

THE STUDY OF MARXIAN ECONOMICS IN BRAZIL DURING THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the possible interferences on the part of the Brazilian military regime (1964-1985) in the teaching and research of Marxist economics. First, we examined courses, syllabi, and reading assignments from economics departments mainly from the 1960s and 1970s. Second, we interviewed professors that either studied or taught during the military regime years. We were unable to identify a systematic and well-organized interference in economics departments constraining the teaching and research on Marxist economics; however, the climate of fear and suspicion that reigned in the Brazilian universities led scholars to what we could call a “self-censorship”.

Key-words: military dictatorship in Brazil, Marxism, economics in Brazil, academic freedom.

JEL: A10, B24, B29

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to understand how the Brazilian military government, whose power reigned between April 1st 1964, and March 15th 1985, affected the study and research economics inside the country's universities. In addition, we are interested in the teaching and research identified within Marxist economic theory, essentially due the anti-communist character of the government at that time. There is ample literature covering the political harassment that took place inside teaching facilities, especially the public universities, during this period. However, research focusing on the economic teaching is remarkably scarce, if not non-existent.

In order to study this period and subject we employ two distinct yet complementary methodologies. The first one is an examination of a series of academic records granted by schools of economics. This documentation includes syllabi, course descriptions, and class diaries. In these documents, we investigated the presence of contents exposed to Marx's ideas, Marxists' ideas, or even socialism.

The search through this physical primary source was complemented by a second phase of research based on the oral history method. Besides filling the gaps left by the first step, this method is important as long as we understand that all the political harassment, repression and censorship could involve physiological affectation to some degree that is possible to be unraveled making use of interviews. Thus, the testimonies were primarily collected from economists who were teaching or researching (as teachers or students) Marxism during the 1960's and 70's. However, that is not the whole picture. In order to obtain a larger spectrum of information we also interviewed economists from myriad theoretical backgrounds that played important roles in the in the realms of institution building and policymaking. That is the case for Antonio Delfim Netto³, former minister during the military government and one of the major players in the modernization of Brazil's graduate studies programs. Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira⁴ and Antonio Plínio Pires de Moura⁵ are also non-Marxists economists.

³ Delfim Netto is emeritus professor from Usp since 1987. He had his Bachelor's at Economics among the third group that graduated also from University of São Paulo (USP). He started teaching in 1952 in the same institution. He has held positions as Secretary of São Paulo States' Treasury (1961), Minister of Economy (1967-1974), Brazilian Ambassador to France (1975-1978), Minister of Agriculture (1979), Minister of Planning (1979-1985) and Federal Deputy (1987-2007)

⁴ Bresser-Pereira is a professor from the FGV of São Paulo (since 1959), editor of the *Revista de Economia Política* (FGV) and Foundation Member of CEBRAP. During the Military Government he was Minister of Economics for eight months in 1987. After the re-democratization he helped to found the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) and was Ministry of State Reform and Science and Technology during Fernando Henrique Cardoso's term

⁵ Plínio Moura graduated in economics at the Federal University of Bahia in 1961 and received his Masters from Institut International de Recherche et Formation en Vue du Développement in 1968. He also took ECLAC's and Harvard's specialization courses. At the State of Bahia's Government, he served as Science and Technology Planning Secretary's Head Chief from 1975 to 1976. Currently he is professor at UFBA, a position he held since 1963.

We also interviewed Claus Magno Germer⁶, João Antônio de Paulo⁷, Luiz Gonzaga Belluzzo⁸, Paul Israel Singer⁹ and Theotônio dos Santos, all of whom are connected to Marxist Theory and/or politics¹⁰.

The general results of our research shows that we were able to identify the lack of a well-organized and systematic interference from the military government upon the economics teaching and research. However, there are other features that should be taken in consideration in order to account for the repressive and violent environment and the overwhelming censorship. This conjuncture was responsible for creating the fear that crystalized in the form of a “self-censorship”, i.e. the avoidance of subjects that could attract undesirable attention.

2 THE NEW REGIME AND THE UNIVERSITIES

There are two prominent characteristics concerning the actions of the Brazilian military government towards the country's top higher education institutions.

The first characteristic is the reformulation of higher education that took place during the 1960's. This had been a matter of intense debate since the 1940's (CUNHA, 1988) and grew in importance due to post-war reconstruction efforts, which concerned technical and scientific progress, and placed education as a priority issue (NICOLATO, 1986). The reform that was eventually implemented included the replacing of chair system with the new academic department structure, the promotion of research and graduate programs and the establishment of a teaching career (FAVERO, 2006), as well as the tripart structure: research, teaching, and education (KLEIN; SCHWARTZMAN, 1993)¹¹. This progress was of utmost importance and so was the avoidance of potential setbacks, such as the defeat of a proposal to end tuition free the public university (CUNHA 2007, p.333).

