

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS:  
EXPELLED OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS  
UNDER MILITARY RULE IN BRAZIL, 1964–1985

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

Between 1964 and 1985 the Brazilian dictatorship expelled from the military ranks thousands of officers and soldiers who were seen as subversives. Through an examination of state archival sources and interviews, *Unusual Suspects* examines how these servicemen remembered expulsion and how their experiences shaped them socially and culturally. When joining the military many officers and soldiers conflated notions of masculinity with military honor. This dissertation argues that as they were expelled these men were denied access to their military identities, which led them to experience a disconnection with their ideas of manhood. Expulsion from the military, imprisonment, torture, and marginalization from Brazilian society inflicted upon these servicemen what I call a gendered trauma. This project draws from written and oral sources collected throughout Brazil—Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Porto Alegre, Curitiba and Salvador—College Park, MD, and Mexico City. This dissertation shows how expelled servicemen reacted to the violence they endured, often engaging in actions that helped them to reclaim their manhood. While some were more successful in overcoming this trauma, others endured it for a longer period of time. Ultimately, this dissertation concludes that the dictatorship had overarching effects in servicemen’s lives that transcended the era of the dictatorship itself.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEL	Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth
ABHO	Associação Brasileira de História Oral
ACIMAR	Entidade Nacional dos Civis e Militares
AMFNB	Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil
AI	Ato Institucional
ALN	Aliança Libertadora Nacional
AN	Arquivo Nacional
APERJ	Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
APESP	Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo
APP	Arquivo Público do Paraná
AMPLA	Associação dos Militares Atingidos Pelos Atos de Exceção, or Associação de Defesa dos Direitos e Pró Anistia dos Atingidos por Atos Institucionais
BNDE	Banco de Desenvolvimento Econômico
CBA	Comitê Brasileiro pela Anistia
CISA	Centro de Informações de Segurança da Aeronáutica
CENIMAR	Centro de Informações da Marinha
CGI	Comissão Geral de Investigações
CIE	Centro de Informações do Exército
CIEX	Centro de Informações do Exterior
CNV	Comissão Nacional da Verdade
CSN	Conselho de Segurança Nacional
COLINA	Comando de Libertação Nacional
DOPS	Departamento de Ordem Política e Social

ESG	Escola Superior de Guerra
IBAD	Instituto Brasileiro de Ação Democrática
IPES	Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Sociais
IPM	Inquérito Policial Militar
MMC	Movimento Militar Constitucionalista
MR-8	Movimento Revolucionário Oito de Outubro
MR-26	Movimento Revolucionário Vinte e Seis de Março
MRMN	Movimento de Resistência Militar Constitucionalista
OAS	Organization of American States
OBAN	Operação Bandeirantes
PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro
POLOP	Organização Revolucionária Marxista Política Operária
PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro
RAN	Resistência Armada Nacionalista
RI	Regimento de Infantaria
STF	Supremo Tribunal Federal
STM	Superior Tribunal Militar
SNI	Serviço Nacional de Informações
SOA	School of the Americas
SOPS	Supervisão de Ordem Política e Social
UMNA	União dos Marinheiros Nacionalistas, or Unidade Mobilização Nacional Pela Anistia
VAR-Palmares	Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária—Palmares
VPR	Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária

## INTRODUCTION

The Cold War, and the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, reached beyond the territories of these nations and their allies, affecting most populations in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. In Latin America, the Cuban Revolution of 1959 served as a warning to the United States, which fought to stop “communist infiltration” in the region and keep Latin American nations in their sphere of influence. In the name of anticommunism, U.S. governments supported dozens of paramilitary groups, military coups, and authoritarian regimes throughout Central and South America during the second part of the twentieth century.

In order to assess their influence and the approximation of Latin American nations to the Soviet Union, U.S. intelligence agents produced thousands of reports documenting the political state of Latin American countries during the Cold War. In Brazil, between 1964 and 1985, a period in which military officers ousted president João Goulart and governed the country, reports from U.S. embassies to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., examined the politics of the military regime. Some of these reports assessed the conflicts between officers in power, which after 1964 were divided into two main factions, hard-line and moderate. Most of the documentation of the U.S. Department of Defense about Brazil, consists of reports from U.S. embassies and consulates, and portrays the Brazilian military as a cohesive unit that supported and enforced the military regime. One document dated January 21, 1965, in which an agent at the São Paulo consulate analyzed a list of officers who were recently promoted, caught my attention. In this report, the U.S. Embassy lists supposedly “hard-liner” junior officers who were rising in the military ranks, and who could become important leaders in the armed forces and in

the Brazilian political scene; individuals the U.S. Department of State should know about.<sup>1</sup> A familiar name on this list stood out—my grandfather’s, who was at the time Lieutenant Colonel Paulo Francisco Martins Ferreira.

I grew up knowing that my grandfather had served in the Army, as decades after his retirement, family members still called him “colonel,” but I never knew why he had retired. It surprised me to read his name on a document from the U.S. Embassy because just five months after the report was sent to the Department of State, on June 30, my grandfather retired from the Army. My family remembers pieces of his retirement history. One family member told me that he took an exam to become a general three or four times but did not pass and gave up on his military career after realizing he would not be able to continue rising in the ranks. Another said that after the 1964 coup the Army ordered him to question a university professor who was imprisoned, that he refused, and started to disagree with the course of the policies of the military government but did not voice his opposition, instead, asking to retire. About the military dictatorship, some family members remember the only opinion he voiced was, “The armed forces were not made to govern the country.” Although he decided to leave the Army, he did not explain to his own family why he made this decision. My family’s memory of my grandfather’s experience with military rule is blurred since, for reasons I will probably never fully understand, he rarely spoke about it.

My grandfather’s history made me start to question some of the most well-established narratives about the Brazilian dictatorship. Scholars who have studied the dynamics between Brazilian society and the military regime between 1964 and 1985 have largely portrayed the

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<sup>1</sup> National Archives II, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Subject-Numeric File, 1964-1966, DEF 6-1 BRAZ, A-206, BOX 1620, “Fractional List of Hard-Line Junior Army Officers,” January 21, 1965.

armed forces as a cohesive unit whose goal was to safeguard the dictatorship. These studies have emphasized opposition between civil society and the armed forces, portraying the institution of the armed forces, together with other groups from the national and international private sectors, as the enforcers and supporters of military rule. On the other end of the spectrum, resisting authoritarianism, they have positioned civilian sectors of society such as the student movement and union workers. Within the regime, they highlight, officers who enforced the regime were divided into two factions, moderates and hard-liners, and disagreed on whether they would return power to civilians in a speedier manner or retain it indefinitely.

Cases like my grandfather's complicate these binaries. According to family memory, junior Army officer Ferreira opposed military intervention in politics, but was fond of General Artur da Costa e Silva—the Army general who became president between 1967 and 1969 and who was a member of the hard-line faction. Lieutenant-colonel Ferreira also stayed in the Army after 1964—siding with coup leaders—but decided to retire one year into the dictatorship. He could not be simply defined as a hard-line junior officer, as his decisions did not reflect those of that group, and at the same time that he could not be categorized as a moderate or as a revolutionary for deciding to leave the forces. My grandfather's silences about military rule, and his lack of a definitive answer for why he decided to retire also raised questions about how he felt about leaving the institution, and about how the era of military rule affected his life socially and culturally. What happened to officers and soldiers who were proud members of the armed forces before 1964, but who were forced out of the military after the March 1964 coup? What were their motivations and ideologies, and what characterized their life trajectories after the coup? My grandfather and many other cases of Brazilian military officers show that the binary categories in which they were remembered in history need to be reevaluated.

Reexamining the Brazilian military dictatorship, this dissertation challenges the narratives that equate the “armed forces” with the “military regime” and imply they were always and only one and the same. It also disputes discourses that oppose “civil society” and the “armed forces,” showing that sectors within the armed forces resisted the military coup and the regime that ensued. I discuss the relationship between the armed forces and the military regime, showing that the armed forces were a complex political body formed not only by supporters of the military coup but comprised also of critics and of soldiers that did not have a clear political stand about the regime. I argue that the dictatorship and the transformations it brought to the armed forces had overarching effects into the lives of officers and soldiers who were expelled from the institution at the time of the coup. By attempting to eliminate opposition inside the armed forces through the expulsion of officers and soldiers considered subversives, and by imprisoning, torturing, harassing, and denying these individuals employment in Brazil, the coup leaders imposed onto them traumas that had a gendered character.

Brazil’s early 1960s were marked by increasing pressure from progressive sectors for social, political and economic reforms throughout the country. In reaction to president João Goulart’s pursuit of these reforms, a group of generals from the armed forces ousted the president and instituted a military regime. While there is a strong body of literature that examines civilian resistance to the regime and conflict between the generals in power from 1964 to 1985, there has been little focus on the opposition that emerged within the military ranks against the dictatorship. I examine the life trajectories of officers and soldiers who did not identify as hard-line or moderate; officers who identified as nationalists before 1964 and continued resisting interventionism after they were categorized as communists and expelled from the armed forces; sergeants and sailors who were also expelled from the forces, accused of communist activity due

to their involvement in military clubs and associations that were pushing for reform inside and outside the armed forces; and soldiers who did not participate in political activities but who were still accused of communism and fired from the forces. These cases show a more complicated history of military rule. In order to eliminate dissent, members of a faction known as “internationalist” before the 1964 coup engaged in an ongoing operation to cleanse the armed forces from opposition to their project throughout the era of military rule. Even officers who were initially favorable, or tolerant, of the coup, were expelled from their military ranks after they started to criticize some of the regime’s policies.

After the regime authorities expelled these officers, non-commissioned officers and low-ranking soldiers from the military ranks they continued spying on them and often times imprisoning them between 1964 and 1985. Many low-ranking soldiers were imprisoned and tortured inside the barracks even before they were expelled, and most expelled servicemen continued being surveilled on the streets, in their houses, and at work after they left the armed forces. Focusing on the perspectives of these expelled soldiers, I examine how they remember their expulsions from the forces and life during the dictatorship, and the ways in which their experiences and the memory they created about them affected these men socially and culturally.

Questions of honor and manhood were essential to the formation of members of the armed forces. A harsh period of training in the Army, Navy and Air Force transformed civilian men into officers and soldiers, turning them into “honorable men” who were willing to sacrifice their own lives for the republic and its citizens. Individuals who were trained in the Escola Militar do Realengo (which functioned until 1944) and in the Academia Militar das Agulhas Negras (founded in 1951), gained social status as they became military officers. However, even for sergeants and low-ranking soldiers—who were usually from lower-income families

compared to officers—being accepted into the armed forces made them feel as if they were ascending socially. For many men who lived in poor communities of Rio de Janeiro, especially for those who were poor and also black, serving in the military was one of the only ways they could ascend socially. Military service gave these men a relatively stable source of income, and military status gave them a sense of respectability. Officers could provide for their families, and low-ranking soldiers could help their parents financially. Furthermore, as they wore the military uniform, they were identified as men who were willing to sacrifice their own lives for Brazil, and this made them feel respected by others as honorable men. Thus, these men were able to acquire both material gains and social capital from military service. Such experience with the military service in Brazil shaped these men's identity, and, for this reason, expulsion from the armed forces traumatized them.

Being expelled and marginalized from the military influenced the ways these individuals saw themselves. Because they believed the military accorded them an honorable status, when they were expelled they felt that the officers in power stripped them of their honor and manhood. The experiences with military rule inflicted upon these men what I call a gendered trauma. I argue that as they faced different types of state violence, these men experienced their “masculine” qualities being removed from them. The idea they had of manhood was intertwined with their military identity. Thus, for many expelled officers and soldiers the inability to identify as members of the military started the process of being stripped from their masculinity. Because they were not able to call themselves officers or soldiers, and they were not being able to perform the rituals of being a member of the military, they did not feel they could express their masculinities. The other violations they were exposed to after expulsions continued traumatizing them. The humiliation of being imprisoned and tortured inflicted physical forms of emasculation.

And lastly, the inability to hold formal employment and provide for themselves and their families prevented many former servicemen from overcoming the trauma and regaining their sense of manhood. In addition to examining how this trauma is present in their discourses, I evaluate some of the life events that helped them through and/or strategies they developed to overcome this trauma. I study, for example, how race and social class often times affected these men's efforts to overcome this gendered trauma.

Although this history transpires mostly in Brazil, expelled members of the armed forces largely framed their fight as a struggle against imperialism, and many travelled within Latin America and even across the Atlantic Ocean as political exiles. This dissertation, therefore, contributes to our understanding of the networks of solidarity that were formed across the global south during the Cold War. It also contributes to the scholarship on the implications of authoritarianism for the political, social and cultural landscape of the global south.

## **Methodology**

This dissertation relies on oral and written sources collected in several cities in Brazil, and also in Mexico City and College Park, Maryland. In Brazil, I consulted the Public Archive of São Paulo (APESP), the Public Archive of Rio de Janeiro (APERJ), the National Archives in Rio de Janeiro (AN), the Public Archive of Rio Grande do Sul (APERS), and the Public Archive of Paraná (APP). In Mexico City I visited the Archivo General de la Nación and the Archivo Histórico Genaro Estrada, and in College Park I visited the U.S. National Archives II. In these archives I collected thousands of documents pertaining to the life trajectories of thousands of officers and soldiers who were marginalized from the armed forces after the military coup of 1964 in Brazil.

