

FREE TERRITORY: the student occupation of the Colégio de Aplicação (São Paulo, October 1967)

Território livre: a ocupação estudantil do Colégio de Aplicação
(São Paulo, outubro de 1967)

Territorio libre: la ocupación estudiantil del Colegio de Aplicación
(São Paulo, octubre de 1967)

BRUNO BONTEMPI JÚNIOR^{1*}, NATÁLIA FRIZZO DE ALMEIDA²

¹Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brasil. ²Instituto Federal de São Paulo, Itaquaquecetuba, SP, Brasil.

*Corresponding author. E-mail: bontempi@usp.br.

Abstract: This article narrates the occupation of the Colégio de Aplicação of the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences, and Letters of the University of São Paulo in October 1967. Based on documents produced by the school, by the Department of Education, by the Inquiry Committee, and in newspapers, it interprets this event as the culmination of differences that marked the relationship between the school and the university. Based on Nora's considerations about the event in history, the article argues that the occupation gained more significant and far-reaching political meanings, having achieved an unforeseen projection in the mass media in times of dictatorship, which would have influenced the decision taken by the authorities of the faculty and the state education department, to end up a school experiment considered subversive.

Keywords: secondary education; student movement; dictatorship.

Resumo: O artigo narra a ocupação do Colégio de Aplicação da Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras da Universidade de São Paulo, em outubro de 1967. Com base em documentação produzida pela escola, pelo Departamento de Educação, pela Comissão de Sindicância e em jornais, interpreta o evento como a culminância de diferenças que marcavam as relações entre a escola e a universidade. Apoiado nas considerações de Nora sobre o acontecimento em história, sustenta que, tendo alcançado uma projeção imprevista nos veículos de comunicação, a ocupação ganhou significados políticos mais graves e abrangentes em tempos de ditadura, os quais teriam influenciado a decisão, tomada pelas autoridades da faculdade e da Secretaria Estadual de Educação, de encerrarem uma experiência escolar considerada subversiva.

Palavras-chave: ensino secundário; movimento estudantil; ditadura.

Resumen: El artículo narra la ocupación del Colégio de Aplicação de la Facultad de Filosofía, Ciencias y Letras de la Universidad de São Paulo, en octubre de 1967. A partir de documentación producida por la escuela, el Departamento de Educación, la Comisión de Investigación y en los periódicos, interpreta el evento como la culminación de diferencias que marcaron las relaciones entre la escuela y la universidad. Apoyado en las consideraciones de Nora sobre el acontecimiento histórico, sostiene que, habiendo alcanzado una proyección imprevista en los medios de comunicación, la ocupación adquirió significados políticos más serios y abarcadores en tiempos de dictadura, lo que habría influido en la decisión, tomada por las autoridades universitarias y el Departamento de Educación del Estado, de poner fin a una experiencia escolar considerada subversiva.

Palabras clave: enseñanza secundaria; movimiento estudiantil; dictadura.

INTRODUCTION

A gente quer ter voz ativa
No nosso destino mandar
Mas eis que chega a roda-viva
E carrega o destino pra lá
(Hollanda, 1968).

Traditionally, the State ensures its hegemony by complementarily using of violence and ideological control. Authoritarian regimes, which continuously use repression, also strive to control and direct the media and education systems. By them, they exercise *violence douce*, aiming to propagate and extend over generations their justifying ideology. As for education and culture, they dismiss people, closing or emptying institutions and destroying subversive and contradictory devices to open paths to convert education systems, vehicles of cultural diffusion, and propaganda into feeding and reproducing gears of the regime and the *status quo* that sustains them.

The abrogation in the legislative and executive branches, the purges, and mass arrests of enemies by the regime instituted in Brazil in 1964 paved the way for reforms in education that aimed to meet the demands of the classes that supported the coup, silencing student movements, inculcating convenient values and behaviors, and aligning educational guidelines with economic and national security policies. The Operação Limpeza (Operation Cleansing) that followed the seizure of power affected professors, students, members of left-wing political parties, and organizations such as Movimento de Educação de Base (Grassroots Education Movement) and Juventude Universitária Católica (Catholic University Youth). An offensive on the municipality of Angicos the day after the coup dismantled Paulo Freire's group, arresting and exiling him. At Universidade de Brasília, president Anísio Teixeira was deposed and replaced by an intervenor. Supported by the Institutional Act Number Five (AI-5), the governor of São Paulo dismissed professors from the Faculty of Medicine, and professors João Cruz Costa, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Mário Schenberg, and Florestan Fernandes were taken to interrogations and prosecuted (the latter was detained by the police).

The numerous and active student movement collectives laid under the crosshairs of the coup promoters since they stood at the left of the political spectrum, i.e., they opposed capitalism and imperialism and favored workers' and peasants' movements (Cunha, 1983). Moreover, the youth of the baby-boom generation shared a culture that included political voluntarism, revolutionary charm, and their own aesthetics and deviant behaviors in fashion and morals (Garcia & Vieira, 1999). The image the barracks projected stigmatized students as enemies of law, order, and morals: avatars of the ghost of communism and protagonists of the corruption of 'good manners' (Muller, 2010).

In 1967, students from Colégio de Aplicação (CA) of the School of Philosophy, Sciences, and Letters at Universidade de São Paulo (FFCL-USP) organized a strike that was sparked by their indignation at the arbitrary dismissal of the director, occupying the school building. The board of the Department of Education and FFCL-USP followed the reactionary and repressive script of the regime: police forces were called upon to quell the uprising. After the event, an inquiry was opened to determine responsibilities¹. Less than two years later, the school was extinguished.

Using documentation on the student occupation and on the aspects of organization, management and pedagogical practices that generated external and internal conflicts in the school community, this study hopes to describe the multiple forms of resistance to the dictatorial regime in education, which expresses the action of students. This narrative aims to show that the CA occupation represented the apex of a growing number of conflicts radiated in concentric circles: school management, institutional dissent and rivalries, and parent-school relations. Considering, with Pierre Nora (1988, p. 181), that “[...] in our contemporary societies it is through them [the media] and only through them that the event marks its presence and cannot avoid us[...]”, this study argues that the press coverage turned the occupation into a fact that touched the sensibilities of the time and thus took on meanings that stirred political passions and made the school and its subjects fall into repressive action.

