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Watching Radical Geography: Spaces and Practices of Authoritarian Surveillance in ‘Democratic’ and ‘Dictatorial’ Brazil

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses stories of surveillance of Brazilian critical/radical geographers, drawing on innovative sources. That is, the folders and reports through which the political police and related institutions watched critical and radical scholars during the 20th century in all Brazilian states and abroad, under both ‘dictatorial’ and ‘democratic’ regimes. Our argument is twofold: first, surveillance is not only a device that characterises ‘authoritarian’ or ‘autocratic’ regimes, but a dispositive that can be geared at any moment to the repression of dissidences, even in what is called a ‘democracy’, being not only ‘technology’, but intention to construct a political enemy. Second, ideas on radicalising archives and rescuing alternative geographical traditions should take advantage of hostile sources produced by ‘adversaries’ such as police informants, radicalising these sources through critical readings. To this end, direct access to original documents, places and languages proves paramount to put transnational radical geographies in mutual dialogues.

RESUMO

Este artigo aborda histórias de vigilância de geografias críticas brasileiras baseando-se em novas fontes. Trata-se nomeadamente das pastas e relatórios pelos quais a polícia política e as instituições relacionadas vigiaram estudiosos e estudiosas críticas e radicais durante o século XX em todos os estados brasileiros e no exterior, sob regimes tanto ‘ditatoriais’ quanto ‘democráticos’. Nossa argumentação é dupla: primeiro, a vigilância não é apenas uma ferramenta de regimes ‘autoritários’ ou ‘autocráticos’, mas um dispositivo que pode ser utilizado a qualquer momento para reprimir dissidências mesmo nas chamadas ‘democracias’, sendo não apenas ‘tecnologia’, mas intenção de construir um inimigo político. Segundo, os debates atuais sobre a radicalização dos arquivos e o resgate de tradições geográficas alternativas devem aproveitar as fontes hostis produzidas por ‘adversários’, como informantes da polícia, radicalizando essas fontes através de leituras críticas. Para fazer isso, o acesso direto a fontes primárias e o estudo de lugares e línguas é fundamental para colocar as geografias críticas e radicais transnacionais em diálogos mútuos.

Based on new archives containing innovative sources such as police surveillance records, this paper addresses the work carried out by the ‘information community’ (Melgaço and Pimenta 2014,

122) that watched the entire Brazilian society, under both ‘dictatorial’ and ‘democratic’ regimes, during the 20th century. Here, we focus on the surveillance exerted on critical, radical or only

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intellectually independent geographers, who were constantly under the lenses of political control. Our argument is twofold. First, authoritarian surveillance is a practice that is far from limited to dictatorial regimes or 'autocracies'. Although it should be noted that, in the Brazilian case, the 1964–1985 'military-civilian' dictatorship represented a peak as for obsession with surveillance and brutality in repression, surveillance affects as well 'democracies', calling for more geographical engagement with surveillance studies. Second, historians of Geography should build specific methods to avail of 'hostile' sources produced by adversaries, reading them 'against their grain' to both radicalise archives and decolonise Geography.

For these tasks, considering experiences from the 'Souths' and from outside the Anglosphere through transnational and multi-lingual investigation proves to be paramount. Importantly, the experiences of the Brazilian geographers that are analysed here show how the application of authoritarian devices to academics still exposes the dangers of acting as principled individuals, available to take risks for a cause, rather than merely making theoretical 'critiques' from safe places. It is increasingly clear today, especially after the recent clashes between the US government and some universities over academic freedom, that nobody can be so sure to be in a place that is completely safe from authoritarian degeneration.

International geographical scholarship focuses hugely on matters of surveillance and biopolitics based on so-called 'French Theory' (Deleuze 1992; Foucault 1975, 2004) and 'Italian Theory' discussing how states of emergency tend to become the norm (Agamben 2005; Carter-White and Minca 2025; Esposito 2018). The burgeoning fields of carceral geography (Moran 2015) and abolitionism (Davis et al. 2022; Gilmore 2022) analyse the dreadful dispositives that state and capitalism put in place in the business of mass incarceration. This phenomenon mainly targets the socially and racially discriminated social strata and fosters a 'new punitiveness' according to which penal legislations and praxes are progressively giving up the correctional sides of the punishment to come back to devices such as the 'public humiliation of the offender' (Pratt et al. 2005, xii). For Dominique Moran (2015, 1), this 'punitive turn' implies the need for geographers to investigate spaces of incarceration and total institutions, a task that goes beyond mere enclosed spaces, questioning the boundaries 'between what is considered "inside" and "outside" of the prison' (Moran 2015, 3). Critiques of hyper-incarceration are not limited to its uses on 'marginal' people, as geographers highlight a 'carceral-police continuum' (Massaro and Boyce 2021, 569), that is the pervasiveness of surveillance and coercive powers in places such as 'homes, neighbourhoods, schools, mental health care settings, and a variety of other spaces and environments' (Massaro and Boyce 2021, 571).

The growing brutality of the police and related institutions is discussed by recent work on 'anti-policing' (Springer and White 2024), referred not only to armed institutions but also to policies availing of 'schools and universities, media, medical institutions, charities and other organisations ... to regulating people's ideas, behaviour, mobility, well-being' (Brock and Stephens-Griffin 2024, 58), including citizens' voluntary participation in surveillance (Koskela 2011). These policies aim at preventing or intimidating activism, implicitly equated with 'crime',

in ways that are increasingly associated with 'normality' beyond states of exception (Pele and Menezes 2024; Schlembach 2018). In Foucauldian and Deleuzian terms, several scholars discuss the shift from 'disciplinary' societies, in which individuals pass through initiations in closed spaces, to 'control societies' that are characterised by the 'universal transmutation' and 'constant modulation' (Beckman 2018, 4) of forms of control voluntarily accepted (e.g., traceability through smartphones). These techniques render it more and more difficult to locate power and to perceive all the forms of individual and collective domination.

Paralleling 'anti-policing', an established literature on 'anti-security studies' (Neocleous and Rigakos 2011) challenges ideas of 'security' by arguing that, in the perverse logics of to-day capitalism: 'Security is the monstrous idea that we are alone and locked into competition over scarce resources ... that we need to protect our little island of private life against the threat of others, and that we must submit to authority to do so' (Anti-Security Collective 2024, 6). On the one hand, Dylan Rodríguez (2006, 2) highlights how, in the very core of Western 'democracies', that is the United States, one can identify a full-fledged 'radical prison praxis' as imprisonment, surveillance and repression are ordinary lived experiences associated with political radicalism and social unorthodoxy, which do not spare intellectuals. On the other, the authors of the *Security Abolition Manifesto* argue that this strategy should be broken by 'dismantling police, prisons, and patriarchy with the challenge of reconstructing social order around the commons and commoning' (Anti-Security Collective 2024, 14).