In addition to written sources, I collected thirty-three interviews with men who were expelled from the military and also consulted interviews that other historians had previously conducted and are now stored at the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil (CPDOC). I also consulted biographies and monographs expelled servicemen wrote to express how they experienced military rule. Throughout most of the servicemen's narratives they lamented their exclusion from the ranks, as these events interrupted their careers. On one hand, expulsion, incarceration and torture damaged these men's expectations of performing masculinity, working as a means to emasculate them and break down their self-esteem and sense of belonging. On the other hand, some former servicemen were able to rebuild their gender identity and perform masculinity inside the resistance movements against the regime. The oral history component of my research allows me to understand not only how the dictatorship transformed the armed forces and eliminated opposition inside the military ranks, but also how it permanently changed the lives of men who had their military careers interrupted by the coup.

The feminist oral history methodology developed by Kathryn Anderson, Susan Armitage, Dana Jack and Judith Wittner provides an appropriate set of tools for conducting interviews, as these authors shows that oral history gives the historian the rare opportunity to have the subjects they are studying assign meaning to what they said.<sup>2</sup> I drew from their methodology and asked my interviewees not only about the events they lived through and remembered but also about what these events meant to them. Since my emphasis is on perception as framed by my

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<sup>2</sup> Kathryn Anderson, Susan Armitage, Dana Jack and Judith Wittner, "Beginning Where We Are: Feminist Methodology in Oral History," *The Oral History Review*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Fieldwork in Oral History (Spring 1987): 103-127.

respondents, this conceptual tool allowed my subjects to give meaning to memory instead of just describing facts and events.

### **Authoritarianism in Latin America during the Cold War**

This dissertation is situated at the intersection of political and gender history, as well as at the history of memory, law, and human rights of Latin America in the context of the Cold War. Latin America served as a battlefield for the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, so they could showcase their own ideological systems. Odd Arne Westad, for example, has shown that both the United States and the Soviet Union were attempting to prove to other nations that each of their own ideologies should be the ones governing policies throughout the world.<sup>3</sup> The “Third World” became the site in which these superpowers showcased their systems of governance.

During the 1950s and 1960s in Brazil, while popular social sectors were pushing for economic and social reforms that would redistribute resources and benefit the lower strata of society, conservative sectors pushed back to maintain the status quo. Progressive sectors demanded social, political and economic reforms, such as land redistribution. However, when president João Goulart started to pursue these reforms between 1961 and 1964, military generals ousted him and instituted a dictatorship. This dictatorship received the support of the United States, whose leaders wanted to make sure the Cuban Revolution would not spread in Latin America. Similar processes took place in other nations, including Chile, Argentina, Peru, Uruguay, and Paraguay, which all endured coups and authoritarian rule.

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<sup>3</sup> Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Many scholars have studied military authoritarianism in Latin America in the context of the Cold War, and most of this scholarship has focused on regime politics. The first works that marked this scholarship focused on understanding the conditions that led to the implementation of authoritarianism in the region and its maintenance. During the 1970s, when Latin American dictatorships were still in place, scholars focused mainly on understanding the elements that led to the establishment of these dictatorships. They were mostly interested in examining how dictators came to power and altered the political, economic and social relations in these countries in order to identify the problems of political systems and find solutions. Guillermo O'Donnell, for example, argues that the modernization of Latin American societies during mid-twentieth century increased the number of political groups that were able to enter the political arena, namely labor unions.<sup>4</sup> In this context, he suggests, authoritarian regimes were implanted in Argentina and Brazil as elites who held political power acted to prevent these groups from taking power or to prevent a situation of shared power. Others claim that the fall of democracy was a result of political parties' failure to compromise. Arturo Valenzuela explains that the Chilean military regime was a consequence of the Christian Democrats allowing for the intensification of the tensions between the political Right and Left. He argues that instead of being "obsessed" with combating "Marxist totalitarianism" ideologies, the Christian Democrats should have noticed the necessity of coming to an agreement with the Allende's government coalition.<sup>5</sup>

In Brazil, some of the most important works about the period written during the dictatorial period focused mainly on the political conditions that enabled the creation and

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<sup>4</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California Press, 1973).

<sup>5</sup> Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

maintenance of a military regime, and the structure of the military government itself.<sup>6</sup>

Attempting to explain this authoritarian cycle in Brazil, these authors ended up oversimplifying conflict within the armed forces in the wake of the coup. Most of these works equate the armed forces with the military regime, portraying the first as a cohesive unit that supported and protected the dictatorship. The main division within the armed forces and the authoritarian government they examine in depth is between “moderate” and “hard-liner” supporters of the regime. After 1964, officers who aimed to stop the communist threat and quickly return state control to civilians became known as “moderates.” Officers who wanted control to remain with the military indefinitely were known as “hard-liners.”<sup>7</sup> Scholarship has portrayed these groups as the only factions inside the military that competed for power during the era. Thomas Skidmore does not claim that moderates and hard-liners were the only groups acting within the armed forces, yet he fails to acknowledge the conflicts that were taking place inside the military and the outcome of ideological dissent in 1964.<sup>8</sup> Maria Helena Moreira Alves, on the other hand, acknowledges that the officers who took power needed to cleanse the armed forces from opposition. She studies how the generals who took power used the ideology of the Doctrine of National Security and Development to justify the imposition of their system of control and

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<sup>6</sup> Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

<sup>7</sup> About the involvement of the Brazilian military officers in politics see: Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics*; John Schulz, *O Exército Na Política: Origens da Intervenção Militar, 1850-1894* (São Paulo: Edusp, 1994); Shawn C. Smallman, *Fear and Memory in the Brazilian Army and Society, 1889-1954* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002); José Murilo de Carvalho, “Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil, 1930-45,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 62, no. 2 (May 1982): 193–223; Paulo Ribeiro da Cunha, *Militares e militância: uma relação dialeticamente conflituosa* (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2014); Maud Chirio, *A Política nos Quartéis: Revoltas e Protestos de Oficiais na Ditadura Militar Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Zahar, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*.

domination.<sup>9</sup> Although she does not discuss in length the case of dissenting servicemen, she briefly mentions that one of the most important goals of the officers who took power was “Operation Cleanup,” which targeted sensitive areas of possible opposition, one of them being the military.<sup>10</sup> The “military strategy” aimed to purge and expel from the forces all servicemen who could oppose the policies of military rulers. Moreira Alves, however, does not examine expelled servicemen’s efforts to resist the Doctrine. When identifying what she calls the “main opposition sectors” against the dictatorship she mentions the student movement, the labor movement and Frente Ampla, the third being formed by politicians, failing to acknowledge military resistance against the military government.<sup>11</sup>

When Latin American countries transitioned to a new democratic era in the 1980s and 1990s, many scholars started to study the human rights abuses of the dictatorships, still with a focus on political developments, institutional violence and social movements of the era. Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, Anthony Pereira, and Pilar Calveiro have provided important interpretations about human rights violations in Latin America under military regimes. Roniger and Sznajder discuss the long-term legacies of human-rights violations at the institutional level committed in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.<sup>12</sup> Pereira examines human rights’ abuses and judicial systems in Chile, Argentina and Brazil during the era of their dictatorships, showing that

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<sup>9</sup> Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985).

<sup>10</sup> Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition*, 41.

<sup>11</sup> Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition*, 82.

<sup>12</sup> They show that the issue of institutional human rights violations was not resolved after the dictatorial period. Institutional principles such as such as lack of accountability, impunity, lack of investigation, the non-prosecution of publicly known crimes, and lack of equality before the law, which according to the authors should have remained reprehensible in a democracy, continued to be broken and were not fought against in the institutional level. Luis Roniger and Mario Sznajder, *The Legacy of Human Rights Violations in the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Brazilian leaders relied on trials for political prisoners more consistently than Argentinian and Chilean leaders because its judicial and military elites experienced a high degree of integration prior to the establishment of the regime.<sup>13</sup> And Calveiro, writing about Argentina, argues that after redemocratization the efforts of the Argentinian society to recognize human rights violations publicly and charge the state criminals were not enough. She sees the “disappearance process,” as she calls it, as the end point of a long-time process in which all major Argentinian political actors, especially the political parties and their leaders, were also responsible for. Without taking the responsibility off of the armed forces for the human rights violations, she proposes to critically study the actions of political actors in Argentina leading to the military regime.<sup>14</sup> Marguerite Feitlowitz also writes about Argentina’s Dirty War, examines the language of terror used by the military regime, shows how certain expressions became loaded with terror, and how the regime impacted language in Argentina.<sup>15</sup>

In Brazil, the Amnesty Law of 1979, which gave amnesty to targets and human rights violators, hindered the investigations and punishment of these crimes. Some have described this process as a state effort to lead society to collectively forget about the period. Social movements that were heavily composed of victims of these crimes and their families took upon themselves to make Brazil remember, pressuring the government for change in the amnesty law and seeking other ways to reach what they understood as justice for victims of the regime. Scholars also

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<sup>13</sup> He argues that each of these countries dealt with “political subversives” differently as a result of the integration and consensus between the judicial and military elites pre-existent before each dictatorship was implemented. His study provides an explanation to why in Brazil political prisoners had more access to a judicial system than in Argentina and Chile, where the number of political *desaparecidos* was much greater than in the first country. Anthony Pereira, *Political (In)Justice: Authoritarianism and the Rule of Law in Brazil, Chile, and Argentina* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> Pilar Calveiro, *Política y/o Violencia: Una aproximación a la guerrilla de los años 70* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2005), 19.

<sup>15</sup> Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

started to conduct investigations together with these social movements to counter the official narrative of the regime, which claimed that political prisoners were guilty of terrorism. One of the most important contributions of this scholarship was precisely to counter the official narratives that claimed the military was “forced” to take power to prevent Brazil from becoming a communist nation. This scholarship characterized those who state agents called “terrorists” and “communists” as victims of the regime who endured imprisonment, torture and even death. It showed that the regime committed human rights violations, but it also contributed to the construction of a national memory that would not erase the militants who resisted against the regime. Moreira Alves provides important insight into the ideological apparatus the generals in power constructed, but other scholars documented the violations.<sup>16</sup> Using documentation that the Brazilian government allowed him to consult in 1997, Carlos Fico studies the dynamics of the security and information agencies of the military dictatorship.<sup>17</sup> Fico argues that the agencies responsible for the espionage and policing of individuals considered political “subversives” did not act with the level of autonomy that scholars have previously assumed. He shows that these agencies were subordinated to the high command of large military units.

The Amnesty Law of 1979, however, was not a new phenomenon in Brazil. Ann Schneider discusses five moments (1890s, 1910, 1930s, 1945 and 1979) in modern Brazilian history in which specific groups were given amnesty. According to Schneider, the majority of those who would benefit from these amnesties had been categorized as “revolutionaries” and “subversives,” and had been imprisoned and exiled from Brazil before given amnesty. She shows how political amnesty was a form of settlement between the state and its former opponents.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition*.

<sup>17</sup> Carlos Fico, *Como Eles Agiam: Os Subterrâneos da Ditadura Militar – Espionagem e Polícia Política* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> Ann Schneider, “Amnestied in Brazil, 1895-1985” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2008), 47.

Since the 1990s, many scholars have written about the military regime's persecution of its opponents to counter the military dictators' official narrative that classified members of resistance movements as terrorists.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, in an attempt to condemn state violence, this scholarship created and reproduced a Manichean view of the dictatorship's history that divided historical actors between heroes and villains. As scholars did the important work to uncover cases of torture, disappearances and killings in Brazil, historical narratives became divided: on one side we would find the armed forces as a unit, the perpetrator of human rights abuses; and on the other side we would find civilians being imprisoned, harassed, tortured and killed for opposing military rule. Therefore, although this scholarship drew attention to the harm done to the opponents of the dictatorship, it also created misconceptions about the groups and movements who acted in support of or against the dictatorship.

Recently, scholars have started to complicate the Manichean history of military rule in Brazil. Maud Chirio, for example, was one of the first to question the struggle for power of moderates and hard-liners as it has been written. Chirio studies the hard-liner faction of officers from 1961 to 1978 and shows that this group was not homogeneous in its ideology or strategy.<sup>20</sup> She identifies a division within the hard-liner faction, from which a second generation of hard-liner officers emerged, and shows that this group did not aim to participate in the national decision-making process. She shows that their strategy was to intentionally not claim the presidency as their own but to maintain a space at the core of the police state. These were the officers who enforced the state's clandestine actions inside the military barracks and in public

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<sup>19</sup> Marcelo Ridenti, *O Fantasma da Revolução Brasileira*, 2 ed. (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2005); Elio Gaspari, *A Ditadura Envergonhada* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002); Cecília MacDowell Santos, Edson Teles, Janaína de Almeida Teles, *Desarquivando a Ditadura: Memória e Justiça no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 2009).

<sup>20</sup> Chirio, *A Política nos Quartéis*, 12.

spaces, justifying their actions in the name of the “revolution.”<sup>21</sup> Her research thus shows that political conflicts did not take place only between moderates and hard-liners, or between military officers and civilians.