⁶ Claus Germer is a retired professor from the Federal University of Paraná. He earned his Master's degree in 1974-75 from USP/ESALQ and PhD from Unicamp during the 1990's. The professor was also Agriculture Secretary of the State of Paraná between 1983 and 1985.

⁷ João Antônio de Paula is a Senior Professor from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). He earned his Bachelors in 1973 from the same institution and has taught there since 1976. He earned his Master's degree from Unicamp in 1977 and PhD of Economic History in 1988 from the University of São Paulo.

⁸ Belluzzo is a retired professor from University of Campinas (Unicamp). He earned his PhD degree in 1975 from the same institution. Between 1974 and 1992, he was the Ministry of Economy's Economic advisor and secretary of Economic Policy. In 2001, he was included in the Biographical Dictionary of Dissenting Economists as one of the world's 100 most important heterodox economists.

⁹ Paul Singer earned his Bachelor's of Economics from USP in 1959, becoming a professor right after. Before that, he was already involved in the politics of the Communist Party. He got his PhD of Demography also from USP.

¹⁰ Theotônio dos Santos earned his Bachelor's of Politics and Sociology and Public Administration from UFMG in 1961. His master's degree in Political Science from UnB was earned shortly before the coup in 1964. He Was granted the Doctor Honoris-causa from two universities, the Federal University Fluminense (UFF) and UFMG. He currently holds the UNESCO/UNU Global Economy and Sustainable Development chair and is emeritus professor from UFF.

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Second, we highlight as a central question for our study the political-ideological systematic suppression of academic freedom undertaken by the military governments. More specifically, we are interested in the possible internal persecutions and curtailments of academic freedom at universities. In this regard, the military discourse was very clear and direct, always advocating the correction of “certain leftist inclinations, or even better, [...] the expunging of leftists inside the higher education institutions” (CUNHA, 1988, p.21). We will go into further detail on this subject in the following paragraphs.

2.1 INFORMATION AND THE INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS

The Brazilian military dictatorship began to configure its intelligence apparatus with the creation of the *Serviço Nacional de Informação* (National Information Service – SNI) in 1964. The dramatic growth of this apparatus quickly resulted in it becoming the largest among all Latin American authoritarian regimes (STEPAN, 1988). Information was central to the regime’s ability to avoid any coordination of a potential socialist revolution as well as to enable their own. The initiative to gather detailed information involved three high profile institutions: The *Escola Superior de Guerra* (War College – ESG), the *Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Sociais* (Institute for Social Studies and Research – IPES) and the *Instituto Brasileiro de Ação Democrática* (Brazilian Institute for Democratic Action – IBAD). Together they gathered detailed information dossiers on over 400.000 Brazilians citizens (ALVEZ, 1985, p.25). General Golbery Couto e Silva, one of IPES’s former commandants and widely known as one of the major contributors to the National Security Doctrine, acknowledged that the institution acted to destabilize the previous president, João Goulart (WASSERMAN, 2006).

There are two complementary time periods that we lay out in order to analyze the military rule offensive against academia. Mansan (2013) provides a timeline of the repressions according to the intelligence apparatus’ modus operandi: the cooperative (1964-1967), the internalized (1967-1979), and the disguised (1979-1985). Holzmann et al (2008) in turn writes about “waves of violence”, which bear some resemblance to the divisions outlined by Mansan.

During the cooperative period, the security agencies obtained the information with the assistance of members of civil society. Inside the universities, this happened to be staff and faculty members (MANSAN, 2010). The emergence of the internalized period (1967-1979) overlapped with the taking office by the militaries’ most repressive group and the publication of the AI-5¹². The

¹² The Institutional Acts (AI) were laws implemented by the government without the need of congressional approval. They were known for the withdrawing civil rights. The AI-5 was the harshest of all.

education reform that took place in 1967 is also responsible for the change in the *modus operandi*. Being that decentralization was one of its goals, the reform fostered the creation of the *Divisões de Segurança e Informação* (Security and Information Divisions – DSI) and the *Assessorias de Segurança e Informação* (Information and Security Advice Agencies – ASI), the last being specific for acting within state owned autonomous entities (MANSAN, 2010; FAGUNDES, 2013)¹³. According to Motta (2008, p.37), the main feature of the ASI was the creation of an ideological filter in order to prevent the access of subversive ideas and materials inside universities; control student protests; control teachers’ activities, mainly with regard to international commitments; besides the dissemination of the government propaganda. Finally, the disguised period started with the ASI shutdown in 1979. From that moment on, surveillance became informal.

