Cultural philanthropy and political exile: the Ford Foundation between Argentina and The United States (1959-1979)

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Abstract: This article aims to reconstruct the role played by a giant of American philanthropy—the Ford Foundation (FF) — in Argentina starting from a very critical moment for Inter-American relations during the Cold War: 1959. The research is based on an extensive amount of archive sources, including specific information about the *grants* given by the foundation to hard science professionals in order to escape the political emergency of the mid-Sixties. This contribution will be divided into three parts (i) a brief introduction to the main goals and strategy of the FF and strategy in Latin America in light of the imperatives of the bipolar conflict (ii) the role played in supporting social sciences and organizing *resettlement* programs (iii) the several contradictions in the process of welcoming these scholars in the U.S. academies.

Keywords: Political exile; Cultural philanthropy; Inter-American relations.

Filantropia cultural e exílio político: a Fundação Ford entre Argentina e os Estados Unidos (1959-1979)

Resumo: Este artigo tem como propósito reconstruir o rol desempenhado pelo gigante da filantropia estadunidense — a Fundação Ford (FF) — na Argentina, a partir de um momento muito crítico das relações interamericanas durante a Guerra Fria: 1959. A pesquisa está baseada em uma extensa quantidade de fontes provenientes de arquivos, incluindo informações específicas sobre as quantias doadas pela Fundação para profissionais das ciências duras com o fim de escapar da emergência política a meados dos anos 1960. Essas contribuições serão divididas em três partes: (i) uma breve introdução aos principais objetivos e estratégias da FF na América Latina à luz dos imperativos do conflito bipolar; (ii) o papel desempenhado no apoio às ciências sociais e à organização de programas de reassentamento; e (iii) as diversas contradições no processo de boas-vindas aos acadêmicos nos EUA.

Palavras-chave: Exílio político; Filantropia cultural; Relações Interamericanas.

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The aim of this article is to reflect on the role that the Ford Foundation (FF), "the paragon of modern nonprofit foundations in the 20th century" (Curti, 1963; Bell, 1971), played as a sponsor in promoting exile procedures for a number of academics and intellectuals from Argentina to the United States under the authoritarian governments of the 1960s and 1970s. A vast amount of unpublished material retrieved from the central archive in New York[1] has made it possible to outline the many strategies—at times admittedly fraught with contradictions and ambivalences—whereby a number of aid projects for victims of political violence were devised and managed. While arguably of limited relevance in terms of the actual number of beneficiaries involved, such strategies of support are instead compelling for gaining at least a general grasp of the value sets that inform a part of the United States not necessarily coterminous with the North American Department of State.

To address the specific context of this case study, we will put forth a theoretical and methodological premise with regards to the choice of the Ford Foundation as the main catalyst of this story: our underlying conviction is that the study of Latin American exiles can also benefit from new approaches in historiography developed over the last few decades. As regards the study of international relations and specifically the turns of diplomatic history which frequently come up in the retracing of the paths and the roles played by individuals and governments even in processes of exile, we can think, for instance, of the so-called New *Diplomatic History (NDH) approach*.[2] This approach focuses on subjects who had not been previously considered strictly as bearers of diplomacy, within a global reappraisal of the broader scope of politics, both nationally and internationally. For one, the rise of a global civil society has deeply altered the space and the functioning of political rules while at the same time blurring the boundaries, once far more sharply defined, between state actors and non-state actors. As a result, even in the study of Latin American exile, attention is being paid to state and/or non-governmental actors by members of the historical, social and political sciences (Sznajder and Roniger, 2009; Franco, 2008; Jensen, 2010; Dutrénit Bielous, Montaño and Los Santos, 2008).

It is within these premises that we decided to sketch an analytical outline of the role played by the Ford Foundation, which Parmar among others included in the so-called '*Big* 3', together with the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations. These are social actors who "despite their image of scientific impartiality, ideological-political neutrality and being above the market and independent of the state" were "extremely influential in America's rise to global hegemony over the past century", since they provided "the intellectual and political bases that would assist America's rise to global leadership" (Parmar, 2012, p. 2).