BETWEEN IMPROVISATION AND INNOVATION

As Dallabrida (2023) points out, in the 1950s, when economic development and modernization were the order of the day, intellectuals and educators proclaimed educational innovation as a necessary adjustment measure, especially for secondary education, the expansion of which due to urban growth and schooling courts conflicted with its elitist and dysfunctional character based, according to Chaloba (2023, p. 6), [...] on disciplinary teaching, on the encyclopedic curriculum, on the valorization of methodologies based on verbalism and memorization, and on the demand and rigor in exams as a criterion for the selection of merit aimed at the formation of the elites and middle classes.

At the end of the previous decade, Decree-Law no. 9.053/46 had determined the creation of application gymnasiums in philosophy faculties for teaching practice in didactic courses under supervision of the professor of General Didactics, in which students were to fill secondary chairs (Correia, 2018). Regarding the duration; the

¹ On December 6, 1967, the FFCL-USP director established a commission of inquiry to investigate the facts of the strike. In total, 13 testimonies were collected, to which documents by the deponents were attached. This lasted until January 1969, ending with the hearing of Clóvis Bojikian. The records of this process constitute part of the documentary basis of this study.

serialization of subjects; and the regime of tests, promotions, and programs, the gymnasiums would obey the 1942 Secondary Education Organic Law. However, by handing over the administrative and pedagogical management to Didactics chairs, which fostered theoretical and practical research on school education, the government offered them the opportunity to insert innovation in the 'gaps in the educational monolith' by experimental classes, such as *Classes Nouvelles*, under development in France in the 1950s (Dallabrida, 2023).

At Universidade de São Paulo, the CA founding met the insistent demand of a group of DE professors, more specifically, full professors and assistants of the Didática Geral e Especial (General and Special Didactics) chair (Vidal et al., 2016). The creation and development of experimental classes was one of the most discussed topics among educators in schools and academia (Fontes, 1999) (Vieira, 2020). *Revista de Pedagogia*, coordinated by FFLC's Didactics professors, understood the experimental classes as a space to exercise and study pedagogical renewal practices (Rozante, 2008).

However, the Department of Education Affairs of the State of São Paulo signed an agreement to create CA with FFLC. Santos (2015) suggests that the delay stemmed from the difficulty in raising funds and the resistance of Conselho Técnico e Administrativo (Technical and Administrative Council) toward hiring teaching assistants to supervise the teaching exercise of students. There also existed setbacks and resistances in the DE and school units regarding the existence and functionality of these establishments (Castro, 1992).

Founded in 1957, the CA mainly aimed to serve as a teaching practice field for FFCL-USP students. In their environment, they could experience the daily school life and observe and practice the methodologies that circulated in the experimental classes of the 1950s. Unlike their lofty aims, they endured a precarious physical and organizational structure based on improvised solutions. Installed in rooms at Colégio Roosevelt, its area was small and its corridors narrow. There existed no room for recreation and physical education, only one room for professors and another for coordinators, and no full-time teaching regime. Reports indicate that these conditions could only be accepted as provisional solutions since to fulfill the purposes of educational renewal, it would be [...] indispensable to have broader resources (Suplemento..., 1960, pp. 129-130).

The funds from the State Department did not cover the most elementary needs, necessitating the resort to families, especially to pay for experimental classes². In 1962, a second agreement with the state enabled the innovation, with the adoption of experiences in the coordination of disciplines, guided studies, individualized

² Due to its location, the school served the families of Higienópolis, Barra Funda, Lapa, and Pompeia, predominantly middle- and working-class neighborhoods. In the morning classical course and in the evening scientific course, social origins were more varied than in the experimental classes, the contingent of which was composed of the children of liberal professionals, artists, and intellectuals.

monitoring and collective guidance meetings, and practical and team work. The agreement offered the experimental classes unique conditions since professors began to be paid for hours of meetings and research. In weekly meetings, coordination and professors analyzed psycho-pedagogical aspects and proposed strategies to improve school performance.

As for the institutional organizational chart, since 1958, the Educational Guidance Service had operated at CA under Maria José Garcia Werebe's responsibility³. Her appointment split powers in general activities since the chair of Didática Geral e Especial (General and Special Didactics) would choose and manage the faculty, whereas Orientação Educacional (Educational Guidance) would manage the attendance and guidance of students and mediate students and professors. In 1963, Amélia Americano de Castro assumed the chair of Metodologia Geral do Ensino (General Teaching Methodology), which would affect the management of experimental classes⁴. Her direction created Serviço de Orientação Pedagógica (Pedagogical Guidance Service), which sought to integrate these disciplines using methodologies such as guided study, the review of forms of evaluation, and educational tours.

For Warde (1980), the creation of Serviço de Orientação Pedagógica indicates the absence of a consensus on the principles that should guide the educational project. If, for Werebe, CA should constitute a training center for education professionals from the public network and formulate practices for state secondary schools, the chair of Metodologia Geral do Ensino (General Teaching Methodology) deemed it a laboratory of teaching methodologies and a field of internship and research for FFCL-USP. Also according to Warde (1980), the divergences generated disputes as Amélia Americano sought to increase the power of the Methodology chair, whereas Maria José Werebe refused to up her ascendancy over the guidelines of the school.

TRIBULATIONS IN CLÓVIS BOJIKIAN'S ADMINISTRATION (1966-1967)

In 1965, the Planning Agency director, Maria José Werebe, appointed the instructor of Educational Guidance Clóvis Bojikian as CA director. The following year, under the 3rd agreement, the director was hired full-time. Clóvis aimed to extend the

³ Maria José Garcia Werebe (1925-2006) graduated in Pedagogy at USP in the 1940s received an invitation by José Querino Ribeiro to work as an assistant to the chair of Didactics. In 1952, he became a full professor at FFCL-USP.

