

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Funding Policy Research under ‘Distasteful Regimes’: The Ford Foundation and the Social Sciences in Brazil, 1964–71

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Abstract

The Ford Foundation’s involvement with the social sciences in Brazil coincided with the early years of the military regime that ruled the country between 1964 and 1985. The paper studies how changed political circumstances in the United States and abroad induced the Foundation to gradually abandon the technocratic approach that had governed its overseas programme since the 1950s, thus introducing a critical shift in its policies toward the developing world. A grant proposal to the University of Brasília, which had been subject to repeated military interventions since 1964, highlighted the ethical dilemmas raised by the goal of fostering policy-relevant research in an authoritarian political context. Relying on a pragmatic decision-making framework that converted ethical and ideological considerations into cost–benefit exercises, the Foundation finally moved away from the maxims of modernisation theory to embrace new strategic priorities like human rights, democracy and intellectual pluralism.

Keywords: Ford Foundation; Cold War; Kalman Silvert; Latin America; authoritarianism; modernisation

Introduction

The Ford Foundation has often been celebrated for its response to the 1973 military coup in Chile, immediately embarking on an extensive rescue operation to help displaced Chilean scholars and later taking the symbolically powerful decision to close its Santiago office in 1974.¹ These actions were rightly perceived as momentous by the people directly involved, and later came to be regarded as a pivotal moment

¹Jeffrey Puryear gives a systematic account of the Foundation’s actions in Chile after the 1973 coup: ‘Higher Education, Development Assistance, and Repressive Regimes’, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 17: 2 (1982), pp. 3–35. For the role played by Kalman Silvert in coordinating the Ford Foundation’s response to the crisis of the Southern Cone democracies, see Peter S. Cleaves and Richard W. Dye, ‘Bringing Vision, Mission, and Values to Philanthropy’, in Abraham F. Lowenthal and Martin Weinstein (eds.), *Kalman Silvert: Engaging Latin America, Building Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2016), pp. 115–25.

prompting the Foundation to reorient its priorities toward human rights activism.² The Ford Foundation records at the Rockefeller Archive Center contain an entire box entitled 'Latin America and the Caribbean Program Files on the 1973 Coup d'Etat in Chile', which chronicles the deliberations leading to the strategy adopted in Chile between 1973 and 1974. Curiously, when opening the first folder in this box, one finds a set of memoranda relating to the operations of Ford's Rio de Janeiro office a few years before the Chilean coup. In one of these documents, William Carmichael, then head of the Ford Foundation's Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OLAC) in New York, tried to close the protracted negotiations on a grant proposal to the University of Brasília (UnB) that had consumed the energies of his staff for the better part of 1971.³

From its modest beginnings in 1936, the Ford Foundation was overhauled into a powerhouse of global philanthropy in 1950, after inheriting the lion's share of the Ford Motor Company's assets.⁴ Building on the celebrated report of the study group led by H. Rowan Gaither, a prominent patron of Cold War science research, the Foundation decisively embraced an international scope as a major actor in development aid, while choosing to focus on the social sciences as a privileged area for its research and educational programmes.⁵ During the 1950s, its engagement with Latin America remained limited, but this changed following a 1959 mission headed by Reynold Carlson, Alfred Wolf and Lincoln Gordon which led, among other things, to the inauguration of an office in Rio de Janeiro in 1962.⁶ Shortly thereafter, however, the Brazilian socio-political context changed dramatically due to the military coup of March–April 1964, establishing an authoritarian regime that ruled over the country for the next 21 years. Given Ford's aspirations for its fledgling Latin American programme, the situation posed difficult challenges. Support for the social sciences aimed explicitly at building research capacity and training human resources to help tackle Brazilian socio-economic challenges. But as the repressive nature of the new regime became more apparent, the question eventually arose: was it possible to assist Brazil without also, at least indirectly, assisting the Brazilian government? Did the Foundation's efforts to foster policy-relevant research necessarily translate into support for an authoritarian political regime?

Despite these concerns, the Ford Foundation increased its support for the social sciences in Brazil during the mid- to late-1960s, as OLAC staff believed it possible to maintain a technocratic, politically neutral attitude amid changing circumstances.

²William Korey, *Taking on the World's Repressive Regimes: The Ford Foundation's International Human Rights Policies and Practices* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 25–45.

³Carmichael to Nicholson, 'Request for "A" Status, University of Brasília', 27 Jan. 1972, Folder 1, Box 1, FA721, Ford Foundation Records, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, NY (hereafter FFR).

⁴Henry and Edsel Ford bequeathed all the Class A (non-voting) stocks of the Ford Motor Company to the Foundation in order to avoid new inheritance taxes implemented by the Roosevelt administration. See Francis X. Sutton, 'The Ford Foundation: The Early Years', *Daedalus*, 116: 1 (1987), pp. 41–91.

⁵H. Rowan Gaither, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (Detroit, MI: Ford Foundation, 1949); Peter D. Bell, 'The Ford Foundation as a Transnational Actor', *International Organization*, 25: 3 (1971), pp. 465–78; Sutton, 'The Ford Foundation'; Roger L. Geiger, 'American Foundations and Academic Social Science, 1945–1960', *Minerva*, 26: 3 (1988), pp. 315–41.

⁶Wolf, Gordon and Carlson, 'Ford Foundation Mission to Brazil, July–August, 1959', Catalogued Report 000008, FA739A, FFR.

But the publication of Institutional Act no. 5 in 1968 inaugurated a period of systematic repression and curtailment of civil and political rights, leading to political arrests, torture and university purges targeting intellectuals who opposed the regime.⁷ Confronted with this new reality, Foundation officers in Brazil began to revise their priorities. Support for the creation of the Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (Brazilian Centre for Analysis and Planning, CEBRAP), a think tank uniting social scientists expelled from the universities or subject to forced retirement, marked a much-celebrated first step toward a new policy of providing accommodation for dissenting voices.⁸ The issue came to the forefront of OLAC concerns, however, in the context of a much lesser-known episode: a controversial grant proposal to economics and the social sciences at UnB, in the early 1970s. Located close to the seat of the Brazilian government, UnB had suffered repeated political interventions and academic purges since 1964, and a possible grant compelled Ford personnel in both Rio and New York to openly consider the implications of their involvement with the military regime. This gave rise, in turn, to a conflict of perspectives on the appropriate nature of liberal developmental policy.

This paper contributes to the literature on the history of the social sciences during the Cold War, illustrating how the scientific patronage networks and geopolitical considerations that dominated the first decades of the post-war era shaped the production and dissemination of social scientific knowledge.⁹ Focusing on the work of a major player in this Cold War system of patronage – the Ford Foundation – but expanding the gaze beyond the mainstream of Western academia, we will show how similar factors also influenced the development of the social sciences in other areas within the sphere of influence of the United States at the time.¹⁰ Like other philanthropic foundations, Ford functioned as one of those ‘allegedly neutral channels’ for

⁷The Brazilian military regime (1964–85) comprises different periods distinguished by their levels of authoritarianism and brutality. The first few years are typically regarded as a ‘moderate’ phase, when the regime strived to retain a semblance of civic legitimacy for its activities. The context changed dramatically from 1969, leading to an era of increased repression that lasted for most of the 1970s, only to be softened with the initial overtures toward a democratic transition during the early 1980s. The publication of Institutional Act no. 5, which suspended Congress and the right to *habeas corpus*, was a watershed moment in the transition between the first two periods.

⁸Yves Dezalay and Bryant G. Garth, *The Internationalization of Palace Wars: Lawyers, Economists, and the Contest to Transform Latin American States* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 104–5.

⁹Hunter Crowther-Heyck, ‘Patrons of the Revolution: Ideals and Institutions in Postwar Behavioral Science’, *Isis*, 97: 3 (2006), pp. 420–46; Joel Isaac, ‘The Human Sciences in Cold War America’, *The Historical Journal*, 50: 3 (2007), pp. 725–46; David C. Engerman, ‘Social Science in the Cold War’, *Isis*, 101: 2 (2010), pp. 393–400; Mark Solovey and Hamilton Cravens (eds.), *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Mark Solovey, *Shaky Foundations: The Politics–Patronage–Social Science Nexus in Cold War America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013).

¹⁰The potential and limitations faced by Ford as an institution that acted transnationally while seeking to retain a certain degree of independence from US foreign policy have been examined by one of its own high-profile officers: Bell, ‘The Ford Foundation as a Transnational Actor’. On the entanglement between big philanthropic foundations and the US foreign policy establishment throughout the twentieth century, see Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

the international dissemination of US cultural and academic standards.¹¹ This did not mean, however, that patrons of science were capable of perfectly shaping the practices of their grantees according to their own preferences.¹² The UnB episode tested the limits of Ford's Latin American programme, presenting a scenario where the policy relevance of social scientific research could be cultivated at the expense of an open and plural environment for academic debate.