Geographers progressively investigate the 'surveillance-space nexus' that directly contributes to 'the very production of the spaces concerned' (Klauser 2017, 2) by surveillance, including the study of 'events' (Anderson and Gordon 2017). Spatialisations of control can be very heterogeneous, shaping urban spaces through video-surveillance (Koskela 2000) and leading to more diffusive forms of territorialisation that are increasingly banalised as well (Klauser 2019). For Francisco Klauser (2017, 9), 'Interrogating the spatial logics, functioning and implications of surveillance' should contribute to 'wider socio-political debates'. This should be done without forgetting that, traditionally, geography often served surveillance rather than questioning it (Lowman 1986). Hence, the need for further reflection, methodological innovation and closer engagement with the field of surveillance studies (Ball et al. 2012), recently burgeoning around supports such as *Surveillance and Society*.

This scholarship analyses political police surveillance, including the use of agents-provocateurs and undercover agents (Marx 2012), often allowed to commit crimes. These activities have been widely unmasked in the last decade following a range of public cases and 'leaks' that concern significantly the very 'free' West (e.g., the United States and the United Kingdom). In many cases, espionage is performed not only by states but also by corporations, further equating activism with crime and terrorism. Yet, 'undermining dissent is ... undermining democracy' (Lubbers 2015, 348), and this kind of surveillance should be studied and exposed by critical scholarship. Surveillance studies highlight the colonial origin of Western technologies of political control (McCoy 2015), deployed on global bases during the Cold War and later applied to suspect categories such as Muslims in

the United States (Kamali 2017) or homeless people (Fast and Cunningham 2018). Several authors discuss how authoritarian surveillance is not a prerogative of 'backward' or 'autocratic' states, as it sits in the core of Western democracies. Thus, it may also involve people who still feel to be in some 'safe' place.

Volinz (2025, 112) notes how 'authoritarian surveillance is no longer an exceptional or rare practice' in a world in which 'the boundaries between authoritarian and democratic regimes, the liberal and the illiberal ones, are blurrier than ever'. In both cases, similar technologies are used to trace and hinder dissent, well beyond 'less and less exceptional' (Volinz 2025, 113) states of emergence. While agencies of mass surveillance such as the FBI are increasingly promoted as friendly by official propaganda (Erdener 2024), Midori Ogasawara (2025, 133) stresses that authoritarian surveillance stands 'in the heart of democracy and capitalism ... [as] mass surveillance has been redrawing boundaries of democratic principles'. Despite scandals around cases such as Wikileaks and Snowden, the 'authoritarian surveillance within democracy has been whitewashed in technological competitions with the Global South, such as China and India, and in tech-savvy culture in the Global North', in which 'the anti-communist and white nationalist discourse has been revived' (Ogasawara 2025, 133). Ogasawara references classical works by Max Horkheimer and the Frankfurt School to stress that 'authoritarianism is the issue of Western democracy, historically developed in conjunction with industrial capitalism' (Ogasawara 2025, 133), in relation to which the phenomenon of Nazi-Fascism has not been an incident, but a logical consequence. Thus, 'the double faces of Western civilization need to be recognized' (Ogasawara 2025, 136). Significantly, the 1964–1985 Brazilian dictatorship worked under the pretext of countering authoritarian communism to save the allegedly 'free' world in a Cold War context (Motta 2022).

In the first part, we address the specificities of Brazilian histories, especially related to the military dictatorship, to understand how to study police sources as new supports for making other histories of Geography. In the second part, we analyse the two specific regional cases of Recife and São Paulo, two key centres for the growth of critical geographical scholarship in Brazil, inserting them in their national and transnational context. This latter directly connects with the third part, in which we discuss the national and international implications of this surveillance, starting from the cases of internationally renowned geographers Josué de Castro and Milton Santos.

1 | Information Communities in the Brazilian Context

Although quite common in the field of political history, the use of police records as (highly biased) sources is still rare in the history of Geography. Anarchist historians suggest that these documents are 'often more useful to understand ideology and mentality ... of the people and the organisms that redact [them] rather than to fully understand their object, that is the actions and opinions of the popular classes' (Sacchetti 2002, 5). They especially stress the need to avoid echoing, even unwittingly, the narrations that authoritarian regimes may have produced on certain people or groups. A specificity of police reports is that they

often tend to exaggerate aspects such as the 'dangerousness' of certain individuals, typically to justify further surveillance or to claim the merit to have 'discovered' some conspiracy. However, such sources can reveal how certain people and groups were perceived by the powers in place at each time, and often contain materials such as leaflets and internal documents produced by social movements, seized during arrestations or perquisitions, that may not survive in other repositories. In Brazil, the photographic documentation surviving in police archives has been used to study the numerical strength and social compositions of leftist demonstrations that took place in the 1950s, on which few other sources were available (Motta 2015).

These archives often contain a great amount of press clippings. While collecting press folders on individuals or political associations may seem a relatively 'light' form of surveillance, these meticulously collected press reviews show how also the public actions of certain people deserved control. That is, in contexts of ideological struggle, justifying a negative political judgement can be a more important goal than accurately discovering what certain people effectively do. These materials also confirm a key feature of political police control: while Foucault considered surveillance as 'infra-legal', political surveillance is not triggered by the fact that one commits or may commit crimes, but by ideological concerns.

An important specificity of police surveillance in Brazil has been its continuity across different regimes. The works of the main Brazilian agencies of political control widely exceeded the temporal limits of the two authoritarian regimes that ruled the country in the 20th century, that is Getúlio Vargas's *Estado Novo* (1937–1945), already censoring Geography (Ribeiro 2024), and the 'military-civilian' dictatorship (1964–1985). The infamous DOPS (*Departamento da Ordem Política e Social*) was founded in 1924, remaining active until the 1980s, and the SNI (*Serviço Nacional de Informações*), created after the 1964 coup to coordinate the different military and civilian agencies of espionage, was disbanded only in 1990. During the 1964–1985 dictatorship, institutions such as the Army, Navy and Air Force, and even civilian Ministries such as that of Education, were all provided with their own services of surveillance and information.