⁴ Until 1961, FFCL-USP had two departments dedicated to education studies: Seção de Pedagogia e a Seção de Didática (the Pedagogy and Didactics Sections). In 1962, the Congregação da FFCL-USP (FFCL-USP Congregation) approved the reform of its Pedagogy course, which now has a common core of integrating disciplines, such as teaching practice, methodology, and didactics; and another with specific training in the areas of concentration: School Administration; History and Philosophy of Education; and Educational Guidance (Santos, 2015).

conditions of operation of the experimental classes to the collegiate class, but controversies and conflicts would mark his administration. According to Julieta Ribeiro Leite (1968), the director had redistributed rooms and improved the facilities of the secretariat and the library. As the annual funds remained insufficient, he resorted to specific strategies to sustain structural reforms and teaching practices. To equip the chemistry laboratory, for example, he secured partnerships with other state agencies and had the help of families. Bordering the limits of the public and the private, family members of surplus admission proposed to finance the expansion of gymnasium vacancies. Such heterodox ways of collecting money generated strangeness, especially in relations with the DE, since the funds obtained from the families were agreed upon verbally without the scrutiny of the deliberative bodies of the school.

Another controversial measure was the implementation of *Jornadas Pedagógicas*: assemblies of the school community organized by the director and the guidance services. They aimed to provide free discussion of CA objectives and problems to improve teaching and management practices. *Jornadas* listed themes, and, after an exposition, smaller groups synthesized the debates and propositions. In a generalized context of authoritarian control of institutions, movements such as these would generate controversies in the school community and tensions in the relationships between the school and the college.

During 1967, three *Jornadas Pedagógicas* were held. In the third one, students debated the issue of school indiscipline and pleaded for solutions to issues regarding the physical structure of the building. On the occasion, they questioned the DE priority order, asking whether the school should serve as a field for internships or dedicate itself more and better to secondary education. The critical and purposeful intervention of students configured a disturbing novelty in the prevailing school culture. Sylvia Magaldi⁵ (1968, p. 21), in a statement to the Commission of Inquiry, show the suspicion with which the freedom given by the director was sometimes regarded:

Prof. Clóvis frequently changed this atmosphere by enabling a certain indifference between dialogue and students questioning professors. He was very dear to them and, in conversation, said: the school is yours, without bothering to show them how far they could go in the use of their freedom.

Julieta Ribeiro Leite (1968) endorsed Magaldi, accusing the director of setting no limits, which would have increased cases of indiscipline. For the coordinator, the students deemed themselves ‘owners of the school’ due to their confidence that they could give their opinion on the decisions applicable to the deliberative bodies.

⁵ Sylvia Magaldi was a History professor at CA. In 1965, she became coordinator of the experimental classes.

Regarding students, Prof. Clovis gave them equal treatment, granting them a lot of freedom. He had a different conception regarding the student-school relationship. Until then, the role of the coordination aimed to link the idea of freedom to the notion of authority and responsibility. Prof. Clóvis' administration greatly expanded the concept of freedom; an example included the participation of students in the school guild, rejecting any interference from professors or the management after the director's approval of new statutes (Leite, 1968, p. 7).

The coordinators questioned the proximity between the director and the students, whom they understood as subversive to hierarchical and authority standards. According to them, in the mediation of conflicts, Clovis often agreed with them, contesting the teaching authority; when it came to punishments, he refused to put them into practice as they had been defined. For the coordinators, "[the management's] emphasis was all on the intellectual aspect and the students transferred their intellectual behaviors to indiscriminate criticism of the school, professors, and methods employed" (Magaldi, 1968, p. 20).

The student rebellion would go further by engaging in extramural movements, such as the strike of university students in Conjunto Residencial da Universidade de São Paulo (Universidade de São Paulo Residential Complex), in 1966. The fuse included the claim against the increase in meals in the restaurant, but students pleaded for greater autonomy in the management of Conjunto Residencial. The rectory refused to negotiate. In a march in favor of the cause, four students from CA were detained (Greve no CRUSP, 1966). In solidarity, CA students organized pickets and boycotted classes. According to Magaldi (1968), instead of repressing the movement, the director would have followed the representatives of the directory to the classes to summon their colleagues to the assembly. Understanding its neutrality as a disguised position in favor of the movement, a group of professors pressured the director for the school to be released.

The reports of the Commission of Inquiry show that Julieta Ribeiro, Sylvia Magaldi, and Scipione Di Pierro Netto understood that the power of the director was based on the systematic endorsement of Werebe, who had appointed him to the position. They and he condemned the management of disciplinary matters, including those of educational counselors, and disliked the director's political orientation. Magaldi and Ribeiro insinuated that Clóvis incited subversion for having stated that the strike configured a form of political training of students, whereas Scipione (1968) accused him of being 'leftist' and 'subversive.'

THE CONTROVERSIAL DRAFT REGULATION

Bojikian (1968) understood, at a certain point, that his administration was stuck either because of the multiplicity of commands and disagreements between the chair of Teaching Methodology and management or because the highest deliberative instances needed to process all decisions (even the most common ones). As most meetings often failed to reach a quorum, the ensuing delays engendered lapses in operation and supply. To solve this, a commission was established, consisting of Maria José Werebe, Amélia Americano, José Augusto Dias, and Bojikian, which should present a preliminary draft of the regulation revision.

The guidelines of the draft bill involved concentrating powers in the director (responsible for the didactic-pedagogical guidelines and for administrative and financial deliberations), entrusting coordinators and administration of guiding the teaching staff, and reducing the frequency of meetings of the Planning Body to twice a year. The draft sought to remedy the lack of definition regarding the attributions of Serviço de Orientação Pedagógica and Serviço de Orientação Educacional, defining that the chair of Metodologia Geral do Ensino (General Teaching Methodology) would provide technical advice by instructors and indicate its coordination, whereas the professors of the gymnasium would guide the internship activities.