While Chirio focuses on studying the most conservative factions of officers who operated and were classified as part of the hard-liner faction, I study officers and soldiers who were excluded from the entire process, focusing on members of the armed forces who neither supported nor enforced military rule. Like Chirio’s, my work shows that there is a fallacy in identifying the military personnel during the era just as moderates or hard-liners. My work, however, shows that an entire group of opponents to military rule was erased from historical narratives, as they are barely mentioned by the historiography. I also challenge Chirio’s claims that one factor that allowed coup leaders to overthrow president João Goulart was “the lack of any real military resistance.”<sup>22</sup>

### **The Military in Politics**

Scholars of the Brazilian armed forces have shown that officers and soldiers have long been involved in politics. From 1889 onward, when the newly installed republican state started to restructure Brazil’s armed forces, officers intervened in national political conflicts. Shawn Smallman shows that military officials exercised a crucial role in the institutionalization of the Brazilian Republic in 1889.<sup>23</sup> Deodoro da Fonseca, an Army general, was the first to control the provisional government that replaced imperial rule, and later he ensured his election as president by threatening to send troops to dissolve Congress. Frank McCann also shows that it was a group

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<sup>21</sup> Chirio, *A Política nos Quartéis*, 234.

<sup>22</sup> Chirio, *A Política nos Quartéis*, 17.

<sup>23</sup> Smallman, *Fear & Memory*.

of military officers who overthrew the empire, aiming to defend their particular interests and allying themselves to a political minority.<sup>24</sup> Hermes da Fonseca became president in 1910 and did not retire or resign from the Army. From 1910 to 1914 the Army listed him as marshal, and his assignment read “President of the Republic.”<sup>25</sup> The Republic’s structure and politics, therefore, was built by military officers from the beginning.

Authors who study this period have also focused the New Republic’s need to strengthen the military not only in terms of material resources, but also in uniting servicemen under a similar military ideology. Smallman explains that in 1889 the Army united for a short period of time to fight the Brazilian Empire, which they believed was attacking the military. However, as the perceived danger was removed, the Army collapsed “into internecine rivalries.”<sup>26</sup> In this moment, officials started to strengthen the Brazilian armed forces. Peter Beattie discusses how military conscription became a crucial aspect of this project.<sup>27</sup> One of the challenges that the armed forces faced in this moment was changing the population’s perception about military service, which most saw as punishment. Until the early 1900s, the Brazilian population saw military service as an opportunity for many to escape poverty and destitution.<sup>28</sup> McCann shows that only during the First World War did the population’s perception about conscription start to change.<sup>29</sup> The dominant agrarian oligarchies would not allow the implementation of most of the reforms military officers were proposing to strengthen the institution.<sup>30</sup> Some officers started to

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<sup>24</sup> Frank D. McCann, *Soldiers of the Pátria: A History of the Brazilian Army, 1889-1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 15.

<sup>25</sup> McCann, *Soldiers of the Pátria*, 109.

<sup>26</sup> Smallman, *Fear & Memory in the Brazilian Army and Society*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Peter M. Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

<sup>28</sup> Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> McCann, *Soldiers of the Pátria*, 158.

<sup>30</sup> McCann, *Soldiers of the Pátria*, 182.

believe, then, that change would only come if they intervened in politics, and in the 1920s two main currents or factions emerged within the armed forces—one legalist and the other revolutionary. The Tenentista Movement, or Lieutenant Movement, was one of the most significant revolutionary military movements in Brazil.<sup>31</sup> Rebellious junior officers who adhered to the movement did not advocate for a military government as a political solution. These officers' intervention in politics would be limited and had the purpose of generating a new and “good” government ruled by civilians.<sup>32</sup>

The 1930s, and the change in government administration, culminating in Getúlio Vargas' rise to the presidency, catapulted the armed forces back to the center of national politics.<sup>33</sup> José Murilo de Carvalho suggests that after 1930 the armed forces became increasingly involved in

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<sup>31</sup> Another important rebellion was the sailor movement that became known as the Revolt of the Whip. For more see Álvaro Pereira do Nascimento, *A Ressaca Da Marujada: Recrutamento e Disciplina Na Armada Imperial* (Rio de Janeiro: Presidência da República, Arquivo Nacional, 2001); Álvaro Pereira do Nascimento, *Cidadania, Cor e Disciplina na Revolta dos Marinheiros de 1910* (Rio de Janeiro: Mauad X, 2008).

<sup>32</sup> José Augusto Drummond, *O Movimento Tenentista: Intervenção Militar e Conflito Hierárquico (1922-1935)* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1986), 63. Drummond argues against an interpretation that saw *tenentes* as political representatives of the middle classes. He highlights the military character of the movement and argues that these junior officers acted politically and generally independently from outside influences. This interpretation understands the military as an autonomous political body that could be acting in conjunction to other social groups, but that was politically and ideologically independent from them. A focus on sailors' attempts to protest their conditions and pressure for change shows that not only officers revolted. This revolt was not only significant for the 1910s, but it inspired the political involvement of sailors throughout the twentieth-century. The sailors I study in this dissertation who formed the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB) in the beginning of the 1960s were strongly inspired by the revolting sailors of 1910, in special, João Cândido.

<sup>33</sup> See Alfred Stepan, *Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); and McCann, *Soldiers of the Pátria*. Stepan suggests that the Brazilian military ideology changed throughout the twentieth century, and that a “new professionalism” emerged and contributed to the 1964 military coup. Supporters of the “new professionalists” understood that they needed to focus on internal security, that segments of society could challenge the legitimacy of the government, that the political and military skills of the corps should be interrelated, that military action should be unrestricted, and that the military should be political. He opposes this ideology with “old professionalism”, which were officers focused on external security. Stepan shows that the “new professionalism” was foundational to the 1964 military coup. Frank McCann, however, disagrees with Stepan's interpretation, claiming that “old professionalists” were not disconnected of national politics.

politics due to the lack of discipline and the instability that took over the corps.<sup>34</sup> The idea of the Army as a politically neutral institution disappeared and political divisions inside the armed forces became an everyday practice. But the belief that the armed forces should intervene in politics became predominant.<sup>35</sup> Scholars studying the involvement of servicemen in politics during this era have shown that by the 1950s discussions about politics and the role of the armed forces in Brazilian society were prevalent in the institution. Chapter 1 discusses the divisions within the armed forces between 1950 and 1964, showing that the conflicts of this era culminated in the 1964 coup.

This scholarship shows that the 1964 military coup was not an isolated event and instead rooted in ideological conflicts that started to form as early as the 1930s. It highlights that servicemen across military branches and rankings have participated in national politics since the end of the nineteenth-century. When examining the history of the armed forces during the era of military rule, and because the highest-ranking officers become Brazil's governors, most studies equate the institution with the government, as discussed in the previous section. The cases of dissent from servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces starting on April 1964 and throughout military rule have not received much attention. Only during the last decade scholars have started to study the various ways in which servicemen challenged military rule.<sup>36</sup> My work

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<sup>34</sup> José Murilo de Carvalho, "Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil, 1930-45." *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (May 1982): 193.

<sup>35</sup> Carvalho, "Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil," 219. Carvalho also shows that by 1945 the Army became an influential institution in society. The military draft, for example, started to reach all men—in terms of class and race. Members of the armed forces gradually increased their interest and power of influence on national politics and in civil society.

<sup>36</sup> Several studies about the specific cases of sailors and sergeants have been published in the last decades. Anderson da Silva Almeida discusses marines and sailors' experiences with military rule from 1964 until the amnesty. Anderson da Silva Almeida, *Todo o Leme a Bombordo: Marinheiros e Ditadura Civil-Militar no Brasil: da Rebelião de 1964 à Anistia* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2012). More recently he published another book on the specific case of Admiral Cândido Aragão. Anderson da Silva Almeida, *...Como se Fosse um Deles: Almirante Aragão - Memórias, Silêncios Ressentimento em Tempos de*

expands on this scholarship, showing how we can benefit from an analysis of institutional persecution. If we look at the armed forces as a category we see that the marginalization of officers and soldiers in all three branches was similar. Thus, servicemen from each branch and from all ranks deserve to be examined in order to understand how military rule impacted the armed forces as a whole.

Studying specific movements, such as the sergeants and the marines and sailors' movements, scholars have highlighted the opposition of openly leftist groups against military rule. Elio Gáspari suggested in 2002 that twenty-five percent of officers who served in the armed forces in 1964 were expelled from their ranks immediately after the coup.<sup>37</sup> However, few studies have examined the specific cases of these officers and soldiers—not only the ones expelled in the wake of the coup but subsequently. Renato Lemos was the first scholar to question the “moderate versus hard-liner” narrative, studying the actions of General Peri Constant Bevilaqua together with the Superior Military Tribunal (STM) from 1965 to 1969.<sup>38</sup> General Bevilaqua disagreed with the regime's actions to imprison and marginalize individuals for political reasons and was expelled from the ranks in 1969.<sup>39</sup> Lemos' work indicates not only that the armed forces were not a cohesive political body in 1964, but that throughout the era of

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*Ditadura e Democracia* (Niterói: Editora da Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2017). Although significant to the field, Almeida's studies focus on specific groups acting within the Navy. His and other works that examine specific military groups have not explored in detail sources that examine persecuted military's trajectories as a way to understand military rule with different lenses other than a political focus.

<sup>37</sup> Gaspari, *A Ditadura Envergonhada*.

<sup>38</sup> Renato Lemos, *Justiça Fardada: O General Peri Bevilaqua No Superior Tribunal Militar (1965-1969)* (Rio de Janeiro: Bom Texto, 2004).

<sup>39</sup> Lemos shows that Bevilaqua did not rise against Goulart in 1961, after president Jânio Quadros' resignation, but that in 1964 he supported coup leaders in ousting the president. Bevilaqua, however, contested the National Security Doctrine, and during the period he served as judge to the military court, the Supremo Tribunal Militar, he attempted to concede habeas corpus to many individuals who were being accused of communism, saying that “being a communist is not a crime.” Lemos, *Justiça Fardada*, 86.

military rule officers who continued serving challenged the violence of the generals in power in different ways and were expelled from the institution for doing so.

Following Lemos' lead, a few other scholars examined the cases of expelled servicemen during this era. Cláudio Beserra de Vasconcelos discusses what he calls the "repressive politics applied to servicemen after the coup."<sup>40</sup> Vasconcelos examines the juridical processes against servicemen, trying to understand the characteristics the generals in power used to determine which servicemen would be expelled from the forces.<sup>41</sup> He suggests that this persecution had a political-ideological character and can be explained by a series of factors that emerged during the post-war period in Brazil, such as the crisis in political legitimacy, the rise of anticommunism, and the crisis in military hierarchy, or insubordination inside the armed forces.<sup>42</sup> He also suggests that the expulsions were precautionary and used to prevent future conflicts inside the armed forces of servicemen who could oppose the regime. His work, however, focuses exclusively on expulsions and imprisonment in the period immediate to the coup, and on two archives, the Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth (AEL) and the Public State Archive of Rio de Janeiro (APERJ). In several ways, my dissertation expands on his argument and focuses on different aspects of the same process. While he focuses on the juridical processes against the expelled servicemen, my work is centered on oral history and the servicemen's life trajectories after expulsion. My dissertation examines the consequences of expulsion and is more concerned with the period following the dictatorship and the servicemen's memory about the period than with the political-

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<sup>40</sup> Cláudio Beserra de Vasconcelos, *Repressão de Militares na Ditadura pós-1964* (Rio de Janeiro: Arquivo Nacional, 2018), 31.

<sup>41</sup> See also Flávia Machado Burlamaqui, "As Forças Armadas, a Anistia de 1979 e os Militares Cassados," *Militares e Política*, no. 6 (June 2010): 114–40. Burlamaqui wrote about the cases of expelled servicemen focusing on the legal implications of the amnesty law of 1979. She shows that the amnesty law failed to address the cases of most expelled servicemen and how they fought for reparations after 1979, forming an association and organizing collectively.

<sup>42</sup> Vasconcelos, "A Política Repressiva", 9.

ideological conflicts within the armed forces leading up to 1964. This approach allows me to examine the social and cultural effects of military rule on expelled members of the armed forces.

Nina Schneider indicates that the cases of expelled servicemen have not been depicted and discussed in scholarly works at length because these cases challenge ideas of “perpetrators” and “victims.”<sup>43</sup> She shows that the scholarship on Brazil’s dictatorship has predominantly chosen to focus on topics that show human rights abuses, and that scholars often assume that “the construction of a clearly categorized military institution better serves the purpose of condemning the military dictatorship than a fragmented and nuanced representation.”<sup>44</sup> This dissertation shows that the cases of expelled servicemen, however, help us understand the reach of military rule and how contentious it was, as colleagues of coup leaders rose against military rule. Esther Itaborahy Costa’s master’s thesis examines the case of expelled members of the Air Force. She shows Air Force Decree 1104 was created with the purpose of reducing the numbers of *cabos* who had been admitted to the Air Force, after the Air Force conducted a study and determined that the number of low-ranking soldiers was a problem for the institution since they outnumbered officers seven to one. She examines how some Air Force soldiers organized themselves from the moment they were expelled from the forces to their fight for amnesty.<sup>45</sup> These studies show that the violence of military rule was greater than it is usually depicted since it reached not only civilians but also members of the military institution.