Recollecting that period, military men overtly justified the institutionalised violation of human rights claiming that 'torture was necessary in some cases ... to obtain confessions and, thus, to avoid a greater evil' (D'Araújo and Castro 1998, 225). In the late 1970s, the dictatorship became less directly repressive and, in 1979, an Amnesty Law cancelled all political crimes of the previous years, although Brazilian scholarship notes how its main beneficiaries were not opposition activists, but the very torturers (Motta 2023). After the approval of the new Constitution in 1988, the Army continued to claim a role as an alleged 'warrantor' of democratic life (Zaverucha 1994). Yet, in 2011, an important event that facilitates current studies has been the institution of the *Comissão Nacional da Verdade* (hereafter CNV) by President Dilma Rousseff, who was herself a victim of torture when she was an activist in the early 1970s. This organism had the task to 'investigate human rights violations between 1946 and 1988, with a particular focus on the period of the military dictatorship' (Melgaço 2025, 142), and put together an impressive corpus of documents and recollections.¹

However, surveillance did not end after the dictatorship. As recently discussed by Lucas Melgaço (2025, 140), ‘In 1999, the remnants of SNI were restructured into the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN), which remains operational today’. In the 1950s, it was under the democratic government of Juscelino Kubitschek that the Brazilian service of information ‘gained autonomy and was tasked with monitoring subversive activities and political parties’ (Melgaço 2025, 141) after being trained in the United States by the CIA, a key agent in the dynamics of control and repression in all of Latin America. According to Melgaço, a key feature of surveillance is its ‘recursivity’ as, ‘over time, surveillance systems may turn back upon themselves’ (Melgaço 2025, 143), affecting both the watched and the watchers. It was the case with the CNV, whose activities became the field of fights over public memory, including questionings of the very statute of ‘truth’ in historiography. In addition to survivors’ recollections, CNV ‘massively used DOPS documentation’ (Sodré and Roncaglio 2017, 252), surviving in State Archives. Despite obstacles such as the unequal availability of materials and the unwillingness of former functionaries to reveal their roles in tortures and murders, these sources were generally considered reliable by the ‘commissions of reparation’ (Sodré and Roncaglio 2017, 264) for victims of the dictatorship. Their study can be considered as a counter-use of archives comparable to the work of ‘counter-surveillance’ that social movements enact as self-defence against police abuses, through methods such as video activism and ‘cop watching’ (Koskela 2011, 273).

During the dictatorship, information services used informers infiltrating ‘subversive’ groups (Negro and Fontes 2008, 18), produced abundant photographic material (Lissofsky and Bastos 2012), and collaborated with similar institutions in other countries, especially Salazar’s Portugal, to watch Brazilian exiles (Braggio and Fiuza 2019). Alongside activists, syndicalists and journalists, academics also attracted special attention. On the one hand, ‘a significant number of professors and students were killed or disappeared’ (Melgaço and Pimenta 2014, 118). On the other, since the 1964 *Operação Limpeza* targeting the education system to the totalitarian turn following the 1968 Institutional Act n. 5, a capillary ‘information community’ (Melgaço and Pimenta 2014, 122) operated among the agencies mentioned above, with the direct involvement of infiltrated spies and university administrations. Indeed, the regime had very clear the ‘strategic function’ (Mansan 2013, 18) of education, and did not forget to also watch ‘technical and administrative staff’ (Mansan 2013, 19) in universities.

These operations also needed an ideological cohesion and a common drive against the enemy (Augustinho 2018), which had to be despised and feared. During the Brazilian dictatorship, surveillance methods broadly matched those used by other regimes of fascist inspiration in the 20th century. Franco’s Spain likewise targeted students’ activism through imprisonment, torture and surveillance, strictly collaborating with the CIA in the context of international anti-communist alliances (Rodríguez Tejada 2014). Previously, it was Italian fascism that had established sophisticated techniques connecting the political police with Mussolini’s Special Tribunal since the 1920s, including the extra-judicial keeping of large amounts of data on all citizens who were potentially suspect, also thanks to a ‘dense network of informers such as

waiters or hotel doormen, taxi drivers, workers, and journalists’ (Barocci 2024, 35). In Rome, a central repository of individual folders on ‘subversives’, the Central Political Record (CPC), was uninterruptedly nourished under ‘liberal’, fascist and republican Italy from 1894 to 1968 (Fonio 2011). A similar continuity can be observed as for Brazilian surveillance agencies.

For this paper, we researched materials related to academic geographers (including students when available) on digital platforms such as the SIAN (*Sistema de Informações do Arquivo Nacional*), centralising the state surveillance records that have been digitalised in Brazil hitherto, the CIA Reading Room and the CNV. Then, we worked on paper materials in the State Archives of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, with the idea of taking archives against their grain (Beckingham and Hodder 2023) to recursively overturn the results of authoritarian surveillance into contributions to the radical archive. Although this work is far from exhaustive, being only the first step of a longer project that should lead to a systematic investigation of the huge body of materials that are held in the archives of all Brazilian states, whose discussion would abundantly exceed the length of one paper, it allowed for significant findings. That is, both during and outside the ‘dictatorial’ periods, the very scholarly places and practices of Geography, such as classes and department activities, academic publications and meetings of associations such as the *Associação dos Geógrafos Brasileiros* (hereafter AGB), were the object of systematic monitoring. Definitively, it is Geography in itself that brings intellectual devices which concern the powers in place.

2 | Centres of Geographical ‘Subversion’

Before introducing our specific cases, it is worth locating surveillance matters in histories and contexts of Brazilian Geography. While recent scholarship discusses the contested translations of definitions that were first elaborated in North America such as ‘Radical Geography’ (Barnes and Sheppard 2019; Ferretti 2025; Ribeiro 2021), one can consider that, in Brazil, the broad equivalent of that transnational movement can be considered *Geografia Crítica*, which was characterised by a ‘radical thought’ (Verdi 2018, 540). Brazilian historiography canonised the 1978 AGB Congress in Fortaleza as the starting point of this movement, arguing that, after that moment, AGB became a key political actor involving both academics and students in the context of Brazil’s re-democratisation (Antunes 2008). Yet, recent scholarship questions some simplistic readings of a ‘before’ characterised by a substantially conservative and positivistic AGB, and an ‘after’ characterised by a substantially revolutionary AGB. These authors nuance heroic (and sometimes self-celebratory) narrations (Pedrosa 2024) and note how conflicts ‘had appeared before’ (Verdi 2018, 542) in Brazilian Geography, emphasising the graduality of the critical conscientisation of Brazilian geographers (both academics and students) under harsh conditions of repression during the dictatorship. In these processes, some places played key roles, as we discuss in this section and in the following one. Among them, Recife, São Paulo and the ‘exile’—closely connected with the former two, expose the same matters with surveillance.

