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## Global north American hegemony and the MEC/USAID agreements (1965-1968)

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This article takes part on the north american hegemony of the Brazilian Education History and the object of the study is the exchange between Brazil, through the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), and United States of America (USA), represented by the United States Agency for (USAID) - the famous MEC/USAID agreements, established in the period of the military dictatorship, from 1965 to 1968. The research problem asks how MEC/USAID agreements could be instruments to the US hegemony over Brazil in the educational field. **Objective:** The objective is to understand the constitution of the US hegemony over Brazil, in the context of the MEC/USAID Agreements (1965-1968). **Methodology:** It is a bibliographical research, with a qualitative approach and it tries to stablish some discussions, based on the Critical Discourse Analysis of Fairclough (2001). **Results/Conclusion:** As a result of the study, it was verified that the US interest on the path of Higher Education in Brazil in the military regime, went beyond the discourse of modernization, because by encouraging a reorganization of universities, the US imposed from the ideological school apparatus, its hegemony as a great capitalist country.

### KEYWORDS

MEC/USAID agreements. Hegemony. Higher education. Discourse of modernization.

## Hegemonia global estadunidense e os acordos MEC/USAID (1965-1968)

### RESUMO

**Introdução:** O presente artigo se insere no *tema* hegemonia norte-americana na História da Educação brasileira e tem como *objeto* de estudo o intercâmbio entre Brasil, por meio do então Ministério da Educação e Cultura (MEC), e Estados Unidos da América (EUA), representado pela *United States Agency for International Development (USAID)* – os acordos MEC/USAID, no período da ditadura militar. O *problema* de pesquisa indaga acerca da forma pela qual os Acordos MEC/USAID serviram para instrumentalizar a hegemonia estadunidense sobre o Brasil no campo educacional. **Objetivo:** O *objetivo* incide em compreender a constituição da hegemonia estadunidense perante o Brasil, no contexto dos Acordos MEC/USAID (1965-1968). **Metodologia:** Trata-se de uma pesquisa bibliográfica, de abordagem qualitativa e que se baseia na Análise Crítica do Discurso, na vertente de Fairclough (2001). **Resultados/Conclusão:** Como resultados do estudo, verificou-se que o interesse norte-americano pelos rumos da Educação Superior no Brasil, no período militar, foi além do discurso de modernização, pois ao incentivar uma reorganização das universidades, impunha um aparelhamento ideológico escolar, sobrepujando sua hegemonia como potência capitalista.

### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Acordos MEC/USAID. Hegemonia. Educação Superior. Discurso de modernização.

## Hegemonía global de estaduniden y los acuerdos MEC/USAID (1965-1968)

### RESUMEN

**Introducción:** El presente artículo se inserta en el tema de la hegemonía norteamericana de la historia de la Educación brasileña y tiene como objetivo de estudio el intercambio entre Brasil, por medio del Ministerio de la Educación y Cultura (MEC), y Estados Unidos de América (EUA), representado por United States Agency for International Development (USAID)- los más conocidos acuerdos MEC\USAID, establecidos en la dictadura militar, entre los años de 1965 a los 1968. El problema de la encuesta se pregunta de que manera los acuerdos MEC\USAID sirvieron para instrumentalizar la hegemonía estadunidense sobre Brasil en el campo educacional. **Objetivo:** El objetivo busca en comprender la constitución de la hegemonía estadunidense sobre Brasil, en este contexto de acuerdos Mec\USAID (1965-1968). Se trata de una encuesta bibliográfica, de abordage cualitativo y que busca trazar las discusiones, partiendo del análisis crítico del discurso, de acuerdo con Fairclough (2001). **Resultados/Conclusión:** Como resultados de estudio, se verificó que el interés norte americano por los caminos de la educación superior em brasil en el período militar, fue además del discurso de modernización, pues al incentivar una reorganización de las universidades, se ponía a partir del aparato ideológico escolar, su hegemonía como fuerza capitalista.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Acuerdos (MEC/USAID). Hegemonía. Educación Superior. Discurso de modernización.

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## 1 Introduction

Discussing how the American hegemony was instrumentalized in Brazil, in the period from 1965 to 1968, makes one go back to the colonization processes of both countries. We start from the argument that these processes influenced the construction of identities in both countries, reflecting, then, in the hegemonic relation between them. It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the category of identity nor to propose a study of comparative history, but to raise discussions about the discourses embedded in the history and formation of the peoples of Brazil and the United States of America/USA, and that can instrumentalize the American hegemony over emerging countries.

It is necessary to consider that discourse, as exposed in this text, refers to Fairclough's (2001, p. 90-91) understanding in his Social Theory of Discourse, when using the term, as "social practice, and not as a purely individual activity or reflection of situational variables." The British linguist brings together linguistically oriented Discourse Analysis, with social and political thought relevant to discourse and language, from the perspective of "the study of social change." Thus, it is that all analysis on discourse has a critical and intentional production characteristic, which in the interim is appropriate for the following analyses.

