, in which the United States claimed an “international police power” as a “civilized nation” to rectify “[c]hronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society...” (FRUS 1904: XLI). US hegemony was further asserted through the dollar diplomacy of the Taft Administration, in which the United States provided loans to insolvent Latin American countries on condition of enacting financial reforms conducive to foreign capital (Head 2012: 272-273).

More broadly, the arrival of the US as a great power was an important marker of the end of the long 19th Century, in which European empires established a core-periphery structure upon world politics (Osterhammel 2014, Buzan and Lawson 2015, Green 2019). US policymakers adopted a legalist orientation which extended the applicability of claims to sovereignty and international law beyond the European continent in ways that accompanied the growing intensity of economic globalization (Coates 2016). Their attempt to construct a rational-legal order reached its apex with the Wilson Administration, which sought to reorder world politics after World War I on the basis of a new rules-based architecture which ensured that the rights of capital would be protected by sovereign states (Slobodan 2018). The United States subsequently assumed responsibility for maintaining civilizational standards of governance associated with both international law and sovereignty while adding a new benchmark - liberal democratic self-government - for actors who sought legal standing in world politics (C. Hobson 2008). Wilson thereby created a new historical context in which national self-determination became the basis for anticolonial mobilizations demanding inclusion in the world order, yet he simultaneously perpetuated Eurocentric racial hierarchies by ignoring claims to sovereign equality by Latin

American, Asian, and African indigenous leaders (Manela 2009: 25). In this way, the United States claimed hegemony by redefining the symbolic capital associated with membership in international society.

Two Discourses of Tutelage and Race War

Given this historic context, American intellectuals developed alternative yet intertwined discourses of racial hierarchy which represented the white race as superior to non-whites within either a universal or plural civilizational framework.⁸ A paternalist imperial discourse was common among many US intellectuals who assumed that enlightened rule by Anglo-Europeans could reform racially inferior peoples and generate stable institutions consistent with civilized standards (Schmidt 1998, Blatt 2004). This discourse complemented the somewhat more inclusive post-Civil War US identity and defined the United States as possessing a right to intervene abroad and assimilate non-white peoples into a Eurocentric world order. The most prominent theorist of this benign form imperialism was Paul Reinsch (Schmidt 2008; J. Hobson 2012: 122-124; Vitalis 2015: 43), American political scientist and US minister to China during the Wilson administration. Reinsch argued that the civilized nations should establish protectorates over backward territories as a means of ensuring mobility of capital, goods, and people (Reinsch 1905: 7). This enlightened form of imperialism was analogous to what we today consider state building. It sought to create the conditions in which indigenous peoples could learn self-government and permit their inclusion in an expanding open international economy. More aggressive forms of this discourse were common in the US media, which assumed that nations of color like Haiti would regress from civilized habits without the guiding hand of advanced Anglo-Saxons (Blassingame 1969, 30).

An alternative imperial discourse informed by scientific racism was articulated alongside paternalism during this period. John Hobson (2012: 8-9) describes this discursive framework as a pro-imperial offensive racism, or the belief that non-white races of the East were an existential threat to Western Civilization due to their immutable biological or genetic differences. Whereas Eurocentric paternalism implied that some degree of restraint was appropriate during tutelage, offensive racism implied that uplift was impossible and only the use of force could maintain

⁸ On civilizational discourses, see Jackson (2006: 82-86).

order among barbaric or savage peoples. Despite the paternalism of the Roosevelt Corollary, Roosevelt himself displayed offensive racist thinking in his earlier writings when he justified the conquest of overseas territory as a means of spreading civilization across the globe and cultivating civilized traits associated with manhood among white Americans (Wertheim 2009: 498-500). Along with Roosevelt, US military theorists like Alfred Thayer Mahan conceptualized the arrival of globalization and contact Asians and Africans as threatening the dominance of the white race, a sentiment shared by other intellectuals of the era (Barder, unpublished manuscript). The articulation of offensive racial discourses should not be understood as an entirely novel development, but rather built upon the exclusive ethnonationalist identity of the antebellum United States.⁹