Upon receiving it, the head of the DE, Roque Spencer Maciel de Barros, interpreted the document as an attempt to distort what he understood to be the objective of the CA: to serve the college as an internship field and teaching practice. Julieta Ribeiro Leite and Sylvia Magaldi shared this understanding, who would have warned Amélia about the consequences of the reorganization to Serviço de Orientação Pedagógica (Magaldi, 1968). The decrease in teaching power followed the determination that the guidance of the internships would remain the responsibility of professors and no longer the instructors of the subject. In this case, at a meeting in October, Amélia Americano opposed the advisory role attributed to the chair, alleging that, attributing to the director the responsibility for the didactic-pedagogical guidelines removed the power granted by federal law from the chair. After the discussion, the Planning Body partially approved the regulation to enable the director to receive the powers, defining that the director designation would be up to the chair.

REPERCUSSIONS OF THE IMMINENT DEPOSITION

The next day, October 4, Clovis went to the school classrooms. According to the testimony of Scipione Di Pierro Netto (1968, p. 2), the director said to the audience attending his lecture:

“The school has just undergone a change in structure and its direction would be in charge of the Chair of General Teaching Methodology. As I do not belong to the Chair, I will remain at Colégio until the end of this year. Thank you and see you soon”.

The director's statement caused perplexity, quickly motivating the uproar. On October 5, conflicting information circulated about the facts and arguments that would have led to the alleged dismissal. The students met in an assembly of the guild, while members of the Association of Friends of the Integrated Classes of the College of Application (ASASICA) met at Werebe's residence and Amélia Americano gathered teaching instructors to deal with the chaos that was being established⁶.

Amélia called a meeting on October 6 for Clóvis to explain the reasons for having announced his resignation. Clóvis opened the meeting at 6 pm, warning of an assembly at 8 pm, with students, family members, and professors. While Amélia exposed her disagreements with the draft bill, Clóvis intervened to remind her of the assembly. The professor told her that he was yet to conclude but he declared the meeting closed. Faced with the protests of Julieta Ribeiro and Sylvia Magaldi, the director left the room, followed by a group of professors.

Understandably offended, Amélia Americano summoned the DE to an emergency meeting at the end of which the council decided to remove him from the board, keeping him in the school as an instructor. Werebe was the only person to defend him at the meeting. The assistant to the chair of Administration, José Augusto Dias, was provisionally entrusted with the direction (Departamento de Educação, 1967).

With the announcement, high-school students met the next day, October 10, went on strike, and occupied CA, transforming it into a 'Free Territory.' They demanded the retention of the director, greater participation in the deliberative bodies, management autonomy, and the unquestionable definition that the school should aim toward the integral training of students instead of meeting department interests.

THE FREE TERRITORY

On October 16, 1967, the Planning Agency director officiated Julieta Ribeiro Leite as CA head, to the fury of the strikers, who had suspected her involvement in the dismissal. The 'Che Guevara Manifesto' addressed to Amélia Americano reaffirmed the need to allocate the school to secondary integral education and the demand for student participation in decisions about the regulation. The manifesto Alunos de

⁶ In 1965, Julieta Ribeiro Leite created Associação dos Amigos das Classes Integradas do Colégio de Aplicação (Association of Friends of the Colégio de Aplicação Integrated Classes) to finance the integrated classes and improve the CA physical structure (Bojikian, 1968).

Pedagogia em Greve (Pedagogy Students on Strike) alleged that the transfer of direction was a [...] low blow from the reactionary group of the Department of Education [...], composed of Heládio Antunha, José Eduardo Villalobos, José Querino Ribeiro, Roque Spencer, Amélia Americano, Scipione Di Pierro Netto, and Moysés Brejon (Comissão de Sindicância..., 1968, p. 272).

The strike suspended classes for three days to disaggregate and demobilize students. Julieta Ribeiro Leite (1968) reports having asked Clóvis to help prevent the movement, writing a manifesto which professors signed to contain it. The former director would state to the Commission of Inquiry that he avoided intervening, in an attitude analogous to the one he had taken in the Conjunto Residencial da Universidade de São Paulo strike (Leite, 1968). In turn, Werebe (1968) told the inquiry that Clóvis was unable to do anything to convince the students that his removal involved no injustice since he was only partially convinced of it.

Julieta Ribeiro Leite unsuccessfully tried to convince the students to interrupt the movement, whereas their families organized a commission to dialogue with the DE. To the inquiry, Heládio Antunha, Scipione Netto, Amélia Americano, Roque Spencer, and Sylvia Magaldi argued for an unrepresentative strike due to the nine hundred students who were enrolled. In Leite's accounts (1968, p. 11), about [...] 40 students led [and] 150 were puppets.

Return to school was scheduled to October 19 but the students refused to enter it, setting up a picket next to the main door. The police were called to intervene, but the testimonies show no consensus about who would have called them. When the agents arrived, the students invaded the school. According to Amélia (Castro, 1967, p. 4),

Precautions were taken, including the closure of the laboratories. In addition to the deponent, professors Julieta, Bernardo Issler, Scipione, Sylvia Magaldi, as well as others preceded the arrival of professors Roque and Heládio Antunha. Two Dops agents appeared at the school and the professors prevented them from entering. The students, causing agitating in the streets, upon seeing the police car, rushed into the school and, after a quick assembly, one of the students, Sergio Rubinstein, came to communicate that they had decided to occupy the school, declaring it a free territory and that they would ask for the removal of the professors, giving a deadline for this. They would bring professors they trusted to teach the classes in due course. The professors would have a deadline to meet their demands: up to 6 pm.

Then, they asked the staff and professors to leave and informed that the dialogue would be opened after an assembly. Having deliberated, they declared that they would only vacate the building when the DE reviewed the resignation and that,

if another person was chosen, that it would be a 'neutral' person rather than Julieta Ribeiro, i.e., one that would have no commitment to the interests of the chair. Students invited professors and interns who were sympathetic to the cause to offer classes at the occupation, and students from other schools expressed solidarity, issuing motions of support.