[1] The material was acquired by the Rockefeller Foundation a few years ago and is currently stored in the central archive (RAC) at Sleepy Hollow, Terrytown, NJ.

[2] Consider for instance the methodology-based seminar developed in the context of the Spanish CSIC: <http://cchs.csic.es/es/event/seminario-estudios-internacionales-nueva-historia-diplomatica-problemas-retos-metodologicos>.

More recent research in the field of political science would suggest that large foundations could also be effective examples of *smart power*, understood as a skillful blend of *hard* and *soft* power wielded by the US towards foreign countries (Parmar and Rietzler, 2014).

Cold war and cultural foundations in Inter-American relations

Historiography has long demonstrated that the Ford Foundation played a leading role in an overarching strategy of cultural propaganda which coincided with the establishment of the US hegemonic identity on a global scale (Heydemann and Kinsey, 2010), even more specifically within the time frame of the Cold War. Take, for instance, the working group that involved Spanish historians such as Antonio Niño, Lorenzo Delgado, José Antonio Montero over the subject of the North American cultural offensive in Europe and Latin America (Niño, 2009; Niño and Montero, 2012), or the line of research pursued by Nicholas J. Cull (2008) on the dialectics between propaganda and cultural diplomacy.

Complementing a series of long-established classics on American philanthropic foundations in general (Arndt, 2005; Arnove, 1982), fresh research has recently appeared (Hammack and Smith, 2018; Zunz, 2011; Reich, Bernholz and Cordelli, 2016) on the specific role of the Ford Foundation. Innovative studies have also started to zero in on the subject of Inter-American relations, such as those of Calandra (2015), which addressed a medium-term timeframe in the sub-continent, and Quesada (2015), which shed light on the three-way relationship that existed between the Ford Foundation, universities in Chile and universities in the US. Recently, scholars have also started using the category of *philanthrocapitalism* or *strategic philanthropy*, to emphasize how these institutions rely on *business practices* applied to philanthropic projects and use market-driven procedures for the resolution of social issues (Thompson, 2018; Tedesco, 2015).

The Foundation, set up in 1936 on the initiative of the Henry Ford family with the aim of maintaining control of the *Ford Motor Company*, benefited from inheritance tax relief and explicitly endorsed philanthropic objectives, even though it split from its parent company in 1950. During the post-World War II period, it played a leading role in European cultural policies mostly via the tool of project financing (or *grants*). In this sense, along the lines suggested by Giuliana Gemelli (1998, 1997) the course of action of this colossus of philanthropy could well be defined as the "softer" and "more communicative" side of US political and cultural strategies during the Iron Curtain, as well as a crucial point of intersection—in the terms proposed by Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2005)—between *champ intellectuel* and *champ politique*.

The European context has been the subject of extensive research. Think, for instance, of the situation in Italy, which was reconstructed mainly thanks to the solid study conducted by

Gemelli. Gemelli traced the rise of the great cultural foundations in her country, institutions which in her words "acted as channels of expanded sociability, both academic and intellectual, organizational and projectual" even at a time when non-profit associations in Italy had no legal existence (Gemelli, 2000). Attempts were then made to tap the American model by replicating the social setup of the corporate world and the reproduction strategies of the ruling class, placed in a "context of elective affinities, characterized by a shared vision of modernity" (Gemelli, 2000, p. 652). All of this was part of a very specific strategy. Gemelli also suggests that starting from the 1950s, the presence of the Ford Foundation in Italy should be considered within a major shift of financial resources from military research to scientific and humanistic research, which marked a less aggressive phase in the Cold War (Gemelli, 1994). The Ford Foundation's interest in Europe fell largely within a limited time frame: after an initial, pioneering phase (1958-64) and a subsequent phase (1964-69), we witness the progressive withdrawal of funds, coinciding with the management of Mc George Bundy.

