

ABSTRACT

International Norms and the Transformation of National Societies: The Case of Brazil and its Human Rights Struggle for Racial Equality for Afro-Brazilians

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The study of the impact of international norms in International Relations has been largely concerned with the effects on state behavior. However the changes required by some norms require changes beyond the state and into society itself. The human rights norm of racial equality is one such norm which requires both changes within the state but also attitudinal and behavioral changes at the level of the citizenry. Understanding how such profound normative change takes place requires a closer examination of change processes within domestic settings. This thesis takes Brazil's human rights struggle for racial equality for Afro-Brazilians as a case study and seeks to understand how international human rights norms in general and the international human rights norm of racial equality in particular, are penetrating the society to produce normative transformation. Using a four stage theoretical model for norm penetration, the research undertaken tracks and analyses Brazil's relationship with the international and regional human rights architecture, the evolution of both the Brazilian state and civil society and the national discourse on race as drawn from research conducted on the state of São Paulo. The analysis identifies the pattern of normative change in regard to racial justice in Brazil with special reference for the state of São Paulo.

Keywords: Marlon Jerome Jameson; Brazil; international norms; racial equality; human rights; Afro-Brazilian.