2.1 | The Recife Hub

The city of Recife, the state of Pernambuco and in general the Brazilian Northeast are popularly associated with leftist politics, including the activism of the Peasants' Leagues, brutally repressed by the 1964 coup as famously documented by Castro (1969). Around some of this latter's followers such as Manuel Correia de Andrade, a circuit of critical geographers worked in Recife, addressing the insurgent geo-histories and the socio-environmental problems of their region since the 1950s (Ferretti 2021). These scholars gave a substantial contribution to the AGB, and it is not a coincidence that Pernambucan DOPS kept a record of press clippings on this association since 1959, when local newspapers related the results of the early research by Andrade and colleagues.² In the following years, DOPS likewise collected public information on AGB's meetings and its regional and national organisation.³ Even the politically moderate *Instituto Joaquim Nabuco de Pesquisas Sociais* (IJNPS, now Fundaj) had a dedicated press folder at DOPS, in which activities such as a 1956 visit of French geographer Max Sorre were recorded.⁴

Ironically, IJNPS's leading scholar Gilberto Freyre preached political neutrality in 1956, saluting geographer Mauro Mota as the new director of the Institute.⁵ Although later compromised with the military dictatorship, Freyre had a contrasting relationship with the *Estado Novo* (Mesquita 2018). Considered for a while a 'leftist', he was arrested twice and honoured with a bulky police folder of both press clippings and police reports covering several decades of his career. Geographer Mota was one of his closest friends and supporters, being mentioned many times in police reports on Freyre.⁶ Among the personal folders on Pernambucan geographers who were filed by the police in relatively early years, Mário Lacerda de Melo had been noted in 1935 for attending a congress of the 'Proletarian Youth', and his travels were tracked until the 1940s.⁷ In 1944, also the presence of French anti-racist anthropologist Roger Bastide to carry out fieldwork in the Northeast was recorded.⁸ In 1956, a Congress of the International Geographical Union took place in Rio de Janeiro in the presence of USSR delegates, whose contacts with Brazilian colleagues did not pass unperceived in Pernambuco, in the tense climate of the Cold War.⁹ After 1964, the surveillance became closer, but it did not appear to have been qualitatively modified, at least in Pernambuco.

Leading geographer Andrade was already a dissident under the *Estado Novo* (Ferretti 2018). At the moment of his arrest in the days following the 1964 coup, his police folder contained only two notes dated 1945. The first was so detailed to report that, on 3 September of that year, he had donated five cruzeiros to the Communist Party.¹⁰ The second relates to his student's engagement against the Tribunal of National Security, that Andrade defined 'a remain of fascism'.¹¹ In 1964, arrested as a collaborator of leftist Governor Miguel Arraes, Andrade remained 3 days in jail and a further 3 months on house arrest. Like all the political opponents arrested after the coup, he was subject to an interrogation whose minutes survive in DOPS folders. As most of these dissidents did, Andrade responded to the questions of police officers minimising his political involvement. He namely argued that he served in the Pernambuco Government's research group on food production as a technical advisor.¹²

Yet, as an effect of the Cold War paranoias that fostered the coup, Andrade was lengthily interrogated on his (thin) 'Communist' record, responding in a way that matched his later recollections, published in freer circumstances (Araújo 2002). 'In 1944, as a student of Law, he went to the section Jener de Souza of the former Communist Party, then legal, in Barão de São Borja Street, in Recife. He attended 8 to 10 meetings of that group without finally joining the Party, for ideological divergences and for not wanting to submit to Party discipline'.¹³ Indeed, Andrade always claimed his indiscipline in relation to all dogmas and authoritarian organisations. While his police folder is relatively small in relation to his recognised role in shaping Brazilian Critical Geography, Andrade recollected that, after being released, he was informed by one of his students that a DOPS spy was in charge of recording all his lessons. Thus, he preferred to spend the following academic year in Paris, where he was invited by French geographer Pierre Monbeig (Araújo 2002).

In the following years, the action of infiltrated informants clearly appeared in the systematic collection of information on UFPE (Federal University of Pernambuco) students, especially after the national movement for amnesty in 1978–1979. Meetings of students and teachers were systematically minuted by infiltrated agents,¹⁴ and the direct involvement of university authorities in police espionage is documented by the presence, in DOPS archives, of files with photos and details of the academic careers of students who led the movement in each department and curriculum. As for Geography, one finds the files of the 1978–1979 students' representative for the Geography master, Lucivânio Jatobá de Oliveira¹⁵ and, for the Geography bachelor, Maria do Socorro Souza.¹⁶ The online records provided by the SIAN contain numerous documents that show the working of the aforementioned 'information community' such as reports by the Information Service of the Ministry of Education spying on students' movements on behalf of the Fourth Army. One of these reports provided details on the First Northeastern Meeting of Geography Students that took place in Maceió (Alagoas) in 1984.¹⁷ While the presence of Marxist geographer Ruy Moreira from Rio de Janeiro was noted in that meeting, the report did not neglect to stress the dangers of Communism, eventually alerting to the alleged students' intentions to 'occupy Rectorates and take control of universities'¹⁸ if their requests were not satisfied.

Andrade's name appears in numerous reports related to heterogeneous scholarly gatherings such as a 1983 meeting of the Society of Philosophical Studies, classified among the 'events contesting the regime' by informants arguably alerted by the fact that 'one of the central themes will be the thought of Karl Marx'.¹⁹ In 1981, Andrade's presence as a speaker was noted in the First National Symposium on the Quilombo of Palmares (the most famous example of Black slaves' revolt in Brazilian history) that took place at the Federal University of Alagoas in 1981. The infiltrated agents seized quite clearly the political meaning of the historical celebration of Palmares's leader Zumbi, noting that the 'meeting was attended by the Ambassadors of seven countries of Black Race ... and by elements of the Black Unified Movement ... who promoted parallel meetings'.²⁰ Among them, informants noted the presence of Black leader and former exile Abdias Nascimento. Thus, geographers such as Andrade were considered 'dangerous' for both their critical scholarly production and their wider connections with social movements.