The article's argument relies on a detailed examination of Ford Foundation records relating to the funding of the social sciences in Brazil during the 1960s and early 1970s, to uncover strategies adopted to deal with the difficult ethical dilemmas posed by the Brazilian political context. We will highlight how a group of key actors centred around Ford's consultant Kalman Silvert forged a protocol for doing business with authoritarian regimes, gradually replacing developmental mores inherited from the 1950s – capital accumulation, technical expertise, economic and social programming – with a new set of goals based on the preservation of intellectual tolerance, democratic values and human rights.¹³ This shift, in turn, called into question part of the modernising agenda behind the institutionalisation of the social sciences in Brazil during the 1960s.¹⁴ It further resulted in a conflict of perspectives within the ranks of Ford's Latin American programme, highlighting some of the tensions inherent in the post-war liberal consensus on development and modernisation embraced by the West.¹⁵ Mutual adjustment efforts eventually

¹¹Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, 'On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 16: 1 (1999), pp. 41–58.

¹²A similar claim has been advanced by Álvaro Morcillo Laiz, based on the Rockefeller Foundation's involvement with Colegio de México during the 1940s: Álvaro Morcillo Laiz, 'La gran dama: Science Patronage, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Mexican Social Sciences in the 1940', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 51: 4 (2019), pp. 829–54.

¹³In the case of Brazilian economics, this shift of emphasis led to the consolidation of an academic community characterised by its commitment to theoretical and methodological pluralism, in sharp contrast to prevailing worldwide trends in the field: Ramón García Fernández and Carlos Eduardo Suprinyak, 'Manufacturing Pluralism in Brazilian Economics', *Journal of Economic Issues*, 53: 3 (2019), pp. 748–73.

¹⁴The early stages in the institutionalisation of the social sciences in Brazil are discussed in Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, 'Dilemas da institucionalização das ciências sociais no Rio de Janeiro', in Sérgio Miceli (ed.), *História das ciências sociais no Brasil*, vol. 1 (São Paulo: Vértice/Idesp/Finep, 1989), pp. 188–216. On the Ford Foundation's later involvement with the field, see Sérgio Miceli, 'A aposta numa comunidade científica emergente: A Fundação Ford e os cientistas sociais no Brasil, 1962–1992', in Sérgio Miceli (ed.), *A Fundação Ford no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Sumaré, 1993), pp. 33–97; Leticia Canêdo, 'The Ford Foundation and the Institutionalization of Political Science in Brazil', in Johan Heilbron, Gustavo Sorá and Thibaud Boncourt (eds.), *The Social and Human Sciences in Global Power Relations* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 243–66; Ramon G. Fernandez and Carlos E. Suprinyak, 'Creating Academic Economics in Brazil: The Ford Foundation and the Beginnings of ANPEC', *Economía*, 19: 3 (2018), pp. 314–29.

¹⁵The classic account of the premises sustaining this liberal consensus is Robert A. Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: Political Development Ideas in Foreign Aid and Social Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973). Nils Gilman chronicles the rise and fall of the liberal approach to developmental studies known as modernisation theory: Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). On the influence exerted by this rationale over the Ford Foundation's work in Brazil during the 1960s, see Benedetta Calandra, 'De la selva brasileña a la capital de las ciencias sociales: Proyectos modernizadores de la Fundación Ford en América Latina, 1927–1965', *Historia y Política*, 34 (2015), pp. 53–80; Edneia Silva

led to a new framework that departed in significant ways from both previous Foundation policy and the political agenda of the Brazilian military regime.

Following this Introduction, the paper is divided into five sections. The next section shows how the Ford Foundation's early approach to the social sciences in Latin America relied on a technocratic notion of developmental assistance, strongly influenced by modernisation theory. In the following section we argue that this approach came under increased scrutiny from the late 1960s due to changing political conditions in both the United States and Latin America, which called into question the ideological neutrality of social scientific research. The heated debates triggered among Ford staff by the UnB grant proposal are then examined, followed by an analysis of the emergence of a decision-making framework that incorporated these ethical issues. We conclude by exploring some of the longer-term implications of this episode for the Foundation's activities in Latin America and the developing world.

Policy Research and Technocratic Modernisation

Following the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the so-called Cultural Cold War came to be fought with renewed energy in Latin America.¹⁶ The big philanthropic foundations moved to incorporate the region more decisively into their assistance portfolios, seeking to reinforce the networks connecting Latin American scholars and US academia.¹⁷ Even if Ford was not alone in such initiatives, its allocations were by far the most sizeable and fruitful for the development of the social sciences in Latin America.¹⁸ To implement its new programme, the Foundation created a network of regional offices that sought out potential grantees and worked closely with them to design grant proposals, which were then forwarded to New York for appraisal by the Overseas Development Division, later absorbed into the International Division.¹⁹

Santos Rocha, 'Contribuições da Fundação Ford à formação e consolidação de campos científicos no Brasil', *InCID: Revista de Ciência da Informação e Documentação*, 7: 2 (2016), pp. 93–117.

¹⁶Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015). On Ford's long-term involvement in efforts to export US culture and values to Latin America, see also Calandra, 'Selva brasileira'.

¹⁷Parmar, *American Century*, pp. 183–9.

¹⁸The Rockefeller Foundation had extended limited support to social science programmes in Latin America since the 1940s. It later contributed to the cooperation agreement between the University of Chicago and the Catholic University of Chile that produced the 'Chicago Boys' – the famous group of Chilean economists who undertook their graduate studies at Chicago and took back with them an unyielding commitment to free markets; many of the Chicago Boys later became directly involved with the Pinochet regime. The Rockefeller Foundation likewise supported a pioneering initiative by the Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) in Brazil during the early 1960s, which prepared economists for advanced graduate training in the United States. These actions, however, paled in comparison to the comprehensive character of Ford's programme in the field. See Geiger, 'American Foundations'; Juan Gabriel Valdés, *Pinochet's Economists: The Chicago School in Chile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Elisa Klüger, 'Meritocracia de laços: Gênese e reconfigurações do espaço dos economistas no Brasil', PhD Dissertation, USP, 2017, pp. 167–8; Morcillo Laiz, 'La gran dama'.

¹⁹Nicholas R. Micinski, 'The Changing Role of the Ford Foundation in International Development, 1951–2001', *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 28 (2017), pp. 1301–25.

The Foundation's proclaimed strategy for the region followed an overarching purpose: to assist institutions that could help devise and implement public policies addressing the developmental issues of Latin American societies. Such developmental policies were usually conceived, in typical modernisation theory language, as a series of piecemeal changes emulating, sometimes with shortcuts, the path already travelled by developed Western societies – a strategy for introducing reform while avoiding political instability and radicalism. Relying on the concept of 'institution-building', the Ford Foundation promoted the creation of stable spaces where the appropriate culture and values could be embraced, preserved and reproduced over time – values, that is, properly aligned with the liberal developmental consensus espoused by the 'action intellectuals' of the John F. Kennedy era, who combined expertise in social scientific research with a taste for concrete policy-making.²⁰

An early example of this attitude can be found in a 1963 document prepared by Ford's Rio de Janeiro office to support the creation of a training and research programme in economics at the Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC), in north-east Brazil. When discussing possible research agendas, the document mentions Kennedy's 'Alliance for Progress' and joint efforts between Brazil and the United States 'in a program for improving living conditions and stimulating economic and social progress in North East Brazil'.²¹ It concludes with an appeal stressing the importance of institutionally based training and research to accomplish developmental goals, which could bring 'greater results in terms of consistency, coordination of efforts and proper understanding, developing over a long period of time'. A subsequent memorandum from the Overseas Development Division, recommending approval of the UFC proposal, expressed the same rationale with unusual clarity when identifying impediments to successful implementation:

Manpower skills are scarce in all forms, but conspicuously absent is a cadre of professionally trained people to undertake studies and provide actionable programs in economic development. The Northeast agencies cannot meet their staffing requirements; they compete with each other for the same limited pool of individuals, most of whom are recent university graduates with ample motivation but mediocre training ... Without access to such skills, efforts to plan and implement economic development tend to produce impressive program façades that are hollow in content.²²

Here we see, in a nutshell, the belief that technical knowledge applied to economic planning held the key to an effective developmental policy – a technocratic solution avoiding the risks inherent in more wide-ranging platforms of social and political reform, such as drastic redistributions of political and economic power. This was in line with the rationale embraced by the Foundation's Overseas Development programme during the early 1960s, purporting 'to establish and

²⁰Dezalay and Garth, *Palace Wars*, pp. 64–6.

²¹Martins Filho, 'Ofício para Stacey Widdicombe', 8 July 1963, Reel 3637, Grant File 64-407, FA732C, FFR.