By the 1960s, priority of intervention was shifting away from The Old Continent, and towards countries in the Southern Hemisphere. In fact, it should be noted that the Ford Foundation began to act on an international scale precisely as conflict broke out between the two superpowers. The other two giants described by Parmar—Rockefeller and Carnegie—were instead major players between the 1920s and 1950s, during the pioneering phase in the construction of a liberal internationalism (Parmar, 2012, p. 3).

It is in the context of the so-called "cultural cold war", a category developed essentially from the US diplomatic-cultural offensive in Europe (Smith and Krabbendam 2003; Saunders, 2001), that we will therefore endeavor to examine the Foundation's work. The scope of this examination, however, does not take place so much within The Old Continent, but in the areas more recently grouped by historiographers under the heading of 'Global South' (Connelly, 2000; Harmer, 2014; Harmer and Riquelme, 2014). Among these, Latin America. Historiography has so far produced a substantial critical mass of studies on US hegemonic construction in its so-called 'backyard', in terms of military interventions, *covert intelligence actions*, financial loans and the widespread, pervasive presence of multinational companies such as the *United Fruit Company*. Only recently, however, attention has veered towards an analysis of cultural policies and their various modes of local implementation (Joseph and Spenser, 2008; Calandra and Franco, 2012; Iber, 2015).

Keeping an eye on Inter-American relations deeply affected by the precarious balances of the Cold War, it is worth noting that the Ford Foundation played a most prominent role for many Latin American universities and research centers, both in terms of on-site funding and with regard to the reception and training of academics in the United States. Latin America—the subject of great disquiet for the State Department after the Cuban Revolution and therefore a privileged arena for an ideological showdown—was thus to benefit from a comprehensive package of interventions.

Global cultural investment in the area was actually being considered as early as 1957 (FFA, 1957). However, following Castro's conclusive success—a watershed event for the geopolitical equilibrium of the entire region—the Ford Foundation became "the largest financial sponsor for social sciences in the subcontinent", with investments of nearly 250 million dollars in that area between 1959 and 1983 (equivalent to 17% of global international programs) (FFA, 1984, p. 12).

Latin American studies were also financed generously across the US to meet a clear-cut need: to achieve a thorough understanding and to possibly start curbing the social and political turmoil in what at the time was seen as a highly volatile environment (SCLASSR, 1970). After the first interlocutory missions of 1957, projects acquired prominence in the Latin American area in 1959—a most significant year in terms of Inter-American relations (FFA, Wolf, 1959).

It is within this context that we are better able to grasp the sense of the collaborative bonds between Latin American universities and study centers established during those years. Such bonds would prove essential during the authoritarian turns of 1970s, as they were turned into channels for privileged reception.

The relation with Argentina and the flight of hard scientists during the Onganía regime (1966-70)

Argentina was an object of early interest for the Ford Foundation, especially *vis à vis* other Latin American countries.[3] By 1959, the political plight of the country was already under high scrutiny (FFA, K. H. Silvert, 1959). Among its various aims, the Foundation expressed the urgent need to support the social sciences, after the "painful academic landscape left by the years of Perón", in order to boost the education of "a new generation of young and modern social scientists" (FFA, N. Manitzas to R. E. Carlson, 1971, p. 1; FFA, Adams, 1970). Millions of dollars were invested in *grants* for disciplines like economics and sociology, as well as for regional studies that came to the fore with the lectures held by Gino Germani and Jorge Enrique Hardoy (FFA, N. Manitzas to R. E. Carlson, 1971, p. 2). Studies on urban movements became a privileged area of inquiry since at least the mid-1960s (FFA, Ziccardi, 1973), but disciplinary funding progressively expanded to embrace the most varied fields of knowledge: from marine biology to social anthropology, from the natural sciences to medicine (FFA, Pearson, 1963; FFA, Corson, 1966; FFA, Reina, 1963; FFA, Bixler, 1965, 1966, 1971). As investigated by Murmis (2007), the Foundation played a crucial role in institutionalizing, professionalizing and internationalizing the social sciences in the country.

[3] For an overview of Ford programs in the Latin American South see The Ford Foundation (2003).