Still in 1984, a report on the 5th National Meeting of Agrarian Geography celebrated in the Federal University of Santa Maria (RS) sketched the 'subversive' record of Andrade (one of the event's main speakers). Among Andrade's suspect activities, they included his intention to attend the 1976 International Geographical Congress in Moscow and listed several conferences to which he had contributed, quoting some of his 'subversive' declarations such as raising 'the problem of access to land for those who work it'.²¹ Interestingly, these sources seem to have overlooked Andrade's role in the 1978 AGB Congress in Fortaleza, which suggests that, although able to produce huge amounts of information on incredible levels of detail, the 'information community' was far from lucidly grasping the political signification of all events.

After the end of the dictatorship, UFPE students were still filed for their mobilisation against university fees in 1986²² and Andrade's name continued to appear in various reports at least until 1991 (i.e., after the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution). In that year, Andrade attended the 4th Congress of Ecology of the Northeast in Recife, seemingly not such a dangerous hideout of subversives.²³ Puzzlingly, several reports show that some attention, that may be defined not only post-dictatorship but also post-mortem, was called by the *Centro Josué de Castro* in Recife, a cultural centre dedicated to the geographer deceased in Paris in 1973, of which Andrade was one of the contributors. Still in 1990, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, concerns were raised by the fact that this Centre had (true or alleged) 'connections with the Brazilian Communist Party'.²⁴

Although it is clear that, after the end of the dictatorship, surveillance did no longer had the same meaning, pervasiveness and dangerousness, this persistence of 'old habits' well exemplifies one of the characteristics of police sources mentioned above. That is, the rush to provide justifications to continue denouncing dangers and 'conspiracies' even when they are immaterial, in the absence of more concrete 'flesh' to nourish the policing machine.

2.2 | Counter-Histories of USP

The oldest and biggest university in Brazil, *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP), has been a key laboratory for espionage and repression since 1964, with the active collaboration of several academics, as timely denounced by the famous *Black Book of USP* (ADUSP 1979). As for USP geography, the huge documentation surviving in DOPS folders at the State Archive of São Paulo is mainly referred to the years of the dictatorship and also accounts for the production of pamphlets, leaflets and other materials by students' movements. Local informants collected abundant materials on the *Centro de Estudos Geográficos Capistrano de Abreu* (CEGE or *Centrinho*), which was a reference for students and early career researchers in the Department of Geography, producing bulletins and journals such as *O Geográfico*, whose copies survive in DOPS folders after having been seized on campus. In 1974, the Delegate for Political Order Silvio Pereira Machado signed a report that defined CEGE as an initiative 'of clearly subversive characterisation that takes place on campus, in university rooms, gathering students of the USP Department of Geography'.²⁵ This note implied the suspect of

some 'complicity' of Geography Department staff with students, as we detail below.

As usual, DOPS' definition of what was 'subversive' seemed to be very inclusive, as among the earliest CEGE's claims one can find non-so revolutionary revindications such as: 'Why drinking machines do not work? Why there is no toilet paper in the restrooms'?²⁶ More interestingly, Geography students also contested the very teaching methods that they considered too traditional, 'only including frontal lessons, disgusting seminars and what is worst, without excursions'.²⁷ While *Centrinho* activists took directly the responsibility of filling this lacuna by organising themselves a 'geographic excursion' to Curitiba *Caverna do Diabo* for Easter 1974,²⁸ *O Geográfico* intervened on broader university politics, including the project for the new USP Campus. There, Geography students denounced the use of university funds for constructing a military installation within the area, which clearly did not serve educational purposes.²⁹

Students also expressed willingness to collaborate with progressive teachers, many of whom were likewise filed by the 'information community', in redesigning the curriculum. They explicitly addressed the most classical dilemmas of defining the discipline, asking to: 'Clearly define what is Geography, its object of study, field of application and place among other disciplines. What is expected from a geographer in: teaching; planning; research. Thus, what should be our minimally satisfactory training'.³⁰ To gain stronger theoretical knowledge, CEGE activists circulated books by authors who were likewise deemed 'subversives' such as Celso Furtado, Caio Prado Jr. and Pierre George.³¹ For Pereira Machado, the very publication of few bulletins in 1973–74 was a reason for summoning to the police headquarters three Geography students who were identified as the responsible: Teresinha Mamede Frischenbruder, Diamantino Alves Pereira (now professor at USP) and Augusto Cassio Portugal Gomes, from whose questionings nothing concrete against them seemingly emerged.³² Yet, these police actions reveal a climate of serious intimidation.

In the bulletins seized from Philosophy students in that same year, 1974, the list of students from different curricula that resulted prisoners at that moment and whose liberation was requested included one 'Roberto Lima' from Geography.³³ In 1977, a new bulletin of CEGE students, *Refazendo Geografia* (Remaking Geography) was seized by the police. Since 1974, General Geisel had launched a less repressive version of the dictatorship—not for humanitarian concerns but to prepare a softer transition to democracy that guaranteed impunity and lasting political influence to military people (Motta 2023). Then, the political atmosphere became more effervescent, and students resumed requests for a Geography 'able to work for the needs of the [poor] majority of the Brazilian population', alongside a new organisation of libraries and departments that did not discriminate against the 'poorest students ... who work all day'.³⁴ That is, a Geography 'active' and socially relevant. A very telling part of students' claims was their opposition 'to any kind of ideological veto in the appointment of professors'.³⁵ In the same year, 1977 another bulletin called *Ação Geográfica* (Geographical Action) was mentioned in police reports.³⁶

From the materials collected by DOPS officers, who kept updated lists of all USP academic staff,³⁷ some telling details on the relationship between students and academics in Geography likewise emerge. There are quite contrasting claims on who first introduced ‘critical geography’ in São Paulo (Scarim 2000; Verdi 2016), and the idea that political radicalism affected students rather than academics in the years of the dictatorship is quite widespread (Verdi 2018). However, several USP geographers who are not generally mentioned today as ‘radicals’ were considered ‘leftists’, ‘subversive’ or at least suspect in police folders. Of course, it is not the police that decides who is ‘critical’ or ‘radical’ in Geography, but this perception of the potentially progressive role of some institutional figures should serve to nuance common understandings in Brazilian histories of critical/radical geographies and to open new problematics.