US Dispositions in Haiti and the Dominican Republic

I now examine how these historic and discursive contexts structured the dispositions of US policymakers during the occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. US interventions followed a geostrategic logic: policymakers perceived a threat to Caribbean naval access to the Panama Canal due to rising German economic influence and recurring revolutions in both countries.¹⁰ US occupations resolved the potential German threat while guaranteeing international economic openness. They were also a commonsensical response by US policymakers given their self-assumed role as agents of civilization with a paternalist responsibility to raise up otherwise inferior peoples (Renda 2001: Chapter 3, Tillman 2016: 78-81). US Navy Admiral William B. Caperton, who initiated both interventions on the order of President Wilson, justified his declaration of US martial law in Port-au-Prince based on the need to provide a government “necessary for the establishment and maintenance of the fundamental rights of man...” (FRUS 1915, 484), thereby framing civilized standards of liberal governance in terms of the French revolutionary tradition. Caperton espoused similar ideas when taking control

⁹ Another discourse identified by John Hobson (2013), defensive realism, is also worth mentioning. This discourse suggested that white contact with inferior races would lead to a regression from civilization and rationalized domestic opposition to territorial annexation during the late 19th Century since non-white peoples would compromise the vitality of the American nation. For more on how racism motivated anti-imperialism, see Love (2004) and Maass (2019).

¹⁰ In reality, Berlin never had any intention of challenging the United States while preoccupied with World War I in Europe (Small 1972).

of Santo Domingo. He described US intervention as motivated solely by a selfless desire to uphold international law:¹¹

“This military occupation is undertaken with no immediate or ulterior object of destroying the sovereignty of the Republic of Santo Domingo, but on the contrary, is designed to give aid to that country in returning to a condition of internal order that will enable it to observe the terms of the treaty aforesaid, and the obligations resting upon it as one of the family of nations.” (FRUS 1916, 247)

Both statements illustrate the civilizing disposition of US policymakers. In rationalizing US intervention based on the need to guarantee individual rights and the political stability of both polities, Caperton demonstrated how US actions were consistent with its great power identity. To maintain its own sense of self, it had to intervene and ensure that other states maintained civilized governance practices as members of the “family of nations,” just as a father would act to maintain order within his family.

But in their private communication, US military officers were extremely pessimistic about local governance practices and assumed that strong paternalism, if not outright coercion, were the only practical solutions to both countries’ problems. Caperton wrote that local political leaders were prone to engaging in an uncivilized kind of politics characterized by deceit and self-enrichment. In a 12 June 1916 letter to the Chief of Naval Operations, he described Dominican Senators as “thoroughly unreliable and no dependence can be put on what they say” (Caperton Papers, Box 1, Folder 1). On 26 June, the US-nominated Customs Receiver in Port-au-Prince wrote to Caperton: “There is not a man in the Government who is concerned with anything except his private gain and with finding places for his friends. Force and force alone only can control the situation (Caperton Papers, Box 1, Folder 1).” Caperton shared a similar view when explaining on 11 July to Colonel Littleton Waller, the commanding officer for the US Marines in Haiti, that “the only thing for these Republics, is a strong United States Military government, with plenty of ‘big sticks’ and forces who would govern the people as they should be governed” (Caperton Papers, Box 1, Folder 5). As for Waller and Smedley Butler, the US Marine officer appointed to command the *Gendarmerie*, they described Haitians and Dominicans in terms of

¹¹ Schoultz (1998: 207-208) argues that the 1907 Dominican Treaty was the inspiration for Dollar Diplomacy under the Taft administration. From this perspective, the initiation of the 1916 occupation was part of the broader hegemonic project of ensuring that the inter-American affairs were governed on a rational-legal basis associated with civilized standards.