Argentina therefore plays a preferential role in the Latin American continent, only slightly inferior to the one played by Chile (Calandra, 2012). As for research in science and the humanities, we should not forget the support given from 1958 to the Torcuato Di Tella institute in Buenos Aires, eventually reshaped into the *Centro de Investigación en Administración Pública* in 1967 (CIAP). During the early 1960s, the Foundation recognized neither private nor public campuses as stable partners and preferred to cooperate with an independent center, which represented 'a paradigm of pluralism' (Berger and Blugerman, 2017, p. 9). It is worth mentioning that its origins can be traced back to 1959, when the sons of Torcuato di Tella, founder of one of the richest national factories, decided to devote 13 million dollars from the family foundation to the new centre (Cassese, 2008).

The Di Tella institute had played a crucial role in the cultural life of Buenos Aires and the whole nation, as it was extensively investigated by cultural historian and Latin American studies specialist John King (2007). In a way, this institution epitomized the liberal culture of Argentina and according to some renowned intellectuals, such as Oscar Masotta, it constituted a place where fine arts, political radicalization, nationalism and populism could ideally merge. Recently, some authors have also delved into another, less known field which was also encouraged and promoted there, such as theatrical and dance performances. In her *Teatro expandido* Pinta (2013) highlights, for instance, how important the Di Tella was for a whole generation looking to new political and artistic horizons, and how much it contributed to the "post Peronist cultural modernization project", according to Oscar Terán's definition (1998).

Another important date is 1963, thanks to funding of the *Fundación Bariloche* (FFA, Manitzas, 1967; FFA, Grinóvald, 1980; FFA, Petrecolla, 1991). Funding was also maintained until the end of the 1970s for the *Centro de Estudios Urbanos y Regionales* (CEUR), the *Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* (FLACSO) and the *Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales* (CLACSO) (FFA, H. Simons, 1968; FFA, K. N. Rao to J. Nagel, 1971). Several young students, who would later become prominent intellectuals in the country, received scholarships from the Foundation in order to specialize in the United States. Among these was the recipient of a $263 grant from 1964 (Berger and Blugerman, 2017, p. 11), Guillermo O'Donnel, 'father' of the modern Argentinean (and Latin American) political sciences. His *Bureaucratic-Authoritarian States* (1973 and 1982) provides a comprehensive and explanatory theoretical and interpretive framework through which to understand a critical era for the so-called Southern Cone. Recently, D'Alessandro and Ippolito-O'Donnel (2015) reconstructed the deep impact his thought has had for political and social sciences throughout the whole region. He was one of the first intellectuals to provocatively intuit that, at that time, modernization and development could not only lead to the promotion of democracy, but also to authoritarian and oppressive regimes (D'Alessandro and Ippolito-O'Donnel, 2015, p. 5).

The political repression aimed at universities in Chile in 1973, on which the Foundation would soon intervene, did not come as a surprise to the Ford Foundation, which had already tackled numerous precedents in Argentina. Aware of some abuses as early as the first Perón government (1946-1955), in the mid-sixties the Ford Foundation witnessed a new and much more sweepingly repressive wave against academics, during the dictatorship of General Juan Carlos Onganía. On one hand, artists gravitating around Di Tella were labelled 'inmoral', 'leftist', 'foreign-friendly' and therefore dangerous. On the other, violence against the academy was unleashed especially from July 1966, when it mostly targeted leading exponents of the exact sciences. A precise account of the event, which gathers several testimonies from students and scholars at that time directly involved in the infamous '*noche de bastones largos*' (the night of the long batons), is given in *Exactas exiliada*, a collective memoirs book: "Los docentes renunciantes de la Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales de la Universidad de Buenos Aires fueron unos cuatrocientos y la mayor parte de ellos se fue al extranjero. El impacto fue variable según los departamentos y en algunos resultó devastador. Muchos de los que éramos estudiantes quedamos atrapados en un limbo, con materias por render y dejados a nuestra suerte" (Penchaszadeh, 2016, p. 9).