2.2 REPRESSSION CYCLES AND THE POLITICS OF FEAR

The apex of repression in Brazil occurred in response to the rise of the discontentment and protests (largely influenced by the May 1968 events) in the late 1960’s. However, the first “cleaning” attempt occurred immediately after the coup. The first wave of repression started following the takeover of the self-titled “revolutionary government” in 1964¹⁴, almost at the exact same moment as the cooperative phase began. During this period, the University of Brasília was the most affected. UnB opened its doors in 1962 and was closely attached to people who notoriously opposed the regime, including Professors Darcy Ribeiro and Anísio Teixeira and the ousted President João Goulart. Additionally, as shown by Salmeron (1999) UnB was an easy target for the conservatives of the new government, because it adopted several left wing educational measures. The army raided the university twice and several of its professors were laid off between 1964 and 1965. The most outstanding episode happened on October 9th 1965, when the Dean, Laerte de Carvalho, fired fifteen professors. In protest, another 223 resigned. Together, they represented 79% of the university’s faculty (SALMERON, 1999).

The second wave of violence occurred during the beginning of the internalized period. The Ministry of Education started to coordinate surveillance and punishment measures more closely (MANSAN, 2010, p.80). Academia faced ever clearer ideological persecution. The recurrent layoffs that struck the University of São Paulo (USP) are a portrayal of that. Florestan Fernandes, Jayme

¹³ The agency was also named AESI (*Assessoria Especial de Segurança e Informação* - Information and Security Advice Special Agencies).

¹⁴ This period accounted for an attempt to eliminate what accounts for the “general left position” and was marked by the Institutional Act Number 2 (AI-2) implementation (CODATO, 2004).

Tiomno and João Batista Villanova Artigas are some of those who were forced into retirement (ADUSP, 2004). The protest against the layoffs made by the Dean, Hélio Loureço de Oliveira, led to the promulgation of a decree that forced the retirement of another 23 professors as well as the Dean himself. They included Paul Israel Singer, Otávio Ianni and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (who would later become Brazil's President between 1995 and 2002) (ADUSP, 2004, p.48).

Several other universities suffered strong ideological persecution and patrol. Holzmann et al (2008) and Mansan (2009) analyze the incidents inside the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), whilst Brito (2014) and Clement (2006) examine the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA). The University of Campinas can be considered an outstanding exception (Unicamp). There, the Dean Zeferino Vaz played a crucial role in implementing projects to modernize the education system (even before the educational reform) including attracting outstanding academics and protecting them from any ideological harassment. At Unicamp, there was no ideological filter; the only thing that mattered was excellence and the contributions that the new faculty could offer (GOMES, 2007).

We now intend to delve into the specificities of economics teaching and research. In particular, we will provide sources that allow us to understand where Marxist thinkers in economics were located and how they and their work were affected.

3 MARXIST ECONOMICS INSIDE THE ECONOMICS SYLLABUS

Our review of the syllabi of economics departments to which we had access allowed us to assert that there were no apparent external/ideological interferences. By that we mean to say that there was no obvious exclusion or generalized decrease in the quantity of content connected to Marxist thought. If we can find this decrease in some places, we can also find an increase in others. We obtained access to documentation from six of the main public schools of economics in Brazil, namely: the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), UFBA, UFRGS and USP¹⁵.

It should be noted, that until the 1980's Marxism had a peripheral presence inside scientific discussions within economics. Coutinho (2001), which sought to summarize the influx of Marxists ideas among Brazilian economists during the twentieth century, supports this view. According to him, there was a kind of theoretical isolation made worse by a subordination of economic debates inside the political arena (KONDER, 1984, COUTINHO, 2001). Further, as argued by Bielschowsky (1997, p.

¹⁵ From UFMG and UFPR we obtained access to syllabi, course descriptions and programmes; from USP to the subjects taught during the period, as well as from UFBA (here we also had access to class diaries and some programmes). From UFRJ we had syllabi and some course descriptions. Finally, from UFRGS we only had access to course descriptions.