To the Commission of Inquiry, Boris Schnaiderman (1968) said that he had participated in the commission of family members who had offered to mediate relations with the DE, requesting a review of the dismissal considering what Bojikian had done for the school. The request was ignored. The group would have decided not to prevent the strike as it considered it right and gave material support to the occupation with clothes and groceries. Schnaiderman (1968) claimed a division among family members as one group defended the strike and demanded the readmission of Clovis and another that repudiated students' subversion, who would lack the stature to question the deliberations of the university.

On October 21, people opposed to the strike attended a meeting of the family commission in large numbers aiming to end the movement. According to Antunha (1967, p. 2), the convocation aimed to create another commission "[...] that was less factious [...] to negotiate with the DE". While trying to reach an agreement, two students entered it, starting a tumultuous discussion. Sérgio Rubinstein, student leader, said that his meetings were more organized, being expelled for his audacity. Then, the group in favor of the strike manifested itself and, in solidarity, withdrew from the meeting (Schnaiderman, 1968).

Led by Heládio Antunha (1967), relatives of the new commission decided to put into practice a different negotiation strategy. A phone call was made in the early hours of Saturday to Erwin Rosenthal, head of the FFCL, requesting that he attended the occupation. The president accepted the assignment, having arrived, with professors and the director of the department, in the 'free territory,' at around 3 am. Surprised while sleeping, the students would have received him, according to Antunha (1967, p. 3), with a disrespectful "What did you come here to do?". Amélia Americano narrated to the Commission of Inquiry:

The students arranged the furniture of one of the classrooms in a semicircle to receive the professors. Professor Erwin told the students that they had committed serious faults: the occupation of a public building in violation of the LAW and the strike, which was illegal. However, he would not take this into account and promised to waive any sanctions if they immediately vacated the building. However, the students reiterated their disagreement with the regulation and demanded the removal of the new president. The deponent told them that it was not a question of discussing these issues at the moment but that they should leave the school building. Professor Roque spoke, making a brief history of the

events, insisting that the decisions made would not be undone but that dialogue was possible so that the students could give their opinion on the future regulation, and for this purpose they could constitute a commission. The students, however, always insisted on their aims. They said that only the assembly could decide whether or not to leave the building. Professor Erwin asked if that group would be willing to leave and if in the assembly they would pronounce themselves in this sense. One student opined that they would only leave the building by the constitution of a deliberative and non-consultative commission aimed at solving the pending problems. After almost an hour of conversation, in view of the attitude of the students, it was clear that this group did not want to cooperate (Antunha, 1967, p. 6).

Believing that the students wanted to gain time, Spencer and Rosenthal sought out the Secretary of Public Security of the State of São Paulo, Col. Sebastião Ferreira Chaves, who put Deops Deputy Delegate Alcides Cintra Bueno Filho in charge of the operation. When the agents arrived, they were asked to surround the building in the late afternoon of Sunday, 23, granting the occupants a short period to complete the evacuation. On Sunday, at approximately 11 pm, the vehicles arrived. The police invaded the school, forcing the students to leave (Castro, 1967). Bernardo Rubinstein (cited by Janotti, 2021, p. 26), Sérgio's father, a high school student and president of the CA Student Directory, reported his version to the deputies of the Legislative Assembly, detailing the acts of violence committed in the police operation:

At that same moment, six to eight elements of the DEOPS kicked over the main gate of the CA, opening it wide open and mercilessly attacking all those who were there, i.e., fathers, mothers, and some professors, violently pushing them out into the hall. Meanwhile, these investigators and several civil guards entered the building and ignored the parents who screamed for help for their children and the mothers who shouted for mercy toward the minors who were there. Nothing contained the fury of the investigators who, shortly after, led the minors out of the building using indescribable violence. heads and some professors remained indifferent to what happened there.

Astonished, the advisor Maria José Werebe (Comissão de Sindicância..., 1968, p. 200) wrote to the FFCL director:

It is hard to believe that profs. of our Faculty were responsible for the depressing spectacle that took place yesterday at the College, doing nothing to prevent the students, including the children, from

being attacked by the police. Profs. and an advisor who were on the premises of the establishment were not spared by the police. Throughout the crisis of the College, these profs. little skill in dealing with young people. But the use of undignified means to submit them shows their total ineptitude as educators, even more so after the students were willing to leave the College today to try, together with Your Excellency, a solution to the crisis.

On October 31, Rosenthal responded to the letter, saying that the teacher had been hasty in accusing colleagues of ineptitude in the role of educators.

The faculty considered the CA occupation scandalous. The DE council minutes contain manifestations of disapproval of the act, and it is inadmissible that the youth would disrespect the teaching authority. To an extreme extent, the department requested the Technical and Administrative Council to denounce the agreement of the CA with the Secretariat of Education Affairs, alleging that it was unable to maintain responsibilities over an establishment that rejected its guidance. Werebe expressed annoyance and asked for the reconsideration of her, losing the vote. The repercussions of the accusations in the letter to Rosenthal rendered her lone resistance even more fragile. In a session on November 6, professor José Querino Ribeiro left the council room, saying he was 'shaken' by Werebe's accusations, declared *persona non grata* by the DE (Departamento de Educação, 1967), from which she would be expelled in early 1969 (Santos, 2015).

THE CRISIS OF CA AS A FACT AND ITS DEVELOPMENTS

In 'The Return of the Fact,' Pierre Nora (1988, p. 188) states that, paradoxically, "[...] the event bears witness less by what it translates than by what it reveals, less by what it is than by what it provokes". In the final analysis, the CA occupation, an event the narrative of has reconstituted itself, translates the revolt of students against a measure seen as unjust and authoritarian, which targeted a director for whom they had great affection. However, this intrinsic significance fails to make the incident a revealing fact for the history of education. Starting with the motivations, the testimonies to the Inquiry Commission, if examined from the inside out, indicate that the students liked to have possession of the word the director granted them either collectively in Jornadas Pedagógicas or individually in the disciplinary disputes against the institutional powers. As Nora (1988, p. 182) points out, the right to speak, its possession and its public use configured appeals that would erupt in the movements of May 1968:

as we know, it was the festival of stirring speeches; all forms cohabited to constitute the event itself: the speech of leaders and the anonymous speech, the written speech and the verbalized speech, the student speech and the worker's speech, the inventive or quotable speech, the political, poetic, pedagogical or messianic speech, the speech without words and the crude speech [...]