This led the Foundation to allocate specific funds for fleeing academics. One striking initial episode was a *grant* awarded to the Argentine Institute of Radioastronomy, directed by Carlos Varsavsky, whose members (for the most part also employed at the University of Buenos Aires) quit their jobs en masse after explicit threats. A $23,000 Ford Foundation loan (added to previous funds from the Carnegie and Gillette Foundations [FFA, J. S. Nagel to H. E. Wilhelm, 1968, p. 3; Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966]) enabled the Institute to keep the equipment operational and to support fourteen "excellent students" financially. Transfers to foreign universities were funded for all these students, to ensure successful completion of their PhD courses (nine students to the United States, one to Great Britain, one to Chile, two to the National Atomic Energy Institute and one hired internally) (FFA, D. Carwford Dun to J. S. Nagel, 1968; Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966).

A natural extension of this intervention was the project *Relocation of Argentine Professors* (*PA-66-444*), which involved a total expenditure of 200,000 dollars (divided into 150,000 for travel and 50,000 for books or laboratory instruments). Aimed at "relocating about 100 academics on the run", the *grant* addressed multiple recipients and involved numerous host countries (FFA, Busby, 1989, p. 5; Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966).

Venezuela, first of all, where forty professors of chemistry, physics, biology, genetics, botany, geology, with their respective families (a total of 99 people) were welcomed by several universities in Caracas (FFA, R. Crawley to J. Nagel, 1967a; Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966; FFA, R. Crawley to J. Nagel, 1967b).

The Ford Foundation aimed to prioritize the Latin American continent as a possible destination for two crucial reasons. On the one hand, there was a strong propensity to promote *development* across the whole macro-region, a widespread objective during the mid-1960s in which the Ford Foundation felt directly involved. On the other hand, there also emerged a subtle wish among members of the Ford Foundation to avoid Europe or the United States for fear of stirring up the impression (as will be the case with Chilean academics) that "Argentine communists" were being welcomed; a perception here reported as an outside form criticism which probably unveiled in fact their own internal unrest. A memorandum from a head of the Caracas office to New York headquarters reads:

> My strategy is actually quite simple: to help those who are persecuted, regardless of their creed, according to American traditions; and even more so if we believe they are innocent. In other words, I think of our support as based on a human factor, and I have accordingly extended a hand to those who needed it most at the time. Hence the Foundation's desire to place Argentinian scientists in Latin American countries rather than in Europe or the United States, for although their exodus comes as a loss to Argentina itself, *they may at least help underdeveloped countries* in Latin America.

I believe this formula was successful and criticism from various sources over the Foundation's *helping the so-called "Argentine communists"* has by now disappeared. (FFA, G. Sutja to J. Nagel, 1968, p. 1, my emphasis).

Nearly forty engineers, mathematicians and physicists, did in fact reach the Latin American continent, and relocated between Peru, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Mexico (FFA, D. Gunn to J. S. Nagel, 1968).

Since August 1966, just a month after the Buenos Aires blitz, the first host country in the subcontinent in chronological order was, however, Chile. 48 teachers of physics and mathematics were relocated at the *Universidad de Chile* and the *Universidad Técnica del Estado* thanks to a $ 75,000 loan (FFA, E. d'Etigny to J. P. Netherton, 1968; FFA, J. P. Netherton to J. S. Nagel, 1968; FFA, D. Crawford Dun to J. S. Nagel, 1968) which somewhat confirmed the paradoxical, cyclical ebb and flow between the two countries. At this stage, Argentine scientists ended up in Santiago; followed by Chilean academics fleeing from the 1973 coup to Buenos Aires. At a later time, scholars of both nationalities were to flee from Argentina again after the 1976 coup.

Reception of the 'Argentinian Communists' in the USA

As part of this project, the United States also hosted twenty-six scientists, who were relocated in the universities of Berkeley, Stanford, Cornell, New York, Nashville and the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (FFA, D. Gunn to J. S. Nagel, 1968). In addition, since the beginning of 1967, thanks to an allocation of 10,000 dollars, the *United States National Academy of Sciences* in Washington received several students who were thereby enabled to continue their doctoral studies (FFA, S. W. Gregory to J. Mc Daniel, 1967; FFA, H. Wilhelm, 1967; Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966).