88), Marxism inside economics was circumscribed to developmentalism. The Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies (ISEB), a left wing institution, always worked in the formulation and defense of a developmentalist project (BRESSER-PEREIRA, 2004)¹⁶. Therefore, if we can observe a lack of Marxist debate inside several economics departments during the military regime, we can largely blame the absence of a stronger network of discussion, debates, and dissemination of this kind of thought. Some exceptions include the creation of study groups on Marxism and related subjects. One that became very famous, mainly for including important names from Brazilian academics, e.g. José Arthur Giannotti, Florestan Fernandes and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the *Seminários de Marx* (that started in the late 1950's). Lidiane Rodrigues (2011) analyzes this group of academics and shows how they pioneered “academic Marxism”, something that was rare during that time. Nevertheless, there was some presence of Marxism in the economic teaching.

We can point to two important origins of economics thinking in Brazil. The first one considers its teaching as a discipline. In this case, its genesis is connected to José da Silva Lisboa – the Viscount of Cairu – and his Political Economy Public Lessons. According to Saes et al (2014), although these lessons were created by decree in February 23, 1808, they were never administered due to other commitments made by the royal family in Lisbon. Even without materializing, the Lessons had great influence on Political Economy teaching inside Law Schools, and Engineering Schools, places where several important economists in Brazil in the first half of the twentieth century were exposed to the subject (SAES et al, 2014).

The second pathway is the genesis of higher education courses in economics. The first economics degrees were awarded by institutions that provided a mix of courses, including Accounting, Economics and Actuarial studies, therefore they can be traced back to another public lesson on economics, the Court Trading Lessons that began in 1809 (CASTRO, 2001). Although it was established in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Emperor, D. Pedro II, regulated and defined their syllabi only in the 1840's. Degrees in economics only became available in 1905 (CASTRO, 2001). By 1945, following the creation of the University of Brazil, a public university located in Rio de Janeiro, a Bachelor's Degree of Economics, was finally offered separate from Accounting and Actuarial Studies.

Eighteen years later, in 1963, the degree's required coursework went through a reformulation when the Federal Council of Education (created in 1961) established a new basic curriculum. In 1968, after the educational reform, some courses made use of the flexibility provided by the new rules in order to alter their syllabi to a greater extent than others. From then on, we can notice a higher degree

¹⁶ To understand in which terms the ISEB was considered a left wing institution see Czajka (2010).

of differentiation among the courses offered by economics departments, now more connected to the interests and theoretical view of their own (NOGUEIRA, NUNES E BARROSO, 2005, p. 8, 11-19). A modification as important as this one would only happen again in 1984. The most striking point is how this period of greater “academic freedom” that allowed some universities to include more left wing content, happened during the internalized period and all its remarkable repression t.

The UFRJ economics department is our first example. We compare the syllabus previous to the educational reform (1967) to one from after (1972) and use some course descriptions from 1973 as well. While the 1967 syllabus strictly follows the 1963 basic curriculum, in 1972 we notice the inclusion of some others. Marxist content is present in some disciplines, according to the 1973 data. In *História Econômica Geral e Formação Econômica do Brasil* (General Economic History and Brazilian Economic Formation – HEG & FEB) topics include “bourgeois revolutions” and “imperialism and the new colonial expansion” among others of a similar nature. Besides that, Marx also appears as a topic of study in the discipline of Sociology (UFRJ, 1973).

At UFPR as well, HEB & FEB also presented Marxist content in 1969. The discipline had as mandatory bibliography Caio Prado’s book *História Econômica do Brasil* (The Economic History of Brazil). This is significant as long as the author had other titles censored during the 1960’s (REIMÃO, 2014, p.82). Among others, this discipline covered topics such as “Economic evolution in Europe: the bourgeoisie rise to power”. In History of Economic Thought (HET), Marx and Engels were present as part of the discussion on “reaction to the classics” (UFPR, 1969).

UFMG presented a Marxist topic in 1966 with the name of “Contemporary Situation of Marxism”, within HET. In the same discipline we could observe the “Catholic Socialism: the Left Party” as a subtopic of the discussion on “Cristian Economic Doctrines”. HEG & FEB discussed “The Socialist Word”, but without making clear whether they drew on the historical materialism method or not (UFMG, 1966). In fact, one of our interviewees commented on how Marx had no major role in the subjects. In short, although we can verify the presence of Marxism, we cannot determinate how it was approached.