both offensive racism and paternalism. Waller used racial slurs in explaining how soldiers of African descent could not be trusted with weapons, evidence of a disposition shaped by the massacre of his slave-owning ancestors in the Nat Turner slave rebellion of 1831 (Schmidt 1998: 84). Butler switched from referring to Haitians as “savage monkeys” to “my chocolate soldiers” as his mission changed from waging a pacification campaign at the outset of the occupation to assuming command of the *Gendarmerie* (quoted in Renda 2001: 103). One discourse rationalized military engagement against a subhuman inferior race, while the other rationalized intensive paternalist rule among black Haitians who could become soldiers in the model of the US Marines. However, both led US policymakers to view Haitian and Dominican elites as unable to competently perform civilized governance and thus lacked the symbolic capital associated with self-rule. Such perceptions matched the racialized tacit knowledge about the capacities of non-white political leaders and led US officers to enact more intense forms of dominance despite local sovereignty.

However, Eurocentric discourses cannot tell us exactly why the degree of hierarchy initially varied across occupations. The United States proceeded to impose its will on Haiti by selecting its new President, Sudré Dartiguenave, and threatening Deputies in the Haitian National Assembly with prosecution for bribery due to their initial opposition to the Haitian-American Treaty of 1915 (Schmidt 1995: 74-75). Once ratified, the United States gained authority over Haiti’s customs collection, finances and public works, and was further authorized to build the new constabulary force which Butler would command. These reforms were enacted by Americans selected by the United States on the basis of their technical and scientific expertise who nominally served on behalf the Haitian government. This relationship fits the description of an asymmetric federation, but one in which subordinate Haiti is fully compelled by the US government to invest its appointees with institutional authority rather than autonomously consent to it. In the Dominican Republic, Caperton simply ignored the provisional President, Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, and the Dominican Congress when they attempted to negotiate a similar treaty that did not provide the same rights to the United States as in Haiti. When their government effectively collapsed – partly because US policymakers refused to offer a loan - Caperton then established a military government rather than allow new elections (Tillman 2016: 74-76). The resulting governance hierarchy resembled empire rather than an asymmetric

federation because it left no residual right for Dominican self-governance and never involved the investment of governance authority in the United States.

We can explain this variation in hierarchy in terms of the logic of practicality. On 9 June 1917, US Rear Admiral Harry Knapp described the establishment of military government in the Dominican Republic as required by the circumstances rather than an intentional outcome: “By the accident that the Dominicans deserted their posts it became necessary to put American officers in charge of the administration of several Dominican government departments.”¹² To achieve US objectives in the country, military government was the only practical response, not to mention a preferable one given the assumed shortcomings of local elites: “almost all the vexatious questions have been eliminated that would have arisen in the endeavor to control Dominicans in the administering of these offices....”¹³ When the Haitian National Assembly almost passed a new constitution on 19 June which undermined the 1915 treaty and prevented the United States from legalizing the foreign ownership of property, Marine officers threatened President Dartiguenave with military government unless he dissolved the National Assembly.¹⁴ He subsequently did so by a decree which was announced to Assembly Deputies by Butler and his armed *gendarmes*. This kind of coercive bargaining resembles a logic of consequences – US officials increased the costs of noncompliance to Haitian officials until they took action consistent with US demands or simply eliminated their governmental authority. Enacting this degree of hierarchy was a self-evident response to the political circumstances informed by a sense that US officials were agents of civilizational uplift and non-partisan governance who acted for the good of the entire country. According to the text of the decree, such action was necessary to achieve “certain constitutional reform’s [sic] exempt from all party spirit and inspired by a desire to launch the country into the way of Progress and Civilization...”¹⁵ US officials were certainly tempted to enact military government in Haiti, but it was not required by the situation.