The Colégio strike attracted so much attention in the municipality. It provoked other collectives and sectors of social life to demand mobilization, starting with the university student movement, which promptly tried to imbue the act with its flags, reconnecting it to a network that included students, professors, and intellectuals that sympathized with revolutionary and anti-imperialist causes. According to Janotti (2008, p. 8),

the students FFCL Pedagogy students released a manifesto, dated October 12 [1967], against the arbitrariness of the Department. They denounced what happened as a coup the reactionary group had perpetrated against the practice of Educational Guidance in the Faculty, privileging Teaching Methodology, which had managed the Pedagogical Guidance Sector of the school and, by the draft [of regulations] would also administer it. They linked this coup with the restructuring of USP under the guidelines of the agreements with the US government, called MEC/USAID. [...] Students from other establishments expressed solidarity with CA students on newspapers. In the occupied school, members of various Academic Centers, the Brazilian Union of High School Students, and intellectuals attended conferences during class time.

The São Paulo press covered the dispute of narratives about the student strike, generating several interpretations if we consider the two largest newspapers in the state⁷. In the first report published about the strike, *Folha de S. Paulo* reported in detail the arguments of students punctuating them with testimonies from family members, who praised the person and administration of Bojikian (Entrou em greve o Colégio de Aplicação, 1967). An article by Manoel Moraes Neto and Celso Ming Azevedo, who visited the occupation, includes students' names and functions to show the public the good organization of the movement and the seriousness of its claims. At the end of the text, the authors state that the strike, on that occasion in its last days, was “[...] one of the better organized ever held in São Paulo” (Moraes Neto & Azevedo, 1967, p.

⁷ To analyze the journalistic articles, the authors used the transcriptions by Maria de Lourdes Janotti that she donated to the collection at Centro de Memória da Educação da Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo (Center for the Memory of Education of the Faculty of Education at Universidade de São Paulo), where they are available. Furthermore, they assure that they have checked the originals in their scanned versions on the portals of both companies.

14). By giving students words and proper names, *Folha de S. Paulo* gave the movement a legitimate character of contestation and built an image of the occupation that contrasted with the representations offered by the police and endorsed by *O Estado de S. Paulo*.

Unlike the *Folha* group, *O Estado de S. Paulo* maintained close ties with the FFCL. The historical protagonism of the company and the intellectuals around creation of the university and the setting up of FFCL-USP extended at that time to the work of Roque S. M. Barros as a columnist for 'Notas e Informações' (Notes and Information), a column that functioned as an editorial (Bontempi Jr., 2015). The articles about the strike evince the biases due to these affinities. In following the events, readers are urged to take as truth the interpretation emanating from the DE the faculty management and the Secretariat of Education endorsed: only council were to make decisions about the organization of the school (Ulhôa Cintra apoia Filosofia, 1967). It also endorsed the version of the Deops delegate, which claimed that the evacuation of the building was neither illegal nor violent (Dops retirou os grevistas, 1976). The newspaper gave primacy to the 'explanations' by Barros, reproducing his letters in full (Diretor faz esclarecimento, 1967; Ulhôa Cintra apoia Filosofia, 1967), silencing family members and professors, unlike the letter from 56 other faculty in protest against their exclusion from recent decisions about the school (Aplicação leva greve adiante, 1967).

The sequence of journalistic notes shows that the DE sought to justify its autocratic power over the Board of Directors in a rigid interpretation of the terms of the agreement based on the good relations of its head of the department with the FFCL-USP director Erwin Rosenthal, the secretary of education and former dean of USP Ulhôa Cintra, and with *O Estado de S. Paulo*. On October 21, signaling to those involved and to public opinion the imminent legal risk of the uprising, the newspaper recorded that the secretary dismissed denouncing the agreement because the faculty had made the correct decisions within its competence (Ulhôa Cintra apoia a Filosofia, 1967). The newspaper also published the report in which the police authority justified its repressive action by describing images of disorder, filth, and promiscuity in which 'girls' smoked and lived with older boys under the eyes of negligent parents (Dops retirou os grevistas, 1967).

The CA Student Directory, although pressured by the school administration and harassed by the siege of the police authorities, took enough courage to send a letter to the editorial staff of *Estado* contesting the report of the Deops delegate. In this letter, published in full, they denied that the investigators had entered the 'free territory' and the presence of dirt, disorder or promiscuity. Finally, they denounced as false the delegate's statement of no physical aggression by the police, stating that tDeops was not "[...] the competent body to find a solution [...] to the case" (Greve declina no Aplicação, 1967, p. 13).

In a few days of occupation, the movement had changed, leaving its immediate cause in the background and adopting items from the tactical and ideological repertoire of the organized student movement, which had supported it from the beginning (Entrou em greve o Colégio de Aplicação, 1967). On the 21st, *O Estado de S. Paulo* published the manifesto of withdrawal of 106 colleagues from the Student Council, declaring that the strike had been “[...] entirely distorted by a small group that has taken over the general command, which is leading the College to chaos and total ruin” (Ulhôa Cintra apoia a Filosofia, 1967, p. 14). Radicalization was evident, led by more politicized students.

On October 20, when the impasse had become critical, strikers had sent to the department “the [...] minimum conditions for a productive dialogue” (Ulhôa Cintra apoia a Filosofia, 1967, p. 14). Among other conditions, they demanded that the department commit to abide by the deliberations from a future tripartite assembly, which resonated with the agenda of 1962 1/3 Strike, led by União Nacional dos Estudantes (National Union of Students). On the other hand, the declaration, published on the 25th, that the fundamental agenda was no longer (as the press had reiterated), the reinstatement of the former director but an opposition to the restructuring guidelines imposed on the school (Greve declina no Aplicação, 1967), which would be, in turn, direct consequences of the MEC-USAID agreements (Comissão de Sindicância..., 1968, p. 250), evincing the semantic overflow of rebellious action.