²²'Request for Grant Action, Strengthening of Economics Teaching and Research in Northeast Brazil', 22 June 1964, Reel 3637, Grant File 64-407, FA732C, FFR.

strengthen institutions needed to supply trained manpower to cope with basic problems'.²³ As stated in one of Ford's annual reports, the work of these 'technicians of development' helped create 'the framework for improved life for all' and thus represented 'the world's best assurance of overcoming the unreason and aggressions that may be swept in by the winds of change'.²⁴ Accordingly, the agreement signed in July 1964 between UFC, the Ford Foundation, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Superintendência de Desenvolvimento do Nordeste (Superintendency for Development of the North-East, SUDENE), which covered the area served by UFC, made clear how the Foundation's initial actions in the region were oriented to the training of technicians to assist the Brazilian government. Among the items specified in the agreement, one is especially revealing. Besides commitments on infrastructure, fellowships and research, the university agreed to 'require every student to work in his field with a university, a private developmental, or government agency located in the north-east for a period equal to at least twice that [during] which the student had received graduate training under a fellowship at the University of Ceará or abroad'.²⁵

The Ceará case provides striking illustration of the proximity between Ford and Brazilian policy-making institutions, but it was not an isolated event. The Foundation had been cooperating directly with the Minas Gerais state government since 1965, in a joint project involving the State Secretariat of Agriculture, Purdue University and the Universidade Rural do Estado de Minas Gerais (UREMG).²⁶ This included the creation of an economic analysis and agricultural policy section within the State Secretariat, a think tank of applied researchers with advanced training in agricultural economics.²⁷ Even after the 1964 coup, therefore, Ford was still willing to work in close collaboration with Brazilian government agencies whenever the institutional conditions seemed appropriate.²⁸

The prospect of influencing public policy, directly or indirectly, also inspired the enthusiastic support offered to the Instituto Brasileiro de Economia (Brazilian Institute of Economics, IBRE) at the Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV, a private think tank founded in 1944 which received generous public subventions). IBRE had been one of the first beneficiaries of Ford support in Brazil, receiving a five-year grant in 1960. Since its creation in 1951, the institute had collaborated closely with

²³The *Ford Foundation Annual Report, 1962*, p. 49. The Ford Foundation's reports are available via <https://www.fordfoundation.org/search/?q=annual+report&p=0>.

²⁴The *Ford Foundation Annual Report, 1963*, p. 6.

²⁵Agreement on the Economics Teaching and Research Program at the University of Ceará', 1964, Reel 3637, Grant File 64-407, FA732C, FFR.

²⁶The project dated back to a 1958 contract between Purdue and UREMG, sponsored by the US State Department through the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), to foster programmes in rural education and home economics: 'An Appraisal of the Needs of the Universidade Rural do Estado de Minas Gerais', July 1964, Catalogued Report 000134, FA739B, FFR. In 1969, UREMG became the current Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV).

²⁷Thomas, 'Final Narrative Report on the Ford Foundation's grant to Purdue University ... for the Foundation's project with the State Secretariat of Agriculture in the State of Minas Gerais', 24 July 1968, Reel 2676, Grant File 63-580, FA732C, FFR.

²⁸Schuh to Bell and Carmichael, 'First Annual Report, Supplemental Grant to the Agricultural Secretariat of Minas Gerais', 18 June 1969; Schuh, 'Letter to William Carmichael', 15 April 1970, Reel 2676, Grant File 63-580, FA732C, FFR.

the Brazilian government, producing economic statistics and other applied research, and this relationship remained unabated after the military takeover of 1964. When a supplemental grant came up for discussion in 1967, OLAC's field advisor for economics in Brazil, Werner Baer, said he was 'convinced that if the Ford Foundation wishes to exert its influence on Brazilian economic research, teaching, and even policy making, it should maximise the influence it has on the IBRE section of the Vargas Foundation'.²⁹ Stacey Widdicombe, head of the Foundation's office in Rio de Janeiro, confirmed this assessment. Besides eminent economists such as Arnold Harberger and Albert Hirschman, the FGV grant had the support of João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, head of the Brazilian Planning Ministry's Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas Aplicadas (Institute for Applied Economic Research, IPEA), who stressed 'the difficulties the government had in putting top quality researchers full-time onto studies of long-term economic development'.³⁰ USAID staff were equally positive, urging that 'IBRE researchers maintain communication with appropriate Brazilian government officials' to guarantee their work 'would have a direct influence on policy problems as soon as possible'. Widdicombe thus concluded Ford should treat this grant as a top priority, given 'IBRE's pre-eminent position in Brazil and the quality of its research program, together with its demonstrated ability to have its research results reach policy makers in both private and public sectors'.

In sum, the attitude of Ford's personnel toward so-called 'policy-oriented' research does not seem to have changed significantly after 1964. As stated by Reynold Carlson, the first head of the Rio office, in a report written a few months after the coup, 'the turmoil which was being systematically fomented especially over the last two years' undermined some of Ford's initiatives in Brazil. The new government seemed committed to 'putting the house in order' and 'seeking to extricate the economy from the morass in which it finds itself'.³¹ To judge from its actions in the following years, the Foundation appeared ready to assist in this task. In its 1966 annual grantee report to the Foundation, the Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas (Institute for Economic Research, IPE) at the Universidade de São Paulo (USP) expressed confidence in the possibility of producing policy-relevant outputs while steering clear of the government's broader political agenda:

The IPE does not aim [solely at] the creation of a team of technicians, specialists and advisors with the instrumental analytic know-how but also the organization of a group of studious [*sic*] people [who] will try to give their collaboration to the State of São Paulo and to the Federal Government, as well as to the other State Municipalities, becoming equidistant of private interests as well as of conveniences or political pressures.³²

²⁹Baer to Widdicombe, 'Some Further Comments Related to the Getúlio Vargas Foundation Economic Research and Staff Development Program', 21 Aug. 1967, Reel 1886, Grant File 67-573, FA732C, FFR.

³⁰Widdicombe to Wilhelm, 'Getulio Vargas Foundation, Economic Research and Staff Development', 26 Aug. 1967, Reel 1886, Grant File 67-573, FA732C, FFR.

³¹The Ford Foundation Program and Brazilian Agriculture', August 1964, Catalogued Report 002609, FA739D, FFR.

³²Camargo *et al.*, 'Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas, Annual Report for the Year 1966', 29 March 1967, Reel 5335, Grant File 65-007, FA732C, FFR.

Baer's above-mentioned memorandum conveyed a similar message, stressing how IBRE had managed to work with the government without forfeiting its intellectual integrity and prestige. 'Although some of the past leaders of IBRE were men of rather conservative persuasion', he argued, 'they never let their ideological convictions interfere with the selection of the best technical personnel'. Moreover, IBRE enjoyed 'universal respect' that cut across political divides, as 'shown by the fact that both pre-March 1964 and post-March 1964 governments have made use of the Vargas Foundation's services'. As evidence of the institute's intellectual and political openness, Baer cited increasing interactions with the Rio office of the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean – an agency tending to favour left-of-centre reform platforms – while stressing that 'many of the students now in the Vargas Foundation's graduate school are former student leaders, some of whom sat in jail for a few months after the events of March–April 1964'.³³

Ideology Rebirth

In New York, meanwhile, different circumstances combined to gradually erase the plausibility of these premises. The appointment of McGeorge Bundy as the new president in 1966 inaugurated an era in which civil rights and equal opportunity became the touchstones of the Foundation's domestic policy.³⁴ As one of the 'action intellectuals' who rose to power with Kennedy, Bundy was a vocal advocate for a wide-ranging foreign aid programme by the US government, describing as 'a national disgrace' the fact that 'the richest country in the world by far ... ranks only seventh in the percentage of national income that goes into foreign aid'.³⁵ Accordingly, a new International Division was established under the direction of David Bell, who joined Ford after serving as USAID administrator from 1962. OLAC went through a comprehensive organisational revision, enlisting a network of full-time programme advisors with distinguished academic credentials and proven experience in Latin American affairs. An enlarged programme for the social sciences was converted into one of the office's five priority areas, part of a movement 'away from technical assistance, toward a more general and more humanistic approach to society'.³⁶ Kalman Silvert, a New York University political scientist with considerable experience of field work in Latin America, was brought into OLAC's staff as a senior advisor to this programme.³⁷

In the field, however, such work was made increasingly difficult by two key events in close succession. The first was the infamous Project Camelot debacle in

³³Baer to Widdicombe, 'Some Further Comments', 21 Aug. 1967.

³⁴An in-house study by the Ford Foundation History Project describes the Bundy years as 'The Shift to Social Justice': Patricia Rosenfield and Rachel Wimpee, 'The Ford Foundation: Themes, 1936–2001', Rockefeller Archive Center, 2015, p. 15. On the implications of this transition for the Foundation's activities in Latin America, see Jacquelyn Marie Holmes, 'From Modernization and Development to Neoliberal Democracy: A History of the Ford Foundation in Latin America 1959–2000', Honors Thesis, Bates College, 2013, pp. 32–74.

³⁵*The Ford Foundation Annual Report, 1968*, p. xv.

³⁶Silvert, 'The Foundation, the Social Sciences, and Latin America', April 1976, Catalogued Report 005065, FA739B, FFR. See also Dezalay and Garth, *Palace Wars*, pp. 68–70.

³⁷Kalman Silvert was also the first president of the Latin American Studies Association (1967–8).