Inside UFBA we could not find the information organized in the form of syllabi, however we gained access to the class diary covering several years. This allowed us to conclude that its 1963 syllabus was very close to the basic curriculum. Regarding the post educational reform period, in 1969 there were only some topics that could or could not be approached from a Marxist perspective, like “The Origin of Capitalism” in HEG & FEB (UFBA, 1969). Less information could be obtained from UFRGS. The brief course descriptions did not make it possible to point to places where there could be discussion around Marx’s work (UFRGS, 1973). Similar situations occur in USP, where since 1964

the usual disciplines present the possibility of including Marxist content (CANABRAVA, 1984, v.1, 438-440). However, we do not have a comprehensive source of materials for analysis to verify further.

Documents for the structure of the courses during the internalized period were also obtained, UFMG's documents being the most revealing (UFMG, 1979). This analysis is relevant since we can find an actual increase in the presence of Marxist content. There are two different interpretations of this fact. First, the analysis reveals the existence of repression in the previous period, making it possible for professors to teach Marx's work only near the end of the military government. On the other hand, the repression was not very effective inside the universities because professors simply acquired independent interest for the subject or the new professors that entered the department brought this interest. Either way, this means that some kind of training on Marxist economics was possible during the most repressive years of the military dictatorship. UFMG is the place where this becomes most evident.

Finally, we can observe, even without the access to as comprehensive a variety of material as we would like, that the dictatorship did not eliminate the discussion on Marxism or Socialism from economics, even in its harshest period. For instance, the presence of this discussion in UFRP's syllabus happened while Flávio Suplicy de Lacerda, a well-known conservative (who, as Minister of Education and Culture, was responsible for the almost successful effort to eliminate free Higher Education Institutions), was the Dean. Nevertheless, even when Marx, Marxism or Socialism is clearly covered by some disciplines, we cannot determine for sure whether the intent is to train the students in this perspective, or just criticize. Regarding this, and the filling of other gaps, the interviews we conducted are extremely valuable.

4 MEMORY: ORAL HISTORY AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Oral history is a method of research that seeks to find evidence of facts, people, groups and events that cannot be thoroughly explained based exclusively on written records. This highlights its connections to the history of oppressed, persecuted and marginalized groups that has a limited access to mainstream memory building. It fills the gaps between official records. Furthermore, oral history provides a more subjective perspective, that allows us to obtain personal impressions and access the innermost self's experiences, especially if there is any trauma or marginalization involved (PONIATOWSKA, 1988; HALBMAYR, 2009). Regarding Brazil's dictatorship, for example, some studies have resorted to this empirical approach, namely Júnior, Videira and Ribeiro Filho (2009), who interviewed physicists, and Lourenço (2010), who worked with elementary school teachers.

Inside economics, the use of oral history excelled, especially with the renowned interviews made in Arjo Klammer's (1983) work *Conversation with Economists*. A Brazilian version of it can be found in a two volume project: Biderman, Cozac and Rego (1996) and Mantega and Rego (1999). However, our study is closer to the approach developed by Mata and Lee (2007). There, the authors analyze and portray the emergence of a heterodox economics association, the Union for Radical Political Economy, from the perspective of a personal experience. Unlike Klammer and others, Mata and Lee had a well-established goal: reconstruct the history of this association from a specific outlook.

Our interviews deal with several themes that illustrate the state of Marxist economics in Brazil after the 1964 coup. The ones we consider most relevant are the following: 1) the possibility of, and the way of accessing, theoretical discussions on Marxism; 2) the constraints inside each department; and, 3) the individual perception of the interviewee regarding the constraints imposed by the military government on the production of Marxist content inside economics departments.

4.1 THE ACCESS TO MARX, MARXISM AND SOCIALISM

It is of major importance to ask whether the military government actually detected relevant amounts of teaching and research regarding Marxist Theory. In addition to the present literature, as Coutinho (2001), our interviews point towards a small presence of subjects of that nature inside economics departments. Two accounts on USP's school of economics are of major importance. Delfim Netto (2015), who obtained his Bachelors from there in 1951 and became a faculty member thereafter, points out that the overall quality of the professors was low and most of them were actually autodidact. More specifically on Marxism, Paul Singer (2014), who graduated from there in 1959 and became professor as well, depicts reality as follows: "... [In] the course I took, Marx... was scarcely mentioned. Even worse was the lack of knowledge and the constant and silly mistakes made by the professors. It was not on purpose. The question is that their knowledge was minor and antipathetic."

Moreover, Antônio Plínio Pires de Moura (2014), who earned his Bachelor's from UFBA in 1961, claims that the university had the fame of being left wing, or Marxist, although its major influence was the national-developmentalism. There was no actual Marxist discussion, he claims. This agrees with what Bielschowsky (1997, p.88) states, that the Marxism present in economics was closely connected to a kind of developmentalism. Bresser-Pereira's (2014) interview also deals with this but focuses more on how this is consistent with Dependence Theory.

