

# **Philanthropy during the Cold War, 1958-1985: A Case Study for Brazilian History in the United States and the Social Sciences in Brazil**

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The study of Latin America as a field in American institutions of higher education can be traced back to the beginnings of the twentieth century, however, it was not until the Cold War era that the field would experience its “boom” years. Several factors have contributed to this expansion in the field (and subsequent specialization in area-studies): among them are federal funds, which emanated directly from governmental policy. Defeating the Russians in the “space race” led to increased public spending on higher education.<sup>1</sup> Under Title VI, of the NDEA Act of 1958, the U.S. government doled out hundreds of millions of dollars to language and area studies programs across universities all over the United States, with its main aim to acquire the necessary knowledge to fight communism across the globe and better secure American interests. Increasing university and college enrollment (of “baby boomers”) also played a role in expanding the field and in the subsequent area specialization that ensued. For better or worse, “the Boom years”<sup>2</sup> in area studies, and particularly in Latin American studies, might not have been possible had it not been for the help of both private foundations and government funding.

The Cuban revolution in 1959 provided additional stimuli to train competent specialists in Latin America who could advise the nation's leaders, and to an extent, better serve the private sector by producing useful scholarship that could inform diplomatic decisions and foreign affairs.

The year Castro took power in Cuba was also the year that the Ford Foundation started its programs in Latin America that contributed more than three billion dollars to the development of area studies in the United States, and in 1963, began operating in Latin America. The importance of establishing centers with trained specialists on each side of the hemisphere can be corroborated in the correspondence authored by academics and foundation personnel; to cite an example, in 1958 the historian Richard Graham writes in a memorandum to Alfred C. Wolf: “... I have come around your original feeling that Vanderbilt might be the best center for the preparation of the Brazilian report ... Also, whichever team is picked, someone should be called upon for (the) report on the political scene, labor organizations, etc.” The letter assesses the most adequate list of Brazilianists and Brazilian scholars best suited to author a report assessing scholars who could best “triangulate.”<sup>3</sup> The Brazil office began operating in 1962,<sup>4</sup> in the former Rockefeller Foundation (RF) office.<sup>5</sup> The RF is the second largest philanthropic organization in Latin America after the Ford Foundation, but had established itself much earlier in the twentieth century.

Parallel to the university expansion in the United States, a large number of Latin American countries were under authoritarian rule. Academic freedom in these countries, most noticeably in the social sciences, was shriveled and repressed. In the case of Brazil, at the onset of the coup d'État in 1964, more than five hundred of the nation's leading left-wing politicians and scholars<sup>6</sup> found themselves persecuted by the military regime and/or exiled from the country. A second wave of forced migration of Brazil's intellectual elite followed the Acto Institucional N°5 in 1968. Mainly social scientists and other scholars who were deemed “leftists” or “nacionalistas”<sup>7</sup> were affected by this act.

An article by Fernanda Masi<sup>8</sup> surveys the influence of foreign scholarship in Brazil and

its influence on national autochthonous Brazilian scholarship. During the first part of the twentieth century, to large extent one can conclude from her essay, that this influence was mainly European, specifically French and German. It is only until after World War II that American scholarship had a larger influence on autochthonous scholarship, slowly replacing the European school of thought in Brazilian higher education.<sup>9</sup> Brazil's alliance with the United States after the war may have also played a role in drifting social scientists away from European schools of thought. Although many political events and a new global order can be found at the heart of this new orientation, this report seeks to question the role of philanthropic monies in this process.

The original purpose of my research at the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) was to question the motives propelling philanthropic organizations to finance both Brazilian area-studies in institutions of higher education in the United States and the social sciences in Brazil. My first hypothesis was that foundation monies were able to mold the direction of social sciences in a conscious manner into a more empirical production as opposed to theoretical. However, after consulting a myriad of sources available on this subject at the RAC, the previous statement is only true to an extent. While it is true that the social sciences in Brazil currently resemble much more than social sciences in the United States as opposed to Europe, foundation monies played their part in financing scholarship of an empirical nature, but are not entirely responsible for the shifts in Brazilian social sciences. This research report, as opposed to questioning the motives behind this philanthropy, will instead focus on the developments and the expansions that were made possible thanks to these sources, and the way that the historical events also shaped the modus operandi of primarily philanthropic organizations, both in Brazil and in the United States.