It is noteworthy that there is an almost unison discourse that we would be facing two distinct colonization processes, the one in the USA, of settlement, and the one in Brazil, of exploitation. For many years there was the premise that supported the discourse that the colonization process in the United States enabled them to become the power they are today, while Brazil's only contributed to leaving it at the margins of the capitalist production model. However, according to Karnal (2017, p.17, emphasis added):

We can only speak of a **colonial project in the Portuguese and Spanish areas**. Only in them was there constant and systematic concern about the issues of America. [One hundred years after colonization, if we were to compare [the Iberian Peninsula with England] we would see that the Iberian Peninsula became much more urban and had more commerce, a larger population and more 'developed' artistic cultural productions than the English. In this fact will lie the greater ease of the North American colonists in proclaiming their independence. [...]. **Because it was weak, English colonization gave birth to America's first victorious independence.**

In Karnal's (2017) terms, the simplistic explanation for the different paths that the Iberian and English colonies followed, does not present facts about why the United States became a capitalist power. However, the colonization of Iberian and English America, lead one to understand that in some points they were convergent, otherwise let's see the following arguments:

Columbus' arrival in the new land and the name given by him to the natives, inaugurated the relationship between Indians and Europeans, which is determinant for the analysis proposed here. This relationship provided, then, the recognition of the Other, a term used by Burke (2004, p.153), when proposing a discussion on the creation of stereotypes. The author explains that the choice for the word "Other -" capitalized and in the singular - would be

clearer if it were related to "people different from us, in the plural, instead of turning them into the undifferentiated Other [...]." This leads to the understanding that the encounter between the indigenous and the white man resulted in a clash of cultures, from which two possibilities of reaction arose: the assimilation of the culture of the unknown as a reflection of their own culture; and the construction, consciously or not, of an opposing culture that would come to represent this Other.

In this vein, when the white, European, "civilized" man saw before him not only gigantic lands of exuberant nature, but above all, a people totally opposite to the conception of man that he had, the cultural shock was inevitable, as well as the creation of stereotypes. Thus, both in North American lands and in the "Tupiniquim lands," whites and Indians found themselves face to face, in a sometimes-peaceful recognition, sometimes not.

Thus, in the historical colonial trajectory of the two countries, one must consider that the ideals of man, society, and culture were crucial to the formation not only of the countries, but mainly of their national identity. For Hoonart (1992, p.56) this ideological construction was guided mainly by the religious aspect, and in Brazil "missionary action was insistently requested by the Portuguese government itself," because the alliance between the Portuguese state and the Catholic Church was advantageous and, according to the author, there was "on one side a discriminatory discourse about colonialist competitors from other European nations [...]. On the other side, this policy [allowed] dismantling the indigenous organizations that might subsist under the leaderships of their own indigenous chiefs."

On Hoonart's (1992) analysis, Rezende (2006, p. 90) highlights the importance of religious missions in the Amazon for land occupation and Portuguese rule, as they set "penetration landmarks along the extensive Amazonian river network and were used [...] to carry out an expansionist policy, either in the acculturation of the American gentiles, or in the implementation of a Christian and Catholic model at the service of the Portuguese state."

It is possible to state, therefore, that the ideological aspect propagated by religion constituted an important tool for Portuguese domination, with expansionist purposes. One can highlight the convergence with the historical process of territorial expansion of the United States, which as in Brazil, caused the genocide of thousands of indigenous people, based on theological arguments, since:

the pilgrims had identified themselves with the chosen people God was leading into a promised land. [Thus], just as God had empowered Joshua (in the Bible) to drive out the inhabitants of the promised land, they believed in their right to drive out those who inhabited their Canaan. John Cotton, a Puritan pastor, gave several sermons in which he highlighted the similarity between the English nation and the struggle for the promised land described in the old testament. (KARNAL et al. 2007, p. 51).

In this vein, the Native Americans, such as those in the Amazon, were killed, or enslaved in the name of imperialistic interests, cloaked in a false ideology of predestination.

The Americans, through their *Manifest Destiny*<sup>1</sup>, and the Portuguese, under the maxim that "the kingdom of God is identified with that of Portugal." (HOONAERT, 1992, p. 58). For his part, Costa (2011, p. 2,272) realizes that it was a "noble" mission to annex territories, to "apply a civilizing process, making the peoples of these annexed territories submit to its government and way of life".

In the Brazilian case, the Church took upon itself the concern for those stray souls - the Indians, in order to bring them the knowledge of God and civilization. In both colonization processes, what was seen was the need, due to exploitative interests, to impose the colonizer's culture on the colonized, in order to then take away the riches of that New World.

Therefore, in analyzing the colonization process of Brazil and the USA, it is convenient to resort to Hall's (2006, p.50) premise that "a nation is not just a political entity, but something that produces meanings, a system of cultural representation." By this, it can be said that both countries have constituted a new national culture<sup>2</sup>. Thus, whether this new culture came about under the auspices of violence or of persuasion, a hybrid culture is formed, marked by the different traits of the peoples who constituted it. In this case, the feeling of national identity emerges, based on Manifest Destiny, imposing the American culture and way of thinking, since the annexation of its territories, and why not say that it still spreads all over the Globe?

The historical context of Brazil and the US outlined here indicates that one cannot analyze the hegemony of one country over the other without considering the issue of identity, even though it is not part of the objectives of this text. To direct the proposed discussions, the article is divided into two sections: the first, entitled Brazil/USA: the dawn of a hegemonic relationship, brings notes on the beginnings of the relationship between the two countries in a hegemonic context and the second, called The MEC/USAID agreements and the reforms in Higher Education (1965-1968): construction of hegemonic discourses of modernization, addresses in announced time cut, the character of reform and modernization that the MEC/USAID agreements assumed as a goal, further strengthening the U.S. hegemony in Brazilian education.

## 2 Brazil/USA: the emergence of a hegemonic relationship

In view of what has been said about the processes of colonization of Brazil and the United States, it is possible to conclude that the hegemony of the United States cannot, not even remotely, be justified by the origin of these two nations. It is necessary to understand the concept of hegemony materialized by that country. In this study this is indispensable, since it

<sup>1</sup> Manifest Destiny refers to the conception impregnated in the period of the conquest of new U.S. territories, which developed from the idea that "it would be a mission to spread the conception of American society to regions seen as needy and in need of help." (KARNAL et al., 2007, p. 107).