FINAL REMARKS

The bibliography on the FFCL-USP CA highlights the political repercussions of its closure during the military dictatorship, especially the disputes between the progressive and conservative sectors of the university, whose disagreements about the direction of CA contributed to its final crisis. For Janotti (2008, 2021), the end of the experience stems from the educational character of the school as its critical education remained incompatible with the authoritarian regime. Werebe (1980) and Warde (1980) find the limits of the intended educational innovation in the elitism of its audience and in the uniquely exceptional conditions in public schools. For Almeida (2022), despite the final external violence, an intricate set of structural, financial, and organizational problems generated conflicts between managers, family members, and students; an incompatibility between the expectations of the department and the pedagogical management of the school; and disputes for academic power that unbalanced the school organizational chart.

Thus, the CA occupation may have failed to constitute the efficient cause, although it played a crucial role in its extinction and in the collective memory (Dallabrida, 2017; Almeida, 2020). The mass media coverage of it turned the

occupation into an event that transcended the walls of the school and amplified the voice of a few dozen students that now reached public opinion. Fed back by the repercussion of the acts and increasingly magnetized by the effervescence of the student tide, that eruption of school and civil indiscipline, differently narrated and resignified in the light of the respective editorial lines, was engulfed by the political and moral conflicts of a bipolar society, in which a vigilant and repressive regime reduced them to the terms of being for or against the 'revolution.'

The expression of student boldness, with slogans, banners, tents, and innovative psycho-pedagogical experiments that steered away from traditional secondary education and the democratic attempts of a heterodox management made CA an uncomfortable cell for FFCL-USP, the Secretariat of Education, and the regime. At the confluence of the actions and speeches of the agents, layers of implications and meanings joined the protest of the students and, above all, by the action of the press, the strike became a fact for public opinion and the political class. If, as Nora (1988) states, the event bears stands for both what it shows and what it provokes, the constituent narratives made the small rebel group an extension of the 'leftist' student movement as their reluctantly 'amoral' and 'resistant' behavior would complete the signs of subversion the agents of repression immediately grasped.

The facts of the CA occupation have unsurprisingly coalesced in newspapers with other contemporary 'crises' involving faculty and student collectives. In that same October 1967, headlines announced the imminent resignation of the rector at Universidade de Brasília Laerte Ramos de Carvalho in view of the failed intervention against civil servants and professors who were declared subversive (Universidade de Brasília..., 1967); the criminalization of the congress of São Paulo students (O DPF considera subversivo..., 1967, p. 10); and the arrest of the UNE president Luiz Travassos in Recife (O XI não quer a UEE..., 1967). In their succession and as a whole, news such as these created a vertiginous scenario of insubordination and disorder, which, for the most conservative, would justify repressive measures, which the military government effectively took by the AI-5 decree.

REFERENCES

- Almeida, N. F. (2020). A comemoração das vanguardas pedagógicas do ensino secundário paulista da década de 1960: reconstruir o passado para moldar o futuro. *Revista da FAEEBA: Educação e Contemporaneidade*, 29(59), 110-128.
<https://doi.org/10.21879/faeoba2358-0194.2020.v29.n59.p110-128>

Almeida, N. F. (2022). A vitrine vista de dentro: a história da disputa e as disputas na história do Colégio de Aplicação da FFCL-USP [Tese de doutorado]. Universidade de São Paulo. <https://www.teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/48/48135/tde-19072022-155551/pt-br.php>

Antunha, H. G. (1967). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação (processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969), dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Aplicação leva greve adiante. (1967, 14 de outubro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 12.

Bojikian, C. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Bontempi Jr., B. (2015). *Laerte Ramos de Carvalho e a constituição da história e filosofia da educação como disciplina acadêmica*. Edufu.

Castro, A. A. D. (1967). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Castro, A. A. D. (1992). Memória do ensino de didática e prática de ensino no Brasil. *Revista da Faculdade de Educação*, 18(2), 233-240.
<https://www.revistas.usp.br/rfe/article/view/33496>

Chaloba, R. F. S. (2023). Prefácio. In N. Dallabrida (Org.). (2023). *“Brechas no monólito educacional”: classes secundárias experimentais e inovação no ensino secundário nos anos de 1950 e 1960* (pp. 5-9). Appris.

Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. (1968). *Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969*. [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Correia, E. S. (2018). Colégios de aplicação pedagógica: sua história e seu papel no contexto educacional brasileiro. *Revista Eletrônica Pesquiseduca*, 9(17), 116-129. <https://periodicos.unisantos.br/pesquiseduca/article/view/619>

Cunha, L. A. R. (1983). *A universidade crítica* (3a ed.). Francisco Alves.

Dallabrida, N. (2017). As classes secundárias experimentais: uma tradição escolar (quase) esquecida. *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, 17, 213-234.

Dallabrida, N. (Org.). (2023). *“Brechas no monólito educacional”: classes secundárias experimentais e inovação no ensino secundário nos anos de 1950 e 1960*. Appris.

Departamento de Educação. (1967). *Atas do conselho* [Acervo Julieta Ribeiro Leite no CME-FEUSP].

Di Pierro Netto, S. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Diretor faz esclarecimento. (1967, 15 de outubro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 26.

Dops retirou os grevistas. (1967, 24 de outubro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 15.

O DPF considera subversivo o encontro estudantil e vai abrir inquérito pelo Congresso da UEE. (1967, 10 de outubro). *Folha de S. Paulo*, p. 16.

Entrou em greve o Colégio de Aplicação. (1967, 13 de outubro). *Folha de S. Paulo*, p. 14.

Fontes, A. A. B. (1999). *Inovações educacionais: autores e atores das classes experimentais* [Tese de doutorado]. Universidade de São Paulo.