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<sup>43</sup> Nina Schneider, “The Forgotten Voices of the Militares Cassados: Reconceptualising ‘Perpetrators’ and ‘Victims’ in Post-1985 Brazil,” *Brasiliana – Journal for Brazilian Studies* 2, no. 2 (November 2013): 313–44.

<sup>44</sup> Schneider, “The Forgotten Voices,” 326.

<sup>45</sup> Esther Itaborahy Costa, “Do Banimento à Luta pela Anistia: História e Memória da Associação dos Anistiados Políticos e Militares da Aeronáutica – GEUAr,” (Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, 2014), 14.

As the dictatorship marginalized servicemen considered to have leftist tendencies in Brazil, in other Latin American nations similar processes also took place. Although the scholarship on these cases is still scarce, Leith Passmore discusses the experiences of conscript soldiers during the Pinochet era in Chile.<sup>46</sup> His work challenges the narratives that portray servicemen solely as enforcers of military rule. Using oral histories, the author examines the memory of ex-conscripts in Chile who were called up to complete their compulsory military service between 1973 and 1989. He shows that these men were often perpetrators of, witnesses to, victims of human rights abuses, or all three. My dissertation shows a similar process taking place in Brazil.

### **Memory and Gender**

In the last few decades scholars of Latin American history have focused on memory and gender to examine the second half of the twentieth century, pushing the scholarship to a deeper understanding of dictatorships' opposition movements. In Brazil, in 1975, the Center for Research and Documentation for Brazilian Contemporary History (CPDOC) was one of the first institutions to start doing oral history, and thus far it has collected about one thousand interviews.<sup>47</sup> Especially during the 1980s and the 1990s, the center collected dozens of interviews with officers who participated in the military regime. In the published works *Visões do Golpe*, *Os Anos de Chumbo*, and *A Volta aos Quartéis*, CPDOC published transcribed interviews of retired officers of the armed forces to recover their memory about the years of military rule and

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<sup>46</sup> Leith Passmore, *The Wars Inside Chile's Barracks: Remembering Military Service under Pinochet* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2017).

<sup>47</sup> CPDOC, "O que é História Oral," Accessed on May 24, 2019, <https://cpdoc.fgv.br/acervo/historiaoral>.

the return to democracy.<sup>48</sup> These interviews serve as primary sources for scholars who write about the dictatorship today. However, there are few monographs that critically examine them. The work of CPDOC's researchers, for example, albeit being crucial to catalog oral histories, does not have a strong analytical content. Although there are research centers in universities that emerged to focus on oral histories, and historians in Brazil created the Associação Brasileira de História Oral (ABHO), few monographs that focus on memory about the dictatorship have impacted the field of Brazilian history significantly. Most of the work on memory have contributed to the condemnation of human rights violations in the period. Maria Paula Araujo, for example, seeks to understand how memory impacts our understanding of history and to also recover the voices of activists in Brazil.<sup>49</sup>

Scholars who focus on other South American nations have shown that when we examine how individuals and groups remember these political historical processes we understand the period through different lenses. Coining the concept of "memory box," Steve Stern shows that four social groups in Chile produced contending memory frameworks about the period.<sup>50</sup> While some remembered the regime as salvation, others remember it as a cruel rupture, others as persecution and awakening, and a forth group as a closed box, or a period in history that should be left in the past. After Stern, other scholars studied the period in a similar light, looking into

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<sup>48</sup> Maria Celina Soares d'Araújo, Gláucio Ary Dillon Soares, and Celso Castro, *Visões Do Golpe: A Memória Militar Sobre 1964* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, 1994); Maria Celina Soares d' Araujo, Celso Castro, and Gláucio Ary Dillon Soares, *Os Anos De Chumbo: A Memória Militar Sobre a Repressão* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Relume Dumará, 1994); Maria Celina Soares d' Araujo, Celso Castro, and Gláucio Ary Dillon Soares, *A Volta aos Quartéis: A Memória Militar Sobre a Abertura* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Relume Dumará, 1995).

<sup>49</sup> Maria Paula Araujo, "História, Memória e Esquecimento: Implicações Políticas," *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, v. 79 (2007): 95-111.

<sup>50</sup> Steve Stern, *Remembering Pinochet's Chile: On the Eve of London, 1998* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Steve Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds: Memory Struggles in Pinochet's Chile, 1973-1988* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Steve Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989-2006* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

how memory shaped competing narratives about Latin American dictatorship. Writing about the specific case of dictatorship archives in Guatemala, Kirsten Weld examines the importance of reconciling national memory from the 1960s until the 1990s in Guatemala. She shows that when the dictatorship's archives were discovered in 2005, they renewed a national conversation about historical memory and transitional justice. Guatemalans were pushed through a process of memory reconciliation, in which the documents of the dictatorship revealed the truth about human rights violations. Activists started to reframe the official narrative about the war, a military-backed version of history that held state security forces protected the country against communism.<sup>51</sup> Leith Passmore is specifically concerned with examining shared memory narratives of military service under Pinochet to understand how memory binds these men, who found “meaning, legitimacy, solidarity, and companionship in ex-conscript groups in the first decades of the twenty-first century.”<sup>52</sup>

A focus on memory is important precisely because it highlights competing narratives about the authoritarian rule, bringing to the fore narratives that have not received attention before. Lucas Figueiredo and Vicente Arruda Câmara Rodrigues have written about the dispute in narratives about the period.<sup>53</sup> Both of these authors expanded our understanding of the history of the military intelligence archives' after democratization, showing how archives were, and are, used to hide or bring to the fore the operations of military rule. Figueiredo argues that the regime's intelligence agencies were sophisticated and one of the most important elements in

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<sup>51</sup> Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 5.

<sup>52</sup> Leith Passmore, *The Wars Inside Chile's Barracks: Remembering Military Service under Pinochet* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2017), 5.

<sup>53</sup> See Lucas Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum: Militares e Civis Na Ocultação Dos Documentos Da Ditadura* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2015), and Vicente Arruda Câmara Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis: Arquivos da Ditadura Militar e Acesso à Informação em Tempos de Justiça de Transição no Brasil* (Aracajú: Edise, 2017).

sustaining military rule. He also argues that the public does not have access to all this documentation because the military regime hid or destroyed them.<sup>54</sup> Rodrigues also argues for the importance of the archives for the memory of military rule, showing that the clashing efforts of groups who wanted to keep the archives closed and others who aimed to open them led to the “(in)visibility” of the documentation about the period, as while a few archives were opened to the public, others remained hidden or were destroyed.<sup>55</sup>

One of the most important works on memory in Brazil is Rebecca Atencio’s *Memory’s Turn*. She shows that there were few institutional state initiatives that focused on recuperating the memory about the dictatorship’s human rights violations. She argues that Brazil was slow in punishing violations because the state failed to organize “a national culture of memory and human rights” following the country’s return to civilian rule, and claims the Brazilian state chose “the path of least resistance” when dealing with the memory about the dictatorship, what she called “reconciliation by institutionalized forgetting.”<sup>56</sup> The work of Atencio and others has been instrumental to an understanding of the cultural and social impacts of military rule in Latin America.

Recent studies have considered particular social groups that resisted the regime, such as students and urban and rural workers. Understanding how class, gender, and race and ethnicity affected resistance has been crucial for these contemporary historians.<sup>57</sup> The production of studies that focus on gender in Latin America has only become more prevalent in the last few

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<sup>54</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 73.

<sup>55</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 101.

<sup>56</sup> Rebecca J. Atencio, *Memory’s Turn: Reckoning with Dictatorship in Brazil* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 12.

<sup>57</sup> To understand how Japanese-Brazilians navigated issues of race and ethnicity during this period see Jeffrey Lesser, *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

decades. Sueann Caulfield shows that only during the 1990s historians started developing more complex theoretical frameworks for analyzing the intersection of gender, class and ethnicity with politics or the social relations of production.<sup>58</sup> Particular to the study of the twentieth century, most historians have focused on gender inequality, the change of gender roles, the role of women in the workplace, and women's agency and resistance in Latin America.<sup>59</sup> Examining social institutions such as the family, the relationship between women and men in different spaces, the relationship between state and the family, and studying how honor and patriarchy, for example, are redefined during the era, these scholars have shed light into our understanding of power relations and the spaces where hegemonic views can emerge and be enforced.

The use of gender lenses in understanding cycles of authoritarianism in Latin America has produced important scholarship. These studies have highlighted that gendered discourses and representations help us understand how the politics of military rule in Latin America and people's responses to these policies affected social groups in different ways.<sup>60</sup> They deconstruct

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<sup>58</sup> Sueann Caulfield, "The History of Gender in Latin American Historiography," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81, no. 3-4 (2001): 451-492.

<sup>59</sup> Susan Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy: The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); John D. French and Daniel James, *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers: From Household and Factory to the Union Hall and Ballot Box* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Sueann Caulfield, *In Defense of Honor: Sexual Morality, Modernity, and Nation in Early-Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Heidi Tinsman, *Partners in Conflict: The Politics of Gender, Sexuality, and Labor in the Chilean Agrarian Reform, 1950-1973* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Heidi Tinsman, *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

<sup>60</sup> See Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); and Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013). Taylor studies the military regime and of the opposition movements during Argentina's Dirty War, showing that the regime's public spectacles of violence were used to terrorize its population, and to impose their ideas of national identity, traditions and goals. these ideals of nation building were loaded with misogyny, and that the construction of national identity in this context was predicted on female destruction, or on the oppression of women. The opposition, however, instead of deconstructing this idea, ended up reproducing the same violent misogyny in their critique of the regime. Langland shows that inside the student movement that opposed the dictatorship in Brazil, although students

ideas of “good” and “bad” characters in the political scenario and show that both the state and the left reproduced problematic discourses about gender roles. Works that examine gender in Latin America during the authoritarian cycles but also throughout the larger twentieth-century, however, lack a focus on masculinity.<sup>61</sup> Benjamin Cowan’s work is particularly influential to this dissertation, as it shows that many of the excesses of the Brazilian dictatorship drew from an ideology that determined what was morally acceptable.<sup>62</sup> In this view, communism was unacceptable to coup leaders because it was often equated with pornography and obscenity. Even though most officers and soldiers I study were against military interventionism and publicly opposed the dictatorship, many objected to being labeled as communist. I believe this might be because they were influenced by the ideas Cowan examines, and also often saw communists as “sexually perverse hippies.”<sup>63</sup> In the schools of military training, servicemen were taught on the “acute and cataclysmic” effects of modernization on youth, media and gender relations, which were interpreted as the work of subversive communists.<sup>64</sup> According to this view on “subversion” this brought a moral and familial decline.

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challenged gender roles and behavior, they reproduced established gender norms, as students’ militancy rested on masculinist and heteronormative assumptions.

<sup>61</sup> Exceptions are James Green, “‘Who Is the Macho Who Wants to Kill Me?’ Male Homosexuality, Revolutionary Masculinity, and the Brazilian Armed Struggle of the 1960s and 1970s,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 92: 3 (2012); James Green, *Exile Within Exiles: Herbert Daniel, Gay Brazilian Revolutionary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); Matthew Gutmann, *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Rafael Ramírez, *What it Means to Be a Man: Reflections on Puerto Rican Masculinity* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1999). Green examines masculinity and homophobia among the revolutionary Left in Brazil, studying how militants understood homosexuality and dealt with cases of same sex romantic and sexual relationships within revolutionary organizations. Gutmann argues that gender qualities are always shifting and that we should avoid generalizations that attempt to determine what are the qualities associated with gender in Mexico and in Latin America. Moving away from the view of the Mexican “macho” stereotype, he shows that the idea of a unitary maleness is “wrong and harmful.”

<sup>62</sup> Benjamin Cowan, *Securing Sex: Morality and Repression in the Making of Cold War Brazil* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

<sup>63</sup> Cowan, *Securing Sex*, 8.

<sup>64</sup> Cowan, *Securing Sex*, 245.

As men who were formed in the armed forces, many officers and soldiers I interviewed distanced themselves from this representation, as they wanted to be seen as honorable men. In their imaginary of honorability, family ties and heterosexuality were crucial. There were certain aspects of “masculinity” many of my interviewees understood as crucial to their own identities as military men, such as an ideal of braveness and the sense of protection for the nation and its population as a duty, which also implies in a strong patriarchal sentiment. In addition, for the men I interviewed even the mere ritual of wearing a military uniform shaped the ideal they built about their own masculinities. When servicemen were marginalized from the forces and had to follow different career paths, even though they continued identifying as servicemen, they needed to change their ideals of manhood and how they performed masculinity in order to deal with the trauma of being banished from the armed forces.

