



## The binomial ‘Security and Development’: propaganda, social control and higher education during military dictatorship in Brazil (1964-1988)<sup>1</sup>

O binômio ‘Segurança e Desenvolvimento’: propaganda, controle social e educação superior durante a ditadura militar no Brasil (1964-1988)

El binomio ‘Seguridad y Desarrollo’: propaganda, control social y educación superior en la dictadura militar en Brasil (1964-1988)

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### Abstract

The binomial ‘security and development’, mainly through the influence of the Escola Superior de Guerra (‘National War College’), was one of the ideological foundations of the dictatorship established in Brazil by the 1964 coup d’état. The spread of that idea occurred, among other means, through propaganda, one of the main elements of the system of social control formed after the overthrow of President Goulart. Higher education had strategic importance for the group in power in those years. The analysis of the functions fulfilled by that binomial in processes of propaganda focused on higher education provides a better understanding of the functioning of that mode of social control and of the ideological directives of that authoritarian regime.

**Keywords:** Propaganda. Social control. Higher education.

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## Resumo

O binômio segurança e desenvolvimento, em boa parte através da influência da Escola Superior de Guerra, constituiu um dos fundamentos ideológicos da ditadura implantada no Brasil a partir do golpe de 1964. A disseminação daquela ideia ocorreu, dentre outros meios, através da propaganda, um dos principais elementos do sistema de controle social configurado após a deposição do presidente Goulart. A educação superior possuía importância estratégica para o grupo então no poder. A análise das funções cumpridas por aquele binômio nos processos de propaganda voltados para a educação superior permite compreender um pouco melhor tanto o funcionamento daquele meio de controle social quanto as diretrizes ideológicas que fundamentavam aquele regime autoritário.

Palavras-chave: Propaganda. Controle Social. Educação Superior.

## Resumen

El binomio seguridad y desarrollo, sobre todo a través de la influencia de la Escola Superior de Guerra ('Escuela Superior de Guerra'), constituyó una de las bases ideológicas de la dictadura creada en Brasil por el golpe de Estado de 1964. La difusión de aquella idea ocurrió, además de otros medios, a través de la propaganda, uno de los principales elementos del sistema de control social establecido después de la destitución del presidente Goulart. La educación superior tenía entonces importancia estratégica para el grupo que tomó el poder. El análisis de las funciones cumplidas por aquel binomio en los procesos de propaganda que miraban hacia la educación superior permite comprender un poco mejor no solo el funcionamiento de aquel modo de control social, sino también las directrices ideológicas que fundamentaban aquel régimen autoritario.

Palabras clave: Propaganda. Control social. Educación superior.

## Introduction

How the ideas of security and development were articulated to form one of the ideological references of the regime established in Brazil after the 1964 coup d'état? What was the role played by *Escola Superior de Guerra* (ESG) in that process? Was propaganda a mode of social control used for this purpose in a relevant way? If so, how that binomial was present in this kind of activities of social control? What functions of social control was played by propaganda in that field? Was there a kind of propaganda focused specifically in the field of higher education? If so, what was its impact? Did another type of propaganda have some relevant impact on the field of higher education?

In this article I present some answers to this questions. This reflections were part of a broader project, which aimed to provide some understanding of the action, in the field of higher education, of the system of social control that ran in Brazil between 1964 and 1988 (Mansan, 2014).

The concept of *social control* adopted in this study align itself with the perspective of the so called revisionist studies of social control, which have as a reference the works of Stanley Cohen, Gareth Stedman Jones, Michael Ignatieff, David Rothman, among others. Social control, in that perspective, point to 'the organized ways in which society responds to behavior and people it regards as deviant, problematic, worrying, threatening, troublesome or undesirable' (Cohen, 2007, p. 1).

Also the concept of system of social control is used here according to the perspectives of the reference works of that group of studies. So, according with was wrote by Cohen & Scull (1983, p. 7), it means to have in consideration, with analytical purposes, the constant action, during some time, of some mechanisms who, with determined functions, aid each other (with of without intention) in actions of social control with results that, despite projects, wills and individual and collective interests, run to a significant and consistent contribution to the preservation of the social order and to the political regime in which are part of.

About the method used in this historical study, the critical and comparative analysis of the documents was systematically developed, based on the totality principle (Goldmann, 1978, p. 12-13) and on the Jörn Rüsen fundamentals as presented in his classical trilogy, aiming to the development of a 'regulated research' (Rüsen, 2010, p. 111). It was developed, thus, in a processual and dialogic way, 'the regulated procedure, which conducts from the question to the answer'.

Beginning by the 'formulation of the historical question', as detailed above, following by the appliance of the question to the sources, eventually with hypothesis reformulations, and finally going to the 'historical answer formulation', after which its synthesis is presented.

Again, in agreement with Goldmann, in this synthesis there is no conclusive claims, but it seeks to contribute with an analysis that can dialogue with others, gradually expanding and complexifying the knowledge about the topic.

## Security and development

As has been evidenced for decades by the extensive specific literature, the 1964 *coup d'état* in Brazil was the successful conclusion of an antidemocratic movement coordinated by a group of military, politicians, businessmen and Catholic leaders, with internal hegemony exercised by the military and support of almost all major media companies and a significant portion of the middle classes (Dreifuss, 2006).

When that group took the power, after the deposition of president João Goulart, a major persecution was begun in Brazil. Called *Operação Limpeza* (meaning 'Cleaning Operation') by those who implemented it, its focus was on the left and all those who were seen as supporters of the previous government (Alves, 1989, p. 56).

At the same time, many State reforms were carried out, seeking to adapt the public administrative structure to the objectives and conceptions of the authoritarian government. In these objectives and conceptions, the doctrinal mark of the *Escola Superior de Guerra – ESG* (an institution similar to the National War College) is clearly visible (Alves, 1989, p. 59).

In the higher education field, the 1964 coup enabled the imposition of a new educational paradigm, providing an opportunity for strong growth in the field in a conservative and authoritarian way, with emphasis on the private sector. Also according with the perspective of conservative modernization of higher education, there was significant investments in post-graduated studies, notoriously in areas seemed by regime as strategic to the capitalistic development project in Brazil (Cunha, 2007b).<sup>2</sup>

One of the most outstanding aspects of the influence of ESG is the centrality of the Security and Development binomial, composed of two elements perceived as inseparable and mutually determinant, and also characterized as what should be the central objective in the ideal model of contemporary State defended by them.

In the manual used by ESG as the basic reference in its courses and other formative activities, this understanding was repeatedly made explicit. ‘The ends of the contemporary State’, which ‘complete and reciprocally condition each other’, would be, according to this view, ‘the *Security*, aiming to ‘create and maintain political, economic and social order’; [and] the *Development*, aiming to ‘promote the Common Good’ ’ (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 26).<sup>3</sup>

It was a project of State and society with a clearly conservative approach, in which, in the terms used in the aforementioned manual, ‘the elites’, under the leadership of the ‘leading elite’, would be responsible for the direction of the ‘masses’ or of the ‘people’.

According to this view, only such elites would be able to ‘capture and interpret’ the ‘latent interests and aspirations of the people’, ‘harmonizing them with the true interests of the Nation and with the Common Good’ and ‘presenting them back to the people’ who, ‘sensitized’ by the ‘educational’ action of the elites, could finally ‘understand and adopt the new standards’ thus ‘proposed’ by them.