The types of archives consulted during my stay can be grouped into several categories,

the first being documentation either in paper format or on microfilm concerning grants administration for the Ford Foundation, the RF and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The second group consists of reports either authored by Ford Foundation consultants in Brazil, scholars (primarily from the United States), U.S. officials, amongst others. A third category is the applications on behalf of Brazilian-area historians to the SSRC and their relating correspondence; and last, but not least, Ford Foundation annual reports, as well as Nelson A. Rockefeller's notes on Brazil. I interviewed two Ford Foundation consultants, Peter D. Bell and William Carmichael.

The contributions of the Ford Foundation, as we shall see, played a multi-faceted role. Until this day, many *nacionalista* Brazilian scholars accuse foreign monies of corrupting indigenous scholarship, and that the grants administered by the Ford Foundation were given to projects which could prove to be useful to American private interests. Although the latter is not an explicit condition to receive financial support, grant selection and administration is inevitably a political choice. While on the one hand this might be true, given that most of the funds were used for administration and technical training of the Brazilian national elite, many of the grants administered in the social sciences were given to innovative projects and studies. On the other hand, Ford monies were also used to modernize Brazil's national library. For example, grant 78-380 funded new methods in the documentation of contemporary history at the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil (CPDOC) [The center for Research and Documentation of Contemporary History of Brazil], one of Brazil's leading institutions for the social sciences. Ford Foundation monies also served to finance the treatment of archives at leading Brazilian institutions, i.e., the Universidade de São Paulo and the Universidade de Campinas.

It appears to me that grants in the social sciences were mainly contingent on the Ford program focus. Because of the excess funding in anthropology, many Brazilian social scientists would pursue this field only because there was a possibility of funding. One can postulate that the academic Ford representative at the time had a lot of leverage in which field was privileged for financing. For example, when American anthropologist, Shepard Formman held office in the late seventies and the early eighties, much of the Ford's funding was funneled to anthropology and ethnology. However, this was not the case for history. Richard Morse (an historian and a Ford consultant) was vehemently active in getting foundation funding for the study of Brazilian history in Brazil. In his correspondence, he seemed to be outraged that most of Brazilian's history and historiography was being pursued by Americans as juxtaposed to Brazilians. During my stay I was not able to find significant funding of Brazilian historians. This was not the case for anthropology or sociology.

Financing American specialists also appeared to be subject to the RF's considerations. In 1963 and 1964, the historian Richard Graham solicited funds to conduct research on the role of England on Brazil's early industrialization and it appears that he was met with some resistance as his project may not have initially fit into the foundation's prime concern. He writes, "I have attempted to be rather explicit in order that you may correctly assess the nature of the project. You will understand that I have no desire to fill out applications that will be discarded in the first screening, because the topic does not fit into the Foundation's plans."<sup>10</sup> Although the historian eventually received a one year grant of \$13,130.00, the sentiment expressed in this correspondence seems to point to the issue of scholars catering their research projects to appease foundation committees.

Grant reports also indicate that Brazilian-area specialists in the U.S. were important in

pioneering much oral history, both in the United States and in Brazil. James and Edna Wilkie at UCLA, for example, had provided their own interviews with Francisco Julião and made this material available to the CPDOC. Many of Brazil's finest institutions have developed, thanks to this funding, which had it not been for the Foundation's support, may not at all be in existence today, considering that during the military dictatorship, the social sciences were not the nation's priority nor its vision of progress. Philanthropic money helped develop graduate programs in the social sciences at leading Brazilian institutions such as the IUPERJ, the Museu Nacional, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, and the University of Campinas. These range from institutional grants to the development of libraries, and as mentioned before, the sponsoring of congresses, the preservation/modernization of Brazilian archives; to individual grants, allowing Brazil's most renowned social scientists to pursue or to continue their research in a time when social scientists were either being prosecuted by the military dictatorship and/or exiled. Yet at the same time, many Brazilian social scientists seemed to be "slighted" by the administration of these grants.