### **Chapter outline**

The first chapter of this dissertation discusses the political environment inside the military before the 1964 coup. It shows that the political conflicts that culminated in 1964 started two decades before the coup and were marked by a debate centered on Cold War narratives. Chapter two examines the first wave of expulsions of officers and soldiers, in which the leaders of the 1964 coup started an operation to cleanse the armed forces of opposition, a process that started to inflict on to these men traumas that had a gendered character. This chapter examines the first reactions of anti-interventionist officers and soldiers to the 1964 coup and studies two movements of opposition that emerged almost immediately after the coup, the Nationalist Armed Resistance (Resistência Armada Nacionalista—RAN) and the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement.

Chapter three studies the years between 1968 and 1974, and the specific cases of officers and soldiers who created and were members of the guerrilla movement *Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária* (VPR) in São Paulo. Chapter four studies the trajectories of officers and soldiers between 1974 and 1979, as they tried to survive and rebuilt their lives and careers after expulsion from the armed forces. It analyses the different access to civilian careers for officers and soldiers, and it shows that most expelled servicemen continued being surveilled and harassed by the armed forces after they were released from prison and expelled from their military ranks. It also examines how physical tortures, imprisonment, and a sense of impotence to conduct their lives and support their families, continuing to inflict upon these men a gendered trauma.

Chapter five examines the fight of expelled officers and soldiers for amnesty from 1978 until the present, as some soldiers still seek the state's recognition as victims of the dictatorship. For the men who received amnesty in 1979, this process gave them a sense of closure, as it allowed them to recognize themselves as honorable men and understand their persecutions more as a part of their past than of their present. Lastly, chapter six discusses the memory of the era of military dictatorship in Brazil, examining the narrative that was built about the period in Brazil between 1985 and 2018. It shows the relationship of expelled soldiers with the memory of the period and with the narratives that were constructed about the era, which practically erased their experiences from public knowledge. Although these chapters follow a chronological order, at times I examine how their discourses were informed by more recent discussions. Altogether, these chapters tell the history of officers and soldiers who were categorized as subversives and expelled from the military, how they were subjected to traumas during this era, which they continued experiencing even after 1985. In bringing to light these experiences, this dissertation helps build a more complex picture of military rule and its social and cultural aftermaths.

## Note on Terms

Recently, scholars and activists have argued for the need to call the 1964-1985 Brazilian dictatorship a ‘civil’-military dictatorship, instead of calling it simply a military dictatorship, due to the involvement of the private sector, right-wing politicians and other conservative groups that pressed for the coup and benefitted financially from authoritarian rule.<sup>65</sup> Although it is true that many civilians had a role to play in the power relations during the era, I will continue referring to this process as a military dictatorship. Many of the triggers that caused the political crisis that led military officers to take control of the government were events happening inside the armed forces. Insubordination inside the armed forces and protests of sergeants and sailors, which received the support of president were probably the two most important processes leading to the coup. Furthermore, after taking power, the generals who ousted president João Goulart governed the country for twenty-one years, and even politicians who initially supported the coup, such as Carlos Lacerda, opposed it after learning the generals were not willing to return power to civilians. Therefore, even though the coup received ample support from civilians whose interests were enforced during military rule, I will continue calling this period the military dictatorship.

Another term I employ throughout this dissertation is “persecution.” The enforcers of the dictatorship, agents of the political police and officers who were responsible for imprisoning and expelling other officers and soldiers from the armed forces, usually used specific terms to refer to the individuals who were seen as opponents of the coup: communists, subversives, terrorists, or potential terrorists. When studying an interview, I use the terms my interviewees employed when describing their experiences. They would usually tell me that their superiors would call them

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<sup>65</sup> For more on this debate see Andre Pagliarini, “‘De onde? Para onde?’ The Continuity Question and the Debate over Brazil’s ‘Civil’-Military Dictatorship,” *Latin American Research Review*, 52, 5 (2017): 760–774.

subversives, or communists. The individuals who were seen as influential in the political scenario or those who joined resistance movements were seen as potential terrorists, or terrorists. This was due to their ability to cause some sort of nuisance to the authoritarian government, including the actions of some as members of the guerrilla movement. Nevertheless, others used these terms to refer to them, expelled officers and soldiers rejected them, claiming they were not communists, subversives or terrorists. In Brazil, activists demanding the end of the dictatorship started calling those who endured some sort of state violence during the dictatorship as “*perseguidos políticos*,” or politically persecuted individuals. An officer or soldier who was “persecuted,” was stripped from their basic civil and human rights, faced imprisonment, physical and psychologic torture, surveillance and harassment. They were persecuted as they were not allowed to express their political opinions without being imprisoned and harassed. For this reason, at times I use the term “persecution” to describe in a broad way the experiences of officers and soldiers who were expelled from the armed forces for political reasons, subjected to imprisonment, torture, surveillance and not able to find employment due to the creation of a law that prohibited companies from hiring them—specifically individuals who had been fired from their jobs and imprisoned because they were labelled as enemies to the military government.

It is also important to note that the men I study all chose to build military careers. I do not examine the experiences of conscripted soldiers, which were obligated to serve the armed forces for one year. While conscripted soldiers usually disliked military service, and only served because they were obligated by law, the men who chose to join the military felt they had made an honorable decision and they committed to the mission of the armed forces. This is important because it helps us understand how these men identified with the armed forces. Deciding to join the forces and build a career was decisive to how they saw themselves as honorable men.

## CHAPTER 1. NATIONALISTS VERSUS INTERNATIONALISTS INSIDE THE BARRACKS (BEFORE THE COUP, 1950-1963)

### Introduction

In Brazil, the armed forces have held an important position in the country's political landscape since the beginning of the first republic, in 1889. During the 1920s, clear political divisions between military officers started to form, and two main currents, one legalist and the other revolutionary were created.<sup>1</sup> The Lieutenant Movement emerged in July 1922, when a group of junior officers plotted to overthrow the government and install a new and "good" government ruled by civilians.<sup>2</sup> The rebellious *tenentes* expressed a desire for change, to overcome the oligarchical ways of the Monarchy that had lasting effects in the Republic.<sup>3</sup> Their goals included to republicanize Brazil, which they perceived was being stained and corrupted by politicians.<sup>4</sup> Many of the lieutenants who rebelled in 1922 claimed they were fighting for their military honor, which was being insulted by president Epitácio Pessoa.<sup>5</sup> In 1924, the *tenentes* emerged with a stronger political discourse, claiming they were against Artur da Silva Bernardes' government because of its nepotism, incompetence, scandals, and the concessions and agreements the president was making, which were ruining Brazil.<sup>6</sup> Since this moment, therefore, it is possible to identify an interventionist faction inside the armed forces, who did not just want to protect the

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the history of Left-wing officers and soldiers inside the armed forces between 1889 and 1935, see João Quartim de Moraes, *A Esquerda Militar no Brasil: Da Conspiração Republicana à Guerrilha dos Tenentes* (São Paulo: Editora Siciliano, 1991), and João Quartim de Moraes, *A Esquerda Militar no Brasil: Da Coluna à Comuna* (São Paulo: Editora Siciliano, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> José Augusto Drummond, *O Movimento Tenentista: Intervenção Militar e Conflito Hierárquico (1922-1935)* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1986), 63.

<sup>3</sup> Nelson Werneck Sodré, *O Tenentismo* (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1985), 55.

<sup>4</sup> Sodré, *O Tenentismo*, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Sodré, *O Tenentismo*, 47.

<sup>6</sup> Sodré, *O Tenentismo*, 48.

country against external threats, but who believed officers had the responsibility to intervene in politics during domestic crises. The *tenentistas* were defeated and imprisoned in the 1920s but were given amnesty and allowed to continue their military careers.<sup>7</sup> Not all, but many of the lieutenants who conspired against the government at this moment became supporters and enforcers of the military government between 1964 and 1985, including Eduardo Gomes, Juarez Távora and Edmundo Macedo Soares e Silva.<sup>8</sup>

During the 1930s, Getúlio Vargas' rise to power catapulted the armed forces to the center of national politics.<sup>9</sup> At this moment, even though many officers still believed the military should have refrained from getting involved in politics, the idea that the armed forces should intervene when necessary became predominant.<sup>10</sup> Members of this faction, who have been identified as the “new professionalists”, understood the need to focus on internal security and believed that the political and military skills of the corps should be interrelated, that military action should be unrestricted, and that the military should be political.<sup>11</sup>

The Brazilian armed forces emerged from the post-war period politically divided. After World War Two the debate about petroleum in Brazil increased inside military circles.<sup>12</sup> The Cold War influenced international relations and the pressure of alignment with the United States increased in Brazil. Aiming to improve foreign relations with the United States, president Eurico Gaspar Dutra (1946-1951) decided to allow U.S. American companies to participate in the oil

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<sup>7</sup> Edmundo de Macedo Soares e Silva, *Um Construtor do Nosso Tempo: Depoimento ao CPDOC*, org. Lucia Hippolito and Ignez Cordeiro de Farias (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação CSN, 1998), 48.

<sup>8</sup> Macedo Soares e Silva, *Um Construtor do Nosso Tempo*, 35.

<sup>9</sup> José Murilo de Carvalho, “Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil, 1930-45,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (May 1982): 193.

<sup>10</sup> Carvalho, “Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil,” 219.

<sup>11</sup> Stepan, *Authoritarian Brazil*, 52.

<sup>12</sup> For a more detailed discussion about the petroleum in Brazil, see José Luciano de Mattos Dias and Maria Ana Quaglino, *A Questão do Petróleo no Brasil: Uma História da Petrobrás* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC/SERINST, Fundação Getulio Vargas, 1993).

industry in Brazil. The oil issue brought many military officers into the debate, and during Dutra's government two factions inside the armed forces were consolidated, the internationalist and the nationalist factions. While internationalists agreed with Dutra's decision, nationalist officers advocated that petroleum extraction should be an exclusively national enterprise. This debate provoked a clash between military officers that would continue until 1964.

This chapter examines the period between 1950 and 1964, and the events and conflicts inside the armed forces that preceded the coup. It shows that during this period officers divided themselves into nationalists versus internationalists—factions that fought over the influence of foreign capital in Brazil's economic development—and interventionists versus non-interventionists—who disagreed over the need of military intervention in politics. While the conflict between officers who identified as nationalists or internationalists was more prevalent in the first half of the 1950s, in the second half of the 1950s until 1964 officers disagreed mostly with the necessity to intervene in politics. Usually the officers who identified as internationalists were interventionists. And nationalist officers opposed military intervention in politics and continued calling themselves nationalists throughout the era. For these reasons, I will refer to non-interventionist officers as nationalists throughout the chapter, and I will often refer to interventionist officers as internationalists.

During the second half of the 1950s until 1964, an anticommunist repertoire that had long existed inside the armed forces was reordered and used to explain and rationalize a military coup. In the wake of the 1964 coup, interventionist officers saw the Army as the only force capable to stop the communist threat, which had infiltrated the armed forces in the sergeants' and sailors'

movements.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the clash of these political ideas led to conflicts within the armed forces that culminated in the military coup of 1964. In this chapter, I show that internationalists' confidence in the communist infiltration inside the armed forces led them, in 1964, to conduct an operation to cleanse the armed forces from opposition, imprisoning, expelling and even killing nationalist officers and soldiers whom they saw as communists.

This chapter starts its analysis in the post-war period, examining the conflicts between nationalists and internationalists during the Getúlio Vargas, Juscelino Kubitschek, Janio Quadros and João Goulart's governments. I examine the perspectives and memory of both nationalist and internationalist officers in this conflict, exploring how they positioned their ideology and political views. At last, I also examine their views regarding the U.S. influence in the formation and training of military officers in Brazil. Internationalist officers justified their attempts to intervene in politics since the 1950s in what they claimed was an imminent communist threat, the implantation of a "syndicalist republic" and the communist infiltration they believed was taking place inside the armed forces. Most nationalist officers who were accused of communism, however, denied they were anything but nationalists. Only one sergeant I interviewed admitted he had been involved with the Communist Party, but that this involvement did not last long as he did not completely believe in the ideas of the Party. In this chapter I focus mostly on the perspectives of officers involved in political debates throughout the fifteen to twenty years that preceded the 1964 coup. However, I introduce the thoughts and perspectives of sergeants and sailors involved in military clubs and movements in the beginning of the 1960s towards the end of the chapter.

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<sup>13</sup> Maud Chirio, *Politics in Uniform: Military Officers and Dictatorship in Brazil, 1960-1980* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018), 40.

## **Internationalists, Nationalists, and the Military Club during Vargas' Second Term**

Throughout the twentieth century, the idea of the armed forces as a politically neutral institution disappeared as officers gradually increased their interest and power of influence on national politics and in civil society.<sup>14</sup> Two main debates, one domestic and another international, took shape in the post-war period and were influential to the ways officers within the armed forces positioned themselves towards Brazilian politics: one about the path for national economic development and another about the country's positionality regarding the Cold War.

Some of the most heated debates about which entities should be allowed to extract oil in the country took place inside the Military Club (Clube Militar). Army officers created the Club in 1887, with the goal of organizing themselves so as to voice their political opinions and concerns collectively on a national scale. Some of the main debates circulating in the Club during its first years concerned the abolition of slavery, the separation of the State and the Church, and the Republican form of governance.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, since its inception the Military Club had been an instrument for officers to organize and present their political views. Antonio Carlos Muricy, a lieutenant colonel in the Army in the beginning of the 1950s, claims that from the start of his military career he saw the Club as a symbol. Because members of the armed forces could not bring politics to the bases and barracks, the Club was the space where officers could voice their opinions and influence the nation.<sup>16</sup> Between 1947 and 1954, the main debate inside the Club concerned national independence and sovereignty especially related to oil.