<sup>2</sup> For Hall (2006, p.50) national culture is "a discourse - a way of constructing meanings." So, the discourse of national culture constructs identities, which "are ambiguously placed between the past and the future."

is assumed that the *MEC/USAID* Agreements founded a hegemonic conception of education along American lines, which left deep marks in the organization of Higher Education in Brazil.

Based on the considerations about how the United States developed a deep feeling of supremacy, of a superior national culture, it is convenient to refer to Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony (2001), in order to verify how the hegemonic relation of the USA with Brazil was established. This, Italian philosopher, born in Sardinia, who spent the last ten years of his life in prison, under the aegis of fascism - totalitarian regime of government established by Benito Mussolini, after World War I -, deeply analyzed the problems of his time, becoming "a scholar of the works of Marx and Engels, gave the world an original interpretation of the transformations that occurred in advanced capitalist societies, from the second half of the nineteenth century" (SOUZA, 2013, p. 7). In the penitentiary, the Sardinian thinker wrote the so-called Prison Notebooks and Letters from the Prison, which were published after his premature death, at the age of 46.

Hegemony, for Gramsci, is the consented domination of one social class over another, or even of one nation over another, which means that domination occurs through the naturalization and legitimization of certain power and authority structures. Such a definition was popularized by the "formula" consensus + coercion, which suggests an expanded notion of the State, that is, a kind of State that remains sovereign not only by force, but mainly by consensus. It is worth noting that although he was a Marxist, Gramsci differed from Karl Marx on the conception that the state rules preponderantly by force. It is important to understand that:

For Gramsci, the State is one of the constitutive elements of this modified and changing reality, and its functioning logic will reflect the changes in the social structure and superstructure. But the State was originally seen by Marx, Engels, and Lenin above all as a coercive class structure that projected itself upon society in order to submit it through political society, that is, through the apparatuses and activities of the State that have the purpose of submitting the masses to the dominant class, its ideology, its ethics, politics, economy, and mode of production. And they were not wrong in identifying the State in this way, since until then the States actually carried such repressive structures, which excelled in their legal-institutional actions. (MARTINS, 2005, p. 126).

The different conceptions of the state can be related to the fact that Gramsci and Marx lived in different historical contexts, which greatly influenced the sedimentation of their approaches. However, their contributions to the understanding of the power of the State in the formation of the popular masses are registered. The State is considered here as in Gramsci, that is, not essentially repressive, or purely ideological, since it acts coercively, yes, but it needs consensus as much as force.

Faced with these different conceptions of the State, different "war strategies" for social transformation are proposed. On the one hand, Marxist-Leninists advocated the "war of movement"-a proletarian strategy of "direct assault on power, which has in force its primary element for the seizure of power." (MARTINS, 2005, p. 126-129). On the other hand,

Gramsci concluded that the "war of movement" would not be enough by itself, it was necessary to advance to a "war of position," since a true proletarian revolution would only occur through consensus.

According to Gramscian theory, there is in Western societies an ideological struggle for consensus, and the philosopher verifies in his analyses that modern capitalism also concluded that the hegemony of its mode of production should be based on the conjunction of force and consensus. Therefore, capitalism is interested:

obtain and maintain its power over society by its control over the means of economic production and the instruments of repression, but mainly by its ability to produce and organize consensus and the political, intellectual, and moral direction of that society. Hegemony is at the same time the ideological-political direction of civil society and the combination of force and consensus to achieve social control (ACANDA, 2006, p. 178).

When talking about a capitalist country like the US, it is convenient to refer to this new struggle for hegemony, which is anchored in the search for consensus. It is for this reason that the rapprochement of the United States with Latin America is emphasized, and here, especially with Brazil. Initially, it is noteworthy that the relations between both countries became closer still in the nineteenth century, when Brazil exercised to develop its economy with agricultural exports, seeking "[...] the necessary support for the maintenance of new political institutions, meeting the U.S. interests of expanding its consumer and supplier markets." (PEREIRA, 2009, p. 69). Later, trade relations were established between the two countries, not always friendly, as in the case of the Paraguayan War, occasion in which the U.S. positioned itself in favor of the Paraguayans.

However, as cultural relations carry the ideologies to hegemony, Tota (2000, p. 28-29), understands that such relations were strengthened in World War II, although the starting point of the Good Neighbor Policy<sup>3</sup>, has occurred decades earlier, in the management of the Republican Herbert Hoover, who traveled to Latin America, seeking to undertake new aspects to the foreign policy of that country. The American president, according to the author, was not well received in all countries through which he passed, but Brazil, on December 21, 1928, in Rio de Janeiro, greeted him warmly - the feeling of Americanism was set to the Brazilian population, in what the author called seductive imperialism, thus described:

For a long time, Americanism had forged a disreputable image of Latin America. The white, Protestant man was valued, always mentioned as the driver of progress, in the fight against the wildlife, and an opposite image was created for the Latin Americans. According to this conception, above the Rio Grande was the America of Indians, blacks, women, and children. **An America that, as a rule, needed to learn the lessons of progress and capitalism in order to abandon this 'inferior' position. An America that, ultimately, needed to be domesticated.** (TOTA, 2000, p. 30, emphasis added).

<sup>3</sup> This is a policy developed during the Roosevelt administration. Under the threat of the Nazis conquering the tropics, they tried to attract sympathy for the American way of life, a safer and more effective strategy than the open threat of military intervention. (TOTA, 2000).

The excerpt shows that Americanism forged the thought that North America was the "good example," the model to be followed by Latin America. The term "domesticated" portrays well the way the Americans saw the Latin American people, that is, as people that needed to be molded to the conjuncture of civility that the "new" political-economic context - capitalism - demanded. Tota (2000) states that it was in this vein that the Americans developed in Brazil, then, the already mentioned Good Neighbor Policy, in which they sought to exalt our country, with the appreciation of Brazilian music, the creation of Disney characters such as Zé Carioca, for example, among other "creativities," driven by the media.