1965, which exposed military funding for a large-scale research project, hosted by the American University in Washington DC, on the dynamics of social change in the developing world. Using cutting-edge tools from the social sciences and enlisting the collaboration of academics from several elite institutions, the project was expected to produce outcomes that could inform counter-insurgency policy.³⁸ In many ways a culmination of the work pursued by the ‘action intellectuals’, Camelot was a watershed in the history of politico-military patronage to the social sciences in the United States, calling into question the premise that scholarly research into social issues could be objective and apolitical.³⁹ The second event was the disclosure, in 1966–7, of covert Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) funding to the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), a prominent international network of artists and intellectuals engaged in the promotion of Western values, with a significant presence in Latin America.⁴⁰ Together, these developments placed a veil of suspicion over foreign agents and institutions who claimed to act independently of the US government, and ignited Latin American rhetoric on the need to fight cultural imperialism.⁴¹ Anti-Americanism, of course, was not a new phenomenon in the region, and the violent events surrounding Vice-President Richard Nixon’s tour of South America in 1958 had already signalled how quickly these sentiments could be aroused.⁴² Coming on the heels of US intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, however, the Camelot and CCF scandals contributed to further discrediting the ‘end of ideology’ thesis at the heart of modernisation theory.⁴³

Given this shifting political climate, Ford sought to reinforce its liberal credentials by dissociating its public image from a foreign policy establishment that looked increasingly conservative amid mounting backlash from the Vietnam War. The Foundation thus needed to ponder the political connotations of its work in Latin America with extra care, to steer clear of any direct association with US Cold War policies both at home and abroad. By the late 1960s, the increasingly repressive and authoritarian character of the Brazilian regime made this even more imperative. One of the first to highlight the potentially dangerous implications of the closeness between Ford’s grantees and the Brazilian government was Silvert: in an article in 1965 exploring the ethical implications of Project Camelot he described Latin America as ‘the scene of a confrontation putting into question the honesty, decency, and even simple competence not only of all of us engaged in

³⁸Irving Louis Horowitz (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot: Studies in the Relationship between Social Science and Practical Politics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967).

³⁹Mark Solovey, ‘Project Camelot and the 1960s Epistemological Revolution: Rethinking the Politics–Patronage–Social Science Nexus’, *Social Studies of Science*, 31: 2 (2001), pp. 171–206.

⁴⁰Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom*, pp. 196–210.

⁴¹Aldo Marchesi, ‘Imaginación política del antiimperialismo: Intelectuales y política en el Cono Sur a fines de los sesenta’, *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*, 17: 1 (2006), pp. 135–59. The Camelot scandal also negatively affected the implementation of the Marginality Project in Chile, another ambitious initiative in the social sciences sponsored by Ford: Mariano Ben Plotkin, ‘US Foundations, Cultural Imperialism and Transnational Misunderstandings: The Case of the Marginality Project’, *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 47: 1 (2014), pp. 65–92.

⁴²Holmes, ‘Modernization and Development’, pp. 34–6.

⁴³Solovey, ‘Project Camelot’, pp. 192–7; Gilman, *Mandarins*, pp. 56–62.

that area but also of students of all our disciplines wherever they may work'.⁴⁴ The situation, he continued, had become even worse after recent events in the Dominican Republic, which caused the Camelot episode to become 'intimately laced in public opinion with interventionism and militarism, with the image of the United States as a power dedicated to the throttling of any revolutionary movement of whatever center-to-left stripe'.⁴⁵

Silvert was aware of how changing political conditions in Latin America raised new challenges to social scientific work in the region. In a September 1969 memorandum to then head of OLAC William Carmichael, responding to a recent report on growing difficulties with the IBRE grant,⁴⁶ he reflected on the likely consequences of 'service-oriented' research:

How can a narrow and technocratic definition of national need be squared with the more profound national need to have the best possible social science information? To what extent do certain institutional ties, financing patterns, and organizational schemes militate *in themselves* against true competence?⁴⁷

Here, Silvert questioned the emphasis on immediate policy relevance that had so far guided Ford's evaluation of the potential and performance of its Brazilian grantees. Around the same time, Werner Baer and David Maybury-Lewis – programme advisors in Brazil in the fields of economics and anthropology, respectively – explained how the actions of the Brazilian government created problems for the joint economics and sociology programme at the Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE). A sociological investigation into the values and attitudes of rural labourers was 'discontinued after the events of 1964 when workers would no longer answer questions freely'. The university's dependence on SUDENE for research funds was also problematic, leading to constant attempts by the latter to control the nature of its activities and an 'attitude that the institute [the Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas, which hosted the economics and sociology programme] should function simply as its [SUDENE's] survey area'.⁴⁸

Even the IPE, generally regarded by OLAC staff as the most accomplished of Ford's Brazilian grantees in economics after IBRE's fall from favour in the late 1960s, was not exempt from similar problems. Reporting on a visit in 1969, Baer showed exasperation with the recent departure of two prominent figures – Afonso Celso Pastore and Carlos Antônio Rocca – who were to have assumed

⁴⁴Kalman H. Silvert, 'American Academic Ethics and Social Research Abroad: The Lesson of Project Camelot', *Background*, 9: 3 (1965), p. 215.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁴⁶Despite its promising early start, the development of the IBRE along the lines envisaged by Ford was hampered by leadership problems and personality conflicts, further compounded by the proximity of its top personnel to different branches of the Brazilian government. See Fernandez and Suprinyak, 'Creating Academic Economics', pp. 322–3.

⁴⁷Silvert to Carmichael, 'Getúlio Vargas Foundation, IBRE', 15 Sept. 1969, Reel 1886, Grant File 67-579, FA732C, FFR; original emphasis.

⁴⁸Baer and Maybury-Lewis to Carmichael and Bell, 'Report on the Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas (Economics/Sociology Section) and Recommendation for Financial Assistance', 11 July 1969, Reel 5389, Grant File 70-138, FA732C, FFR.

leadership roles at IPE but decided instead to accept ‘more lucrative and prestigious government offers’. Adding insult to injury, Pastore had invited five of the IPE’s best students to join him at IPEA and now tried to convince Miguel Colasuonno, the institute’s director, to accept research done for the government for their theses. To Baer, the episode illustrated how even the best Brazilian scholars tended to use academic institutions opportunistically, as a stepping-stone to high government office.⁴⁹

The promulgation of Institutional Act no. 5 in December 1968 marked a watershed moment in the transition from confident reliance on the principle of policy relevance to growing wariness of excessive involvement with the Brazilian regime. A first round of reviews on a grant to the Centro de Desenvolvimento e Planejamento Regional (Centre for Regional Development and Planning, CEDEPLAR), an institute recently created at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), offered a clear glimpse of the new political and ethical considerations shaping the work of OLAC. Reporting on a visit in July 1969, Baer remarked that CEDEPLAR had been ‘fairly immune from the recent political difficulties which the faculty has been facing’.⁵⁰ He alluded to the academic purges carried out by the military government during the previous months, which led to the forced retirement of the university’s rector and the deans of the schools of philosophy and economics. Baer’s report was positive nonetheless, prompting Carmichael to remark that ‘perhaps predictably, the economists seem to be unanimously committed to a “business as usual” stance’.⁵¹ The comment presaged the arguments outlined below about the possibility of fruitful engagement with UnB: such arguments similarly opposed Ford’s programme officers in economics, who believed there was still room for productive work within the Brazilian authoritarian context, to their social science colleagues, who begged to differ. Reacting to Baer’s report, Silvert asked: ‘Are the CEDEPLAR people untouched because what they are doing is so technical and apolitical? Is their work technical, apolitical, and also perhaps irrelevant to significant economic problems?’ Since normality was ‘impossible in contemporary Brazil’, he continued, ‘what have they sacrificed to give the appearance of “business as usual”?’⁵² If the success of a programme depended on it being operated by ‘safe-playing *técnicos*’, this might have broad implications for the Foundation’s activities in the social science field.

In his response to Silvert’s provocative questions, Baer argued that recent political persecution in Brazil was mostly related to past and present activism, rather than research interests. He then expressed his confidence that research work at CEDEPLAR was ‘relevant for any type of regime which wants to tackle some of the country’s fundamental problems’.⁵³ Silvert retorted this idea caused him to

⁴⁹Baer to Carmichael, ‘Visit to IPE, December 23, 1969’, 6 Jan. 1970, Reel 5335, Grant File 65-007, FA732C, FFR.

⁵⁰Baer to Carmichael, ‘Visit to CEDEPLAR, July 15 to 17’, 18 July 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR.

⁵¹Carmichael to Silvert, ‘Federal University of Minas Gerais, CEDEPLAR’, 27 Oct. 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR.

⁵²Silvert to Carmichael, ‘Federal University of Minas Gerais, CEDEPLAR’, 4 Nov. 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR.