Less than two years later, some of them were to remain in the country to complete their studies, and with gratifying results, even though in the first phase they had been strongly urged to return to Argentina. The underlying concern was similar to the one that transpired in the Caracas documents, i.e. the cultural impoverishment of an area already seen as marginal with respect to the "first world". This is what Allen Lenchek, director of the Department of Physics and Astronomy of the University of Maryland, College Park, wrote to the secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, on December 2, 1968:

> Three Argentine students arrived in our department in February 1968. They are Tomas Gergely, Enrique Caponi, Maria Elena Zalles, all from the University of Buenos Aires [...]. We are very pleased with their performance. They all intend to complete their Phd here. Mr. Gergely says he would like to return to the Argentinean Institute of Radio Astronomy, provided no further "deterioration" of the local situation occurs. For instance, he would not go back if the Institute director Carlos Varsavsky were made to leave. Nor would he look for a job in places other than the institute. He would rather move elsewhere in that case, but always within his discipline. Zalles and Caponi have both expressed their desire to return to Argentina, but not under the present conditions [...]
>
> I would like to stress that, although I'm convinced each of them would be a veritable asset for the United States, I share your concern about the scarcity of good scientists in Latin America.
>
> We hope that the Argentine government may in the future create the conditions for these talented people to be encouraged to return to their countries.[4]

As we know from his memoirs, Tomas Gergely could never return to his country and remains to this day in the United States (American Astronomical Society [AAS], 2013). The 'deterioration' of the situation in Argentina, as mentioned by Lenchek, actually occurred in the following years and subsequently, when the political emergence had ceased, was too complicated to allow him and his family—including his three school-age children—to return to his country, losing him both his job, and that of his wife (Gergely in Penchaszadeh, 2016, pp. 77-78).

[4] FFA, University of Maryland (1968, p. 1). On Argentine students see also National Academy of Sciences (1968); Grants to Academics Fleeing from Argentina, 1966.

His case represented another speckle in the vast Argentinian "brain drain" which, in the 1960s, led largely to France and the United States, and included both voluntary and forced migrants (Houssay, 1966; Oteiza, 1970, 1971, 1974). The Night of the Long Batons represented a real watershed not only for Gergely but, in a way, for his entire generation of free thinkers and for the whole country. As he recalls: "Tal como se dio, la Noche de Bastones Largos provocó una bifurcación fundamental en mi vida y en la de muchos de mis compañeros. Existe un antes y un después, y no existe continuidad entre los dos. Lo que pasó esa noche me lanzó en una dirección que no había anticipado, y que ni siquiera hubiera imaginado antes. Y creo que lo mismo sucedió al país. La Argentina no volvió a ser la misma luego de esa noche, que fue presagio de un período mucho más nefasto" (Gergely in Penchaszadeh, 2016, p. 79).

A second symptom of how the situation for scholars of *the whole* Southern Cone grew more complex during the early 1970s (in conjunction with the Chilean and Uruguayan coup of 1973) has to do with the funds assigned to the CLACSO of Enrique Oteiza. Oteiza had established the *Bolsa Especial de Trabajo*—a support organization for scholars expelled from their workplaces, who numbered 1000 cases within the space of a few months. The Bolsa successfully handled nearly 200 (FFA, R. W. Dye to W. D. Carmichael, 1974) of these cases and in 1974, Oteiza received a *grant* of 200,000 dollars from the Foundation. The program was aimed primarily at Chilean and Uruguayan academics and included similar funding to the Association of Latin American Studies which established an Aid Committee for Chile (FFA, Latin American Social Science Council, 1974).