The author points out that especially during the military dictatorship, a period in history more associated with European totalitarian models, the influence of the US was born and spread in Tupiniquim lands. This US influence in the Brazilian context is important to be observed because it coated the discourse of the supporters of the agreements undertaken between the two countries in such a troubled period and reinforces that the struggle for consensus was underway. A struggle to convince that the United States was the model to be followed, and also the allies that Brazil needed for its socioeconomic, political, and cultural development.

It is worth noting that the interest in the directions that Brazil would follow was of great interest to the United States, because as a capitalist power, they feared the rapprochement of Latin American countries with the coming communist regime, playing a relevant role in the composition of the strategies that led to the military coup of 1964. Moniz Bandeira (2014) presents compelling evidence that the American government, through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)<sup>4</sup>, acted directly to bring about the military dictatorship, in the text entitled *The CIA and the coup technique*. The author points out that the coup became a strategy for political transformation of the state and, in the Cold War period, a potent weapon of political intervention in foreign relations.

For Moniz Bandeira (2014, p. 12), the creation of the CIA, in 1947, emerged as proof that the North Americans did not intend to dedicate themselves "only to data collection, but to various types of psychological and paramilitary warfare operations [...], which should never be attributed [to the CIA] or to the United States government, but rather, to other people or organizations." There was the US interest in intervening in the countries with which it maintained diplomatic relations, however, without leaving transparent the influence that it would come to exercise over them, a position that was due to the fact that the discovery of the influence and sponsorship of the US in Coups of State, would lead to undesirable diplomatic conflicts, therefore "the most important rule in its execution is the possibility of plausible denial [plausible agreement]," in whose counterpart the US would totally deny any participation in coup articulations.

<sup>4</sup> The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is an Institution that aims to collect, evaluate and distribute information for use by the US administration in making national security decisions. Available at: <https://www.cia.gov>.

The military coup of 1964 had its bases prepared, according to Moniz Bandeira (2014, p.13), by the intense participation of the CIA, since it introduced a series of political operations, under the technique of "inducing the radicalization of class struggles, through psychological warfare of acts of provocation, in order to undermine the social support base of the government [...]. The consequence was its destabilization."

The interest of the United States as to the destiny of Latin American governments, among them Brazil, evidenced the concern they had as to the development of democratic regimes of their own, as well as the growing nationalist sentiment that would result from this, thus distancing the influence of the Americans in diplomatic relations, due to the feeling of anti-Americanism that could emerge, as had occurred in Cuba.

As far as Brazil was concerned, the stance of the United States had as its main intent "to weaken and overthrow the government of President João Goulart [...], especially with the aim of modifying Brazil's foreign policy, which defended the principles of self-determination of peoples and opposed armed intervention in Cuba." (MONIZ BANDEIRA, 2014, p.14-15). It is pointed out that the period of João Goulart's government has been identified by many scholars as the most democratic of the Brazilian Republic before the Coup of 64.

For Delgado (2009, p.125) Jango "guided, with unquestionable coherence, his political practice by an option of renewed consolidation of the Vargas legacy and by the adoption and support of initiatives aimed at the expansion of social citizenship and the defense of national economic interests." Because of this, the aforementioned author considers him one of Brazil's main labor leaders.

Meanwhile, João Goulart's government was seen as pernicious to National Security, because by defending Cuba's sovereignty and self-determination, he constituted a "communist threat," which "hindered Kennedy's objectives." On such a question, Moniz Bandeira (2014, p.16) mentions that the American president, when gathering the National Security Council to analyze Brazil's situation, both in terms of its political positioning and payments due, would then have suspended all funding to the Goulart government, "doing[...] nothing to alleviate the difficulties of its external accounts, and only allocating resources to the states, then called 'islands of administrative sanity,' whose governors were militant anti-communists." Taking, therefore, the Brazilian government as a communist threat, the US proceeded to infiltrate agents, as if they were civilians, with the objective of elaborating contingency actions and intervening militarily in Brazil, "in the face of the eventuality that João Goulart, as a consequence of the economic pressure from the United States, would react and veer to the left, not exactly communist but in the form of ultra-nationalist authoritarianism," the author concludes.

As a matter of convenience, of masking the facts, the official history of both countries does not mention this American action. However, what we saw after the coup was a closer relationship between Brazil and the United States, the latter being one of the major funders of the policies implemented during the military dictatorship, as we will see below:

The Brazilian regime change in April 1964 made the country the main beneficiary of the Alliance [for Progress] in the entire hemisphere, receiving the largest portion of the financial commitment disbursed by Washington by the end of the decade. This when, not surprisingly, Brazil had become the most flagrant case in which the US used its foreign aid to foster the economy of a country whose political system was in stark contrast with the ideal democratic model described in the Punta Del Este Charter (RIBEIRO, 2006, p. 166).

One can observe, therefore, the contradiction in the great investment of a country that presented itself as a model of democracy - the U.S. - in a country taken by an antidemocratic coup - Brazil. Nevertheless, this was only a step towards what was to follow, that is, the various agreements between the two countries, in which it is possible to conjecture the hegemonic interests of the United States. Among these alliances, this article presents the MEC/USAID Agreements, in the context of Higher Education.

### 3 The MEC/USAID Agreements and the reforms in Higher Education (1965-1968): construction of hegemonic discourses of modernization

In the path taken so far, it is possible to glimpse that the relationship between Brazil and the U.S. has been established under various aspects, since before the time when this article is circumscribed; hence the need to raise the discussions proposed above. Thus, this section brings up the object of study raised, highlighting the MEC/USAID Agreements and their importance in maintaining US hegemony over Brazil, specifically in the educational field.