Garcia, M. A., & Vieira, M. A. (Orgs.). (1999). *Rebeldes e contestadores: 1968. Brasil, França e Alemanha*. Fundação Perseu Abramo.

Greve declina no Aplicação. (1967, 25 de outubro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 13.

Greve no CRUSP. (1966, 22 de setembro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 16.

Hollanda, C. B. (1968). Roda viva. In *Chico Buarque de Hollanda* (Vol. 3). RGE.

Janotti, M. L. (2008). Imprensa e ensino na Ditadura. In A. C. Ferreira, H. G. Bezerra, & T. R. Luca (Orgs.), *O historiador e seu tempo* (p. 95-116). EdUnesp,.

Janotti, M. L. (2021). Colégio de Aplicação da Universidade de São Paulo (1955 - 1970). *RIDPHE_R Revista Iberoamericana do Patrimônio Histórico-Educativo*, 7, 2021.

Leite, J. R. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Magaldi, S. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Moraes Neto, M. M., & Azevedo, C. M. (1967, 21 de outubro). Ninguém entra no Colégio de Aplicação. *Folha de S. Paulo*, p. 14.

Müller, A. (2010) *A resistência do movimento estudantil brasileiro contra o regime ditatorial e o retorno da UNE à cena pública (1969-1979)* [Tese de doutorado]. Universidade de São Paulo.

Nora, P. (1988). O retorno do fato. In J. Le Goff, & P. Nora (Orgs.), *História: novos problemas* (3a ed., pp. 179-193). Francisco Alves.

Rozante, E. L. (2008). *A Revista de Pedagogia da Cadeira de Didática Geral e Especial da Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras da Universidade de São Paulo (1955-1967): a formação do professor de ensino secundário* [Dissertação de mestrado]. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo.

Santos, A. N. (2015). *As origens da Faculdade de Educação da USP: o Departamento de Educação da F.F.C.L. (1962-1969)* [Tese de Doutorado]. Universidade de São Paulo.

Schnaiderman, B. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

Suplemento dedicado ao Colégio de Aplicação (1960). *Revista de Pedagogia*, 4(11-12).

Ulhôa Cintra apoia a Filosofia. (1967, 21 de outubro). *O Estado de S. Paulo*, p. 14.

Universidade de Brasília vive nova crise e o reitor quer exonerar-se. (1967, 10 de outubro). *Folha de S. Paulo*, p. 16.

Vidal, D. G., Bontempi Jr., B., & Salvadori, M. A. B. (2016). Tempos pretéritos e escolhas de futuro: a Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo e a formação docente. *Educação & Realidade*, 41(n. esp.), 1419-1440.
<https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-623667087>.

Vieira, L. (2020). *Classes experimentais secundárias de instituições públicas de ensino do estado de São Paulo: um estudo sobre formas de circulação e apropriação de práticas pedagógicas (1951-1962)* [Tese de doutorado]. Universidade de São Paulo.

O XI não quer a UEE clandestina. (1967, 7 de outubro). *Folha de S. Paulo*, p. 14.

Warde, M. J. (1980). O Colégio de Aplicação da Universidade de São Paulo. In W. E. Garcia (Coord.), *Inovação educacional no Brasil: problemas e perspectivas* (pp. 101-131). Cortez.

Werebe, M. J. (1980). Alcance e limitações da inovação educacional. In W. E. Garcia (Coord.), *Inovação educacional no Brasil: problemas e perspectivas* (pp. 244-264). Cortez.

Werebe, M. J. G. (1968). *Depoimento à Comissão de Sindicância do Colégio de Aplicação. Processo n. 2.624/67 out. 1967-jan. 1969, dez. 1968* [Documento disponível no Arquivo Geral da Universidade de São Paulo].

BRUNO BONTEMPI JÚNIOR: Associate Professor at the School of Education of the University of São Paulo and faculty member of the Graduate Program in Education. Historian, holding a Master's and Ph.D. in Education, with a postdoctoral fellowship in History at UERJ. Leader of the Research Group "History of Education: Subjects, Institutions, and Practices (Brazil, 19th-20th centuries)"; associate researcher of the Thematic Project "*Knowledge and Practices at Borders: Towards a Transnational History of Education (1810-...)*" and the Study and Research Group *Science in Circulation*. CNPq Productivity Fellow (Level 1D).

E-mail: bontempi@usp.br
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8524-2652>

NATÁLIA FRIZZO DE ALMEIDA: Professor at Universidade São Judas Tadeu and the Federal Institute of São Paulo. Historian with a Bachelor's and Teaching Degree from USP, educator, and specialist in School Management, holding a Master's and Ph.D. in History of Education from FE-USP. Her research focuses on History and Education, with an emphasis on the history of universities and the relationships between education and politics during the Brazilian Military Dictatorship (1964-1985).

E-mail: natfrizzo@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8463-7241>

Received on: 2024.06.29

Approved on: 2025.01.09

Published on: 2025.05.01

NOTE:

This article is part of the dossier "Education in the Times of Dictatorship".

RESPONSIBLE EDITORS:

Eduardo Lautaro Galak (UNLP, Argentina)
 E-mail: eduardo.galak@unipe.edu.ar
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0684-121X>

Elizabeth Figueiredo Sá (UFMT)
 E-mail: elizabethfsa1@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5861-7535>

Rosa Fátima de Souza Chaloba (Unesp)
 E-mail: rosa.souza@unesp.br
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3905-7317>

PEER REVIEW ROUNDS:

R1: three invitations; no report received.

R2: three invitations; two reports received.

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Bontempi Júnior, B., & Almeida, N. F. de (2025). Free territory: the student occupation of Colégio de Aplicação (São Paulo, October 1967). *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, 25, e368. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4025/rbhe.v25.2025.e368en>

FUNDING:

The RBHE has financial support from the Brazilian Society of History of Education (SBHE) and the Editorial Program (Call No. 30/2023) of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq).

LICENSING:

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC-BY 4) license.