⁵³Baer to Silvert, ‘Federal University of Minas Gerais, CEDEPLAR’, 13 Nov. 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR.

shudder, 'for I can think of certain regimes dedicated to such profound tasks with which I want nothing to do'. Even if 'Brazil does not yet have its Siberia or Majdenek [Nazi concentration camp]', one should still not make policy statements 'that can so easily be applied to much more loathsome specimens of political animal life'.⁵⁴ His admonitions soon proved ominous: on the night of 12 June 1970, Baer and two other Vanderbilt visiting professors, Riordan Roett and Carlos Manuel Peláez, had their apartments in Rio de Janeiro ransacked by a group of paramilitary police. The operation was triggered by suspicions of subversive activity involving the son of their landlady, part of a broader reaction to the recent kidnapping of the German ambassador to Brazil by an urban guerrilla group. They were held at gunpoint, blindfolded and transported to an unknown location, where they were questioned on several political topics and detained for approximately six hours before being released without any explanation.⁵⁵

At the time, however, Carmichael replied to Silvert siding partially with Baer, saying he was 'not yet ready to subscribe' to the notion that forced retirements had the purpose of 'punishing and preventing "dangerous" or "subversive" research activities', even if he recognised they might have induced some 'shying away from "sensitive research"'.⁵⁶ As late as November 1970, the head of OLAC still defended the distribution of Foundation support to several institutions on the grounds that 'the chances for productive contractual research relations between university centers and governmental entities' would be 'substantially enhanced'.⁵⁷ The rationale for policy-oriented research would come under full attack only when the proposal for a joint grant to economics and the social sciences at UnB reached New York the following year.

Policy Relevance in Authoritarian Times

Located at the heart of the recently inaugurated Brazilian capital, UnB began its activities in 1962.⁵⁸ Its early years were profoundly marked by the influence of two renowned progressive intellectuals: leading anthropologist and educator Darcy Ribeiro, who briefly served as the university's first rector; and Anísio Teixeira, a former student of John Dewey's at Columbia and vocal advocate for a free, universal public-school system for Brazilian children, who replaced Ribeiro as UnB rector when the latter was appointed Minister of Education.⁵⁹ Although infrastructural problems were pervasive, there was a climate of optimism

⁵⁴Silvert, Letter to Werner Baer, 4 Dec. 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR.

⁵⁵Baer, 'Statement on the Events on the Night of June 12 to 13, 1970'; Nicholson to Bell and Wilhelm, 'Detention of Foundation Personnel', 16 June 1970, Folder 48, Box 4, FA624, FFR.

⁵⁶Carmichael to Silvert, 'Federal University of Minas Gerais: CEDEPLAR', 28 Nov. 1969, Reel 3755, Grant File 68-879, FA732C, FFR; original emphasis.

⁵⁷Carmichael to Manitzas, 'Economics in São Paulo and More Generally in Brazil', 18 Nov. 1970, Reel 5335, Grant File 65-007, FA732C, FFR.

⁵⁸Our account of the early history of UnB closely follows the eye-witness testimony of Roberto A. Salmeron, *A universidade interrompida: Brasília 1964-1965* (Brasília: Editora UnB, 2012).

⁵⁹Carlos Monarcha, *Anísio Teixeira: A obra de uma vida* (Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2001). Ribeiro remained at the Ministry of Education for only four months, serving thereafter as Chief of Staff to President Goulart. After the military coup, he was forced into exile. See Darcy Ribeiro, *Golpe e exílio* (Brasília: Editora UnB, 2010).

surrounding the new university, partly due to its innovative institutional structure.⁶⁰ The emphasis on research, full-time appointments, a departmental structure, and especially the end of the system of *cátedras*, whereby senior professors held almost dictatorial power – all these traits held the promise of a richer and freer academic environment.

The military coup of March–April 1964, however, severely affected these prospects.⁶¹ Teixeira was immediately forced to resign, being replaced by parasitologist Zeferino Vaz. Government troops overran the university on 9 April 1964, and a month later nine professors and four lecturers were fired. Among the casualties were well-known scholars such as Ruy Mauro Marini and Vânia Bambirra, at the time pioneers of dependency theory in Latin America.⁶² A year later, Vaz was replaced by philosopher Laerte Ramos de Carvalho, who had close links with the military's hard-line faction. After only a few weeks in office and repeated clashes with part of the faculty, Carvalho asked for further military support at UnB. The next incursion took place on 11 October, leading Carvalho to fire 16 professors and causing a further 223 resignations – approximately 80 per cent of all faculty.

As the decade wore on, the political atmosphere in Brazil became increasingly polarised. The turning point came in 1968, when political opposition intensified: besides the ripple effects of 'May 1968' in Paris, local guerrilla movements also gained strength, and the assassination of a high-school student in Rio de Janeiro by military police prompted massive demonstrations in all major Brazilian cities. At the national level, the push toward re-democratisation ended with the publication of Institutional Act no. 5, leading to harsh police repression against any form of political dissent. Located at the heart of Brazilian politics, UnB had already had a preview of what was to come next: on 29 August, military forces occupied the university for the third time in four years, an episode that resulted in 60 arrests and one student being shot in the head by the police.

The Ford Foundation retained links with UnB throughout these events, due to a sizeable five-year grant for library acquisitions signed in 1963.⁶³ When seeking out beneficiaries in the social sciences, however, it had so far kept a safe distance from the political quagmire represented by the university. This finally changed in the early months of 1971, with discussions on a possible grant to the economics and social sciences departments at UnB. Ford's representatives in Brazil saw the

⁶⁰On the structure of Brazilian universities prior to the mid-1960s educational reforms, see Maria L. A. Fávero, 'A Universidade no Brasil: Das origens à Reforma Universitária de 1968', *Educar (UFPR)*, 28 (2006), pp. 17–36.

⁶¹Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta chronicles the conflictive relationship between Brazilian universities and the military regime, ranging from projects of modernising reform to police interventions and purges: Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta, *As universidades e o regime militar: Cultura política brasileira e modernização autoritária* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2014).

⁶²Gabriel Lelis, 'A UnB e os militares: Breve estudo sobre as relações entre a Universidade de Brasília e o regime autoritário brasileiro entre 1964 e 1965', *Noctua: Revista de História* 1: 3 (2011). Dependency theory was a radical approach to the study of relations between developed and underdeveloped nations that questioned the assumptions of mutual benefits and long-term convergence inherent in postwar developmental discourse. Andre Gunder Frank, the scholar most frequently associated with dependency theory during the 1960s and 1970s, had also been a visiting professor at UnB shortly before the military coup.

⁶³Edson Nery da Fonseca, 'Biblioteca Central da Universidade de Brasília: História com um pouco de doutrina e outro tanto de memórias', *Revista de Biblioteconomia de Brasília*, 1: 1 (1973), pp. 35–42.

university as an attractive beneficiary because of its modern institutional structure. The expansion plan for the economics department submitted to Carmichael by Edmar Bacha, the leading economist at UnB at the time, had stressed the existence of 'a great dose of flexibility that would favor initiatives geared towards creative work in the fields of teaching and research'.⁶⁴ Many in the Rio office echoed Bacha's assessment. Baer emphasised that UnB's flexible structure made it possible to absorb high-level PhDs returning from abroad, who could exercise their influence on teaching and research 'without having to overcome the barriers of vested academic interests', as embodied especially by the old *catedráticos*.⁶⁵

The grant proposal was appealing for other reasons as well. Baer was especially impressed with the quality of the faculty being assembled. Besides Bacha, the economics department had already hired Flávio Versiani and Charles Müller, and had further commitments from Dionísio Dias Carneiro and Francisco Lopes. These had all studied for PhDs at US universities – the first three at Vanderbilt and Lopes at Harvard, while Bacha himself had a PhD from Yale. At a time when Ford, facing tighter financial constraints due to the late 1960s downturn in stock markets, prepared to gradually terminate its broad programme of assistance to academic disciplines in Latin America, UnB thus offered the prospect of a small-scale investment with potentially large returns, capitalising on available human and institutional resources.⁶⁶

There was yet another element that scored points for the UnB case. 'Considering the movement of the political center of the country to Brasília', Baer argued, 'a strong Economic Department can have many influences on the various economics policy-making organs in Brasília'. Cooperation with the Centro de Treinamento para o Desenvolvimento Econômico (Centre for Training in Economic Development, CENDEC), an organ of the Brazilian Ministry of Planning that offered advanced training in economics to government employees, was 'expected to grow'.⁶⁷ This, of course, was completely in line with the Foundation's conventional strategy of maximising the policy relevance of its grants. Others on the Brazilian side of the command chain shared Baer's judgement. In a July 1971 memo, Gregory Treverton – a specialist in national security who worked with OLAC at the time – mentioned in passing the military interventions at UnB, but argued that the university had 'regained momentum' since the appointment of a new rectorate in 1971, and that 'the signs of recovery were abundant'. This opened new perspectives for Foundation involvement:

The Economics and Social Science departments, decimated in the mid-60's, have been re-built almost entirely by well-trained young people. As the federal

⁶⁴Bacha, 'Letter to William Carmichael', 8 June 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁶⁵Baer to Carmichael and Nicholson, 'Report on Visit to the Department of Economics, University of Brasília', 11 June 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁶⁶The Foundation negotiated a two-year grant to UnB with funds totalling US\$162,000 for both economics and the social sciences. This was a modest commitment when compared to the five-year grants awarded exclusively to the economics programmes at USP and UFC in 1964, totalling US\$433,000 and US\$330,000 respectively – both of which, moreover, were later boosted by supplemental grants.