Although the proposed study focuses on the reform of Higher Education, the North American presence had already been established at other levels of education, with the Alliance for Progress Program, which constituted a broad cooperative program that intended to accelerate the development of Latin American countries, among them Brazil. But the Latin American political context of the past, especially the one that resulted in the Cuban revolution, can be pointed as a cause for changes in US foreign policy. From this perspective, Ribeiro (2006, p.157) understands that the Alliance for Progress was about:

an effort to address the causes of Latin American discontent, driven by the forces of nationalism and what was known as the 'revolution of rising aspirations.' It was recognized that there was a general desire for economic and social change in local societies, which, if unmet, could increase the danger of the spread of communism on the continent, as the Cuban example showed.

It is clear that there was an interest in keeping the other Latin American countries under the American capitalist production model. According to Rosas (1992, p.28) "under the pretext of promoting a common effort to accelerate economic development and social progress in Latin America, the Alliance for Progress anticipated the possible socialist seduction [...]. Corroborating such a statement, Tota (2000, p.47) adds that:

The misery resulting from the economic backwardness of Latin American countries could propitiate revolutions led by nationalists, socialists, or sympathizers of Nazi-fascism, movements that put the interests of the United States in check. [...]

Inter-American Development Commission was formed, [then] with the objective of promoting the economic potentialities of the 'other American Republics.' In the eyes of American strategists, the weakness - not only economic and social, but also military - of Latin American countries was a direct threat to the United States.

As a strategy to counteract anti-Americanism, Ribeiro (2006, p.158) alerts that the Alliance for Progress Program, detailed in the Punta del Este Charter (1961), proposed that the US seal of approval would be "accompanied by a voluntary attempt on the part of the signatory countries to formulate national development plans, implement projects in accordance with these plans, and adapt their development efforts to the general structure outlined by American aid". The United States Agency for International Development - USAID, the agency responsible for the operationalization of the Program, then emerged.

Pina (2008, p.1) corroborates when he states that USAID acted, "not only in Brazil, but in all peripheral countries, [...] to ensure the validity of the capitalist system [...] and transfer to them the conceptions and social, political and economic organization that prevailed in the United States". Thus, the interest in Brazil was based on an American belief: the conception that their country was "[...] holding potential power to control or influence the ways of the continent, to the detriment or benefit of their interests." (PEREIRA, 2009, p.158). However, the intended alliance did not materialize as the US government had planned, as:

The launching of the program coincided with the inauguration of the Jânio Quadros government, which brought a new approach to Brazilian foreign policy. A new paradigm was imposed, for various reasons, and lasted even during the troubled government of his successor João Goulart. But it was not only official policy that brought tensions in Brazil-U.S. relations. The turn toward an independent policy had deeper political and economic causes.

It is worth noting that the American aid came up against the new political-economic delineation of Brazil, interposing itself in the clash between the "cosmopolitan developmentalists" and the "national developmentalists," whose only consensus was the need to industrialize the country. The divergence consisted in the means to do so, involving foreign investments, with Cosmopolitans (in favor) and Developmentalists (against). According to Ribeiro (2006, p.159), "in the period 1961-64, a crisis in the reception of the developmental ideology was established," under which it is possible to verify the polarization of desires for the directions Brazil should follow.

Regarding the strategies of the Program in the educational area - seen at the time from the standpoint of the Human Capital theory - they were grounded in the concept of education aimed at national development, which figured as a progressive strategy. Bordignon (2011, p. 7) recalls that:

If the theory of human capital, then in development, was based on the idea that investment in education could mean a rise in future incomes, it is clear that by adopting a similar stance, the signatories of the document sought the economic development of their societies with the purpose of inserting them into the globalized capitalist system, but with the pretext that educating the Latin American peoples would lead them to a situation of dignity and full social welfare.

In this vein, the Alliance for Progress Program was configured in Brazil as a first legal form (albeit in a conflicting context) of influence on the directions of education in the country. In this period, Bordignon (2011, p. 8) understands that the funding made possible, for example, "the construction of dozens of new technical schools, significantly expanded enrollments in basic education and higher education, and increased education in the agricultural area." With this, the interest in Brazilian education is linked to the search for consensus, and the Gramscian formula of coercion + consensus was already being designed, and it should be noted that the Program paved the way for what would come after the military coup: the reflections of the MEC/USAID Agreements in the context of the University, with the reform of Higher Education in 1968.

For this analysis, we resort to the work of Rosas (1992, p.17-20), whose title brings the instigating question: Reform, for what? In the author's conception, it is only reformed what is not good or when "the risk of deviation from the route is perceived, [i.e.], one changes to change and to prevent change from occurring." Although from past times, the questionings raised are pertinent, because deep changes on the social and economic level were drawn in the Post-coup of 1964 and considering that education is not neutral, it constituted an important strategy. The author continues: "Reform, for what? To achieve an autonomous, free, creative university? One that lives a democratic internal experience and whose access represents a transposable obstacle, without class privileges?" It conjectures, then, the need to reflect on the fact that, before any Reform, one must consider the type of university one seeks to constitute, as well as under which ideology it will be designed. In the sequel, he calls for: "let us have the courage to abandon well-behaved reformulations and reach deep changes, without ceasing to be consequential. Change not to maintain the status quo. Change to change," concludes the scholar.

In the context of the reforms undertaken by the military government, an ideology of modernization was being disseminated. On the role of the modernization discourse that the American model sought to inculcate in the minds of Brazilians, Cunha (2007, p. 287) states that "[...] it was intended to place the university at the service of the priority production of a new labor force required by monopoly Capital organized in state and private 'multinational' forms." This is because, according to the scholar, relying on Gramsci, the University seen as an apparatus of hegemony, was the stage for hegemonic struggles for the formation of organic intellectuals within its own space.