Racial Differences between Haitians and Dominicans

¹² State Department 1965, Central Decimal File 838.00/1464.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ State Department 1965: Central Decimal File 838.00/1467.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Over time, state building hierarchies became correlated to the perception that Haitians and Dominicans were racially inferior to the United States yet different from each other, with Haitians represented as maximally unfit for self-rule. This sense of difference was understood by Wilson at the outset of the Haitian occupation in 1915. In a letter written on 15 August, he acknowledged a “high-handed” approach with the Haitian government in forcing it to adopt the 1915 treaty (Wilson 1966: 208-209), but he believed other nations in the region would not oppose the United States because they viewed the Haitians as racially different: “[T]he effect on ‘Latin America’ of our course down there will not, we think, be serious, because, being negroes, they are not regard as of the fraternity!” (Ibid., 209).

Other US officials made similar distinctions. According to US Marine officer George C. Thorpe, the Haitian Revolution prevented that nation from achieving progress through French tutelage while a longer period of Spanish rule made civilizational advancement possible in the Dominican Republic: “The outstanding result of the greater success of native arms against the foreigner in Haiti... is that Haiti, now known as the *Black Republic*, is far less civilized than Santo Domingo, known as the *Mulatto Republic*” (Thorpe 1920, 76). On that basis, Thorpe believed that “the Dominican is far more amendable to educating processes than is the Haitian *caco*.” (Ibid.).¹⁶ These perceptions were informed by the commonsense knowledge that greater interaction with European culture was a catalyst for assimilation into a Eurocentric way of life. According to a 1922 memo, Haiti’s rejection of white tutelage left it mired in constant revolutions and atrocities which perpetuated its underdevelopment. The Haitian people “were little more than savages”, a maximally regressive developmental condition associated with blackness: “From those days down to 1915 the history of Hayti is the blackest spot in all the Americas.” (FDR Papers, Box 41, Folder “Trip to Haiti: 1917”). The *habitus* of racial hierarchy thereby rank-ordered all three countries from white to black and constituted them with various capacities for independent action in their dominant and subordinate roles, with the value of symbolic capital and the definition of competent governmental performance associated with whiteness.

¹⁶ An in-depth analysis of US racial attitudes toward Dominicans can be found in Mayes (2015, Chapter 5). The same quote informs the title of her own book.

Given this disposition, the project of training soldiers and future officers for the *Gendarmerie* and *Guardia Nacional* was understood in terms of imparting discipline upon Haitians and Dominicans who lacked such behavioral traits due to their racial composition. For US Marines, the mixed-race composition of some Dominicans made them capable of learning the civilized ways of white Americans. According to First Lieutenant Edward Fellowes, who supervised the training of non-commissioned officers in the Dominican *Guardia*, mixed recruits were more capable of leadership compared to their black counterparts:

"As a general rule, the degree of intelligence increased with the decrease of the ebony tinge. The blacker recruits were generally simple-minded giants who did what they were told simply from the habits of discipline, and lacked sense of responsibility and initiative. Those who were of clearer complexion usually were more intelligent, and could be trusted with responsible jobs...[P]ractically all of our best non-commissioned officers were either of Porto Rican descent, or had a larger proportion of Spanish than of negro blood in their veins (Fellowes 1920: 231)

US officials demonstrated more pessimism about training Haitians in a 7 April 1919 interdepartmental letter. They saw white US Marines as only capable officers of the *Gendarmerie*: "here these detachments are officered by white officers (marines) they are efficient and dependable; where they are under native Haitians, they cannot be depended on to stand in a crisis." (FDR Papers, Box 14, Folder "Haiti").