⁶⁷Ford had been involved in the funding of CENDEC since 1966.

government accelerates its move to Brasília, there will be increased possibilities for University faculty to become involved in policy-oriented research.⁶⁸

Treverton believed the circumstances justified a modification in the strategy traditionally followed by Ford in Brazil. In the case of Brasília, with a modest amount of support, 'the programs are likely to be able to move from building departmental strength to conducting problem-oriented research quickly'. The focus should not be the 'traditional institution-building approach', but rather a 'transition to task-research'. Treverton recognised that the 'proximity of the federal government to UnB is not without risks for the University'. As the state apparatus moved increasingly to Brasília, there was danger 'the government and the academic community will come to look upon UnB as the "government" university', but the willingness of qualified scholars to join its ranks was a sign of confidence. Overall, the type of collaboration with government bureaucracy made possible by UnB's position could go a long way toward fulfilling the goals the Foundation had long established for its Brazilian programme:

The movement of the federal government to Brasília has been accelerated, and the government will increasingly require policy-oriented research which the UnB can provide, particularly in economics and social science ... In a relatively short time, the University of Brasília will be in a position to assume a role similar to the one fumbled by the Vargas Foundation in Rio de Janeiro: that of an independent academic training and research institution which also has natural links to policy-making institutions.⁶⁹

In a review of Ford's involvement with the social sciences in Latin America a few years later, Silvert recalled how increased attention to the 'soft' social sciences during the late 1960s had led to the 'isolation of economics' and the effective duplication of administrative and decision-making chains inside OLAC – as the economists had already by then accumulated a respectable record of work accomplished in the region.⁷⁰ Bringing these two groups together, the UnB grant proposal resulted in something akin to a clash of cultures: on the one hand, the technocratic economists who swore by the gospel of policy relevance and did not shy away from direct engagement with the Brazilian government in pursuit of this end; on the other, the group of liberal social scientists who had gained much ground with the reforms introduced by McGeorge Bundy and David Bell since 1966, placing increased emphasis on civil rights and related topics. The latter had been dealing with issues of repression and intellectual censorship since at least 1969, when both CEBRAP⁷¹ and the political science and sociology programme at the

⁶⁸Treverton to Nicholson, 'University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences: Background and Recommendation for "A" Status for Grant in Economic and Social Science', 16 July 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁶⁹*Ibid.* See note 46. The IBRE was the main economics research unit at the FGV.

⁷⁰Silvert, 'The Foundation, the Social Sciences'.

⁷¹Bernardo Sorj, *A construção intelectual do Brasil contemporâneo: Da resistência à ditadura ao governo FHC* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2001). Dezalay and Garth single out the CEBRAP case to illustrate the changing tactics adopted by Ford when dealing with the late-1960s Brazilian political context: *Palace Wars*,

Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas do Rio de Janeiro (University Research Institute of Rio de Janeiro, IUPERJ)⁷² were used to relocate displaced Brazilian scholars.⁷³ The resulting arguments would have a lasting impact on Foundation policy toward Latin America and the developing world.

Stanley Nicholson, head of the Rio office at the time, subscribed to the assessments of Baer, Treverton and other consultants, recommending that the UnB grant be given priority treatment.⁷⁴ When the proposal reached New York, however, reactions were much less enthusiastic. OLAC programme officer Nita Manitzas said she felt 'profoundly uneasy' about Nicholson's request. Her main reservation was 'one of principle', concerning the Foundation's role in helping to rebuild an institution that had been damaged by the Brazilian government itself:

When a government does damage to a national enterprise, is it the business of the Foundation to help the same government rebuild the edifice? On balance, my answer would be negative, on two particular grounds. On the one hand, it puts us institutionally in a position where we may publicly appear to sanction – or, at least, disregard – what happened earlier. On the other hand, and at the level of personal ethics, we may be breaking faith with those who were the original architects of the Brasília program and are no longer able to work there.⁷⁵

Moreover, Manitzas was deeply sceptical of fostering policy-oriented research in the current Brazilian political context:

In a closed political system, where governmental choices are not subject to constant scrutiny, revision, public debate, and public accountability, the research that government solicits from social scientists may serve little to open up the range of policy choices available to the society as a whole. On the contrary, its function may simply be to corroborate and rationalize ... the ideological choices of the government elite; the range of choices will not be broadened and public dialogue will be fed, at best, with partial

pp. 104–5. On the influence of the 'CEBRAP model' over other Ford-sponsored initiatives in Latin America, see Juan Jesús Morales, 'Entre la ciencia y la política: La forja de una élite intelectual latinoamericana', *Política/Revista de Ciência Política*, 54: 1 (2016), pp. 157–88; 'Científicos sociales latinoamericanos en Estados Unidos: Cooperación académica, movilidad internacional y trayectorias interamericanas alrededor de la Fundación Ford', *Dados – Revista de Ciências Sociais*, 60: 2 (2017), pp. 473–504.

⁷²IUPERJ, a private training and research centre in the social sciences, received a Ford grant in 1967 to assist its graduate programme in sociology and political science.

⁷³Similar arguments occupied OLAC staff in 1969 after the Chilean government expelled a group of Argentine scholars from the country due to their alleged connections with radical left-wing movements. The scholars had been relocated to Chile – many of them with Ford support – in the aftermath of the 'Noche de los Bastones Largos' ('Night of the Long Batons') of 29 July 1966, when students and academics who objected to the coup under General Juan Carlos Onganía were forcibly removed from faculties of the University of Buenos Aires: Benedetta Calandra, 'La Ford Foundation y la "Guerra Fría Cultural" en América Latina (1959–1973)', *Americanía*, 1 (2011), pp. 8–25.

⁷⁴Nicholson to Carmichael, 'University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences: Request for "A" Status for Proposed Grant', 16 July 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁷⁵Manitzas to Carmichael, 'Request for "A" Status, University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences', 11 Aug. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

information ... Social science that is harnessed to the needs of a closed political elite will, in the longer term, not be very good social science, because it will be limited in its choice of social theory, its range of alternative ideological construction and, eventually, its freedom to select from the full range of important research themes.

Manitzas thus saw the much-advertised proximity to the federal government not as a virtue, but rather as a dangerous liability – a potential source of ‘subtle forms of self-limitation and self-censorship’, and of contributions to the ‘work of ideological construction and indoctrination’ carried out by the government. She also saw reason for caution in dealing with UnB’s faculty, since ‘social scientists who agree to work at Brasília have already had to make a certain accommodation, or compromise’, and ‘the likelihood of further accommodation is therefore all the greater’. The situation called for rethinking the expected results of the Foundation’s Brazilian engagements. Using the words of Frank Bonilla – who then worked as Ford’s programme advisor to the social sciences in Brazil – Manitzas urged her colleagues to ‘keep clear that problem relevance does not need to mean government links and that governmental interest in research output is not necessarily a good indicator of discipline relevance or productivity’.

Nicholson responded to Manitzas (via the head of OLAC) reinforcing his belief in the soundness of the Brasília grant. The Brazilian social science community – described by Nicholson as ‘pragmatic’ and ‘concentrating more on people than institutions’ – approved of UNB’s prospects as a research institution, while the government was ‘increasingly requiring social science research which is both policy-relevant and intellectually acceptable’.⁷⁶ Moreover, the academic activities developed by current faculty ‘do not suggest intellectual dishonesty or co-option’, and Foundation support would help them ‘remain independent of less palatable government contracts’. Nicholson concluded by appealing to his direct knowledge of the Brazilian context, saying it was ‘easier to have confidence in that judgment on pragmatic grounds than on the matter of principle’.

Given the conflict of opinions, OLAC director Carmichael asked Silvert for his take on the matter.⁷⁷ In his writings from the 1960s, Silvert had insisted that nationalism was one of the hallmarks of modern society, as it implied the recognition of a secular authority as the arbiter of social disputes and fostered the development of a broader sense of empathy that permitted the emergence of pluralistic value systems.⁷⁸ He thus sought to investigate how the nation-state could be used, under certain political regimes, to militate instead against social development and modernisation. In an essay on the recent political history of Argentina,

⁷⁶Nicholson to Carmichael, ‘University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences: Additional Comments’, 20 Aug. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁷⁷Carmichael to Silvert, ‘University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences’, 13 Aug. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁷⁸Kalman Silvert, ‘National Political Change in Latin America’, in Kalman Silvert, *The Conflict Society: Reaction and Revolution in Latin America*, 2nd edition (New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1966), pp. 10–34; ‘The Strategy of the Study of Nationalism’, in Kalman Silvert, *Expectant Peoples: Nationalism and Development*, 2nd edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 3–38.