In Gramsci's terms (2001, p. 21) organic intellectuals "far from being an autonomous and independent group, would in fact be the 'preppers' of the dominant group for the exercise of the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government." Because of this, the Sardinian philosopher states that:

1) Every social group, being born on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates for itself, at the same time, organically, one or more layers of intellectuals that give it homogeneity and consciousness of its own function, not only in the economic field, but also in the social and political field: the capitalist entrepreneur creates for himself the technician of industry, the

scientist of political economy, the organizer of a new culture, of a new law, etc. 2) Every 'essential' social group, however, emerging in history from the previous economic structure and as an expression of the development of this structure, found - at least in the history that has unfolded up to our days - pre-existing intellectual categories, which appeared as representatives of a historical continuity that was not interrupted even by the most complicated and radical modifications of social and political forms. (GRAMSCI, 2001, p. 15-16).

Thus, it is that "the relation between intellectuals and the world of production is not immediate, [...] but is 'mediated,' to varying degrees, by the whole social fabric, by the whole of the superstructures, of which intellectuals are precisely the 'functionaries.'" (GRAMSCI, 2001, p. 20). In these terms, one can understand the reason for so much "investment" in the so-called modernization of Higher Education: the struggle for consensus in the formation of organic intellectuals, whose conquest is determinant in power relations:

[...] all men are intellectuals, but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals [...] One of the most striking characteristics of every group that develops towards domination is its struggle for the assimilation and 'ideological' conquest of traditional intellectuals, an assimilation and conquest that are all the more rapid and effective the more the group in question is capable of simultaneously elaborating its own organic intellectuals. (GRAMSCI, 2001, p. 18).

From these stems the relationship with the discussions of the University Reform in a context of hegemony, since when looking at Higher Education it is understood that the State relies on the organic intellectual that is formed in the Academy. Germano (2008, p. 323), also considers that added to the discourse of modernization and development, was the democratizing reformist, opposed to another based on the doctrine of national security, discipline and order.

From this angle, Cunha (2007, p. 15) warns that "the modernization-imperialism binomial is the key to understanding the process" of university reform undertaken in the 1960s, which can be defined "in the context of strengthening the political and economic subordination of the country, [as] responsible for building the university in Brazil according to the most advanced model of the North American capitalist world." Hence the US interest in guiding the Educational Reforms, in the name of a supposed modernization.

On the modernization-imperialism binomial proposed by Cunha (2007, p. 23), he himself points out that the 1940s are the initial milestone of the modernization process of higher education, "when the services of an American consultant were requested by the Ministry of Aeronautics [of Brazil] to help outline plans for the creation of a Technological Institute." Such an episode, for Germano (2008, p. 320), demarcates that "the democratization process, then underway in Brazilian society since the 1940s, was abruptly interrupted." After all, Cunha (2007) advocates that the military coup was decisive in maintaining this process, which culminated, on June 23, 1965, with the first Agreement signed between the MEC and USAID, aimed specifically at Higher Education.

Before going into the Agreements, it should be pointed out that during the dictatorship an intense salvationist discourse was in vogue in Brazil, in which "the Army and the Armed

Forces saved democracy, saved Brazil from disorder, subversion and communism, thus opening the doors to development and progress, as order was re-established." Such discourse permeated this dark phase of the country and involved the Institutional Acts "opened to ascertain the subversion of order and corruption, in the various sectors of social life and in all public pronouncements of the authorities." (GERMANO, 2008, p. 321). The discourse, in a context of hegemony, as discussed in this paper, is essential to understand the struggle for consensus and hegemony. One cannot fail to point out that the US was the democratic model to be followed, and thus, the guidelines coming from the Agreements were well regarded.

The recently mentioned MEC/USAID Agreement (1965) would have its actions based on a University context, in which problems such as "obsolete structures, unsatisfactory libraries, existence of courses without labor market evaluation, not very flexible curricula, low student performance, part-time students and professors, absence of a global planning" were found. (ROSAS, 1992, p. 36). These aspects stand out, among other situations pointed out in a diagnosis made similarly to what the Higher Team Education group of consultants had already done in 1964, in terms of Higher Education. About these actions Cunha (2007, p. 156) points out that

The goal of Higher Team Education was to find ways to bring higher education assistance into line with USAID's overall strategy and to advise on the desirability of organizing a program specifically for higher education, as already existed for other areas. On this strategy, the group's frame of reference stated that USAID saw higher education as an element of human resource training and as a means of increasing industrial and agricultural production, [...] it did not expect to alter strategies to include institutional change among its larger goals. In other words, 'assistance' was to be given to Higher Education, [as] it existed at the time. [...].

It is clear from the official discourse, that USAID, already in 1964, demonstrated its interest in Higher Education, even if, appearing modest, it presented itself as a mere "assistant" in improving the quality of Brazilian universities, not taking, therefore, the responsibility for institutional reformulation. It happens that, with the military takeover, the consultants withdrew and "produced a dense report, Gardner Report, because of the name of the highest leader of USAID in Brazil." (CUNHA, 2007, p.157). This document opened space for what would come to characterize the 1965 MEC/USAID Agreements.

Regarding the 1965 Agreement, Rosas (1992, p. 36) points out that such an agreement had as its objective "the elaboration of a series of plans for the expansion and restructuring of the national university education system, the creation of an efficient mechanism for elaborating plans and the adoption of a cadre of technicians in educational planning." To achieve this goal, the author mentions that the MEC would have to appoint high-level Brazilian educators so that, together with USAID technicians, they could carry out the educational planning that the Brazilian University needed. This is the Higher Education Planning Team (EPES), whose competencies Cunha (2007, p.162) traces to the important profile of comparing "the diagnosed reality" to something considered as "an ideal system of Higher Education for Brazil." Thus, it would define "the direction of transformation according to the needs of the country's development, as it would also make suggestions in

terms of curricula, teaching methods, and research programs; and of other less vital issues for Higher Education."