These statements indicate that the American habit of racial stereotypes suggested to the Marines that only mixed Dominicans possessed the symbolic capital associated with good soldiering while Haitians utterly lacked it. Racial dispositions made the actual promotion of Haitians to leadership positions entirely impractical given the civilizing objectives of the US military. It would also suggest to mixed Dominican recruits, and broader Dominican society, what kinds of racial performances would enable them to accumulate symbolic capital associated with efficient governance and self-rule. Mayes (2015) and Wright (2015) argue that anti-black US rhetoric which legitimized the occupation made possible *hispanicismo*, a Dominican identity articulated by post-occupation elites which defined the nation in terms of whiteness as opposed to blackness, the identity ascribed as lowest in the structure of racial stratification.¹⁷ In this way,

¹⁷ Rafael Trujillo, a *Guardia* officer who seized power in 1930 and ruled for more three decades, illustrates how whiteness was associated with symbolic capital. He applied powder to his face to lighten his appearance (Mayes 2015: 1-2).

Dominican negrophobia was a performative means of climbing the ranks of international hierarchy by establishing difference from black Haiti.

Dominican Withdrawal, Haitian Consolidation

Commonsensical assumptions about racial difference further shaped how US policymakers responded to growing insurgent resistance. Violent insurrections against US rule re-emerged in the Dominican Republic by 1919 in response to US atrocities and the loss of local authority (Calder 1984). In Haiti, US revival of the *corvee*, a Haitian institution of forced labor for road construction, was a further cause of insurgent rebellion (Renda 2001: 150). Domestic resistance played out alongside the emergence of a transnational network of Haitian and Dominican elites as well as sympathetic actors in the United States and across Latin America which sought to end both occupations. Growing opposition in the United States led Republican Warren G. Harding to strongly criticize the Wilson administration during his 1920 campaign for president and call for a withdrawal from both countries. However, the State Department only considered an end to the Dominican occupation and convinced US officials to announce a US interest in withdrawal in December of the same year. No such initiative was made for Haiti despite President Dartiguenave's request to Harding to reconstitute the National Assembly through new elections, replace the occupation with a military assistance mission, end US control of Haitian judicial institutions, and terminate US attempts to improve public education (FRUS 1921, II: 193, 197-200).

Practice theory and relational-network approaches can explain these varying outcomes. Because US policymakers represented these two nations as racially different from each other throughout their occupations, they made possible heterogenous contracts with both polities and the perpetuation of unequal authority relations in Haiti long after US withdrawal in the Dominican Republic. On 30 July 1921, an official in the State Department's Division of Latin American Affairs explained why continued US administration was needed in Haiti but not the Dominican Republic. He claimed that Dominicans,

“while in many ways not advanced far enough on the average to permit the highest type of self-government, yet have a preponderance of white blood and culture. The Haitians on the other hand are negro for the most part, and, barring a very few highly educated politicians, are almost in a state of savagery and complete ignorance. The two situations thus demand different treatment. In Haiti, it is

necessary to have complete a rule within a rule by Americans as possible. This sort of control will be required for a long period of time, until the general average of education and enlightenment is raised. In the Dominican Republic, I believe we should endeavor to counsel than to control.”¹⁸

The commonsense that Haitians required further tutelage by Americans was shared by John H. Russell, US Marine commander in Haiti just prior to Harding’s inauguration. Russell made a first proposal to the Chief of Naval Operations on 18 January 1921 to consolidate US supervision of the Haitian government under the authority of a single official representing Washington. He further described the shortcomings of the occupation in both paternalist and offensive racist terms. The subsequent failures of the United States in Haiti were due to the irresponsibility of Haitian leaders as well as “[t]he general dislike of the black man for the white” (Russell Papers, Box 2, Folder 5). Racial difference thus justified further subordination of the Haitian government and firm US authority: “The absurdity of a dual control, or of two nations administrating the affairs of a country is too obvious to need comment. Two men can ride a horse but one must ride behind.” (Ibid.). Unlike the conciliatory relationship State Department officials would propose for the Dominican Republic, Russell argued “the United States must have a CONTROL over HAITIEN AFFAIRS.” (Ibid., author’s emphasis).