In this way, the ‘need to instill new interests, aspirations, values and objectives in the population, in order to favorably impregnate them for essential changes in favor of material or spiritual improvement’, was defended, for which it was necessary ‘a well-oriented educational work’, in which propaganda played a central role (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 37; 39-40; 120-121).

Julio Aróstegui used to say that dictatorial regimes have in common, among other aspects, something he called ‘illegitimacy of origin’ (Aróstegui, 2012). Because they were born from illegitimate acts (among which the *coups d'état* are the most common), such regimes receive from the beginning a mark of illegitimacy that accompanies them until their end.

This, however, does not prevent certain ruling sectors of these regimes from seeking to consolidate and expand their active social support and/or to spread behavior patterns marked by submissive and unrestricted acceptance to those who hold certain forms of power. The composition of these two types of political behavior can change a lot depending on the case, but without at least one of them the maintenance of the regime becomes unfeasible. After all, no political regime can maintain itself solely on the basis of coercion (Gramsci, 2007). And in these processes of building passive acceptance and/or active support, propaganda usually assumes a prominent role.

Observing how these processes occurred in the field of higher education in Brazil between 1964 and 1988 helps not only to better understand the recent history of education in the country, but it can also be very effective in helping to understand the general situation experienced by Brazilian society today, especially in this difficult period after the 2016 coup.

<sup>2</sup> For a panoramic view of the history of higher education in Brazil and its inflections, see also the other books of this trilogy (Cunha, 2007a; 2007c).

<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, italicized highlights are always mine, while bold highlights are from the original.

After all, higher education was considered a strategic area and was among the priority targets of the reforms sought by those who took power in 1964.

The military and its civilian supporters attributed this strategic condition to higher education basically because they perceived in it, on the one hand, a great potential to build and consolidate acceptance and support for the regime, as well as, on the other hand, because they identified in higher education the capacity to form professionals (leaders, specialized technicians etc.) considered essential for the success of their societal project.

### **The *Escola Superior de Guerra***

The history of ESG in Brazil has already been the subject of several studies, which cover, together, from the origins of the school, in the late 1940s, to the present day. Several works have already dealt with the elaboration of the National Security Doctrine (DSN) in the ESG of the 1950s, as well as the training, in its courses, of important leaders of the military regime.<sup>4</sup>

The school presented itself as ‘an institute of high studies aimed to developing and consolidating the knowledge necessary for the exercise of *direction* functions and for the *planning of National Security*’ (ADESG, 1964, p. 8). In fact, it was one of the main formative spaces of a higher echelon of intellectuals to work with the group in power and in other strategic functions of the systems of social control (Cohen; Scull, 1983).

The DSN must be understood in the Latin American historical context of the second half of the 20th century. The dictatorships implemented in Brazil (1964), Uruguay (1973), Chile (1973) and Argentina (1976), above all, were ideologically based on appropriations of the North American DSN, with a strong influence of the Cold War context.

In the case of Brazil, it is symptomatic of the importance of the binomial analyzed in this article that, according to Alves (1989), the Brazilian military had called the reinterpretation of the North American DSN made in Brazil the ‘*Doctrine of National Security and Development*’. This adaptation, carried out in the ESG by military personnel such as Golbery, among others, sought to differentiate the Brazilian appropriation, which attributed equal importance to economic development and ‘national security’, from the applications and appropriations of US doctrine promoted in neighboring countries.

According to the main intellectual references of the ESG, such as General Carlos de Meira Mattos and General Golbery do Couto e Silva, development and security were strongly intertwined, and it was not possible to give up one in favor of the other. Significant of this is Golbery's statement in *Geopolítica do Brasil* (Geopolitics of Brazil):

When well-being is sacrificed for the benefit of security, channeling resources from the former to the latter, well-being decreases, while security increases more than proportionally, at first; from a certain point, however, it undergoes a sharp inflection curve, and the increases, now smaller and smaller, will end up being completely nullified, when what, theoretically, corresponds to the maximum of safety compatible with the limitation imposed by the available resources. Reduce well-

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<sup>4</sup> A classic approach to DSN in Latin America is the work of Comblin (1978). This work was fundamental for the perception of the similarities between Latin American dictatorships in the second half of the 20th century and the influence of US foreign policy and military thinking in this context. However, the internal dynamics and the influence of other factors, such as national authoritarian traditions, for example, ended up being relegated to a secondary position, in the face of a power of American ideological influence considered by some authors as overestimated. About this, see Martins Filho (2004). On ESG and DSN in Brazil, see also Stepan (1976), Puglia (2012), Mundim (2007) and Santos (2007).

being even further, and security itself will now be diminished. Security is structured (...) on an irreducible basis of economic and social well-being, a level below which the nation's own capacity for struggle and resistance will be offended, ultimately incapacitating it for the continued effort and violence that war will demand of her. This is indeed a domain in which moral forces play a prominent role, and there is no morality of a people that can remain unharmed beyond certain limits of exhaustion and discouragement. Reduce well-being even further, and security itself will now be diminished. Security is structured (...) on an irreducible basis of economic and social well-being. Below this level, the nation's own capacity for struggle and resistance will be offended, incapacitating it for the continued and violent effort that war will demand from the nation. This is indeed a domain in which moral forces play a prominent role, and there is no morality of a people that can remain unharmed beyond certain limits of exhaustion and discouragement (Couto e Silva, 1967, p. 14).

With the same logic, stated Meira Mattos:

The revolutionary thought, in perfect harmony with the most modern currents of ideas in the modern world, launches its doctrine of Government, synthesized in the seriousness, honesty and competence of the public administration, and in the dynamics of political action whose main vectors are social well-being and economic development. [...] Revolutionary thought intends to be the vitalizing sap of the leading minorities that will lead the Brazilian Nation to the highest destinations of grandeur and prosperity (Meira Mattos, 1966, p. 142).

The ESG and its doctrine were, however, perceived differently in the military, both before and after 1964. Even so, some aspects of the DSN became consensual in the early 1960s among the most diverse military groups, from the 'moderates' to the 'hard-liners', given the sense of crisis experienced by some social sectors. In this regard, the following stood out: (1) the idea of inseparability between security and development; (2) the perception that the country was under threat from 'international communism', which would act through 'subversive' Brazilians. Thus, 'many of the doctrines of internal warfare, formulated in the ESG' and later 'institutionalized in the government of Castello Branco under the influence of the School [ESG], permeated all the main military groups in Brazil and were accepted as a fundamental new fact in political and military life' (Stepan, 1975, p. 136-137).

### **Propaganda and censorship**

In many dictatorial regimes, propaganda and censorship are two sides of the same coin. One says what those in power want everyone to believe; another silences what they fear someone knows – which includes contradictions and silences in the official propaganda.<sup>5</sup>

In Brazil, during the military dictatorship, higher education suffered specific forms of censorship, in addition to those that indiscriminately affected the various social sectors, such as the censorship of the media and of the so-called 'public entertainment' (cultural activities such as theater, for example).

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<sup>5</sup> The concept of propaganda used here is based on García Uceda (1995) and on Jowett & O'Donnell (1999), and Thompson's (1995) observations on the media are also considered.