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<sup>14</sup> Carvalho, "Armed Forces and Politics in Brazil," 219.

<sup>15</sup> Clube Militar, A Casa da República, "Fundação – 1887," Accessed on February 25, 2019, <http://clubemilitar.com.br/nossa-historia/fundacao-1887/>

<sup>16</sup> Antônio Carlos da Silva Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Muricy III, depoimento, 1981* (Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC, 1993), 274.

In the Club, officers who became known as “internationalists,” represented by General Juarez do Nascimento Fernandes Távora and Minister of War General Canrobert da Costa, advocated for economic liberalization. One of their main goals was to liberalize petroleum extraction as a means to foster Brazil’s relationship with the United States.<sup>17</sup> The matters encompassed two discussions, one about the path to Brazil’s economic development and another concerning the country’s position in the Cold War. The group represented by Távora believed an alliance with the United States, which could be reached offering their companies the benefits of oil extraction, would benefit the country and also the Army.<sup>18</sup> Muricy, for example, who expressed the ideas of the internationalists officers like himself, believed in the “controlled freedom” of the petroleum industry. He did not agree with a complete liberalization, but he was against the state monopoly for the research and distribution of the commodity.<sup>19</sup>

Another group in the Military Club, the “nationalists,” who were represented by General Horta Barbosa, did not agree with the liberalization of the petroleum industry. They claimed the main threat to Brazilian sovereignty was “economic imperialism of foreign nations,” being against an alliance with the United States, and they were also in favor of the state initiative to petroleum extraction, in opposition to national private companies.<sup>20</sup> Because the military pressured its members not to get involved in politics, officers from this group even retired from the armed forces to join “the petroleum campaign,” an effort to keep petroleum a state enterprise.<sup>21</sup> Despite the foreign pressure to liberalize the commodity, the petroleum campaign was successful and in December 1948 Dutra adopted the slogan, “the Petroleum is Ours” as his

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<sup>17</sup> Shawn C. Smallman, *Fear and Memory in the Brazilian Army and Society, 1889-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 87.

<sup>18</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 88.

<sup>19</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 250.

<sup>20</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 89.

<sup>21</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 96.

own. Shawn Smallman argues that these events altered the structure of factions inside the armed forces. As officers rallied in favor or against the petroleum campaign, they started to form the ideologies that would divide them into supporters and opponents of the 1964 coup.<sup>22</sup> Even though these ideologies would suffer changes in the next fifteen years as officers debated Brazil's role in the Cold War, the factions that emerged during Dutra's term would be more or less the same that divided the armed forces in 1964.

During the first half of the 1950s, the petroleum issue continued polarizing the Brazilian population and the armed forces. In 1950, nationalist and internationalist officers competed against each other in the Military Club elections, and the nationalists won with a platform that defended petroleum as a public enterprise. General Estillac Leal and Horta Barbosa ran representing the nationalist side, and General Oswaldo Cordeiro de Faria ran representing the internationalists. Nelson Werneck Sodré, a nationalist officer and supporter of the petroleum campaign in the Military Club in 1950, claimed that groups from different ideological and political backgrounds supported the petroleum campaign at this moment, "from communists to conservatives."<sup>23</sup> The slogan "the petroleum is ours" was written "in walls on the streets, in front of houses, in farms entrances, everywhere," what made the campaign in favor of the petroleum nationalization the greatest opinion campaign Brazil he had ever seen.<sup>24</sup>

Francisco Teixeira explains that after the end of World War Two the first attitude of the "nationalist, democratic, and leftist" group inside the armed force was of organizing and installing themselves inside the Military Club. He claims the mobilization the 1950 elections of the Club was so successful that members were able to increase the membership from 1,200 to

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<sup>22</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 104.

<sup>23</sup> Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Nelson Werneck Sodré, depoimento 1987* (Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC/FGV – SERCOM/Petrobrás, 1988), 5.

<sup>24</sup> Sodré, *Nelson Werneck Sodré, depoimento*, 2-5.

12,000 officers from all over Brazil.<sup>25</sup> Although scholars have stated that nationalists and Vargas' interests were intertwined at this moment, Teixeira claimed nationalist officers still saw Vargas as the dictator who governed between 1930 and 1945.<sup>26</sup> Sodré also states that even though the nationalists were seen as Getúlio Vargas' supporters, "he was not our candidate."<sup>27</sup> According to him, the fact that nationalist officers and Vargas supported the nationalization of the petroleum during Vargas' campaign did not mean that the politician was their candidate. This shows that although some officers supported Vargas, others within the nationalist group did not, but were still in favor of respecting and supporting democratically elected officials.<sup>28</sup> Sodré also claims that even if he did not support Vargas, he still respected the election results.<sup>29</sup> Teixeira stated that at the time Vargas won the presidency in October of 1950, Estillac Leal immediately voiced his support for his inauguration. In this way, nationalists supported Vargas not in the sense that they were "fanatics" about the president, but in the sense that they did not support the ousting of a democratically elected officer.<sup>30</sup> Nationalist officers claimed to have stayed out of partisan politics, and that their main goal was to expand the nationalist movement in terms of platforms, such as in the petroleum case.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento, 1983/1984* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 94.

<sup>26</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 101.

<sup>27</sup> Sodré, *Nelson Werneck Sodré, depoimento*, 17.

<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that the Vargas era (1930-45, 1951-54) inaugurated the idea of a "*nacional-estatismo*," and advocated the need of the state to sponsor the construction of social citizenship. Individuals who had been influenced by Vargas and who started to consider themselves part of a political "*varguista* tradition" trusted state intervention in social and economic aspects of society was fundamental. Individuals who came from this tradition, therefore, believed the state should mediate and improve the lives of workers in Brazil. For more see Francisco Carlos Palomanes Martinho, "Vargas e o Legado do Trabalhismo no Brasil: Entre a Tradição e a Modernidade," *Portuguese Studies Review* 12 (2) (2004-5): 159-174.

<sup>29</sup> Sodré, *Nelson Werneck Sodré, depoimento*, 29.

<sup>30</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 116.

<sup>31</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 123.

In 1951, Vargas returned to the presidency after being elected with 48 percent of the total votes.<sup>32</sup> In the 1950s, the president had become a populist who advocated for industrialization and economic growth in Brazil. In order to achieve these goals one of his main plans was to focus on petroleum extraction. At first, and contrary the nationalists' views, on December 1951, Vargas proposed the creation of a mixed corporation between private and public capital for the oil enterprise, aiming to reestablish a pre-Cold War relationship with the United States.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, inside the Military Club conflicts between nationalists and internationalists continued. Among military circles in the Escola Superior de Guerra, Antonio Carlos Muricy, who was a lieutenant colonel in the Army in the beginning of the 1950s, claims that most of the officers were against the state monopoly.<sup>34</sup> However, inside the Military Club, internationalist officers, who were represented by the Democratic Crusade, changed the focus of their campaign. They started to defend a state monopoly, manipulated the fear of communist infiltration inside the armed forces, and won the Club's elections in 1952.<sup>35</sup> After popular pressure and seeing that the military were now mostly in support of the state monopoly, on October 1953 Vargas ruled in favor of petroleum extraction as a monopoly of the state and created the state company Petrobrás.<sup>36</sup>

During his second term, Vargas tried to appease internationalist officers, conceding to some of their pressures. In 1950, and during Vargas's campaign, his and the nationalists' goals seem to have been intertwined and in opposition to the ideals of internationalists. Vargas'

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil, 1930-1964: An Experiment in Democracy, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 101.

<sup>33</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 156; Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 97.

<sup>34</sup> Antônio Carlos da Silva Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento, 1981* (Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC, 1993), 250.

<sup>35</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 164; Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 106.

<sup>36</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 172; Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 96.

nomination of a nationalist general, Estillac Leal, as his minister of war displeased many officers of the armed forces, as internationalist officers interpreted nationalist policies as communistic. In 1952, Vargas tried to appease these officers naming General Ciro Espírito Santo Cardoso, who identified neither as a nationalist nor an internationalist, as his new minister of war. According to some interpretations this was not enough, as even the president's "minor concessions to nationalist sentiment created grave resentment" among internationalists.<sup>37</sup>

Although anti-communism in the armed forces had been latent since the first decades of the century, it increased during the Cold War. In connection to the petroleum issue, another debate that drastically divided internationalist and nationalist officers concerned Brazil's support for the United States in the context of the Cold War. While internationalists worried about the threat of communism and sought an alliance with the United States, nationalists wished to remain neutral in the global conflict, fearing the impact of the United States and its multinationals in the Brazilian economy.<sup>38</sup> Muricy claimed that during Vargas' term he became convinced that leftist forces connected to the president were planning to transform Brazil into a syndicalist republic.<sup>39</sup> After the internationalists, represented by the Democratic Crusade, took control of the Military Club in 1952, a wave of repressions started inside the armed forces. In order to stop communist infiltration in the Army, between June and November of 1952, internationalist officers attempted to eliminate their opponents who had previously won the elections in the Military Club.<sup>40</sup> While the internationalist and anti-communist officers accused the nationalist faction of collaborating with "demagogues" who were "serving the interests of the

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<sup>37</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 165.

<sup>38</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 121.

<sup>39</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 302.

<sup>40</sup> Smallman, *Fear and Memory*, 171.

international communism,” the nationalists accused the anti-communists of being “*entreguistas*”.<sup>41</sup>

Growing inflation, a decline in economic growth, and the accusation that the president was involved in an attempt to murder Carlos Lacerda, a member of the opposition, increased the demands for Vargas’ resignation. One of the last elements that contributed to the end of the president’s term came about with the Colonel’s Manifest (Manifesto dos Coronéis). On February 1954, a group of eighty-one junior Army officers signed a document condemning the president for neglecting the Army, not directing enough resources to soldiers’ salaries, which, they claimed, demoralized Army members as it made them struggle to maintain a high standard of living compatible with their social status. The officers stated that this document served as a warning for the president, as they would not be able to foresee the consequences this crisis would generate. According to Muricy, who was one of the junior officers who conceptualized the document, the *manifesto* had the purpose of alerting their superior officers about the scenario that was being formed in Brazil.<sup>42</sup> The document was also a threat to Vargas, as the contracting parties implied that if the president did not change his attitude towards the armed forces, this could increase discontent among officers in a way that it could lead to a military revolt against the government.<sup>43</sup> Muricy claims this document was a response to communist infiltration inside Vargas’ administration, especially concerning the president’s Minister of Labor, Industry and

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<sup>41</sup> “*Entreguismo*” was a term created by nationalists to ridicule the ones who wanted an alliance with the United States. Nationalists claims the “*entreguista*” individuals aimed to “deliver” or “give” the best resources in the country to the exploration of the foreign capital. Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 106.

<sup>42</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 279.

<sup>43</sup> “Ante a gravidade da situação que se está a criar para breve, impõe-se alerta corajoso, pois não se poderá prever que grau de dissociação serão capazes de gerar, no organismo militar, as causas múltiplas de tensões que, dia a dia, se acumulam.” Memorial da Democracia, “Memorial dos Coronéis,” Accessed on February 22, 2019, <http://memorialdademocracia.com.br/card/coroneis-batem-de-frente-com-getulio/docset/1003>.

Trade: João Goulart.<sup>44</sup> He also admitted that the ultimate goal of the colonels' action was to provide the generals support so they could pressure the government into stopping "the communist-leftist wave."<sup>45</sup> This matter was also connected to the conflicts taking place inside the Military Club, as Muricy claimed that junior officers could see the communist infiltration inside many sectors of society, from the core of the government to the Military Club, as the nationalist faction won the election in 1950.<sup>46</sup>

Vargas' economic policies faced opposition from right-wing civilians and military officers, who not only disagreed with his plans, but also viewed Vargas as a demagogue.<sup>47</sup> After the August 5 shooting of congressman Carlos Lacerda, who had important connections with internationalist officers, Vargas term was finished.<sup>48</sup> In 1954, Lacerda was a student at the Escola Superior de Guerra, which accepted civilians as students for a specific period of time, and a colleague of internationalist officers.<sup>49</sup> Muricy claims that as the media stated that Vargas had ordered the congressman's shooting, the environment of the armed forces became violent in their demands for Vargas' resignation, and junior officers especially in the Army and Air Force advocated the military needed to "oust the president."<sup>50</sup> By the end of August, military generals had signed a document which stated their belief that the president was no longer capable of governing the country.<sup>51</sup> The armed forces were prepared for a coup. However, as the opposition

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<sup>44</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 277.

<sup>45</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 281.

<sup>46</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 283.

<sup>47</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 306.

<sup>48</sup> Francisco Teixeira explains that the Army took the lead on the opposition against Vargas but that because of the connections Carlos Lacerda had with the Air Force, this military branch was also becoming increasingly anti-Vargas. Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 139.

<sup>49</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 290.

<sup>50</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 294.