These dispositions toward maintaining hierarchy over more racially inferior peoples shaped how the US Congress responded to criticism of both occupations. The US Senate formed a special committee led by Republican Senator Medill McCormick (of the same party as Harding) which investigated atrocities in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. While the committee did criticize some actions of US officials in Haiti, it agreed with both the State Department and General Russell on the importance of maintaining the occupation when it issued part of its final report in April 1922. A withdrawal would result in “the abandonment of the Haitian people to chronic revolution, anarchy, barbarism, and ruin,”¹⁹ the conditions associated with Haiti prior to US intervention and characteristic of racially inferior peoples. Russell was appointed as the new US High Commissioner of Haiti and given authority over all US functionaries overseeing Haiti’s affairs consistent with the 1915 treaty as well as an effective veto power over all actions of the Haitian government.

¹⁸ Department of State 1965: Central Decimal File 839.00/2451.

¹⁹ U.S. Senate, Select Comm. on Haiti and the Dominican Republic, S. Rep. No. 794, at 26 (1922).

The American habit of inscribing racial difference and separating Haitians and Dominicans was further reinforced by their interpretation of the performances of resistance enacted by both peoples as well as their ability to mobilize international support for their claims. Dominican elites led by former President Henríquez y Carvajal carefully accumulated symbolic capital across the Hemisphere and in Europe. Rather than call for an outright US withdrawal, they requested a more gradual one in 1919 that would restore Dominican self-rule along with the enactment of legal and administrative reforms consistent with civilized governance (Calder 1984: 187, McPherson 2014: 162). They also retained the services of a Republican New York lawyer, Horace Knowles, who effectively represented them before the McCormick Committee investigating both occupations (Calder 1984: 215). In addition, Henríquez and his aides traveled extensively to Latin American capitals and to the Paris Peace Conference to draw attention to the United States' failure to uphold its own principle of self-determination in the occupation. These efforts enabled him to win sympathy in Latin American nations as well as Spain by tapping into cultural capital associated with their shared Latin identity. Enrique Deschamps, the former Dominican consul in Madrid, called for "racial solidarity" in defense of "one of the smallest peoples of our race against the largest of the Anglo-Saxon race" (Quoted in McPherson 2014: 165, see also Calder 1984: 188-189). Henríquez had effectively claimed that the United States was failing to competently perform its own self-assigned role as a liberal hegemon and compelled other Latin American states to pressure the United States to change course or risk its relations with them. His articulation of Dominican identity in terms of a broader Latin identity enabled Dominican resistance to be part of a broader soft balancing strategy among Latin American sovereigns who were threatened by assertive US hegemony (Friedman and Long 2015).

While a transnational network also emerged on behalf of Haiti, it was less well organized and failed to accumulate symbolic capital. The most prominent Haitian advocate was James Weldon Johnson, Field Secretary of the US National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Like Henríquez, Johnson found supporters among leading Republicans, including former President Theodore Roosevelt and Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr. The party even paid for Johnson's own fact-finding mission to investigate occupation abuses as a means of generating more controversy for Wilson and the Democrats (Plummer 1982: 130-132). However, Haitian demands for an outright end to the occupation rather than a call for

continued tutelage did not resonate with racialized dispositions held by US policymakers about their capacity for self-government and the field positions of both countries (McPherson 2014: 173). During US Senate hearings on occupation abuses in 1921, Smedley Butler presented the decree which dissolved the Haitian National Assembly to undermine their claims that Dartiguenave was pressured (Thomas [1933]2018: 142), reinforcing perceptions of their untrustworthiness. Haitian delegations to other Latin American countries were less successful compared to Henríquez's efforts. As a French-speaking nation with less European heritage compared to other mixed Latin nations, the Haitians were still seen as different (McPherson 2014: 174). Wilson's statement in 1915 was prophetic – US policymakers knew that Haiti were endowed with less symbolic capital among other states in the region and would not feel the same level of international pressure by occupying it.