Unlike those who earned their Bachelor's of Economics, Moura, Netto and Singer, Theotônio dos Santos and Luiz Gonzaga Belluzzo provide us with different accounts. Belluzzo earned a Law Degree from USP in 1965, and also attended the Social Sciences course in the same time period. Hence,

he was a student of Arthur Giannotti and Fernando Henrique Cardoso while they were participating in the “Capital” reading group, *Seminários de Marx*. As a result, he had access to a high quality discussion on the subject (BELLUZZO, 2014). He is therefore the first one to get in touch with an academic Marxism among our interviewees. Santos, on the other hand, who earned a degree of Sociology and Politics and Public Administration from UFMG in 1961, was able to have access to a bibliography that included Henri Lefebvre and poorly known texts of Marx, as “Grundrisse” and A Contribution to the “Critique of Political Economy”. The organized social movements also had a major role on his Marxist formation (SANTOS, 2015).

Santos, therefore, represents an important characteristic of the Brazilian Marxism in the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century: the role of the *Partido Comunista do Brasil* (Brazilian Communist Party – PCB) and social movements as its space. Theotônio dos Santos was closely involved with the establishment of one of the most famous left wing movements from that time, one of those that radicalized and took up arms. This was the *Organização Marxista Revolucionária Política Operária* (Marxist Revolutionary Organization Worker’s Policy – POLOP). Were also part of POLOP another professors Vânia Banbirra, his wife, and Rui Mauro Marini. They had a constant theoretical contact with foreign academics such as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy through the Monthly Review. In his personal experience, therefore, the academic blends with the revolutionary politics (SANTOS, 2015). Santos was present when UnB was assaulted by the Military Police. He was exiled not just from Brazil, but also from Chile, in the first list after Pinochet took over (*Ibidem*).

Paul Singer (2014) is another person that represents a connection between academia and the political struggle in Marxism. The recognition mistakes during his professors lessons were only possible due his training inside the trade unions. That is the case for Claus Germer (2014) and João Antônio de Paula (2014) as well, who were exposed to Marx through the students movement. Paula also points out that Marxism was very superficially taught in HET discipline when he was a student in UFMG, a mere curiosity. Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira (2014) in turn, although was not a Marxist, became aware of its writings due his proximity to the *Juventude Católica* (Catholic Youth – JUC).

These accounts establish two important notions to our research. First, there was no well-established academic discussion on Marxism, inside economics, prior to the period studied. Among those we interviewed, the only ones who had access to high quality teaching on this subject were those who had their degree outside economics departments, namely Belluzzo and Santos. Secondly, when the military took over most of the discussion was concentrated or highly connected to parties and social movements, still outside academia. Marxism was just starting to be study inside academia.

4.2 THE EFFECTS INSIDE THE DIFFERENT ECONOMIC DEPARTMENTS

The military coup imposed hindrances in different manners for each of the Higher Education Institutions, as stated before. Although a professor of the Political Science department, Theotônio dos Santos tells us what happened inside UnB, one of the most severely affected. His words give us the dimension of what happened.

In 1964, four days after the coup, the Dean, Zeferino Vaz, who in the end became a remarkable individual, fired me from the University of Brasilia. I was one of the first four to leave, and others came after. It was all very quick, as something was already prepared. I was vaguely informed, but I know that later there was a lawsuit with a minor conviction of four years reclusion. Besides me, Rui Mauro Marini and Vânia [Bambirra] were also involved. This was regarding POLOP's activity after the coup, three or four months later. However, I was not fully aware of this at the time. The most problematic lawsuit was the one in Minas Gerais in 1965, where there was a fifteen years conviction. Then it became difficult the clandestine life. (SANTOS, 2014)

As a result, Santos spent most part of the military dictatorship rule out of country. He finally returned in 1979, after the amnesty.