ECALAS (Emergency Committee to Aid Latin American Scholars) was financed in 1974 with 80,000 dollars and, among other aspects, could help Chilean scholars to relocate to 32 United States campuses (FFA, B. Wood, 1973). In the fall of 1974, a document from the Congress of the United States (senator Brown, California) shows some support to this initiative:

> The Emergency Committee to Aid Latin American Scholars is the only organization in the United States which has tried to relocate these academics to allow them to continue in their professions and try to gain further training with the hope that the Chilean university system will revert to its previous democratic administration at some future time and allow these academics to re-turn. Given the recent disclosures of US involvement in the overthrow of the democratically elected Allende government, the involvement over the years of North American academics in Chilean scholarly efforts and exchange, this is fitting and deserving of support. If each State university would open its doors to a few graduate students or visiting faculty members, with the support of the local Congressperson, it would demonstrate not only to foreign academics but to our own Latin Americanist scholars a sense of fairness and justice. (Congressional Record, Proceedings and Debates of the 93 Congress Second Session, 1974, pp. 36308-36309).

But the arrival of the refugees was not always a linear process. On the contrary, it was sometimes quite controversial. In April that year Bryce Wood, general secretary of ECALAS in New York, bitterly concluded that "there was no widespread empathy for Chilean refugees as for Cubans. Chileans had not fled from a Communist regime" (FFA, B. Wood, 1974).

Oteiza, on his part, from Buenos Aires, used his funds for neighboring colleagues, and went to Santiago in person in order to pinpoint the beneficiaries (FFA, H. R. Dressner to E. Oteiza, 1974, in Latin American Social Science Council, 1974, p. 8). What such small-scale projects therefore indicate is that in the academic world of the Southern Cone, starting from Buenos Aires, there existed a kind of continuous loop in the deployment of information and intervention strategies. In light of this, even without pushing it too far, I would submit that we can detect the existence of "another" channel of communication, which ran parallel to that of the military juntas, coordinated in the Condor Operation, and to that of the armed fighters, which relied on the *Junta de Coordenación Revolucionaria* (JCR).[5]

Following the events of 1966 and 1974, we eventually reach the watershed occurrence of the March 1976 coup. The violent repression unleashed during the National Reorganization Process (1976-83) had no comparison to other previous authoritarian regimes in Argentina. Renowned scholars as Luis Alberto Romero (1994, p. 97) go as far as to mention a *genocide* (even if this category can be questionable from a historiographical perspective), referring to the thousands of *desaparecidos*. The quantitative aspect of the exile progress is incomparable to other moments of Argentine history as this time, a far higher number of people were involved: this is why scholars tend to use in this case the definition of 'massive' exile (Sznajder and Roniger, 2009, pp. 136-146).

Members of the Ford Foundation were concerned with decree 21381 of the Ministry of Education set up by the new military junta, which prevented any academic dismissed from the public sector from teaching in the private sector, thus actually depriving them of any chance of social reintegration (Puryear, 1982). In an internal meeting held in February, a month before the coup, Richard Dye—who was at the time the *Representative for Latin America and Caribbean, the Andean Region and Southern Cone*—laid out three crucial objectives to be pursued:

1) Attempting to preserve within the sub-region at least part of the existing pool of talent (much of it trained by the Foundation).

2) helping some of the best social scientists (and perhaps humanists) in the Southern Cone to analyze critically the problems and trajectories of their societies and place them in a regional perspective.

[6] This was an agreement between the Chilean Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), the Bolivian Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), the Argentinian Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) and the Tupamaros from Uruguay; a network which since August 1973—as Dinges argued in *The condor years*—took on the ambitious goal of "internationalizing" revolutionary action. See Dinges (2004, p. 51 and ff.).

3) providing advanced training opportunities for particularly promising younger intellectuals to help prevent a 'lost generation' and prepare talent, as well as ideas, "for a better future" (FFA, R. W. Dye, 1976).

Awareness of events in Argentina grew stronger in the following months, as evidenced by a document from the New York staff dated 25 June 1976. The document makes it clear that individuals such as Hardoy or Oteiza were "invited" to urgently leave their country, thus depriving their respective institutions (Di Tella Institute and CLACSO) of their top researchers while also subjecting them to strict controls (FFA, R. W. Dye to W. D. Carmichael, 1976). In ways that closely recall the line of the Ford Foundation at the time of Onganía's dictatorship, the need to encourage escape increasingly trumped all other types of intervention, so much so that one can read, in the memos used by internal Foundation staff, about a *pre-refugee* phase clearly marked off from the phase that followed (FFA, Human rights in Latin America..., 1976, p. 1). A new era had begun and it is quite significant that the Buenos Aires office was closed in 1975 (Berger and Blugerman, 2017, p. 7).