The Security and Information Division of the Ministry of Education and Culture (DSI/MEC), as well as the Security and Information Advisories (ASI) subordinated to it, carried out actions with censorship effects in the universities, and the same did some deans and directors (Mansan, 2014). In addition, other forms of censorship specific to higher education were: the vetoes to the teachers chosen as paraninfos and to the students chosen as valedictorians, on account of their ideological profile, political bond or stigma (such as the ‘cassado stigma’<sup>6</sup>); the bans on academic events due to thematic or to include speakers seen as opponents of the dictatorship; the complications created for university cultural activities that provided the participation of politically stigmatized artists; the confiscations of student journals; the removal of academic outreach posters depending on the events promoted by them; the bans on books considered ‘subversive’, because they are by authors seen as left-wing or, in other cases, because they attack (in the view of censorship agents) ‘morals and good manners’; the obstacles imposed on some research projects on themes and approaches that the control agents saw as harmful to the country, as criticisms of the myth of racial democracy; the contraindication, based on political or ideological reasons, in the licenses to participate in events or in research activities in other countries, as well as in the contracting or contractual renewal of teaching and technical-administrative staff and in student enrollment requests; restrictions on nominations for dean, director, department head (Motta, 2014, p. 217-236).

Along with these forms of censorship typical of that field, it is also necessary to consider self-censorship, a behavior that, regardless of intention, ended up being widely encouraged by the forms of intimidation promoted by that regime.

Censorship and propaganda thus had equal importance and were related in a complementary way, mutually reinforcing and constituting a single mode of control. Although the reflection proposed in this article focuses only on propaganda, it is essential to take into account the aforementioned relationship.

Jowett and O'Donnell propose to differentiate propaganda from persuasion, considering the former as a subcategory of the latter. His approach to propaganda as a communicational process privileges the intentionality of action, considering propaganda as ‘the deliberate and systematic action through which one seeks to shape perceptions, manipulate thoughts and direct behaviors in order to obtain a response consistent with the objective’ desired by the issuer’ (Jowett; O’Donnell, 1999, p. 6). This model is interesting because it highlights variables such as ‘intentionality and manipulation, together with a systematic plan to achieve an objective that is advantageous for the issuer’, differentiating ‘propaganda from a free and open exchange of ideas’ (Jowett; O’Donnell, 1999 p. 11).

Measuring control intentions in certain communication processes, however, is not a simple task. What I did, in the research that supports this article, was to verify if certain communication processes, promoted systematically in some cases and sporadically in others, mobilized fundamental ideas for the support of that regime.

An analysis of the reception of propaganda discourses mobilized by that system of social control would be quite interesting, but the inherent difficulties of this approach are evident. As Fico (1997, p. 20-21) commented:

If it is not easy, at least it is possible to detect the purposes and strategies of those who make the propaganda. How to understand, however, the way in which it is understood by those who see it? (...) It is very difficult to detect the different social receptions of propaganda, even when dealing with a phenomenon close in time such as the case at hand [the military dictatorship]. The difficulties are especially heuristic: what sources could indicate such differences in reception?

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<sup>6</sup> On the ‘cassado stigma’ (stigma that marks those who were summarily removed) and its correlates, see chapter 2 of Mansan (2014).

The study of emission can also reveal important aspects, both of the control potential, via propaganda, of such communication mechanisms, and – and above all – of the main ideas and rhetorical resources mobilized by that system for self-affirmation and the attempt to constitute an appearance of legitimacy for the dictatorship it sustained. Perhaps even more importantly, this approach can help delineate the group in power's perception of itself, of the political regime and of the country, its goals, its interpretation of the past, and its prospects for the future.

### **Propaganda as a ‘psychological weapon’**

In 1975, the ESG stated, in the Basic Manual, that ‘public opinion can be influenced, and directed to some extent, by the judicious use of the psychological weapon, especially through propaganda’ (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 464). The importance they attached to propaganda is evident. However, if it had great potential as a means of social control, it also entailed risks:

The mass media are a very powerful instrument for the rapid and standardized diffusion of ideas, creation of emotional states, alteration of habits and attitudes. Well used by the elites, they will constitute a very important factor for the improvement of the components of Political Expression; used in a biased way, they can generate and increase nonconformity (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 121).

A misuse of this ‘weapon’ could produce or increase criticism and opposition to the regime. But the risk used to worth it, given the control capacity offered by that ‘very powerful instrument’.

This concern with the formation and maintenance of acceptance and support, present since the first moments after the coup, had a notable growth in the late 1960s. Additionally, propaganda techniques had a qualitative leap from the beginning of the 1970s (Fico, 1997).

Since then, those who advocated that ‘greater importance should be given to Public Relations activities, at all levels, in order to improve government action and *create and maintain a significant portion of public opinion focused on the national interest and immune to subversive action*’ started to gain more space. This evidently implied the ‘*need for a structure of social communication*’ that could act satisfactorily in the ‘*clarification and guidance of public opinion* on the actions developed by the Government’. This structure should ‘promote the participation of all social categories, not only seeking Development, but also in relation to the tasks of National Security’ (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 253).

Propaganda was seen as the main instrument in what the ESG used to call ‘psychological warfare’. This would be ‘the planned use of propaganda and the exploitation of other actions, with the aim of influencing the opinions, emotions, attitudes and behavior *of adverse or neutral groups*, in order to support the achievement of the National Goals’ (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 316). It was different from ‘psychological action’ because of the target audience. Psychological warfare would turn against the ‘enemy’, with the objective of ‘depressing his morale’, while ‘psychological actions act on the *friendly population* to raise his morale’, in order to ‘immunize the nation against any kind of propaganda contrary to its interests’. In this aspect, the doctrine was based on a simplistic perspective of political and ideological conflicts, based on a Manichean vision (‘ally versus enemy’). The use of the ‘psychological weapon’ should, finally, ‘strengthen moral and cultural standards and respect traditions, which would result in guaranteeing democratic institutions and the population against the dangers of subversion and external enemies’ (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 321).



Psychological warfare aims *to demoralize the enemy*, giving him a feeling of insecurity, impotence and disbelief in his success, which leads him *to surrender* and, if possible, to his later *active collaboration* with the legal authorities. (...) Since the support of the population is essential for *subversion*, it is evident that every effort must be made to isolate the enemy from this population, creating a real vacuum between them.

[...]

Propaganda and counter-propaganda must be conducted in the aim to discrediting the enemy and its leaders, *making believe* that they only seek to satisfy their personal ambitions [sic] and destroying, as inconsistent, the myths they preach. Through conveniently selected themes, an attempt will be made to discourage the enemy and disaggregate him, *presenting the cause he defends as illegitimate and convincing* the supporters of subversion that their participation in it constitutes a true deception (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 320).

The target audience of this war would be made up of ‘national or foreign *enemy* groups, according to the hypotheses of war’, by ‘individuals or groups that admittedly *do not share national aspirations and are opposed to the achievement of the National Goals*, whether or not they are at the service of foreign groups’ and by ‘*neutrals*, including those who are for personal convenience’. In other words, anyone who did not accept the ‘national goals’ determined by the ‘ruling elite’ could be included in one of these groups (EMFA/ESG/DE, 1975, p. 321).