Among others, Léa Goldenstein, an urban geographer who is rather known as an exponent of the generation that preceded the critical ‘rupture’, was filed since 1973 at least. Emblematically, her daughter was interrogated in 1977 for student activism,³⁸ and Goldenstein resulted under investigation in 1976³⁹ as someone who: ‘Widely spreads subversive ideas in her classes, classifying patriotic attitudes as reactionary. She indicates Brazil as an example of underdeveloped country, spreading slogans on poverty and bad distribution of income in the country. She supports Pasquale Petrone, the Head of Geography, and makes alliances with leftist professors such as Manuel Correia de Andrade, Caio Prado Júnior, Orlando Valverde, Manoel Fernando Gonçalves Seabra, José Pereira de Queiroz Netto and Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz, a Marxist-Leninist leader in the area of Social Science. She supervises students of leftist tendencies such as Marisa Margarida Santiago and Odete Carvalho de Seabra ... the wife of Professor Manoel Seabra’.⁴⁰ Among the figures mentioned above, Maria Isaura Queiroz, the main intellectual heir of Roger Bastide in Brazil (Queiroz 1983), was for sure a progressive figure, but hardly ‘Marxist-Leninist’, which further exposes the tendency of police reports to cage people in rigid political definitions to exaggerate their alignment with the most feared ones. Yet, these lists of names are not uninteresting.

For instance, the couple Seabra was relatively renowned for their activism. While Odete was a member of the Marx reading group, one of the earliest ‘critical’ experiences at USP (Ferretti 2022a), police folders especially mention Manoel, as: ‘Active in students-staff Commissions since 1968, he organises working groups with leftist students, supporting the distribution of leaflets in the Geography building’.⁴¹ The Head of Department, Pasquale Petrone, an Italian-born historical geographer who is generally considered as an institutional figure rather than a ‘radical,’ was likewise filed in 1973 as: ‘A violent fighter of the USP Chair [whatever this meant], the leader of an active group of leftist teachers ... He maintains contacts with Florestan Fernandes and other professors evicted by the AI-5 [the aforementioned totalitarian institutional act of 1968]. During the University crisis at USP, he encouraged students and assistants, also leading the Geography *Centrinho* [CEGE]. He supervises leftist post-graduates such as Ariovaldo Umbelino de Oliveira ... and Maria Niedja Leite de Oliveira,⁴² this latter a student who will be later arrested and tortured by the DOPS (Verdi 2016). Although one cannot find traces of this political engagement in Petrone’s own recollections (Petrone 1994), keeping contacts with people like

sociologist Fernandes, a former Trotskyist placed on compulsory retirement in 1969 and later voluntarily exiled in Canada, meant arguably ‘sympathy for the Devil’ to DOPS officers.

Petrone’s official folders also added details on USP geography circuits, as he was considered to lead ‘leftist’ geographers: ‘José Ribeiro de Araújo Filho, Nelson de la Corte, Manoel Seabra, Gil Soderro de Toledo, Vincenzo Raffaele Bochicchio, Léa Goldenstein, Judith de la Corte, José Carlos Mantovani and Maria Regina Cunha de Toledo Sader—exiled in Chile with her husband Eder Sader. [Petrone] is a close friend of Manuel Correia de Andrade (Pernambuco), Milton Santos (Bahia), Caio Prado Júnior, Orlando Valverde (IBGE), Jorge Chebataroff Cazachenko (Uruguay). He belongs to the group that supports Eduardo de Oliveira França, director of FFLCH [*Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas*]:’⁴³ This latter, a historian, was removed from his institutional charge in that same year for having refused to report student activists to the authorities (França 1994). Only further research may clarify intriguing matters that these documents raise, such as the international contacts between USP staff and Russian-Uruguayan geographer Chebataroff. While other sources seem not to contain evidence of such a close friendship between Petrone and Santos, or Andrade, most of the aforementioned scholars also had personal files at São Paulo DOPS.

Raffaele Bochicchio was then employed as a cartographer in São José dos Campos, after having been a student agitator at USP. Known for his friendship with the Seabras and his former collaboration with most of the scholars listed above, he was described as follows: ‘Belonging to the Marxist-Leninist line, he is adept of an armed revolution to change the political situation in the country ... He supports leftist students ... He is an element of trust of Petrone [probably basing this suspect on their common Italian origin]’.⁴⁴ As for Nelson de la Corte, then professor of Geography at USP, police folders described him and his wife Judith as collaborators of Petrone and other ‘leftists’, including Queiroz. For the informers: ‘In his classes, [Corte] spreads notions of underdevelopment that present a negative image of Brazil. He supported and encouraged student movements ... having also played a key role in student-staff commissions that worked in 1968 at USP ... With ... Bochicchio, Manoel Seabra and Gil Soderro de Toledo, he translated into Portuguese works of subversive nature, such as *Geografia Ativa* by Yves Lacoste [and others]’.⁴⁵ While spreading a ‘negative’ image of Brazil was clearly a reason for being deemed subversive, the translation of foreign authors was likewise suspect, and Yves Lacoste had already some renown as a radical in Brazil (Pedrosa 2015).

As for Regina and Eder Sader, they were effectively exiled in Chile in early 1973, after having been arrested in the late 1960s in the context of repression against critical academics. Puzzlingly, they will need also to flee from Chile after Pinochet’s coup in 1973, to find sanctuary in France until they could come back to Brazil with the 1979 amnesty (Verdi 2018). Then, their names were recorded in a list titled ‘Subversion from abroad in Brazil’, which included the exiles that ‘are coming back to Brazil, some of whom are ostensibly engaged in the growing campaign of contestation to overthrow the regime’.⁴⁶ That is, while the Amnesty Law granted them the right to come back and freely circulate in Brazil, they remained nevertheless ‘subversives’ to

be watched. A geographer at USP, Regina Sader had a 'subversive' curriculum that came back to 1961, when she was 'arrested for agitation in the building of the Student Union'.⁴⁷ Trying to recover her post at USP, she found numerous obstacles of a political kind, and only in the 1980s was she reinstated in her position (Verdi 2018).