Silvert criticised the indiscriminate use of terms like ‘authoritarianism’ and ‘totalitarianism’ in the political science literature:

In both professional and lay spheres, there has been too much lazy satisfaction with simply dividing the world into good democracies and bad dictatorships, with the added modern fillip of welcoming some dictatorships because we like them or because we say nothing else is possible to certain lands other than one kind of dictatorship or another. But of course there are few things so important to developing nations as the kind of authoritarianism they have, or to put it in perhaps less loaded words, the kind of a-democratic situation under which they must live. Certainly to confuse a fascist totalitarianism with a Nasserist or Peronist dictatorship has important consequences: it is a muddling of our thinking, to begin with ... and we confuse our ethical ability to judge good and bad, assuming we wish to permit ourselves a judgment.⁷⁹

‘An authoritarian government which is the least authoritarian it can manage to be’, Silvert continued, ‘is what we should favor if we like democratic solutions’. In his essay on Project Camelot mentioned above, he expanded on the theme by discussing the role of social scientists in such ‘a-democratic’ political contexts. The ‘overriding value decision the social scientist must make’, he argued, is ‘whether he will lend his talents to any government seeking them’. If the assisted government ‘is likely to use its powers to restrict that very freedom of inquiry essential to the academic task’, Silvert concluded, ‘then the social scientist is committing professional suicide, not to speak of what else he may be helping to do to existing or possible democratic institutions’.⁸⁰ Pragmatically, the question then was: how to define the limits of acceptable involvement with unsavoury political regimes?

Distasteful Regimes and Ethical Pragmatism

Silvert responded to Carmichael with a memo entitled ‘Brasília, Social Science’, in which he dealt at some length with ‘the proper relationship of the Foundation to the incumbent Brazilian government’. The desirability of closer connections to policymaking, he began, should not be taken for granted: part of the problems recently experienced by the FGV ‘came precisely from their close connections to government’. It was thus not enough to simply assume that any opportunities for working with the government were good. ‘When labelling an action as “desirable” in a situation redolent of ethical controversy’, Silvert argued, ‘one should take care to establish his criteria of judgment, or at least the limits of that judgment’. The risks of government intervention and academic accommodation were inherent in the Brazilian context. As evidence, Silvert adduced the testimony of Gláucio Dillon Soares, a social science professor at UnB:

Gláucio told me that he and his colleagues are very diffident and cautious in teaching introductory and other lower-level courses. The classes are large, the

⁷⁹Kalman Silvert, ‘Political Leadership and Institutional Weakness in Argentina’, in Silvert, *The Conflict Society*, pp. 103–4.

⁸⁰Silvert, ‘American Academic Ethics’, p. 226.

professors do not know all the students, they are certain informers are sitting in the classrooms, and so they are bland in their approach ... So far as his writing is concerned, Glaucio says that he stops his analyses of political sociological affairs in the mid-1950s or, in any event, safely before the happenings of 1964. In discussing his role as citizen rather than social scientist, Glaucio is even more explicit. He is behaviorally apolitical. We had discussed this matter in St. Louis before he took up his Brasília post, and Glaucio then told me he expected to exercise his full rights as a citizen. He referred to that discussion when I saw him, and said that he was wrong.⁸¹

Silvert was baffled by the use of vague expressions such as ‘policy-oriented’, ‘problem-oriented’ and ‘task research’ by staff in Ford’s Brazilian office. The important issue was ‘the relationship between research and its consumer’, and as policy relevance implied the potential use of social scientific knowledge by public authorities, this inevitably led to ethical and ideological problems. If the Foundation assumed Brazil was in the hands of an authoritarian regime it did not wish to assist, but at the same time found it worthwhile to support the social sciences hoping for a better future, the conclusion was straightforward: the less immediately ‘relevant’ the research, the better. In conclusion, Silvert quoted a long passage from one of his own articles to illustrate the broader problems involved in discussing ‘scientific relevance’ in authoritarian contexts:

A truly competent social science investigating truly significant social subjects can *in the long run* be useful only to rational societies. Social science is thus by this definition irrelevant *in the long run* to irrational social orders. I will not enter into the argument as to whether an authoritarian society can be a rational one. Empirically, Latin American authoritarianisms have been able to consume ‘rational’ approaches ... only in the short run ... In intermediate runs they have all fallen over their internal mythmaking. It is small wonder that empirical sociology is invariably the first victim of authoritarian government in Latin America ... *Social science* cannot be relevant to anti-scientific governments of the stripe we have seen in Latin America. When we know enough of the social process so that social scientists can be relevant for the establishment of static totalitarianism and thereafter pass into oblivion, we will have arrived at the black utopias of Huxley and Orwell. That kind of relevance is suicide.⁸²

At the New York office, Silvert’s concerns were shared by Carmichael’s assistant James Gardner, who believed the appropriateness of Foundation involvement should be judged case by case to decide whether any specific course of action

⁸¹Silvert to Carmichael, ‘Brasília, Social Science’, 23 Aug. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁸²The quotation is from Kalman Silvert, ‘An Essay on Interdisciplinary and International Collaboration in Social Science Research in Latin America’, in Stanley R. Ross (ed.), *Latin America in Transition: Problems in Training and Research* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1970), p. 117; original emphasis.

would 'expand or restrict human choice'.⁸³ Needed were a set of criteria that went beyond the vague concept of relevance and which would appraise the morally troublesome question: 'relevance to what, and to whom?' To Gardner, the Brazilian team's emphasis on UnB's capacity for 'problem-oriented' research sounded like a ruse to distract attention from the longer-term institutional commitments inevitably implied by the Brasília grant. This made it even more imperative that the nature of the relationship between Ford and the Brazilian government be carefully assessed.

On the Brazilian side, it was Bonilla, programme advisor in the social sciences, who expressed the strongest reservations toward the Brasília grant. Prompted by Nicholson and Carmichael to elaborate on his position after returning to New York, he bluntly commented on the nature of the Brazilian regime and its consequences for academic pursuits:

I don't see how anyone can at this point doubt the determination of the regime to wipe out any real opposition and to keep semi-opposition, such as the part of the social science community that has been permitted to survive, neutralized and off-balance but with a semblance of life. You can ask the political analysts to do a little more work on just how this is being achieved, but to doubt that this is going on strikes me as self-delusion ... This is a lawless and murderous government trading on the fear, complacency and passivity of those for whom facing up to such truths means a confrontation with unbearable choices.

Given the situation prevailing in Brazil, Bonilla argued, 'few alternatives will assuage guilt or leave no residue of moral ambiguity'. Before insisting on the many avenues for useful research that remained open, it was important to be 'aware of the extent to which these openings may be doors to an even deeper entrapment, captivity or mindless subservience'.⁸⁴

The most consequential analysis of the circumstances came once again from Silvert, in a memo entitled 'Distasteful Regimes and Foundation Policies Overseas'.⁸⁵ Authoritarian regimes, he argued, were not all characterised by the same levels of totalitarianism and 'atrociousness'. Extreme cases provided easy grounds for decision against involvement, due both to 'moral repugnance' and 'inability to undertake ordered and programmatic work'. The challenge, of course, was dealing with the mixed cases. Regimes that were more repressive in nature, such as Greece and Brazil, tended to 'engage in systematic torture and prolonged imprisonment without trial'. Despite these 'abhorrent practices', however, such regimes did achieve certain outcomes that many observers saw in a positive light: economic stability, expansion of public works and increased employment, among others.

⁸³Gardner to Carmichael, 'Brasília, Social Sciences', 27 Aug. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁸⁴Bonilla, 'Letter to William Carmichael', 29 July 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁸⁵The document was written as background material for a conference of Ford's International Division in New Delhi in October 1971. The timing, however, put it precisely within the context of the UnB negotiations, and it was extensively used in arguments over the grant.

How should the Foundation behave when faced with such a dichotomy? To Silvert, the situation posed an intricate ethical dilemma:

Closing our eyes to evil elements on the grounds that we are helping these governments only to do their focussed good is a very dangerous practice. In the first place, such actions make us all accomplices in policies with which we may not agree. Secondly, we court grave difficulties in other countries with which we work. And, thirdly, we invite future troubles when those regimes crumble – and most of them are somewhat insecure. But, most important of all from an intellectual and ideological point of view, such grant-making is undisciplined; it tends to rest on ultimately unexamined premises, and thus on hunch rather than organized ‘hard’ data.⁸⁶

The solution proposed by Silvert rested on a systematic attempt to evaluate and classify different types of authoritarian regimes within a pragmatic ethical framework. Decisions should be reached after an ‘overt attempt to estimate trade-offs’. Such an analysis was ‘relativistic’ in nature and required ‘careful assembly of data and the willing assumption of reasonable risks’. Recalling a previous agreement that Ford should not work where there was ‘no reasonable room for some freedom in the play of ideas and men’, he pondered: ‘if a country cannot be entirely participand and democratic, does that mean that it is unmitigatedly authoritarian?’ A clear answer to this question was crucial to ensure that Foundation consultants did not have to ‘re-invent ethics and policy in every situation of normative strain’.