Financial support from the Ford Foundation at the peak of intellectual persecution in Brazil (the onset of Acto Institucional N°5 in 1968) is also a subject of debate. Many of Brazil's prominent social scientists had found themselves deposed from their teaching positions at the Universidade de São Paulo (the nation's most important school for social sciences), including notable figures, such as Fernando Henrique Cardoso (at the time a professor of sociology who would later become president in the nineties), and sociologist Octavio Ianni. Efforts to rescue Brazil's most renowned scholars and to save them from political persecution endorsed by the Brazilian military regime can be testified by internal Ford Correspondence. In a letter authored by Werner Baer to William Carmichael, the economist expresses a desire to safeguard Brazilian social scientists: "We have all been following with dismay the recent persecutions of Brazilian

intellectuals. Given Vanderbilts's interest in Brazil, we would certainly be interested in helping out during difficult times which many individuals are going through. If the Ford Foundation is thinking of financing some of these people's stay abroad for one or two years as visiting professors or scholars, Vanderbilt would certainly be pleased to offer a home ... We would certainly welcome such men as Sergio Buarque de Hollanda (the historian), Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Florestan Fernandes, Octavio Ianni, etc. ..."<sup>11</sup> Though, many of these scholars remained in Brazil, the Ford Foundation played a critical role in bankrolling a center where autonomous scholars could continue to work. In particular, the Ford Foundation support of the CEBRAP, or the Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning, not only allowed for many of Brazil's most prominent social scientists to earn a living, but most importantly, to remain in Brazil. A 1969 report by Peter Bell cites this particular event to demonstrate the "independent" status of the foundation.<sup>12</sup> Although without the foundation's support, these scholars would not have been able to remain in the country, a "think-tank" organized primarily by Brazilians had already been a project in conception. Also, one of the conditions to receive financial support was that this research group would not get involved in politics. From the microfilm consulted, which did not encompass the entirety of the CEBRAP's activities, the research evoked in the correspondence concerned, to a large extent, family planning and reproductive health.

One issue however, of being funded in large part by the Ford Foundation, pertains to the "autonomous" nature of the organization. The CEBRAP and other Brazilian Institutions financed by the Foundation are obliged in a sense to justify and detail their expenses, thus the Ford Foundation per sé, had a say on ultimately who received funding. In the correspondence files authored by the group's president, Candido Mendes, he lays out the state of finances for the entire group, detailing each expense and each salary.<sup>13</sup>

The Ford Foundation also served as a locus for Brazilian social scientists seeking to do research in the United States, as testified in a letter by historian Richard Graham in the mid-seventies. This support allowed for many Brazilian professors to come to the United States, thus escaping military surveillance. This action was significant for the development of Brazilian area studies in the United States, because it allowed many American-trained Brazilian area specialists to work with, or be trained directly by, Brazilian scholars. The contribution of the latter to Brazilian studies in the United States merits further research. The Ford Foundation and the RF provided combined grants of over \$38,000 for microfilming expenses and for the contributions of Brazilian scholars in indexing the Handbook of Latin American Studies.