<sup>51</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 298. It is also important to note that, as I will show in the next pages, although general Henrique Teixeira Lott became known for his commitment to legality

against him mounted, instead of resigning or facing a military coup, the president killed himself on August 24, 1954.

### **Juscelino Kubitschek's Era and the Revolts of Jacareacanga and Aragarças**

Vargas' death did not make interventionist officers less worried about the imminence of the communist threat in Brazil. Member of the internationalist faction, and Air Force officer João Paulo Moreira Burnier explains that after Vargas' suicide officers continued conspiring because they saw the emergence of new leaders in the left, namely João Goulart and Leonel Brizola, as a threat and remained vigilant to prevent a communist candidate from taking office.<sup>52</sup> During the second half of the 1950s interventionist officers attempted to interfere in politics again twice, first in 1955, in the Revolt of Jacareacanga, and again in 1959, in the revolt known as Aragarças.

The officers who continued conspiring against the government at this time were in direct conflict with Army General Henrique Teixeira Lott, who as the Minister of War since Vargas' death, was watching the conspiring officers closely and trying to prevent a coup. Since Lott started to transfer many officers from Rio de Janeiro to posts in Rio Grande do Sul, Bahia, Acre and Mato Grosso as a way to hinder the conspiracy, many officers, especially from the Navy and the Air Force, became hostile towards the minister.<sup>53</sup> According to Burnier, Lott prompted the conflict of 1955 when he fought to prevent interventionist officers from implementing a plan that would stop Juscelino Kubitschek from taking office after his election to the presidency.<sup>54</sup> Burnier suggests that he did not believe Kubitschek himself was a communist, but that because

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during the Kubitschek era, at this time he signed this document pressuring for Vargas' resignation. Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 149.

<sup>52</sup> João Paulo Moreira Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento, 1993* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2005), 41

<sup>53</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 29.

<sup>54</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 31.

communists had supported his election, his government would open Brazil's doors to communism.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, Muricy argues that many officers within the armed forces opposed Kubitschek because they saw him as a follower of Getúlio Vargas.<sup>56</sup> Burnier claims he learned about Kubitschek plan with Goulart and Brizola to create a "syndicalist republic" when one colonel allegedly intercepted a radio conversation between Goulart and Brizola, where they could hear Brizola's side of the conversation.<sup>57</sup> This led a few officers to organize and prevent Kubitschek from becoming president.

Francisco Teixeira, a nationalist officer himself, tells a different story about the Revolt of Jacareacanga. He argues that the nationalist faction of the armed forces was not in favor or against Kubitschek; they were in favor of legality.<sup>58</sup> In this way, when interventionist officers decided to stop Kubitschek from taking office, nationalist officers fought them.<sup>59</sup> A group of nationalist officers created the Movimento Militar Constitucionalista (MMC), or Constitutionalist Military Movement, which existed briefly in 1955 to enforce the democratic elections in October of that same year and secure the election's results.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, and even though nationalist officers had to organize to stop a coup, he claims that this movement of internationalist officers had no future and ultimately it did not represent a real threat to Kubitschek, as they were not able to gather enough support from other officers. He says, "that was nonsense, they had one official, a sergeant and a few civilians in Jacareacanga... It had no

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<sup>55</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 42.

<sup>56</sup> Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III, depoimento*, 305.

<sup>57</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 44.

<sup>58</sup> It is important to note that Teixeira himself was a particularly more progressive officer. He explains he was "juscelinista" or supporter of Kubitschek. Nevertheless, he claims that not all nationalist officers were the same. Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 130.

<sup>59</sup> Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento, 1983/1984* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 124.

<sup>60</sup> For a more detailed definition of the movement see, FGV, "Movimento Militar Constitucionalista (MMC): Verbete," Accessed on March 14, 2019, <http://www.fgv.br/cpd/doc/acervo/dicionarios/verbete-tematico/movimento-militar-constitucionalista-mmc>.

future.”<sup>61</sup> Teixeira actually believed Kubitschek gave more importance to the event than he should have. In February 1956, days after he took office, the president ordered the Air Force to send paratroopers to stop major Haroldo Veloso and a few other interventionist officers, who had taken the Air Base of Jacareacanga.<sup>62</sup> Teixeira and others flew there, but upon arriving they imprisoned Veloso and no further actions were necessary to hinder the revolt.<sup>63</sup>

The second revolt that took place inside the armed forces was, again, conducted by Air Force officers. The Revolt of Aragarças took place three years after Jacareacanga, in 1959.<sup>64</sup> Burnier, who considered himself one of the main leaders of the Revolt, claims that this movement had two objectives. The first was to support Jânio Quadros’ election to the presidency in December 1959, as the candidate considered resigning. Interventionist officers, including Burnier, believed that he was the only candidate who would be able to defeat Lott, who was also a presidential candidate at this time. The second objective of this movement, according to Burnier, was to “alert the country against the moral downfall and the corruption” of Kubitschek’s government.<sup>65</sup> Because the communists had infiltrated his office, Kubitschek’s government was corrupt.<sup>66</sup> Ultimately, Burnier claims his group was able to succeed, as they ensured Jânio Quadros’ candidacy, and he defeated Lott in the 1960 elections.<sup>67</sup>

Francisco Teixeira, on the other hand, claims that the Aragarças, like Jacareacanga, had no meaning and no repercussions in the armed forces.<sup>68</sup> Teixeira explains that the insurgent group only took two or three airplanes from the Air Force and hijacked one commercial airplane,

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<sup>61</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 130.

<sup>62</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 166.

<sup>63</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 131, 167.

<sup>64</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 43.

<sup>65</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 44.

<sup>66</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 42.

<sup>67</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 55.

<sup>68</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 204.

and that the revolt was quickly deterred. Burnier and others sought exile in Bolivia, only returning to Brazil in 1961, when they received amnesty from president Jânio Quadros and resumed their military careers. In an interview with CPDOC, Henrique Teixeira Lott touches briefly on the revolts of Jacareacanga and Aragarças. When explaining his actions as Kubitschek's Minister of War, the marshal only states that during the period the armed forces were relatively calm. The revolts of Jacareacanga and Aragarças, he claims, were the only uprisings of the era, and were easily concealed.<sup>69</sup> Differently from Teixeira, who spoke openly about these events on his interview, Lott seemed committed to describing the events he experienced but reluctant to give his personal opinion. This was likely due to the fact that while Teixeira gave his interview in the last years of military rule, in 1983 and 1984, Lott's interview was conducted in 1978. The context in which these interviews were conducted informed the posture of the interviewees.

Even though Teixeira and Lott were right to say that Jacareacanga and Aragarças had little significance and did not represent a real threat, these revolts need to be understood in the larger context of unrest and political conflicts within the armed forces. The officers who participated in these uprisings returned to the armed forces in the beginning of the 1960s and continued conspiring against the elected political leaders whom they considered plotters of the "syndicalist republic." Burnier's interview, and in many places Muricy's interview as well, indicate how the context of the Cold War, which saw the world in binaries, dividing actions and plans as either communist or capitalist, influenced officers who were in the forefront of a movement that resisted change in Brazil and saw any progressive policy as communistic.

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<sup>69</sup> Henrique Batista Duffles Teixeira Lott, *Henrique Teixeira Lott, depoimento, 1978* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2002), 84.

Therefore, even though the revolts of Jacareacanga and Aragarças did not have the results sought out by interventionists, they showed what these officers were willing to do to prevent the spread of what they believed were communist policies. Even though these officers failed in 1955 and 1959 they did not stop conspiring against democratically elected governments. Similarly, and on the other side of the conflict, nationalist officers continued opposing interventionist efforts from taking place in 1955, 1959, and, as I will show in the following pages, in 1961 and 1964 as well.

### **João Goulart and Military Insubordination**

The years between 1960 and 1964 were troubled in Brazil. Jânio Quadros was elected for office, governing for only eight months and resigning; João Goulart, his vice-president, was prevented from taking office and pushed into a parliamentary system for two years, until a plebiscite determined Brazil would return to the presidential system. Goulart's presidency, however, only lasted until March 31, 1964, when the president was ousted from office and interventionist military officers implemented a dictatorship. The first four years of the 1960s were marked by conflict inside the armed forces. If during the 1950s it was mostly officers within the context of the Military Club who were getting involved in national political debates, now sergeants and sailors also became protagonists of this history.<sup>70</sup>

Military officers from the internationalist faction who had initially supported Quadros grew weary of his policies and erratic behavior during the first months of his government.<sup>71</sup>

Therefore, when eight months into his term he decided to resign from office, even the groups that

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<sup>70</sup> As Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro shows, sergeants and sailors were mobilizing politically during the post-war. Nevertheless, during the 1960s their mobilization gains strength. Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

<sup>71</sup> See Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 203.

had supported his election did not protest his decision. Some say that when he resigned, Quadros expected his supporters to rally against his decision and in favor of his government. However, as Thomas Skidmore shows, “if Quadros assumed that the politicians and higher military would not dare accept his resignation, he could not have been more wrong.”<sup>72</sup> Burnier, for example, claims that even though he initially supported Janio Quadros’ government, he opposed certain policies the president started to enforce. The main event that increased his suspicion toward Quadros was the president’s award for Ernesto Che Guevara, recognizing him as a fighter for the Latin American right for self-determination.<sup>73</sup> This came as a shock to interventionist military circles, and they started to suspect that Quadros was shifting to the left.<sup>74</sup> Interventionist officers and other civilian groups who did not support the political views of the vice-president, João Goulart, were prepared to deal with the problem of Quadros’ succession in a different way.

Right after Quadros resigned, members of the internationalist faction of the armed forces, including the military ministers at the time, started to plan how they would prevent Goulart from taking office. Francisco Teixeira, who was already a brigadier at the time, explains that as soon as Quadros resigned, the three military ministers, Odilio Denys (Minister of War), Sílvio Heck (Minister of the Navy), and Gabriel Moss (Minister of the Air Force), imprisoned “all” nationalist officers.<sup>75</sup> Teixeira was restrained in a Marine Base, where he met with other two high-ranking officers, and over forty Air Force officers were held on a ship. According to Teixeira, the ministers’ purpose was to prevent the nationalist officers from offering any resistance to their plan against Goulart.

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<sup>72</sup> Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 204.

<sup>73</sup> Langland, *Speaking of Flowers*, 61.

<sup>74</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 60.

<sup>75</sup> In Teixeira’s words, “logo que Jânio renunciou, os três ministros militares prenderam a todos nós.” Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 224.

As he learned about the military ministers' efforts to stop Goulart from taking office, Leonel Brizola, governor of Rio Grande do Sul and Goulart's brother-in-law, decided to act to condemn the actions of members of the armed forces. In the name of "constitutional legality" from the Piratini Palace, in Porto Alegre, Brizola took control of radio stations in Rio Grande do Sul and, in an attempt to gather popular support in favor of Goulart, broadcasted to the population the plans of the interventionist officers. The military ministers reacted to Brizola's actions, and between August 28 and the 29, members of the military at the Gravataí Air Base in Rio Grande do Sul received an order to bomb the Piratini Palace and stop Brizola.<sup>76</sup>

Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, who was a sergeant and member of the Sergeant's Club in Rio Grande do Sul at the time, claims that when sergeants in the Air Base heard the order they decided to defy it and actively prevent Piratini from being bombarded, puncturing airplanes' tires and disarming the bombs they were carrying.<sup>77</sup> This consisted of some of the first actions sergeants engaged with at this point, which increased their protagonism in the Brazilian political landscape. In addition to the sergeants' actions, Marshal José Machado Lopes, who was the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Region, in Rio Grande do Sul, decided not to side with interventionists either. Upon receiving a communication from Odílio Denys, the Minister of War, to attack Brizola and "dislocate the enemy," Machado Lopes refused, and Brizola told the population about these secret messages.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> See Paulo Eduardo Castello Parucker, *Praças em Pé de Guerra: O movimento político dos subalternos militares no Brasil (1961-1964) e a Revolta dos Sargentos de Brasília* (São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2009), 54.

<sup>77</sup> Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

<sup>78</sup> Hemeroteca Digital, *Diário de Notícias*, "Protocolo Verbal entre o Governador Brizola e o General Machado Lopes" (Porto Alegre, Ano XXXVII – 29 August 1961), 12. Accessed on March, 2019, ([http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=093726\\_04&pesq=Brizola&pasta=ano%20196](http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=093726_04&pesq=Brizola&pasta=ano%20196))

The Marshal claimed he wanted to prevent a greater revolution from taking place in Brazil. Goulart had been elected vice-president twice in Brazil and no one had contested the election results. He also knew that Brizola had the support of the Rio Grande do Sul's police, the Brigada Militar, and of other military officers in the south. Therefore, he explains that his decision was both political and strategic. In addition to not believing a "revolution" or a coup was what the population wanted, as Goulart was receiving ample support from the population at this time, he also made the choice of avoiding an armed confrontation. Machado Lopes claims Muricy tried to convince him into fighting against Brizola. He wanted the marshal to start a revolution in the south, a war that, according to Machado Lopes, would not have a practical result.<sup>79</sup> At this point he also admitted he was afraid that the sergeants would not obey the order to bomb the Palace.