### **Propaganda structure**

After 1964, three state agencies took on a central role in the regime's propaganda: the National Agency (‘*Agência Nacional*’), the Press Office of the Presidency of the Republic (‘*Assessoria de Imprensa da Presidência da República*’) and the [Special] Public Relations Office of the Presidency of the Republic (‘*Assessoria [Especial] de Relações Públicas da Presidência da República*’ – AERP/ARP). The first two entities existed long before the coup, bringing with them a wide range of experience in their respective activities, accumulated over very different governments, especially in the case of the National Agency, whose origins date back to the 1930s. In the case of the AERP (1968-73), later renamed ARP (1974-1978), it was, as is well known, a creation of the military dictatorship. She became the main responsible for the regime's propaganda in the 1970s, a context in which this form of control received a notable increase in techniques and investments, gaining wide visibility and becoming essential for the maintenance and conquest of social support in a conjuncture of strong growth in criticism against the regime. These are the main reasons why the AERP/ARP is most often remembered when talking about the propaganda of that dictatorship. Despite this, the Press Office and the National Agency also performed extremely important functions, although generally more discreet, in the (as a rule, diffuse) propaganda of those dictatorial governments, especially in the period 1964-1968.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> On the Press Office, see Singer (2010); on AERP/ARP, see Fico (1997).

## Diffuse action

The propaganda implemented by these three State agencies was usually diffuse, that is, it did not target a specific social segment. Some sectors of civil society also collaborated with this, for reasons that ranged from ideological alignment to strategies for business or personal growth. The major printed journals and the television had, in this sense, an important role. In some cases, it was propaganda in the sense explained above (marked, therefore, by intentionality); in others, this collaboration took place through *propaganda effects* generated by the dissemination of discourses favorable to the regime, which did not necessarily aim to produce such specific results. It is necessary to consider that the context of exception created a specific framework of limitations and expectations. Although that kind of propaganda action did not have the field of higher education as a target audience, this field was part of the audience reached.

Take, for example, this emblematic editorial of *Jornal do Brasil*, published in June 1968, in a context of great effervescence of opposition to the regime. Although extensive, I will quote it in full, because of its relevance to the argument:

### *Illegal action*

*Public opinion* is beginning to grow impatient at the frequency with which *order has been disturbed by a recalcitrant minority*, insensitive to all appeals for *concord, common sense and legality*.

The Nation is aware of the difficulties it must overcome in order to consolidate its incipient democracy, but it is also perfectly aware that only through work, with *freedom and order* – which cannot be measured by abuse or excesses – will it be possible to transform itself into a prosperous nation for all, without *petty-bourgeois privileges*, without *paternalism*. The *disturbance of order* will never enrich any country.

Having barely recovered from the successive shocks that have shaken the foundations of the regime, Brazil needs, above all, calm to solve its problems. The resort to *violence, to rioting, to disrespect for authority, to contempt for private property*, is a dangerous test. Those who risk it are not these ***subversive minorities, infiltrated in the university environment***, but all Brazilians, without discrimination, because the *regime of force that the activists want to motivate* would affect the collectivity without distinction.

We all defend the urgent need for changes in Brazilian structures. The country has an obsolete organization, which even allows *disorder in the name of justice*. But public opinion has already learned to distinguish between demands and *agitation*. The *people*, almost in their entirety, cannot passively submit, with intolerable assiduity, to the *political-ideological movements and irresponsible riots* that are carried out under the pretext of defending a noble cause, such as Education, or of fighting for the overthrow *of the who naively consider a dictatorship*.

Affected in its very valuable asset, which is daily *normality*, public opinion is led to ask: after all, what does this *minority devoted to disorder* want?

It is proven that the *groups promoting the disorder* have *minority status*. They have nothing in common with the ***student and democratic aspirations of most Brazilian students***. Most have not given power of attorney to *agitators* to act and speak on their behalf. *This imitation of disturbances provoked in other countries lacks spontaneity*.

Neither the *Government* nor the *people* can tolerate the situation that is intended to be installed in the country. *People and Government*, together, must have the necessary understanding that *Democracy* is a process made of daily patience and perseverance. One and the other already opted *in 1945 and in 1964*.

At a time when *institutions are threatened* by the *inconsequential adventure of free-shooters*, it is important to unite all classes in the country, including the one that governs, in defense of the greatest good they still have: the *freedom to be able to cultivate*, even with a lot of effort, *the defenseless Brazilian democracy*, fragile in its structure but strong in the determination of the *people who elected it as their ideal regime* (Ação, 1968, p. 6).

This is a good example of this diffusion of pro-regime ideas by the mainstream press. There, in addition to a series of fundamental notions for the ideological guidelines of the dictatorship, two argumentative patterns were mobilized with repeated centrality in the most diverse forms of pro-regime propaganda:

(1) *the construction of the image of the other*, the ‘enemy’, characterizing the non-consensual opposition as ‘illegal’, promoted by ‘subversive minorities’, ‘agitators’ who would imitate ‘disorders provoked in other countries’ (a probable reference to the May 1968), ‘promoters of disorder’, supporters of ‘violence’ and of ‘disrespect for authority’ and ‘private property’;

(2) *the construction of the self-image*, through the definition of the dictatorial regime as ‘democratic’, associating the 1964 coup to the end of the *Estado Novo* (dictatorship that occurred in Brazil between 1937 and 1945), to a supposed return to ‘order’ and ‘normality’, in search of building a ‘prosperous nation for all’, with the support of ‘public opinion’.

As we will see, these two argumentative patterns were widely and frequently mobilized by various discursive actions that converged towards the defense of the regime.

This used to happen even on television, from the first months after the coup. In August 1964, for example, one of the main Tupi newscasts stated:

Government sources say that the president will reaffirm his decision to proceed with the reforms, *democratically and without demagoguery*. The same sources assure that the president received from the National Intelligence Service, based on information from the National Security Council, that the concentration of *criticism against the government* is part of a *scheme of groups that want the main democratic reforms not to be carried out* (TV TUPI, 1964).

Later, in the first half of the 1970s, another form of collaboration between the television networks and the system of social control became remarkable: the dissemination of so-called ‘repentances’. Deeply shaken by the torture they suffered, some former militants of the armed struggle agreed to make alleged retractions in front of journalists across the country. Brutally compelled to such ‘cooperation’, they claimed that there was no torture in the country, that the option for armed struggle was a mistake and that they regretted their ‘subversive’ actions. The symbolic impact of the forged retractions was huge. Without the support of the media, however, this propaganda would hardly have reached the same proportions (Kushnir, 2010).

Among the main supporters of the coup and the military dictatorship, *Rede Globo* is undoubtedly one of the best known cases. Along with other communication vehicles, it contributed significantly to pro-regime propaganda in several ways (Herz, 1991; Castro, 2011).

One of them was the space given voluntarily to members of the main echelon of dictatorial governments. The case of the program *O Povo e o Presidente* (The people and the president), in the early 1980s, is quite illustrative. At the invitation of Roberto Marinho, General Figueiredo started to have a program on Globo, lasting about 30 minutes, in which he answered questions supposedly sent by the population. Initially, it was on air on Sundays, in prime time, after the program *Fantástico*. It had 42 editions: the first was shown on May 30, 1982 and the last on September 21, 1983. After the 33rd edition (April 22, 1983), it was broadcast on Wednesday nights, lasting approximately 10 minutes (Brasil, 1983a; 1983b).