Later in the eighties however, much less of the funding would be channeled towards the social sciences. Ford reports would stress the importance of creating community based organizations, NGOs and other forms of reaching potential voters. The relationship between these philanthropic organizations and governments is also of an ambiguous nature: In 1969 Nelson A. Rockefeller (NAR) visited Castelo Branco, the President of Brazil. From his personal notes, the apparent relationship between these two men appears to give NAR a quasi-presidential status, as Castelo Branco would discuss diplomatic affairs and even go as far as to compare NAR to Roosevelt: “He [Brando] said that I had come to Brazil as an emissary of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942, in a time of war ... because if I had not come, Brazil might well have gone against the United States. Now I had come in again as an emissary of President Nixon, in 1969, another turn in the history of Brazil, and in a time of another war, this time a communist and guerilla war”.<sup>14</sup> The metaphor in these war comparisons is a powerful one, but even more striking is Brazil's continuous reaffirmation to stand with the United States. Another particularly striking example from NAR's notes was Branco's protest towards a tardy delivery of weapons



used to carry out the 1964 coup d'état: "The Brazilian government requested rifles in 1963, but they were delivered in 1964, after the Revolution."<sup>15</sup>

I did not find any documents supporting a deliberate desire on behalf of either the Ford Foundation or the Rockefeller Foundation to sway in the direction of the social sciences in Brazil. Since a large portion of the files consulted only attest to the day-to-day routines of offices functioning during a military dictatorship in Brazil, further questions are raised. However, another portion of the records evokes more subtle links between philanthropic organizations and the Brazilian military establishment. On the American side, I found that SSRC<sup>16</sup> and Ford Foundation financial support was significant in providing the necessary funding for some of the finest works in the field, thus in a sense, support from the foundations facilitated the expansion of Brazilian history in the United States, but also in Brazil as mentioned above. I also located an expeditionary file concerning an experimental summer program in Brazil by Cornell University. Funded by the RF, its organizers included the young historian Richard Graham.

Although it is clear that autochthonous Brazilian scholarship and intellectual thought is not merely a vessel for foreign investment or control, it is true that through the selective funding of certain projects as juxtaposed to others, one can argue that organizations like the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation allowed Brazil's intellectual elites to think about the social sciences and research in a much more empirical manner.

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Rockefeller Archive Center Research Reports Online is a periodic publication of the Rockefeller Archive Center. Edited by Erwin Levold, Research Reports Online is intended to foster the network of scholarship in the history of philanthropy and to highlight the diverse range of materials and subjects covered in the collections at the Rockefeller Archive Center. The reports are drawn from essays submitted by researchers who have visited the Archive Center, many of whom have received grants from the Archive Center to support their research.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and are not intended to represent the Rockefeller Archive Center.

## ENDNOTES:

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<sup>1</sup> See the Gaither Report: Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age, Security Resources Panel of the Advisory Committee, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Term borrowed from the historian Helen Delpar. The Boom years refer to the period between 1958 and the early nineteen seventies. Delpar, Helen. *Looking South: The Evolution of Latin Americanist Scholarship in the United States, 1850-1975*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Ford Reports – General correspondence, 1958, #:006830. Notes on Brazilianists and Brazilians.

<sup>4</sup> Os 40 anos da Fundação Ford, uma parceria para a mudança social. Nigel Brook e Mary Withoshynsky (organizadoras). USP editoras, São Paulo, Brazil, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Notes from interview with Peter D. Bell, 09/05/2013.

<sup>6</sup> Notes from a conference given by Professor James Green at l'École des Hautes Études on January 11, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Nacionalista and nacionalismo in the case of Brazil does not translate adequately to nationalist nor patriotic, it refers instead to those who advocated for the national development of Brazil without following the rules established by the United States or the World Bank.

<sup>8</sup> Masi, Fernanda. *Franceses e Norte-Americanos nas Ciências Sociais Brasileiras 1930-1960*. (French and Americans in the Brazilian Social Sciences, 1930-1960). In Miceli, Sergio, editor, *História das Ciências Sociais no Brasil*. Editora Revista dos Tribunais LTDA, São Paulo, 1989.

<sup>9</sup> In the aftermath of World War II, in 1946, Gétulio Vargas had passed a law enabling the creation of state universities, the new state and federal university system would absorb formerly isolated law schools and medical schools all over the country. These include the integration of notorious law schools of Pernambuco and of Rio de Janeiro, former centers for training of the nation's disinherited elite.