The above evidence indicates that US perceptions of symbolic capital held by both Haitians and Dominicans best can explain the variation in the different lengths of both occupations. Fragmented domestic institutions and anti-imperial norms certainly made it possible for presidential administrations to accumulate political costs when engaging in long military occupations due to Congressional and inter-party criticism. But the salience of anti-imperialism in US domestic politics clearly depended on dispositions toward each sovereign state and the racialized *habitus* which informed how American officials understood the demands made by each occupied people and their allies. Dominicans were seen as being *potentially* capable of self-rule due to their partial European heritage and their acceptance of some kind of dominant-subordinate relationship with the United States justified on the basis of efficient administration and civilizational progress. By simultaneously mobilizing fellow Latin American sovereigns on the basis of their Spanish-European identity and recognizing the superior US position and identity, Dominican elites made a long-term occupation costly for the United States while also demonstrating competence in ways that affirmed US dispositions about their capacity for reform. In other words, the Dominicans accumulated symbolic capital and then leveraged it to make a withdrawal self-evident to the United States. On the other hand, Haitians were seen as wholly incapable of sovereignty since they were represented as black and mostly African. Their lack of a shared identity with other states in the region denied them any other source of symbolic capital, a factor that shaped Wilson's initial decision to force the 1915 treaty upon them. But most importantly, Haitian demands for a full US withdrawal and their rejection of US coercion led

occupation officials to assert a more intense form of hierarchy. The notion that black Haitians could ever claim equal rights to white Americans – even on the basis of US liberal rules of sovereign self-determination - violated everything that US policymakers knew about each other's rightful place within a stratified racial order. Based on the rules of the racialized game embodied by US officials, they saw the extension of intense hierarchy as the only practical response to the Haitian refusal to reproduce their maximally subordinate role in world politics.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that US state building violated the assumed restraints on its liberal hegemonic role in world politics due to racialized identities embodied by policymakers. Despite a surface commitment to sovereignty and self-determination, US policymakers constrained the autonomy of local officials and institutions either by overriding their institutional actions or directly managing their institutions to create a civilized state based on a Eurocentric model. Further, the US enactment of greater dominance over Haiti in the absence of consent helps us advance our theoretical understanding of hierarchy in world politics. Pouliot (2017) is right to argue that long-standing hierarchies expand the agency of dominant actors while constraining subordinate counterparts in ways that deny free choice to the latter. Future research should examine how ideas about race and civilization informed the degree of hierarchy enacted in other state building interventions, especially those in which US policymakers shared a European racial identity with occupied peoples (such as postwar Germany).

My argument also has important implications for how we evaluate US foreign policy and liberal world order. It suggests that the highly asymmetrical authority relations established by the United States during the Afghan and Iraq wars should be understood less as strategic blunders or accidents of poor policy making and more as representatives of a broader continuity. As part of the initial establishment of US hegemony in Latin America during the 20th Century, US state building in Haiti and the Dominican Republic featured the same contradictions of liberal ordering. The United States incorporated racial ideas about stratification alongside the principles of liberal internationalism which justified violations of sovereignty while claiming to respect it. Since the United States has engaged in a pattern of illiberal domination despite its commitment to liberal principles, then we should continue to question arguments which call for a restoration of US hegemony. So long as the United States retains representations of its own difference in

terms of civilizational advancement, whether in explicitly racial terms or in more subtle ways (Hobson 2012: 185-187), it will fail to break down Eurocentric hierarchies informed by white racial supremacy. In this way, US exceptionalism and hegemony paradoxically reaffirm the same kinds of inequalities which liberal internationalism claims to erase. If the US policymakers truly wish to build a world order based on sovereignty and self-determination, they must abandon representations of non-Anglo identities which deny meaningful autonomy to the rest of the world on the basis of their own cultural and racial superiority. In other words, the United States needs a new story about itself.

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