Its content was largely focused on building a positive image for the regime and, of course, for the Figueiredo government. The tone was optimistic, although in this it was not comparable to the propaganda of the 1970s. In most of his speeches, the military man tried to explain the complicated economic situation experienced by the country and the difficulties of the transition process to democracy. This process, he said, was the main goal of his government.

The essentially propagandistic sense of the program was even more evident in passages like this one, in which Figueiredo was asked about censorship in Brazil:

- President Figueiredo, what about censorship?
- Well, it would be very easy to censor the news and give the impression that we live in the best of all worlds. But that would not be a democratic practice. (...) The reader and the viewer want and deserve to know the truth.<sup>8</sup>

Higher education was a subject that was rarely addressed in *O povo e o presidente*, which, as a rule, preferred to address basic education on this topic. One of the few exceptions was a program in January 1983, in which the dictator was asked about the low supply of night courses in areas such as Medicine and Engineering, which would make it impossible to study for those who worked during the day. In his answer, Figueiredo tried to justify the government's educational policies, arguing that then there would be a tendency to 'an increase in the proportion of courses offered in the afternoon and evening' in those areas, with 'a greater number of options for those who, in addition to working, wish to pursue higher education'. What was not said is that this growth, which had actually taken place since the 1960s, took place mainly through the growth of the private sector, which, in practice, continued to make access to higher education unfeasible for most workers, who did not could afford such costs.<sup>9</sup>

### Specific action

In addition to diffuse propaganda, as already mentioned, there was one specifically focused on the field of higher education. The 'IPES' - *Instituto de Pesquisa e Estudos Sociais* (Institute of Research and Social Studies, organization of businessmen officially founded on Feb 02, 1962), whose coup propaganda before Jango's fall was mapped out by Dreifuss in detail, maintained an intense activity after April 1964 as a disseminator of fundamental ideas for the ideological support of that regime (Dreifuss, 2006). Although the focus of its propagandistic action was not limited to higher education, this was a social segment in which the agency acted directly and with specific persuasion strategies. This was even done through the distribution of propaganda material to students' unions. It is essential to bear in mind that, in addition to the propaganda made by IPES independently and on its own initiative, there were

<sup>8</sup> Program n° 27, shown on Feb 06, 1983 (Brasil, 1983b, p. 58-59).

<sup>9</sup> Program n° 25, aired on Jan 23, 1983 (Brasil, 1983b, p. 38). On the characteristics of the growth of higher education between the 1960s and 1980s in Brazil, marked by the progressive predominance of the private sector, see Minto (2006, p. 87-138; 180-181).

situations in which the agency carried out propaganda in a collaborative way, with the support of other civil society entities, of which, in some cases, took the initiative for such partnerships. This was the case of the *Dois de Julho* Students' Union (apparently from the Law School of the Pontifical Catholic University of *Paraná* – PUC-PR). On May 23, 1966, Carlos Eduardo Rosa, president of that student's union, asked Guanabara IPES (IPES-GB) to receive publicity material; on June 13, 1966, Gen. Octavio Gomes de Abreu, Executive Secretary General of IPES-GB, responded positively (IPES, 1966).

### Donations of publications to university libraries

Another form of propaganda with a specific role in higher education was the distribution of material to university libraries. The AERP itself, shortly after being created, when it was in charge of Colonel Hernani d'Aguiar, and had not yet started using the expensive and well-designed campaigns for which it would become known, came to promote this type of action. An example is the book '*O processo revolucionário brasileiro*' (The Brazilian Revolutionary Process), from 1969 (AERP, 1969).<sup>10</sup>

Created as a celebration of the 'fifth anniversary of the democratic takeover of 1964', the publication was composed of texts produced by 'some prominent personalities in the various fields of national culture and activity', invited by the advisory board to offer 'their testimonies about the Revolution'. The work had a second print in 1969, which suggests a positive assessment, on the part of the AERP, regarding the fulfillment of the book's objectives with its target audience. However, the effectiveness of this form of propaganda, it seems, had some limitations (AERP, 1969, p. 3).

Not surprisingly, the AERP had gathered in the publication texts by some of the most important intellectuals of the regime: Carlos de Meira Mattos, Eugênio Gudin, Gilberto Freyre, Glycon de Paiva, Gustavo Corção and Octávio Gouvêa de Bulhões. Other authors probably invited due to their socio-professional insertions and ties to the group in power also participated: Antônio Carlos do Amaral Osório (businessman, member of IPES and supporter of the 1964 coup), Jorge Boaventura (from the Ministry of Education and Culture - MEC, assumed, shortly after the publication, the head of the Special Committee for Summary Investigation of the MEC – CISMEC) and Octávio Costa (who, as mentioned, would head the AERP in the Médici government).<sup>11</sup>

The texts converged in the defense of the regime, and the chapter that opened the book, written by General Meira Mattos, was practically a synthesis of the ESG Basic Manual. It sought to justify the existence of the dictatorship and the public policies adopted in the name of 'democracy survival', national 'security' and 'development', remembering that such terms assumed very specific meanings in that context.

Gilberto Freyre's texts discussed various aspects of post-1964 Brazilian society, differentiating what he called 'white revolutions' (like the one that, in his view, was taking place in Brazil at the time) from what he called 'scenographic revolutions'. These, he claimed, would hardly occur in Brazil, because, in his view, Brazilians would be 'malicious' and 'extremely sensitive to ridicule'. Nor would they occur because, in his view, 'the grotesque grandiloquence of the theatrical revolutionaries causes repugnance in the *Brazilian who is genuinely Brazilian*'. Curious inversion operated by the already famous author of *Casa*

<sup>10</sup> The AERP administration by Octávio Costa (during Médici government) was marked by a significant increase in government investments in propaganda. The qualitative leap in pro-regime propaganda was also due to the technical improvements that took place in the period. According to Costa himself, 'the main copying laboratory [of films] in the country once informed him that AERP was, in this sector, the biggest Brazilian client'. Octávio Costa - interview with Carlos Fico, quoted in Fico (1997, p. 110).

<sup>11</sup> About CISMEC and Jorge Boaventura, see the chapters 1 and 4 of Mansan (2014).

*Grande & Senzala* at that time: the theatrical and self-proclaimed ‘Democratic Revolution’ of 1964 – which in fact had nothing revolutionary – was presented by him as a ‘genuine revolution’. With a strong anti-communist tone, he was constantly concerned with differentiating himself from scholars such as Florestan Fernandes, who would be, according to him, ‘at the service of a closed ideology’. Meanwhile, Gilberto Freyre offered extensive praise and favorable predictions to that dictatorial regime, which he considered ‘courageously revolutionary’. Wouldn't he be at the service of a ‘closed ideology’?