One can see that there was a very wide scope in the actions of the U.S. in the construction of an identity of the Brazilian University at the time. This is because curricula, teaching materials, and especially research programs are not constituted without a world ideology, that is, without taking into consideration the ideology that a country is supposed to assume as a parameter. At the time, there were those who positioned themselves in favor of the Agreements and the interference of the Americans in Higher Education issues, but also those who opted for confrontation, although suffering the consequent repression. As an example, Cunha (2007) states that, due to the prominent position of the then Federal Education Council (CFE), the MEC placed it as an intervening party in the agreement with USAID, without, however, foreseeing what would be the real participation of the Body in the plans of the Agreement.

The US hegemony was, by these strategies, interposed in the plan of Higher Education, even with the reinforcement of the 1st National Conference on Education (CNE), from March to April 1965, which pointed out in its final text, the importance of adopting models and techniques from other nations, as a reference point for the reform to be undertaken. Thus, even with the resistance movements, the MEC/USAID agreement related to the constitution of the EPES, "despite being an instrument of the greatest political importance, was signed by the president of the [CFE] ad referendum of the plenary." (CUNHA, 2007, p. 163), which demonstrates the great interest in instilling the Agreement in the context of universities, as well as deterring possible resistance.

As previously mentioned, the North American presence in educational matters, especially those related to Brazilian universities, was not easily accepted. This even led to the establishment of a clause in the Agreement, which provided for the obligation of the Brazilian government to invest in publicity on behalf of the US, which was not done, "perhaps to avoid turning to the MEC the forces that were fighting against US imperialism." (CUNHA, 2007, p. 164-165). Thus, the author indicates that new ideology was inaugurated with the second Accord, of May 1967, under the auspices of a team "constituted in the wake of an ascendant student movement, which had in USAID one of its main targets of attack." This new team then had an "A" for Advisory added to its "old" nomenclature, and thus would go from EPES to EAPES. Not without meaning, "advisory" carried the idea of a more modest goal, for while "the 1965 agreement stipulated the general planning of Higher Education, [that of 1967] beckoned for a collaboration with the planning that the MEC would already be doing." Despite the attempt to keep tempers under control, what occurred, in fact, is that the reforming objective of the Accords remained.

It is also worth mentioning that in 1965, Atcon's<sup>5</sup> studies, conducted in 12 Brazilian universities (from Pará to Rio Grande do Sul), were in line with the objectives of the first Agreement, as they brought a diagnosis that supported the planning of the related actions. About this diagnosis, Rosas (1992, p.42) emphasizes that, despite Professor Atcon's technical competence, the texts prepared by him "lead to an artificial structure, marked by internal authoritarianism and technocratism," and adds that such writings leave "always in the air the assumption of ideological disinterest, of centralization in the ideas of modernization of the structure and organization and of administrative efficiency," which would be naive to believe, since a reform of the magnitude that was intended to be established would not undress from a very well planned political project.

The importance of Atcon's studies, according to Rosas (1992), goes far beyond diagnosis, considering that he was hired by MEC's Higher Education directorate to propose an educational model for this segment. For all Atcon's historical path, it can be said that he became, then, in the view especially of the students, a public enemy of the Brazilian University. Cunha (2007, p.27), after presenting an excerpt from a chapter of the booklet printed by the Freshmen Reception Committee of the School of Economics and Administrative Sciences/USP, concludes that it is the most interesting synthesis of how students saw Atcon's diagnosis. For the author, the text demonstrated how the students "were clear about the articulations between the consultants (Atcon and those from USAID) and the general direction of their proposals: the modernization of Higher Education and the demobilization of the student movement." The need for confrontation was urgent.

Several student movements rose up against the hegemonic conception of education that was envisioned in the Accords, especially after the murder of the Para student Edson Luís de Lima Souto<sup>6</sup>. For Amorim and Silva (2016, p.183-184) "it was a kind of trigger for several street demonstrations that exploded in the following years," given the dissatisfactions that were heightened in the three years of the military government. The students organized themselves as a force to confront the regime, and thus, "the movement [that] was active in the demands for reforms that echoed even before the Coup [and had as] central headquarters of the category the Paraenses Academic Union - UAP," an entity linked to the National Student Union (UNE), was one of the first to suffer military intervention, for being considered a place of subversion.

Thus, "the army colonel José Lopes de Oliveira, known as 'needlefish,' invaded the headquarters with his troops. This episode was marked by violence and arrests of the UAP representatives." Due to the repercussion of the Pará student's murder, national authors

<sup>5</sup> Rudolph P. Atcon was a professor at the University of Houston/USA who had already been in Brazil, advising Anísio Teixeira in the organization and implementation of CAPES. The MEC/USAID agreements were complemented by his works: Rumo à reformulação estrutural da Universidade Brasileira (1966) and Manual sobre planejamento integral do Campus Universitário (1970), according to Rosas (1992, p. 42-43).

<sup>6</sup> To claim a new educational policy and fight against the dictatorship, on March 28, 1968, students gathered in the student restaurant "Calabouço", one of the symbols of the Brazilian youth struggle of the 1960s, when the police invaded the place and murdered Edson Luís. This fact generated numerous protests throughout the country (AMORIM; SILVA, 2016, p. 184).

highlight it as emblematic in the movement mentioning that in "Belem, the students depredated the headquarters of the United States Information Service (USIS), an organ of cultural dissemination," (CUNHA, 2007, p. 217), demonstrating the great aversion to the North American presence in the Brazilian educational context.