<sup>10</sup> August 7, 1963, Letter to Mr. General Freund (Rockefeller/Cornell University file, #:2005, Cornell University: Richard Graham: British Brazilian relations, 1850-1918 (Personal Grant, Rockefeller).

<sup>11</sup> May 10, 1969, General Files under Brazil. Reek C-1665, C-1666.

<sup>12</sup> From an unpublished report by Peter Bell, 1969: "If we wish to avoid being overly identified with any government, so too we should avoid being unnecessarily provocative toward governments. That is not to say we should allow ourselves to be intimidated or permit our program to be distorted beyond recognition by new political "realities." In Brazil we did not formally protest the recent political repression of the intellectuals partly because we questioned the appropriateness of such action on our part and partly because we believed that it would yield no positive results. We did express our concern to government officials and professional colleagues and asked them for additional information as to how we should act under the circumstances. We decided to adhere to our existing programs and projects as long as our grantees depended on our administrative and financial flexibility. In São Paulo, where social scientists whom we had planned to assist this fiscal year were forcibly retired from the state university, we helped them establish an independent center for continuing their research. Unlike the U.S. Embassy, we did not embrace the Brazilian Revolution of April 1964, partly because we may have better sensed the logic of repression, but mainly it is not our business to approve or disapprove governments ... Our support of academic freedom is not as much an abstract principle as an essential condition of our work.

<sup>13</sup> Ford Foundation Grants: See Grant 690-0644.

<sup>14</sup> Washington D.C. Files, NAR, 1969.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Terminated SSRC files (Bolívar Laumonier, Frank McCann, Franklin W. Knight, Herbet Klein, James M. Malloy, Joseph Love, Henry Keith, Linda Lewin, Lynn Stuart, Lest Milbrath, Paul Dan Major, Robert Levine, and also Rejects). See Box 275, Folder 3210 and 3212; Box, 273, Folder 3205; Box 355, Folder 3919; Box 303, Folder 3863; Box 302, Folders 3911 and 3841; Box 278, Folder 3347 (post-doc awards); Box 277, Folder 3288.

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## **FORD :**

### **General Correspondence**

1958: NYU-Thomas Clark Pollock  
1959: Vanderbilt University  
1959: Brazil – Re FF Sending Exploratory Team to Brazil  
1959: Brazil – re FF Mission to  
1959: Operations Mission to Brazil  
1959: São Paulo, University – re Proposed Curriculum  
1960: Teixeira, Anisio; re - Report on Higher Education in Brazil  
1960: Brazil, re-examine  
1960: Brazil, re FF has been studying the possibility of ...  
1960: Brazil- re reference notes/training of economists  
1962: Brazilian Institute (at NYU)  
1963: Reel C-1450  
1965: Sub-series OD-LA Reel C-1494  
1968: Series HA: Reel C-1608  
1969: Brazil: Reels C-1665, C-1666  
1970: Bell, Peter: Reel C-1747

### **Grants:**

- Series 690-CEBRAP, Folder 5490
- Grant 06900644, Reels 3059, 3060
- Grant 07390817, Reels 4426, 5494
- Grant 07450, Reels 1932, 4274
- Grant 074500651, Reels 3544, 4274
- Grant 07450687, Reels 1932, 4247
- Grant 07850380, Reel 3730
- Grant 08162424
- Grant 08162425

### **Lac/Forman:**

Box 7280: Box 1, Folder title 205, 137

### **Personal Grants (PA):**

PA 69-644, Reels 2822, 2823, 3119, 5490  
PA 67-492, Reels 2526, 2527, 5351, 5486, 5490  
PA 6190298, Program Special Brazil

### **Project :**

Reel P-1025, Folder D-305

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**Proposals:**

Folder 60-201, Reel 717, Program Specialists and Consultants (Latin America)