Among the younger scholars mentioned above, Arioaldo Umbelino de Oliveira (1947–2025) will gain considerable renown in the field of critical geography, especially on matters of land and peasants. He had likewise a 'subversive' curriculum in police records, reporting that 'in 1968, he was among the students who were kept in São Paulo prison', and became later 'director of the *Centrinho*'.⁴⁸ Oliveira's records display one of the classic features of police reports in authoritarian times: explicit judgements and moral blame towards the watched people that functionaries arguably expressed to please their superiors. This ideologisation of reports indicated that there were not only matters of social control: it was an ideological war, in which the Enemy must always appear as the 'bad guy'. In 1982, informants stated that Oliveira, in his USP classes, 'stopped carrying out the programme of his discipline to start preaching leftist ideology, quoting Pedro Pomar, Lenin and Caio Prado Júnior. The fact provoked indignation among the other professors, not for the ideological aspect but for the distortion of the established programmes'.⁴⁹ While it is funny to see police functionaries trying to discuss what a Geography syllabus should contain, another report, attaching teaching materials, clarified that the matter was the introduction of texts describing peasants' struggles and guerrilla in the Araguara region.⁵⁰ Still in 1987, reports blamed Oliveira and his collaborator Fernando Portela for publishing a handbook on Amazonia characterised by 'pamphlet-like language and a political-ideological factious content'.⁵¹

Finally, with all the limits that these sources imply, surveillance records can preciously complement other more traditional sources that historians of Geography have considered so far. In the USP case, they potentially allow reassessing the origins of critical attitudes in Geography by considering that informants may have heard in class affirmations that teachers were prevented from publishing due to censorship. Another case to be further investigated will be Rio de Janeiro's IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), traditionally considered as the Brazilian stronghold of quantitative and conservative geography during the dictatorship (Pedrosa 2015). Yet, a 1964 police report lambasted 'IBGE Communists', including geographers such as the aforementioned Valverde, Fanny Davidovich and Pedro Geiger, this latter 'linked to the Russians'.⁵² While all these allegations must be taken very cautiously, there remains potential to question and nuance commonplaces in disciplinary historiography. Geography confirms to be a strategic discipline whose contents, eventually studies on society, underdevelopment and Latin America were considered threatening by authoritarian regimes.

3 | National and International Stakes of Surveillance

Among the international figures of critical and radical Brazilian Geography, current international scholarship extensively engages

with Milton Santos and Josué de Castro (Davies 2023; Ferretti and Pedrosa 2018; Hecht 2021). Considered here under an 'international' label as they clearly were the most transnational Brazilian geographers of their generation, their trajectories were closely associated with the stories that have been told so far. Back from exile, Santos was considered the 'big figure' of the 1978 Fortaleza Congress mentioned above, inspiring the critical turn of Brazilian Geography through his book *Por uma geografia nova* (Antunes 2008). Santos, who will end his career at USP, was also a lifelong friend of Correia de Andrade.

As for Castro, the famous inventor of the 'Geographies of Hunger' was from Recife and, although he quitted Pernambuco in 1935, his figure constantly inspired the Pernambucan geographical circuits until today (Ferretti 2018). Although his *Prontuário* (personal folder) in Recife is quite voluminous, surveillance on Castro can only be understood in the context of his international networks, first as a diplomat and later as an exile. It is significant that Castro was also filed by the State Police of São Paulo, where he never resided.⁵³ The collaboration of 'dictatorial' Brazilian and 'democratic' French polices in watching Castro's activities in Paris since 1964 has been already discussed by recent scholarship (Ferretti 2022b; Gomes 2016). Now, an international pre-dictatorship source, that is the CIA records disclosed so far, gives an example of the international scenarios that enhanced the fear of subversion in Brazil—that is, international anticommunism.

A CIA report of 1 October 1956 provided details on the World Federation of Scientific Workers, considered filo-communist, identifying Castro as one of its most famous corresponding members.⁵⁴ On 26 May 1963, another CIA report lambasted the 'equivocal tactics' of Brazilian President João [Jango] Goulart, likewise suspected of filo-communism, whose friendly attitude towards the United States was considered too ambiguous. The authors mentioned Castro as one of the 'pro-communist' officers that Jango was appointing, namely, to lead the Brazilian delegation for the 'disarmament conference in Geneva'.⁵⁵ Castro was not aligned with any bloc; yet, as he also denounced, the instigators of Cold War paranoias had convinced the US government that Brazil was on the brink of a Soviet coup. As noted above, CIA played a role in training Brazilian information communities, and it was in this context that Castro was filed by Recife DOPS.

Already in 1949, his alleged 'sympathies for Russia'⁵⁶ were penned in his folder, with related suspects of receiving Soviet funds. Although pictures and anecdotes on Castro's visit to US President Truman in 1952 had widely circulated, his unauthorised biographers stressed all activities that could indicate 'intelligence' with the Eastern Bloc. These included Castro's participation in the World Peace Council in 1954, and the presence of 'communist elements' at the launch of his *Black Book of Hunger* in Recife in 1961.⁵⁷ Finally, the main 'original sin' of Castro and of most progressive intellectuals of his generation was that of having participated in the campaign in favour of Cuba, travelling to that island in the early 1960s. This participation was invariably noted and blamed in a huge number of DOPS' biographies of intellectuals and activists.

When his political rights were revoked after the 1964 coup, Castro's movements were still tracked. This was especially a

task of the Foreign Ministry, which signalled Castro in Santiago in September 1964. There, he had been invited by the University of Chile together with other Brazilian dissidents such as Anísio Teixeira, Darcy Ribeiro and Celso Furtado.⁵⁸ While it would not be particularly useful to list all the countries in which the ‘information community’ caught sight of Castro from 1964 to 1973, it is worth noting the special concerns of Brazilian authorities for the activities in which a prestigious international figure like Castro could play roles in Latin American political dynamics. In 1965, an informant of Brazilian Air Forces travelled to Peru in the context of the US-funded *Operação Amigo* which targeted friendship (arguably on anti-communist bases) among American youths. Talking with several students in Lima, this individual realised how Castro had recently given conferences there denouncing the Brazilian dictatorship. The geographer was considered there ‘a great political and popular leader ... who leads communist infiltration ... and will lead a revolution in Brazil in three months’.⁵⁹ Although ridiculous, and recalling the most fantasist conspiracy theories, similar concerns served to entertain the fear of the external enemy.