The texts of Eugênio Gudín, Glycon de Paiva, Amaral Osório and Octávio de Bulhões defended the economic policy implemented after 1964, adopting the argumentative strategy of the inseparable overlap between development and security. In the same line followed Octávio Costa. The future head of the propaganda agency that produced that publication took up recurring themes in pro-regime speeches, stating, for example, that ‘no revolutionary episode was more denigrated [sic], slandered, and yet so denied by a more obsessive minority’ (Costa, 1969a, p. 65). In addition to reinforcing the idea of the enemy as a minority, it marked the distance between the ‘Democratic Revolution’ and the ‘1930 Revolution’: ‘we are not faced with a personalist revolutionary dynamic, as in 1930, which enthroned [for] fifteen years the legend of the caudillos charisma. The military regime would be different, marked by a ‘revolutionary dynamic markedly collective, of affiliation to true national aspirations, of solidarity between the generations that are gone, those that are there and those that will arrive’ (Costa, 1969b, p. 57).

One of the main names of fundamentalist Catholicism in Brazil, the far-right intellectual Gustavo Corção presented the most extreme defense of the regime. He criticized what he called ‘*democratism*’, whose objective would be ‘to superimpose on the *common good* the maintenance at any cost of the so-called *rules of the democratic game*’. For him, ‘the good regime’ would be one that had ‘sufficient elasticity to shift the tonic accent according to the real requirements of the *natural law* and the *common good*’ (Corção, 1969b, p. 35-39).

In addition to criticizing democracy, Corção attacked progressive Catholicism, including its support for the student movement of resistance to the dictatorship, characterized as ‘seeds of communist infiltration in Catholic circles’, a ‘*heresy* called ‘progressive’, which, among other factors, brought’ in his view ‘*adulterous marriage with Marxist ideas*’ to Catholic circles. He said that ‘the movement of March 1964’ was ‘a very important act of social justice’ and that ‘now leftist priests, instead of helping, hinder: and instead of elevating, they pervert’, especially ‘in the student area’, in which ‘the action of left-wing priests was especially pernicious and blatantly unfair against governments fighting for the normalization of Brazil’. As an example, he highlighted ‘the famous protest ‘marches’ that, in 1968, ‘on the most artificial pretexts, threatened to drag Brazil back into the *throes of anarchy* that marked the times of Goulart’ (Corção, 1969b, p. 38-41).

The emphasis in his texts was on the association between Goulart and communism, as well as on the attack on the student movement and the Catholic left. About the immediate pre-coup, Corção stated that ‘*communism was already in power* and already had in its favor the softness of a society mistreated by so many and such bad governments. It lacked a finishing touch, but it already had the support of a large part of the press, ‘intellectuals’, *students*, priests and even ‘progressive’ archbishops’ (Corção, 1969a, p. 49). In addition to being anti-communist, his narrative was anti-Semitic and coupist: ‘the tenuous hope we had [in the pre-coup] was that the Army would organize itself and its leaders would know how to superimpose natural law on the *petty legality* produced by *Jewish positivism*’ (Corção, 1969a, p. 49).

At the end, he described his participation in one of the Family Marches with God for Freedom.<sup>12</sup> Continuing in a paranoid tone, he complained about the world's incomprehension about the Brazilian 'miracle': 'the whole world would slander us. The United States, based on the *superstition* of its liberal democracy, or its 'democratism', and 'Europe based on the *leftism* that took over the media' (Corção, 1969a, p. 53).

The notion of *subversion* was the theoretical foundation of that regime. In that book organized by the AERP, this was evident. In the introduction, it was stated that the coup resulted from an alleged 'lack of representativeness of the political body', which would have generated a 'rise tide of *subversion* coming from the Executive itself', against which 'the Armed Forces acted, inspired by the people destitute of its representatives' (AERP, 1969, p. 2).

Both texts by Jorge Boaventura dealt with education, following the line of other authors, with a strong influence from the DSN. As in the rest of the book, the notion of subversion was at the heart of the argument. For Boaventura, that dictatorial regime was guided by 'kindness'. The supposed benevolence of the regime was, for him, a consequence of the Brazilian 'national character'. There would be, he said, a 'curtain lifted by the *agents of subversion that exist in the educational environment*', who would try to 'corrupt our young people and try to turn them against their own parents' and, still, take 'our children to the streets to, in clear evidence of the *anti-national character* of the real motives of all that, induce them to practice *shocking violence and brutality*', considered by him not only as 'unnecessary' but also 'in disagreement with *our national character*'. Despite this, the optimist Boaventura maintained that, 'despite all this wave of *true crimes against the family and against the homeland*', there had prevailed, 'in the Government, as a dominant stimulus, the reason, *so Brazilian, of kindness* (Boaventura, 1969, p. 81).

Alongside Boaventura's curious arguments and understandable doubts about its propagandistic effectiveness, it is evident that education had a central role in that context for the group in power. This was made very clear in that book, where, through the AERP, the dictatorial leaders affirmed their commitment in the area and their directive and authoritarian conception of education: 'therefore, it should not be surprising that the Governments of the Revolution were committed to an extensive educational plan, which, at all levels', would seek to 'bring to the greatest number of people the advantages of instruction' (AERP, 1969, p. 2).

## Military magazines

Also relevant for controlling the field of higher education, indirectly, were some forms of propaganda aimed at the military segment, reaching members of the system of social control and the highest echelons of dictatorial governments. A means of propaganda, in this sense, was the magazine *A Defesa Nacional* (The National Defense) (Sepúlveda, 2010; 2014).

Observe the editorial in the March/April 1968 issue. It celebrated two anniversaries of what the newspaper called 'our Revolution'.

One of them, March 31, 1964, corresponded to what they defined as the 'extraordinary *civic-military movement that would unite all Brazilians aware of their responsibilities*', and which, according to the editorial, would have been confined 'in a small and inexpressive field, to the surprise of many, those *corrupted by anti-national ideologies or by the illegitimate benefits in the use of public money*'. Note the characterization of the coup as a movement

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<sup>12</sup> About the marches, Presot (2010, p. 71-96) highlights the complexity of that eminently urban phenomenon, in a period when about 60% of the Brazilian population of almost 80 million inhabitants still lived in the countryside (IBGE, 1964). She points out that the marches cannot be characterized 'as popular manifestations' nor as a mere 'product of the dissatisfaction of the urban middle classes', and discusses the decisive influence of the long work of propaganda carried out by IPES between 1962 and 1964, also indicating that, on the other hand, the phenomenon cannot be reduced to a mere product of this propagandistic action (Presot, 2010, p. 88).

promoted or supported by the majority of Brazilians, against a minority of ‘subversives’ and ‘corrupts’. Thus, according to the magazine, ‘the Brazilian Revolution was born, *oriented towards austerity, reforms and financial recovery*’. Note also how they sought to build an image of the regime guided by the fight against corruption and the promotion of national development.

The other event was March 15, 1967, when ‘the *second revolutionary cycle* began, with the assumption of power by President Costa e Silva’. Due to the ‘previous *sanitation work*’, carried out during the first dictatorial government, Costa e Silva could have ‘set more daring revolutionary goals in the sense of *valuing the Brazilian man* and *valuing the development*’. With that, ‘the development process’ would have been resumed, achieving ‘inflation control’, in ‘an irreproachable condition of public liberties’, which would have given the ‘democratic tone to the Government’. In the magazine's highly positive and optimistic characterization, during the Castello Branco and Costa e Silva governments, ‘the revolutionary principle of dignified and moralized authority prevailed unassailable in high administrative positions’.