In July 1977 and in August 1978, two 200,000-dollar grants were assigned to the CLACSO, by then directed by Francisco Delich, after the forced departure of Oteiza (FFA, Latin American Social Science Council, 1977). But the novelty of these *grants* was that they were now part of a coordinated translational initiative between the Venezuelan government, the Dutch government and the *World University Service* (WUS), an institution already involved in the Chilean case which was discussed in a special meeting between Switzerland, Canada and England in July 1977 (FFA, F. Delich to N. Manitzas, 1977).

75% of the project funds were directed to Argentina and 25% to Chile, with the future prospect of including another eighty member institutions across the sub-continent. As a matter of fact, the Ford Foundation did fit into a broader program, which CLACSO had previously set up by calling upon international agencies such as the *Swedish Development Agency*, the *Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries* (SAREC) and the *United Nations Development Program* (UNDP) (FFA, D. Bell to G. B. Mc George, 1977).

The range of beneficiaries was very wide: from Argentinian residents, to forced migrants who had no chance of ever returning, to young foreign students determined to go back (FFA, D. Bell to G. B. Mc George, 1977, p. 13). And in December 1977, 36 scholars cut off from public institutions due to the *Ley Nacional de Prescindibilidad*[6] were also aided. As noted in a separate, reserved section edited by Delich, two of these had already been in prison and six had already had to leave their country (Schwartz, 2007).

[6] "La aplicación de la ley 20.840 permitió despedir a los y las prescindibles, sacarlos de su medio y dejarlos expuestos. Las leyes laborales de la dictadura, conocidas como leyes de prescindibilidad, se apoyaban en la 20.840 y la reconocían como antecedente. Por estas leyes, los empleados y empleadas de distintas dependencias del Estado podían ser despedidos. Estas leyes fueron invocadas también por las empresas privadas para deshacerse de los obreros y empleados sindicalizados, militantes, o, simplemente, solidarios" (Schwartz, 2007, p. 7).

A budget drawn up in March 1979 confirmed full one-year funding to 25 academics in Argentina and to five others abroad. Devised in a situation of emergency, the program was terminated at the end of 1979 following an appraisal by Ford experts and on the basis of its own structural limitations: the program could no longer tackle a situation that was by then rampant, in an area that within a few years would be as volatile as a powder keg (FFA, R. W. Dye to J. Himes, 1980).

At any rate, the scope of American reception for Southern Cone refugees ought always to be differentiated in terms of those who were entrusted with *large numbers* and those who instead took charge of *small numbers*. The Ford Foundation certainly belonged to the second group. This untold discrimination in the deployment of aid was openly criticized by Kalman Silvert, an expert consultant on Latin American studies, as early as 1976. His provocative speech retains its relevance:

> After the violence perpetrated during the Onganía regime against the Argentine universities, until the current crisis of academic freedom in Chile and Argentina, LASA and other professors, religious associations, foundations and representatives of both the executive and legislative authorities have worked together to try and alleviate the wound inflicted on intellectuals and academics. The *faceless*[7], the less well known and less prestigious, never received aid from the academics of the United States, even though churches and the European government agencies operated effectively both in Chile and recently in Uruguay to help *blue collar* [FFA, Silvert, 1976, p. 5] workers.

Established from the beginning as a highly selective institution, and always addressed in its "scientific philanthropy" (Parmar, 2014) to first-class beneficiaries, the Foundation maintained its elitist vocation even in contexts of sweeping emergency. As Berger and Blugerman explain (2017, p. 2), individual donations raised after the coup of 1976, while the tendency before that date had been to finance collective projects more than single scholars. Ultimately, emergencies of that kind would have been flagrantly at odds with the Foundation's agenda, hard to manage in broad quantitative terms and difficult to match to select profiles.

[7] *Faceless*, in the original document.

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