The direct opposition to this violence scenario was Unicamp. Due to being a recently created institution, the university did not receive much attention from the military until the 1970's, after the beginning of the transition to democracy, that took around ten years (BELLUZZO, 2014). Besides that, the Dean Zeferino Vaz (who took office after leaving UnB) played a major role in assuring the academic freedom inside Unicamp. Belluzzo tells us about an event that exemplifies the Dean's boldness in defending the faculty from the regime:

For you to have an idea, there was a celebration of the revolution anniversary in 1975. He [Zeferino] took me and João Manuel [Cardoso de Mello] with him to the headquarters. He made a speech, was invited to make a speech and afterwards there would be a cocktail. During the cocktail, an armed forces commander approached us, João Manuel and I were watching, and said to him, "Your University is filled with communists". Then he [Zeferino] replied: "Colonel, you understand about armed forces and I understand about universities. In my university the professors have total freedom to think whatever they want. (BELLUZZO, 2014)

Other Deans that played this role of protecting the academic freedom were Miguel Calmon, UFBA's Dean between 1964 and 1967, and Eduardo Cisalpino, between 1974 and 1978 in UFMG. According to Moura (2014), Calmon used his political prestige to receive several expunged professors from UnB at UFBA. While Paula (2014) says that his own hiring was only possible due to Cisalpino's intervention.¹⁷

¹⁷ In Santos (2007), we can find an account on Cisalpino's experience on how to deal with the military during the dictatorship.

Another important question asked regarded the presence and effectiveness of the surveillance agencies inside universities. Although Belluzzo affirms that Unicamp was considered a sort of oasis in the middle of all the repression toward the universities, he also acknowledges the existence of an intelligence agency apparatus watching over the city of Campinas. He tells us that in 1975 he became aware that he was part of a “marked to die” list along with César Lattes (Physicist), Hilda Hilst (Poet) and Sérgio Arouca (M.D.).

Recently, Unicamp created a commission responsible for studying the events that occurred during the military dictatorship. Among its members is Professor Wilson Cano, who reports the following:

Each one of us, economists, left the previous job to come assemble the humanities area, which had as its main department the economics. We could not be part of any other public university; work at USP, not a chance. We would have never assembled an Institute of Philosophy and Humanities or a Institute of Economics in anywhere else, not the way we did here. Not with this degree of freedom and access to critical work exposed in our lessons, statements and papers. Unicamp was an anomaly in comparison to the rest of academia, but was not so much an island because there were people connected to the government inside. (CANO, 2015, our translation)

Moura (2014) also noticed the presence of an effective ASI at UFBA. According to his testimony, they would catalogue all the students by requiring an extra picture when manufacturing the student ID and sending it to the SNI. There were also undercover agents trying to encourage subversive behavior and expose the enemies they were looking for. “Inside the classroom [the agents] were the most leftists, so you could easily tell they were not actual students. Everybody was constantly walking on eggshells.” (MOURA, 2014)¹⁸

However, the work of the ASI was not always a remarkable presence inside the universities. At USP for instance, neither Delfim Netto nor Paul Singer noticed their existence. Delfim (2014) denies acknowledgment of its existence not only inside the university but also inside the Ministry of Economy while he was the Minister (during the period when the ASI were created). João Antônio de Paula also affirms that there was no surveillance on these lines inside UFMG. What he reports is closer to the disguised period, since the School of Economics Science had a Colonel as part of the Staff that would constantly censor the Student Academic Centre activities (PAULA, 2014). Bresser-Pereira (2014) in turn, the only one connected to a private institution, the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, tells us that he never noticed any kind intervention inside the school, especially because it has always being a school closely connected to business community of São Paulo.

¹⁸ Lourenço (2010) also bring information on undercover agents inside universities.

A particularly important account to our work is the one provided by Professor Claus Germer (2014). He tells us that while he was in his masters at USP-Esalq (located in the city of Piracicaba/SP) during the 1970's there were some dismissals, however "the ones affected were not necessarily Marxist. That was not the point". The persecution during the military regime was not exclusively against communists or Marxists. To Germer the opposition to the government was the central point and not an academic affiliation to a certain economic or social theory. This position is relevant as we take into consideration the persecution against experimental physicists.

From this subject a major conclusion that we can achieve is the lack of standard behavior of the government towards the universities. While Unicamp is a remarkable example of academic freedom, UnB represents the exact opposite. An important variable should be highlighted in order to explain this diversity, the role of the Deans. When they were able to act strongly in the defense of academic freedom, life inside the universities was made much easier.

4.3 SETBACKS IN THE TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS AND THE SELF-CENSORSHIP

Here is where we face what may be considered the most relevant occurrence pointed out by our interviewees. As we were able to see when we analyzed the curricula of the economics departments, there was not a complete elimination of Marxist content, Marx's mentions or approaches that could focus on some of his work – even considering the minimal dissemination of it. The Professors tell us that the military did not modified the curriculum nor interfered the teaching directly. They were also able to teach their classes and choose bibliographies without being harassed or needing authorization. However, it is clear that the climate of constant fear and suspicion encouraged some to avoid certain topics in their teaching and research, setting up a self-censorship.