Education and health were mentioned in the editorial as areas in which ‘the 2nd Revolutionary Government’ would face ‘serious problems’. But at the same time that the editorial stated this, it also assured that ‘the goals of the Revolutionary Government will be bold for these two sectors’, in order to prepare ‘*the new generations, physically and intellectually, for the great battle of Development that will place us on the list of the most socially, technically and scientifically advanced nations in the world*’. This effort, ‘*focusing on our military potential, will represent the indispensable strengthening of our Security*’.

It is noticeable not only the influence of the DSN, through the notion of inseparability between security and development, but also the strategic importance that education had for the military sector. Furthermore, it exemplifies the regime's highly optimistic propaganda, which would seek the country's growth to equate Brazil with the ‘most advanced nations in the world’ (Duas, 1968).

Later, in the mid-1980s, when talking about higher education, the magazine maintained the same argumentative strategy, as in an article by Francisco [de Paula Gusmão] de Souza Brasil. Bachelor of Laws and Doctor of Philosophy, he had completed the Higher Education Course of War (‘Curso Superior de Guerra’) at ESG in 1956, was president of the national ADESG (ESG Graduates Association) in the 1976/1977 administration, was a member of the ESG and of the Editorial Board of the Army Library (‘Biblioteca do Exército’, the Army publishing house since 1937). Souza Brasil also was a teacher at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV) and at the CEP (Personnel Studies Center).<sup>13</sup> In his text, the inseparability of security and development was defended, attributing a fundamental role to education in this sense. Other striking features of the DSN are present there, such as the definition of national security, characterized as being ‘intimately dependent’ on education (Brasil, 1986).<sup>14</sup>

Although these actions with diffuse or specific propaganda effects were fundamental for the regime, several of its agents did not permanently integrate that sector of the system of social control. The comparison with the propagandistic action systematically promoted by the official agencies allows us to perceive the consequences of this difference.

## The National Agency

Officially created by Decree-Law n. 7,582, of May 25, 1945, the National Agency emerged as an organ of the National Department of Information (DNI), which the decree instituted to replace the Department of Press and Propaganda (DIP).<sup>15</sup> The agency's attribution was to ‘distribute news and photographic services, for information purposes only, to the press’.

<sup>13</sup> About CEP, see chapter 1 of Mansan (2014).

<sup>14</sup> See the section about ADESG in chapter 4 of Mansan (2014).

<sup>15</sup> Jorge Duarte (2010, p. 12) states that the National Agency was created in 1937, by order of the Ministry of Justice.



It should be noted that such activities were already carried out, at least since 1934, by the Department of Propaganda and Cultural Diffusion, replaced in Dec 1939 by the DIP. On the other hand, the determination to act in a 'merely informative nature' indicates the intention to differentiate the work of the DNI from that which had complied with the DIP, the main propaganda and censorship body of the Estado Novo. It could be an effective intention to change or just an attempt to build a positive image for the new state agency, highlighting the difference in relation to the DIP, marked by the propaganda of a dictatorial regime.<sup>16</sup>

The following year, the DNI was deactivated, but the National Agency was maintained, passing to the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs. Decree-Law n. 9.788, of Sep 06, 1946, maintained the determination that it should have a 'merely informative function of national activities', establishing as its competence 'to provide the public, individuals, associations and the press with all sorts of information about matters of interest to the nation' and 'to maintain the newsreel with a news approach and the radio bulletin broadcast throughout the country'.

After the 1964 coup, several State entities were assimilated by the system of social control constituted to support the new regime, and the National Agency was one of them. Integrated into the new system, it became one of the regime's main propaganda mechanisms. In 1979, during the democratic transition, it became known as *Empresa Brasileira de Notícias* (Brazilian News Company).

### Daily press releases

The systematic forwarding of official information material to the press dates back in Brazil, at least, to the 1930s, when the Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic was responsible for the activity (Duarte, 2010, p. 12).

In the 1960s, the National Agency sent dozens of pages of information daily to the main newspapers in the country, prepared by the Documentation Service of that agency. As for the form of the 'daily press releases', there were no significant differences from the standards of any news agency at the time. However, in terms of content, a significant rupture emerged after General Otávio Alves Velho became the agency's director.

Several of the speeches in favor of the dictatorship, disseminated to the mainstream press by those press releases, sought to characterize the regime in a favorable way, marked by 'national development'. At the end of 1969, Jarbas Passarinho, then Minister of Education and Culture, stated, during a visit to Pernambuco, that people who wanted to 'work for the development of Brazil' would be 'accepted', while those who wanted 'terror and subversion' would be 'striked out' (Agência Nacional, 1969c). Despite the criticism against the 'subversives', the tone was set by the attempt to build a positive and optimistic image of the dictatorship. This form of propaganda was present in most of the news produced by the agency, including those related to higher education.

### Building a positive and optimistic view of the dictatorship and the country's future

More than half of the identified recording units acted essentially towards the construction of a positive vision of the regime and optimistic about the future of the country.<sup>17</sup> In most cases, through the dissemination of news about the current government, associating it to the image of development. A very peculiar 'development', whose main

<sup>16</sup> On propaganda during the Estado Novo, see Capelato (1999, p. 167-178).

<sup>17</sup> For the analysis of most of the sources used in the research that resulted in this article, I sought inspiration in the propositions of authors who theorize about the methodology commonly called *Content Analysis*, adapting their suggestions to the specifics of that investigation in the aspects in which this seemed appropriate. About this methodology, see Bardin (1977), Morin (1970) and Moraes (1999).

consequence was the strong deepening of social inequality, a process that, although dating back to the colonial period, was significantly accentuated after 1964, as demonstrated by Colistete (2009) in the case of the industrial sector.<sup>18</sup>

To form social support in higher education, they sought to justify the public policies implemented in the sector. For this, one of the main strategies was the dissemination of news about development in the area: international agreements, increase in the number of places in universities, investments in infrastructure, etc. In Oct. 1964, for example, the agency announced the creation of the Ceará School of Architecture (Agência Nacional, 1964a).

The creation or expansion of higher education institutions did not, however, contribute to the reduction of social inequality. On the contrary: the growth of the field of higher education took place in the period principally in the non-state sphere, mainly due to the strong incentives granted to this sector. The educational policies practiced at that time, although with secondary differences between the dictatorial governments, were based on the perception that public universities should be destined to the formation of the ruling elites and the specialized labor necessary for that conservative development project, leaving to the others pay for their studies or resign themselves to a high school education (Minto, 2006).

In this perspective of exaltation of dictatorial governments, in Dec. 1969 it was stated that the Federal University of Viçosa, Minas Gerais, would have a library that would be 'a leader in Latin America in Agronomy and Veterinary matters', through the 'inclusion of this initiative in the financing of the MEC-BID Program' (Agência Nacional, 1969a). A year earlier, shortly after the imposition of Institutional Act n. 5 (AI-5), similar news had been published in relation to the University of Ceará (Agência Nacional, 1968b).

Another recurring way of indirectly praising the regime was publicizing the activities of presidents and ministers. In Oct. 1964, news was published stating that the Minister of Education and Culture Flávio Suplicy de Lacerda, following the activities of the Federal Council of Education, had expressed 'government confidence' in that state entity. Such messages contributed to the construction of a positive image for the minister, characterizing him as an active politician and directly involved with issues in his area of responsibility, also disseminating an appearance of harmony and cooperation among government members (Agência Nacional, 1964a).