Silvert’s cost–benefit analysis guided by ethical pragmatism eventually carried the day. Its clearest elaboration came in a long memorandum by Peter Reichard, a young grant manager at the Rio office, suggesting ‘an analytic framework with which to assess the propriety of the Ford Foundation’s involvement in Brazilian social science’. After arguing the ethical implications of the case were not sufficiently unambiguous to justify complete withdrawal from Brazil, Reichard presented a scheme for analysing the issue on ‘programmatic’ grounds. On the ‘positive’ side, he listed that Foundation programmes might lead to (a) ‘direct attainment of welfare or humanitarian goals’, (b) ‘survival of a critical spirit or some pluralism’, and (c) ‘modification of certain marginal aspects of the Brazilian social process’. On the negative side, conversely, the Foundation risked contributing to (a) ‘accrual of some marginal benefit to the authoritarian government’ and (b) ‘cooption’.⁸⁷ Reichard further clarified that one needed to supplement these criteria with two others: ‘1) [T]he fact of social science inputs to government policies; and 2) the need for an opportunity–cost analysis to supplement the “trade-off” exercise suggested in the memoranda.’ Through a careful consideration of all factors along these lines, the Foundation could reach a more solid position regarding its involvement with the social sciences in Brazil.

⁸⁶Silvert to Bell, ‘Distasteful Regimes and Foundation Policies Overseas’, 18 Oct. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁸⁷Reichard to Nicholson, ‘Social Science in Brazil and the University of Brasilia’, 24 Nov. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

One important conclusion emerged from Reichard's analysis: if Ford decided to stay, this effectively amounted to saying it would be helping 'an authoritarian government do what the Foundation regards as "good"'. Though keeping some distance from the government seemed 'appropriate as a matter of tactics and image', the decision to support the Brazilian social sciences depended on assessing how desirable were the policies the grantees could help implement. It would be thus 'inconsistent to say that we are in principle opposed to what may be the most efficient way of accomplishing these objectives (direct Foundation involvement with the government)'. Another relevant conclusion referred to the distinction between the 'repressive' and 'developmentalist' features of the regime:

The former do not merit our support and the latter ... do ... Hopefully this distinction is not the first step down the slippery slope. Even if one accepts the oft-made argument that economic growth is a greater 'good' in the present Brazilian context than is political liberty, and further that authoritarianism has been essential to current economic growth ... it does not follow that one is forced to support the torture, the death squads, etc. which have no relation to economic advance.⁸⁸

Finally, Reichard offered his own take on the conundrum over policy orientation. 'The distinction', he said, 'between policy-oriented research and non-policy-oriented research is not particularly germane to the problems we face', since all of the Foundation's grantees 'contribute in varying degrees of directness to government policies, and if they did not it is questionable whether supporting them would be worthwhile'. To Reichard, it would be more useful to differentiate between 'independent and coopted social scientists'. This was not intended to separate those who worked for government from those who did not, for 'an independently-minded person might in fact work directly for the government in pursuit of goals he approves'. Pragmatically, what mattered was distinguishing 'policy inducing' from 'policy effectuating' work, the former 'far more likely to be the product of independent thought than the latter'.

When he applied his 'analytic framework' to the Brasília case, Reichard found largely in favour of the grant. There was no evidence the Brazilian academic community would regard it as a 'breach of faith' on the part of the Foundation. Although UnB had greater access to government funding than other institutions, the grant did not come at the expense of other potential beneficiaries. Faculty in both departments being considered for the allocation of a grant (economics and social sciences) seemed fairly competent and future hiring prospects promised to improve them even further. Finally, despite the risks associated with the 'policy-orientation' rationale, 'other Brazilian academics do not appear to regard working at the University as a sign of "accommodation", and the backgrounds of the social scientists involved do not suggest a lack of intellectual integrity'. Two weeks later, Nicholson once again requested priority treatment for the UnB grant, arguing 'the questions raised by Nita [Manitzas], Kal [Silvert], and Jim [Gardner] are, I believe, squarely addressed and the results of our analysis still indicate a strong case for a

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

small initial grant to the Institute.⁸⁹ This time his request went through with little resistance.

Concluding Remarks

In early 1972, reflecting on discussions held the previous year over the UnB grant, Bonilla summarised their implications for the Ford Foundation's involvement with the social sciences in Brazil thus:

I agree that a grant to Brasília will not scandalize the Brazilian social science community or expose the Foundation to sharp attack immediately. It will be seen as a natural and expected step in the rehabilitation of the university and prove the government's ability to achieve this by providing many conditions for work not available elsewhere except, of course, for freedom. Since no one else has much freedom, this may not seem important. Nevertheless a grant will also be a victory for the government in obtaining apparent international certification that certain conditions for inquiry and scholarship are present in Brasília when we know they are not. *A new grant there has symbolic significance.* I see no way around that.⁹⁰

Even in the face of these prospects, the Foundation decided to move forward and add UnB to its roster of beneficiaries. Formally anchoring this decision was a framework for pragmatic decision-making that considered thorny ethical and ideological issues in terms of cost-benefit analysis. The episode thus demonstrated the remarkable flexibility of the Foundation's programme guidelines. Faced with different and rapidly shifting political contexts in the countries where they worked, Ford's staff could manipulate the language of 'policy relevance' and 'problem orientation' to reconstruct the nature of their activities in a way that corresponded to the stated mission.

Nevertheless, the arguments over the UnB grant also offer an unusually clear window into some important changes in the way the Foundation conceived its role in Latin America and the developing world. With the collapse of the post-war liberal consensus during the 1960s, some of the premises that had so far sustained Ford's developmental work gradually became untenable. As the march of political events in South America made it clear that not 'all good things' always went 'together',⁹¹ it became increasingly difficult to uphold an uncritical belief in the value of technocratic solutions. Modernisation theory had long entertained the possibility that certain types of modernising processes could be effectively achieved through authoritarian means, and the new context brought this ideological tension to the forefront.⁹² As a key patron of the social sciences both inside and outside the United States, the Ford Foundation had been groping its way through this problem

⁸⁹Nicholson to Carmichael, 'University of Brasília, Institute of Human Sciences: Request for "A" Status for Proposed Grant', 9 Dec. 1971, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR.

⁹⁰Bonilla, 'Letter to Stanley Nicholson', 14 Jan. 1972, Reel 6573, Grant File 72-374, FA732C, FFR; original emphasis.

⁹¹As in Packenham's classic formulation: *Liberal America, passim*.

⁹²Gilman, *Mandarins*, pp. 185–202.

since the late 1960s. Its Latin American office was the site of extensive arguments about the possibility of constructive engagement with authoritarian regimes, which opposed different frameworks of liberal developmental philosophy. It took some years operating in societies subject to systematic political repression and intellectual censorship, but finally by 1973, 'after acrimonious debate', Manitzas believed she and her colleagues could 'no longer maintain the fiction that advisory services on "technical" matters were apolitical in intent and effect'.⁹³ By thus distancing itself from the Cold War mores of yesteryear, the Foundation completed the shift that would turn the defence of democracy and human rights into the cornerstone of its overseas policy from the mid-1970s.

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Spanish abstract

El involucramiento de la Fundación Ford con las ciencias sociales en Brasil coincidió con los primeros años de régimen militar que gobernó el país entre 1964 y 1985. El artículo estudia cómo circunstancias políticas cambiantes en los Estados Unidos y en el exterior indujeron a la Fundación a abandonar gradualmente el enfoque tecnócrata que dirigió su programa exterior desde los años 1950, desarrollando un desplazamiento crítico en sus políticas hacia el mundo en desarrollo. Una solicitud de financiamiento para la Universidad de Brasilia, la que había sido sujeta de repetidas intervenciones militares desde 1964, resaltó los dilemas éticos surgidos por la meta de apoyar investigaciones políticamente relevantes en un contexto autoritario. Basándose en un marco pragmático de toma de decisiones que convertía a las consideraciones éticas e ideológicas en ejercicios de costo-beneficio, la Fundación se movió finalmente fuera de los postulados de la teoría de la modernización para adoptar nuevas prioridades estratégicas como los derechos humanos, la democracia y el pluralismo intelectual.

Spanish keywords: Fundación Ford; Guerra Fría; Kalman Silvert; Latinoamérica; autoritarismo; modernización

⁹³Conference on the Social Sciences in Latin America, Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, The Ford Foundation, Santa María, Peru, December 5–7, 1973', Catalogued Report 010152, FA739D, FFR.

Portuguese abstract

O envolvimento da Fundação Ford com as ciências sociais no Brasil coincidiu com os primeiros anos do regime militar que governou o país entre 1964 e 1985. O artigo estuda como as mudanças políticas nos Estados Unidos e no exterior induziram a Fundação a abandonar gradualmente a abordagem tecnocrática que governou seu programa no exterior desde a década de 1950, inaugurando assim uma guinada crítica em suas políticas para o mundo em desenvolvimento. Uma proposta de financiamento para a Universidade de Brasília, que vinha sendo submetida a repetidas intervenções militares desde 1964, destacou os dilemas éticos levantados pelo objetivo de promover pesquisas relevantes para políticas em um contexto autoritário. Baseando-se em uma estrutura pragmática de tomada de decisões que converteu considerações éticas e ideológicas em exercícios de custo-benefício, a Fundação finalmente se afastou das máximas da teoria da modernização para abraçar novas prioridades estratégicas como direitos humanos, democracia e pluralismo intelectual.

Portuguese keywords: Fundação Ford; Guerra Fria; Kalman Silvert; América latina; autoritarismo; modernização

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