Moura (2014) for instance, denies that there was any direct control of the military in setting the disciplines of UFBA's syllabus. "That did not happen. The only interference from the military on the universities curricula was when [the Minister of Education Jarbas] Passarinho tried, in the 1969 reform, with the MEC-USAID, to solve the question of the excess of students"¹⁹. Another question was the already existent lack of interest in Marx's economic theory inside the departments, as happened in USP according to Singer (2014). Therefore, until the harshest period started with the AI-5 promulgation, there was not so much what to repress inside that school. After the AI-5, the draining

¹⁹ The MEC-USAID was a consortium between the Ministry of Education and the United States Agency for International Development. The excess students was a question regarding a large number of approved in the universities selection that could not enter due a lack of positions.

that took place there was not due the persecution of the leftists, but because of a mass exodus of Professors to governmental positions, as tells us Netto (2015). Around ten members left the economics department with this purpose, dramatically reducing the teaching staff (NETTO, 2015). This should also suggest a strong aversion to Marxism.

Unicamp on the other hand, as told us Belluzzo (2014), and is confirmed by Cano (2015), had no interference at all. Even with Belluzzo himself teaching Marxists disciplines in the undergrad and graduate studies. João Antônio de Paula was one of his students in 1976, in a time where the repression had already started to cool down. He provides us the insights of his experience as a professor at UFMG during the late 1970's: "Whatever happened under the hoods, there was never a straightforward censorship, veto or repression. I gave the course I wanted and used the literature I wanted" (PAULA, 2014). Moura (2014) expressed the same inexistence of repression in this sense, even during the harshest times.

Notwithstanding, the most revealing feature of our interviews is that although there was no direct and systematic constraint in the teaching and research, the environment of fear and suspicion by itself represented a barrier to the approach of certain topics in the interviewees studies. João Antônio de Paula tells us a little bit more about this regarding the time he was still an undergrad student at UFMG: "When I joined the school of economics [as a student] there was an emptying process as a result of the coup. Even more, there was atmosphere of fear. The fear of speaking, the fear of discussing" (PAULA, 2014). Even when he was in his master's program at Unicamp, he would prefer to have Schumpeter as a theme. "You make a detour because something was problematic, dangerous" (*Ibidem*). Claus Germer goes deeper talking about his experience as a researcher for the Parana Institute for Economic and Social Development (Iparides): "There what happened was what happened everywhere else back then and still happens, Marxists censored themselves, leftists in general actually. It was not written that you could not quote Marx but the fact is that would be considered subversive the ones that dedicated themselves to that sort of thing" (GERMER, 2014). He recalls the artifices he used in order to be able to use Marx in his Master's dissertation: "In the dissertation's text... there are some notions in Weber... for example, the idea of proletariat. The definition is very similar to Marx's use of the term. Therefore, I quoted Weber instead of Marx. This kind of thing happened. There was a heavy environment back then" (*Ibidem*).

Self-censorship happened in other forms as well, for instance in the publications in academic journals. Those, as any other publication in Brazil back then should be permitted by the government's censors. Therefore, knowing the certain topics would not be approved, Singer (2014) tells us that he used to avoid certain subjects.

These interviews pointing towards the self-censorship as an important mechanism for two reasons. First, they reveal the psychological impact of the environment created by the coup. Although there was not such an effective repression of the surveillance agencies against Marxism inside the economics departments, either due to incapacity or lack of political will, the constraint existed in the form of self-censorship. Secondly, this self-censorship scenario is confirmed by studies on other social groups, such as artists (ORTIZ, 1988; REIMÃO, 2014).

5 CONCLUSION

In this work, we looked to rebuild the path of Marxism inside Brazilian academia. In our opinion, , the lack of a systematic and well-organized repression over the syllabi that were reshaped during the period stands out. We should not forget the lack of Marxist topics in the teaching in research of economics during the 1960's and 70's. The interviews underpin the way those Marxists discussions made themselves more present outside of academia, being closely related to political struggle. Two other general aspects are important about the military dictatorship period. First, the intervention had different characteristics when comparing the universities. Secondly, the relevance of this environment of fear and suspicion was responsible for the self-censorship made by the Marxists Professors. This last one is key to illustrating how the effects of an authoritarian government go beyond official actions (or lack thereof). The indirect constraints, through psychological pressure, was crucial in better understanding the loss of academic freedom during that time.

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