Likewise, news about the participation of government officials in academic activities were potential means of propaganda about higher education. In Aug. 1969, for example, the agency announced the presence in Uberlândia of the Minister of Justice, prof. Gama e Silva, where he would participate in the Legal Studies Week of the Faculty of Law of that city, giving the closing conference (Agência Nacional, 1969b).

The importance that ESG graduation ceremonies have always had for the military was projected to the rest of society by propaganda bodies such as the National Agency, through systematic news of the participation of government members in such ceremonies. In Dec. 1968, less than a week after the imposition of AI-5, the agency reported the presence of several members of the government and the military leadership at the graduation of ESG interns, among them the President of the Republic, who presided over the diplomacy (National Agency, 1968a). The school, which before the coup was already recognized as the country's main intellectual center in the military field, received a considerable increase in its status. Much of this recognition was transferred to its students and graduates, strengthening the symbolic value of an ESG degree after 1964.

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<sup>18</sup> As the author observed, 'From the end of the Second World War until the beginning of the 1960s, a highly conflictive pattern of labor relations seems to have undermined the bases for an accommodation of interests between organized workers and industrialists that allowed to combine rapid economic growth with a more equal distribution of income. The resolution of the distributive conflict took place through a radical change in the political system in 1964, which consolidated secular trends of profound inequality in the distribution of wealth and income in Brazil' (Colistete, 2009). See also Alves (1989) and Mendonça & Fontes (1988).

Another form of indirect exaltation of the regime was the concession of honors to members of the government. In that period, many universities conferred several degrees of Doctor Honoris Causa to dictators and ministers, taking advantage of what was already a tradition in the academic environment to get closer to the group in power. For those honored, there was a significant symbolic gain, especially because such actions were widely publicized by advertising agencies such as the National Agency, projecting the idea that they were well-regarded in the university environment. The awarding of medals and honors by other entities fulfilled a similar function, although perhaps with less symbolic impact (Agência Nacional, 1964b).

### Social control functions

Propaganda played an extremely important role in the process of building an appearance of legitimacy for the regime, as well as in the formation of active social support and passive acceptance. As Carlos Fico stated:

Just as ‘material development’ took place on an excluding basis, military political propaganda also operated with a stereotyped view of ‘Brazilian values’, a view that misrepresented social hopes and sought to transfer to the power (illegitimate and dictatorial) the utopian energies that many of us tend to have in relation to our country (Fico, 1997, p. 146).

For this, the two main means used were, as we have seen:

(1) *the construction of self-image*, through the dissemination of positive readings of the regime, associated in them with values such as modernity, development, ethics (especially as fighting corruption), work, openness to dialogue, peace, tranquility, order and normality;

(2) *the construction of the image of the other*, through the diffusion of negative characterizations of the opposition and dissent, as well as the formation of the image of the ‘enemy’, the ‘subversive’, associated with ‘communism’, ‘Marxism’, ‘leftism’, foreign danger, disorder, chaos, violence, conflict, corruption, etc. For that, the system relied largely on ideas rooted long before 1964 in certain imaginaries, such as the anti-communist one. Depending on the media, the target audience or the method of propaganda (diffuse or specific), the emphasis could fall on one or another of these propagandistic axes. In certain cases, complementary argumentative guidelines were also adopted, as in those in which the propaganda fulfilled functions of frightening and stigmatization, in important collaboration with the repressive control of the field of higher education.

The propaganda promoted by the regime was also fundamental in the sense of spreading the notion of *subversion*, both directly, through the aforementioned construction of the image of the other (the ‘enemy’, the ‘subversive’), and indirectly, through the aforementioned positive characterization of the regime (which would be ‘fighting the subversives’). The dissemination of this notion was also fundamental for the success of other forms of control. Surveillance and repression actions tended, therefore, to be seen by members of the field as a ‘necessary evil’ or even as positive and healthy initiatives, for fighting the ‘internal enemy’. This ‘internal enemy’ was perceived, in the characterization made by these perspectives, as an obstacle to the ‘development’ of the country, as well as responsible for violence and fractures in society. It was an evident inversion between causes and effects: the ‘subversives’, created by the system of social control to justify their existence and that of the regime, were presented as the cause of the coup d’état, as well as of the dictatorial regime and of its actions of control.

The affinity of the concepts that supported the perspective developed at ESG with the theories of Carl Schmitt is remarkable, especially: the friend-enemy differentiation (central to the ESG's constitution of the notions of 'subversive' and 'internal enemy'); the defense of an 'authoritarian democracy of Caesaristic and ethnic homogeneity' (which refers to the importance of the myth of racial democracy for the dictatorial regime); the conception of democratic participation restricted to the 'acclaim, devoid of arguments, of the incapable masses' (Habermas, 2008, p. xviii). In *The Guardian of the Constitution*, Schmitt stated, for example, starting from the German case during the rise of Nazism, that, because it was formed 'precisely a practice of the economic-financial state of exception with a right to issue substitutive decrees of laws, this', in his view, would not be 'arbitrary nor chance, not even 'dictatorship' in the sense of the vulgar and party-political motto, but the expression of a deep and internally legal relationship' (Schmitt, 2007, p. 190).<sup>19</sup>

Another important function fulfilled by propaganda was the characterization of politics as a taboo, encouraging behaviors of submissive and unrestricted acceptance, marked by political apathy even in the context of higher education. Encouraging political apathy was, however, a specific function of a broader one: *normalization*. This was fulfilled both by propaganda and by other modes of control.

Propaganda produced important normative effects, spreading models of behavior characterized as normal or deviant and disseminating values and ideas that contributed to the consolidation of standards of conduct in the field of higher education. This normative action had effects considered by the social control system as highly positive, both for the maintenance of 'security' and for the promotion of 'development'. In other words, it was a decisive form of control for the defense of that illegitimate political regime and for the permanence of that excluding and income concentrating social order, both responsible for a brutal deepening of inequalities in the country.

In current memory disputes, the effects of propaganda actions implemented during the military dictatorship are often mobilized in speeches that falsify fundamental historical facts about that regime, spreading quickly through social networks and being further reinforced by politicians statements who seek to benefit with the misinformation of the population. These discourses, by appropriating memories based on the propaganda actions of the military dictatorship, strongly dialogue with prejudices rooted in Brazilian society for centuries, disseminating or reinforcing hate speech, generating disinformation and inciting various forms of physical and symbolic violence.

In view of this, the implementation of pedagogical actions and scientific dissemination based on empirically well-founded historical analysis becomes especially opportune and relevant, since scientific knowledge about our recent past is one of the main ways to obtain solid bases for understanding the difficulties and challenges of the present, as well as to envision the possibilities and limits of our immediate future. These cognoscitive bases are essential for people to be able to make choices that allow better chances of building a more just, egalitarian and truly democratic society. Understanding the damage caused by dictatorial propaganda to Brazilian society can also help to adopt a more critical and conscious attitude towards the information consumed and shared daily by different means, an action that has taken on increasing political and social importance in recent years.

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<sup>19</sup> See also the detailed analysis present in chapter 1 of Machado (2012).

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