The dissatisfaction regarding the directions of Higher Education in Brazil was linked to the fact that Atcon (1966, p. 24 apud PINA, 2011, p.65-66) defended the planning of the educational system aimed at market needs. To this end, the University would have to follow the following objectives: education and professional training, scientific research and Specialization courses, University Extension, and general Higher Education.

The first HEI that the consultant described was the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), pointing out that "it has a central administration, structurally better than that of the traditional past and the professor has suffered a conscious decrease in importance." Thus, at UFPA "it is only necessary to offer more ample resources and a greater freedom of action, so that this university can follow its right path of renewal and growth," Atcon concludes.

In practice, the MEC/USAID Agreements did not mean direct changes in educational policy. However, they decisively influenced the formulations and guidelines that would lead to the Reform process of Brazilian education during the military dictatorship, especially the Meira Mattos Commission (1967) and the University Reform Working Group (GTRU) of 1968, which were decisive in the University Reform (Law no. 5.540/1968) and in the Reform of Primary and Secondary Education (Law no. 5.692/1971).

Here we must return to the question that is the title of the work by Rosas (1992): Reform for what? In Germano (2008, p. 324) one finds a plausible answer of "first of all, the military intended to put Brazil in order" and then, for the military government it was necessary to "reform institutions according to its strategic vision of progress, symbolized by the idea of Brazil/power and also to contain social and political dissatisfactions against the regime." The author concludes, that "the reform of the educational system did not start at its base, but at its top - Higher Education." It is in this scenario that the United States was able to further strengthen its hegemony over Brazil, and the Accords consisted of a strategy that left the mark of this hegemony in the organization of Higher Education.

Considering Gramsci (2001), it can be seen that in the analysis of the Agreements regarding the hegemony of the United States over Brazil, there is the struggle for consensus, and the Brazilian University is the stage of this struggle, since it forms organic intellectuals, whether hegemonic or counter hegemonic. Thus, the great challenge continues to be "the creation of an environment of practices and political formation that favors changes in the common sense that is increasingly hegemonized by conservative ideologies, [...]" and bringing us closer to "devastating experiences that have upset the 20th century," such as the Reform of higher education, influenced by the MEC/USAID Agreements.

## Conclusion

This study, in order to base its analysis, started from the conception that hegemony is expressly linked to the issue of cultural identity, as conceived by Hall (2006). Therefore, the dawn of the two nations (Brazil and USA) had an impact on the way they conducted their foreign policies: Brazil, dependent on foreign capital investments, and the USA as the successful power of the capitalist production model.

Then, the research tried to point out that the approximation between the two countries was also cultural, in which a deep feeling of Americanism was developed in Brazil, provided by the Good Neighbor Policy developed by the Americans. Obviously, it was made clear in the article that this approach has always been related to the foreign policy of both countries. Finally, we aimed to bring the discussion to the educational field, because based on Gramsci (2001) and his conception of school as an ideological apparatus, it is necessary to consider that the Agreements studied act on the maintenance of American hegemony in Brazil.

Regarding the Agreements MEC/USAID, the discourse of modernization on which was based the University Reform outlined under the guidance of American consultants, as a way out to solve the problems faced by the University made it clear that it was about following a model taken as successful, of a capitalist power, the U.S. (PINA, 2008, 2011).

Thus, the discourses of modernization would have worked as a means for the formation of organic intellectuals who would contribute to the maintenance of the hegemonic capitalist model, which had as its main exponent the United States. For them, as observed in the analyses developed earlier, it was important to have a great country like Brazil under their "care," under their material, ideological, and educational power.

The prestigious author Cunha (2007, p. 294) is emphatic in pointing out the failure of the agreement between the MEC and USAID. This is because "the enormous opposition of public opinion, which was expressed in student demonstrations and in the Federal Education Council, meant that the Brazilian counterpart of EAPES did not have members up to the objectives, making the government's purposes unfeasible."

However, it must be considered, in view of the author's exposition, that although it failed, USAID led to deep structural changes in universities, such as the division into Departments, the institution of Exclusive Dedication regimes and the model of access to Higher Education that was in force until very recently: the then Vestibular; among others.

Therefore, after the analyses of the context that involved the object of study of this research, that is, the MEC/USAID agreements (1964 to 1968), important reflections were embodied on how hegemony, so discussed by Gramsci, materialized in a turbulent period in Brazil - the military dictatorship. However, as seen in this article, it did not "appear," on the contrary, this hegemony came to be processed throughout the historical times of Brazil and the USA, based not only on financial dependence, but above all on ideology.

It is valid to consider the contemporaneity of the proposed discussions in the midst of a dark period in which the country lives, after the election of the current president Jair Messias Bolsonaro, a government in which there is a real "witch hunt" regarding the public university. An attempt has been made to implant an ideology of inefficiency and demoralization towards the science produced in Brazilian federal universities, which goes back to the anti-democratic military period that exposed the need for university reform, under very similar discourses.

About the troubled political moment, one must conclude the debate with Leher (2019, p. 13), who questions: "what led the Federal Government to privilege as an arena of conflict education, Science and culture?" Such a question could even be remodeled as follows: "what has always led authoritarian governments (still disguised as democratic) to privilege as an arena of conflict education, science, and culture? In Gramsci, we find a plausible answer: to maintain the hegemony of Capital, in a war of position, in which the fight for consensus and for forming its organic intellectuals are the "warlike" weapons of modernity.

It is then up to the masses of workers to oppose in a counter-hegemonic movement in defense of the public University, of the full development of Science and access to culture, inalienable rights of the Brazilian population, systematically threatened, government after government. This counter-hegemonic movement is urgent, in order to purify the system and its tentacles, which insist on shackling us.

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