In 1972, Air Force informants likewise reported a meeting between Goulart and Castro in Paris in the context of the so-called ‘Jango-Perón political manoeuvre’,⁶⁰ that is, an alleged plot led by Argentine politician Juan Domingo Perón to reinstall nationalist governments in Latin America. Indeed, international surveillance was associated with geopolitical concerns: in the same year, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry tried to convince the Venezuelan government to cancel or at least to ‘postpone’ Castro’s visit to Caracas.⁶¹ Castro received again posthumous honours by his watchers in November 1973. Two months after his death in Paris, he was listed among the members of the Latin American Unity movement, defined by this source as ‘doubtlessly, a further instrument of the International Communist Movement’.⁶² How could one doubt it?

Another famous exile, Milton Santos, resided in countries such as France, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Venezuela and Tanzania from 1964 to 1977, often raising concerns for his possible return to Brazil. In 1969, the Bahian ‘information community’ noted that, from Canada, Santos had expressed wishes to come back ‘to Brazil, and more specifically to Salvador’,⁶³ soliciting authorities to take measures in case this hypothesis materialised. Santos’ subversive CV started in 1942 when, still a young student, his election to student representative in Bahia was recorded. More dangerous was considered his later engagement to legalise the Communist Party, formally illegal in Brazil since 1948 (Motta 2022). After being arrested and compelled to expatriate in 1964, Santos was significantly identified in the following terms: ‘As a geographer, he commits to the study of urbanisation in under-developed countries ... He is associated with extremist elements and active militants of the extinguished Communist Party. He was jailed for investigations after the Revolution of 31 March’.⁶⁴ Although a declared Marxist, Santos never belonged formally to any political Party. Thus, once more, the matter with him was exactly his academic activism as a geographer critically addressing the problems of what was then called the ‘Third World’.

Back to Brazil in 1977 and in touch with academic friends to find a job there, Santos was immediately suspected of an alleged

‘Communist infiltration in the Government’⁶⁵ of Bahia, and later of ‘subversive propaganda’⁶⁶ in Rio, including a cycle of conferences on racial and Third World matters.⁶⁷ Despite being a Black person from Bahia, Santos was not especially involved in Afro-Brazilian movements. Yet, his participation in some activities such as celebrations of Palmares alongside activists such as Abdias Nascimento was carefully noted.⁶⁸ One also discovers that Santos was identified in police milieus with the (arguably racist) nickname of ‘Lumumba’,⁶⁹ that may be referred to both his skin’s colour and alleged connections with Soviet politics, namely the pretext for the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in Congo in 1961. Yet, it was mainly his academic activities that puzzled. In the 1980s, reports were dedicated to the nationwide reorganisation of History and Geography curricula, expressing concerns for the presence of ‘communists’ with ‘negative files’ in police archives, such as Correia de Andrade and Santos, this latter jailed for ‘more than 30 days’⁷⁰ in 1964. Thus, teaching curricula were a key battlefield for defining what kind of ‘democracy’ Brazil would experience.

After 1985, numerous reports were still dedicated to Santos and to the AGB, openly accused of targeting socialist indoctrination of students and disrespecting Cold War boundaries by inviting to the 1986 Congress ‘delegates from Cuba and Nicaragua’.⁷¹ Another concern was the post-dictatorship resuming of international relations among geographers, namely at the Latin American level, as one of the 1986 reports noted ‘the possibility of having a meeting of Latin American Geographers next year’.⁷² This happened in 1987, in Águas de São Pedro (SP), where Brazilian geographers hosted the first EGAL (*Encuentro de Geografias de America Latina*), still working as one of the main gatherings of critical and radical geographers in the continent (Arroyo 2019).

Finally, it is worth noting that, although this article focuses on how the very intellectual work puzzles the powers in place, not all professional geographers remain limited to it. It was the case with Vânia Amoretty Abrantes, urban geographer at Rio Grande do Sul INCRA (*Instituto de Colonização e Reforma Agrária*), who joined the anti-dictatorship armed struggle in the *Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária* (VAR)-Palmares, quite famous because it was the same group of Dilma Rousseff. Like Dilma, Abrantes was jailed and tortured after being arrested in Rio de Janeiro in 1970, and filed until 1991 at least.⁷³ In CNV published documents, Abrantes’ recollections reveal a number of chilling details on her detention and on the dreadful tortures that she resisted in those months (Abrantes 2014). This goes clearly beyond the scope of this paper, but new research will be needed on the results of CNV works, alongside systematic investigations of the huge and still mostly unexplored corpus of documents on surveillance and political repression of intellectuals in 20th-century Brazil and beyond.

4 | Conclusion

This paper has shown how surveillance is not limited to ‘authoritarian’ regimes, being associated with the transnational setup of capitalism and state power. It was in the context of the Cold War in the Brazilian case analysed here; it is in the redefinition of planetary influences today. Then, we demonstrated the

usefulness of interrogating new sources, namely ‘hostile’ ones, to understand the working of the surveillance machine in the specific case of geographers. Police sources eventually expose how surveillance is not only technology as for most Foucauldian studies, but also a variety of ideological stances and concrete political praxes. The key point here has not been to understand the performance of the control machine, but rather its flaws that are intrinsic to the very nature of watching and repressing political dissent. This kind of surveillance is not a perfect panopticon, but a selective dispositive that is even nourished by its own exaggerations and (voluntary or involuntary) inaccuracies, serving to construct the Enemy. Thus, it can be resisted through public denunciation, conscientisation, and counter-surveillance as discussed above.

Brazilian Geography displayed some specificities, as its contents were considered intrinsically threatening by the authorities, especially when politically suspect academics entertained students on topics such as Latin America, ‘underdevelopment’ or ‘Third World’ in times of East–West tensions. Using surveillance sources in addition to more traditional ones (publications, recollections, university administrative materials, correspondence, etc.) allows making histories of ‘other’ geographies, because the very biases of these sources can be also their strengths. On the one hand, the zeal of informants in pleasing the powers in place reveals these latter’s attitudes towards intellectual dissent. On the other hand, these informants had eyes and ears in places such as classes or informal meetings, from which other kinds of written documentation were not always produced. Finally, this case stresses the need for awareness, in today’s radical scholarship, of the responsibilities that we take in striving to construct a new world. Authoritarian surveillance is always alleged to be ‘for good’, like in Brazil, where the pretext was defending the ‘free’ world. Learning how surveillance and repression mechanisms can be deployed to blame and undermine our own work serves to be better prepared for possible challenges.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The authors have nothing to report.

Endnotes

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