**Reports:**

- 0068630: "Brazilianists and Brazilians," 1958
- 000251: "Milton, Katz- Conference," 1963
- 008405: "Consulting Activities at GVF Foundation," 1968
- 008536: "Proposed Arrangements for the 1968-1970 Program," 1968
- 008493: "Situation Report on Brazil," 1969
- 004935: "The Brazilian Environment for Social Sciences," 1970
- 001972: "Notes on Social Science in Brazil," 1971
- 013270: "Research in the Northeast," 1972
- 013361: "The Wisconsin Conference About Brazil's Northeast," 1974
- 006238: "Program Review on Brazil," Nov. 1981
- 012680: "Consultancy on Projects on Women by the FF," 1984
- 002717
- 002695

FA608: Box 1, Folder Title: Ford Foundation Records, Overseas Development, International Training

FA619: Box 19, Folders 197, 198, 199, Slater, Joseph, Private Industry and Educational Exchange

FA619: Box 20, Folders 206, 207, 208, May 15, 1958

FA619: Box 21, Folder 211, University Seminar on the Atlantic Community, Columbia University (Office files of Joseph Slater)

International Division, Sub-series: 000 005, Folder 18449, Folder Title: Introductory Report on Brazilian Education with Special References to Schools, 1964

**SSRC**

- Box 280, Folder 3386, Folder Title: Social Science Research Council
- Terminated fellowships: Box 304, Folder 3896; Box 303, Folder 3862; Sub-series 61, Box 305, Folder 3919; Sub-series 64, Box 303, Folder 3863, Subseries 64, Box 302, Folder 3848; Sub-series 64, Box 305, Folder 3911; Sub-series 64, Box 278 (Post-doc Awards), Folder 3347
- Committee Projects: Box 278, Folder 3326; Box 276, Folder 3246
- Factsheets Rejects: Box 273, Folder 3205; Box 274, Folder 3210; Box 275, Folder 3211
- Fellowships, Box 280, Folder 3383 (Margaret Williams), 1974; Box 278, Folder 3340 (Tamb Lewis), 1968; Box 292, Folder 3594 (Research Training Fellowships)
- Research Training Fellowships: Box 294, Folder 3694 (Kermitsis, Eileen)

FA209: Box 302: Collection A Guide to the Social Science Research Council Records: Folder

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384: Folder Title, "Terminated Fellowship Files, Levine, Rober M"  
FA209: Box 277, Folder 3288, Folder Title, "Love, Joseph L."

**Rockefeller:**

- Projects: Series 200: Box 564, Folder 4827 (University of California); Box 500, Folder 4272 (Cornell University)
- Projects, RG. 1.2: Box 500, Folder 4273, Cornell University (British Brazilian Relations); Box 604, Folder 5163 (Vanderbilt University, Williams Emilio)
- Projects, RG 1.3, Series: 270, Box 9, Folders 79, 78 (Institute for Advanced Study)
- Series H (Family and Friends): Box 15, Folder 179 (O'Neill, Charles)
- Postdoc Fellowships: Series 1, Subseries 64, Folder 3326, Folder 3318, Thomas Skidmore, Riordan Roett

**NAR**

- Series AIA-IBEC, Box 3, 6, 7, 8, 22, and 29

**RBF**

- Grant Files 3, Series 1, Folder Title Rockefeller Brother Funds Records

**Books**

Dubus, René. *O despertar da razão: por ula ciencia mais humana*, 1972. 501.DUB

Fenton, William. *American studies in American Universities*. 378.73

Glick, Phillip. *The administration of technical growth in the Americas*. 338.98

Marinho, Maria Gabriela. *Norte-Americanos no Brasil- Uma historia da fundação Rockefeller na USP*. 361.7606

Urbana. *New Direction in language and area studies, priorities for the 1980s*, 1979. 907.NEW.

Consortium of Latin American Studies Program. (Publisher).

Various Authors. *Os 40 anos da Fundação Ford*. 981.FOR