After Quadros' resignation, Marshal Lott also positioned himself in favor of Goulart, as he wrote a document arguing Brazil should have respected the constitution and allowed him to be sworn in as president.<sup>80</sup> Lott affirms that he was asked to lead a revolt against Goulart's presidency. As an anticommunist, Lott presumably would have no issues taking a stand against his presidency, and Carlos Lacerda himself tried to convince Lott to lead a movement. Nevertheless, even though he disagreed with Goulart's ideas and thought he was in no condition to exert the functions of a president, Lott believed that the constitutional way to prevent him from taking office was through an impeachment process, not a military rebellion.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, in 1961, although there was pressure from internationalist officers to prevent Goulart from taking office, the actions of different sectors of society in his support, but also the actions of nationalist

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<sup>79</sup> José Machado Lopes, *José Machado Lopes, depoimento áudio 1986* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2007).

<sup>80</sup> Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 209.

<sup>81</sup> Lott, *Henrique Teixeira Lott, depoimento*, 100. Lott claims not to remember exactly when this conversation with Lacerda took place. It could have happened between 1961 and 1964.

and constitutionalist military officers who refused to act against Goulart, made his swearing in possible—with one caveat, Brazil’s governance system would change from the presidential to the parliamentary system and Goulart’s powers would be restricted.<sup>82</sup> According to Machado Lopes, Goulart flew from Montevideo to Porto Alegre, met with the marshal, and, accepted the conditions of the parliamentary system after meeting with him.<sup>83</sup>

Thus, from September 1961 to January 1963, Goulart governed under the Parliamentary system, and interventionist officers remained relatively calm, accepting his term as long as his powers were restricted. Burnier claims that as soon as Quadros resigned, he started conspiring against Goulart. However, he says that the solution reached through the parliamentary system appeased most of the military officers who were against Goulart.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, even if Burnier and others continued conspiring, during the year Brazil spent under the parliamentary system, these internationalist officers did not act on their collusion plans. On December 1962, however, Brazil’s Prime Minister Francisco Brochado da Rocha introduced a bill to hold a plebiscite to return to the Presidential System, and a period of greater crisis, which ultimately led to the March 1964 coup, ensued.

In 1962 sergeants also started to expand their mobilization. Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro explains that sergeants started to launch other sergeants for political office such as legislative assemblies, municipal elections, house of representatives and the senate.<sup>85</sup> Since 1951, Cavalheiro claims sergeants started to question certain impositions and fight for a change. Their demands included the expansion of rights inside and outside of the armed forces, such as promotions, a wage increase, the right to get married, the right to access higher education,

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<sup>82</sup> See Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil*, 211.

<sup>83</sup> Machado Lopes, *José Machado Lopes, depoimento áudio*.

<sup>84</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 77.

<sup>85</sup> Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

employment stability and the right to vote and run for elections. According to Cavalheiro, the sergeants wanted to be able to exert their rights as Brazilian citizens. They created the slogan, “sergeants also are people.”<sup>86</sup> In a sergeant convention, 75% of sergeants present chose Cavalheiro to run for the legislative assembly of Rio Grande do Sul as *deputado estadual*, who took one year off the Army to run his campaign, and on October 1962 he was elected the 32<sup>nd</sup> congressman of the Assembléia Legislativa of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>87</sup>

The problem came in the following months, when the Rio Grande do Sul’s Assembly prevented Cavalheiro from taking the post, claiming sergeants were ineligible, while in Rio de Janeiro sergeant elected Garcia Filho was allowed to register his candidacy. At this moment the fight of the sergeants turned to protest in favor of Cavalheiro’s inauguration and term.<sup>88</sup> The decision then went to the election tribunal, the Tribunal Superior Eleitoral, which ruled against the eligibility of the sergeants, and then to the Supremo Tribunal Federal (STF), which made the same conclusion.<sup>89</sup> Cavalheiro then was reincorporated into the Army’s ranks, as General Amauri Kruehl revoked his leave of absence to “deal with personal matters,” which he had taken to run his campaign.

Sergeant Antônio Prestes de Paula, the president of the Sergeants’ Club in the Brasília, was one of the movement’s leaders who decided to make Cavalheiro’s eligibility a motto of sergeants across Brazil.<sup>90</sup> Parucker tells that immediately after hearing STF’s decision on Cavalheiro’s ineligibility, Prestes de Paula communicated with sergeants across Brazil and met

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<sup>86</sup> In Portuguese, “sargento também é povo.” Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos* (Porto Alegre: AGE, 2011), 63.

<sup>87</sup> Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos*, 74.

<sup>88</sup> Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos*, 76.

<sup>89</sup> Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos*, 85.

<sup>90</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Relatório,” 19 February, 1966, 50-D-7-320.

with a group in Brasília, where they decided to conduct an armed protest.<sup>91</sup> The sergeants proceeded to take over the Brasília Air Base and other military units in the region in the same night, and they had reached their initial goals by the morning of September 12.<sup>92</sup> However, it did not last long. Parucker tells that officers proceeded to organize to stop the rebellion as soon as they heard about the sergeants' movement. Although the movement was quickly suppressed, its news moved sergeants across the nation.

The battle in favor of Cavalheiro's eligibility failed in the sense that it did not result in him being able to occupy his post, and yet the campaign galvanized thousands of sergeants to the fight. In São Paulo, uniformed and armed sergeants marched in protest against the newspaper, *O Estado de São Paulo*, which had "offended" their movement. Sergeant Darcy Rodrigues, whose life trajectory I examine especially in chapter three, served in São Paulo. He claims he and others protested against the newspaper because it had stated the sergeants were being manipulated by the Soviet Union.<sup>93</sup> Rodrigues started to organize sergeants in his regiment around 1961, and he was even a candidate for the Sergeants' Club representative in São Paulo, but he lost — which was probably what allowed him to stay in the Army after 1964. Rodrigues claims that Cavalheiro was a precursor of the Sergeants' Movement.

Cavalheiro claims that the STF's decision to deny his eligibility was the trigger for the Sergeants' Rebellion in Brasília in 1963.<sup>94</sup> Internationalist officers saw the sergeants' campaign as subversive. According to a military investigation, an *Inquérito Policial Militar* (IPM), conducted after the military coup of 1964, the idea that sergeants were fighting for the expansion of their rights in 1963, especially the campaign for the eligibility of the sergeants in elections,

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<sup>91</sup> Parucker, *Praças em Pé de Guerra*, 136.

<sup>92</sup> Parucker, *Praças em Pé de Guerra*, 143.

<sup>93</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>94</sup> Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos*, 85.

was a pretext to promote agitation and subversion. When they started debating issues related to the basic reforms proposed by Goulart's government, they became "instruments of subversion of indiscipline and military hierarchy inside the armed forces."<sup>95</sup> After the rebellion in Brasília where they mobilized in public, sergeants were imprisoned.<sup>96</sup> Cavalheiro and five other sergeants were condemned to four years in prison. Cavalheiro was sent to Porto Murtinho, a city in Brazil's border with Paraguay. From this town in Mato Grosso he received the news of the coup by radio.<sup>97</sup> Darcy Rodrigues was also imprisoned for ten days for his involvement with the protest in front of the headquarters of *O Estado de São Paulo*.<sup>98</sup>

After the coup of March 31, the military revisited these decisions, conducting investigations that condemned most of these sergeants and sailors of subversion. According to the documents of the political police, sergeants involved with the movement in São Paulo, for example, were condemned because they participated in meetings where subversion and indiscipline inside the military were openly encouraged.<sup>99</sup> This IPM document says the investigations show "evidence of subversive activities of political groups against national security." It continues saying that these political communist groups infiltrated the armed forces, influencing "members of the armed forces, especially sergeants... leading them to subvert discipline and military hierarchy."<sup>100</sup> The rapporteur of the IPM concludes stating that there was

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<sup>95</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, "I.P.M. Instaurado Para Apurar Subversão nos Quartéis, 4º R.I. e 90 AAé em Quitauana, Pelo Partido Operário Revolucionário Trotskista [sic]", 85, 50-Z-9-12870.

<sup>96</sup> For more on the Sergeants' Movement see, Paulo Eduardo Castello Parucker, *Praças em Pé de Guerra: O movimento político dos subalternos militares no Brasil (1961-1964) e a Revolta dos Sargentos de Brasília* (São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2009).

<sup>97</sup> Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

<sup>98</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>99</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, "I.P.M. Instaurado Para Apurar Subversão nos Quartéis, 4º R.I. e 90 AAé em Quitauana, Pelo Partido Operário Revolucionário Trotskista [sic]", 85, 50-Z-9-12792-12796, 12784-12787

<sup>100</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, "I.P.M. Instaurado Para Apurar Subversão nos Quartéis, 4º R.I. e 90 AAé em Quitauana, Pelo Partido Operário Revolucionário Trotskista [sic]", 85, 50-Z-9-12880.

“no doubt” the accused were articulating a plan to “bring down the institutions and install a communist government in the country.”<sup>101</sup> According to the IPM, communists positioned elements inside the armed forces to promote a campaign of political indoctrination among sergeants, claiming they supported their revindications. In this way, the IPM claims the communists convinced sergeants to follow the principles of nationalist officers. Sergeant Onofre Pinto, one of the sergeants mentioned in this IPM who I also examine in chapter three, was expelled from the Army in 1964 for having participated in the protest in São Paulo. Like the other sergeants cited in the IPM, the investigation condemned Pinto for subverting the principles of discipline and hierarchy in the Army.<sup>102</sup>

Sailors and marines from the Navy also followed a similar path in their struggle to expand the rights of their categories, creating the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB) on March 1962. Sailor Avelino Bioen Capitani claims that their main dissatisfactions were centered on their inability to study and develop their careers in the Navy, the fact they were forbidden from getting married, and on their living conditions in the barracks and inhumane relationship with their officers.<sup>103</sup> The situation of the sailors was especially delicate, he argues, because they had to remain isolated inside a ship for the entire week, only being able to leave on their day off.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, the AMFNB emerged as a space where they would be able to discuss these problems and propose solutions to them.

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<sup>101</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “I.P.M. Instaurado Para Apurar Subversão nos Quartéis, 4º R.I. e 90 AAé em Quitauana, Pelo Partido Operário Revolucionário Trotkista [sic]”, 85, 50-Z-9-12778.

<sup>102</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “I.P.M. Instaurado Para Apurar Subversão nos Quartéis, 4º R.I. e 90 AAé em Quitauana, Pelo Partido Operário Revolucionário Trotkista [sic]”, 85, 50-Z-9-12793.

<sup>103</sup> Avelino Bioen Capitani, *A Rebelião dos Marinheiros* (São Paulo: Editora Expressão Popular, 2005), 25.

<sup>104</sup> Capitani, *A Rebelião dos Marinheiros*, 28.

Interventionist officers saw both the sergeants and the sailors and marines' movements as military insubordination. In the first months of 1964, these associations held two meetings, which were able to galvanize thousands of non-commissioned soldiers, and which received support from president Goulart and from some nationalist officers, represented two of the most important events leading the 1964 coup. The AMFNB held a meeting at the headquarters of the Steelworkers' Union in Rio de Janeiro on March 25, and the Associação dos Sargentos e Suboficiais da Polícia Militar of Rio de Janeiro held a meeting where Goulart, their honored guest, made a speech. For internationalist officers, these two meetings, and the fact that non-commissioned soldiers were able to have access the president, represented the pinnacle of indiscipline.

Army officer Cyro Etchegoyen stated that the main causes of Goulart's ousting were "those rallies at the Automóvel Clube, that rally at the Central do Brasil, and that sailor strike."<sup>105</sup> From Etchegoyen's perspective those were the final elements that led the coup leaders to ignite an offensive against the government. He claimed that at that point they were looking for a reason to transform the conspiracy into real action. Such insubordination gave them the final reason to act. Etchegoyen claims the rally at the Automóvel Clube was so impactful that it changed the plans of the group he was conspiring with. According to him, the group he was conspiring with in Rio de Janeiro was planning "the revolution" for April 4<sup>th</sup>. Their plan was to surprise and imprison Leonel Brizola in a rally at Uruguaiana, Rio de Janeiro. However, on March 30 or 31, after the last meeting at the Automóvel Clube, General Olímpio Mourão Filho, who was serving in Minas Gerais, decided to act and send his troops to Rio de Janeiro.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Cyro Guedes Etchegoyen, *Cyro Guedes Etchegoyen, depoimento, 1992/1993* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2005), 12.

<sup>106</sup> Etchegoyen, *Cyro Guedes Etchegoyen, depoimento*, 14.

Deoclécio Lima de Siqueira, Air Force colonel in 1964 who rose to the rank of Brigadier during his career, situated the 1964 coup within the context of the Cold War. In an interview with CPDOC he reproduced the idea of a communist infiltration inside the armed forces, claiming that the Cold War sought a space for action inside the military.<sup>107</sup> In his view the revolt of the sergeants in Brasília and the sailor movement in Rio de Janeiro were evidence of this. He claimed that what scared him and other officers who ended up supporting the military coup was that Goulart and other authorities in his government let themselves be influenced by these events, by the subversion. Lima de Siqueira did not consider Goulart a communist, but he was afraid that the president would not be strong enough to reprimand the military insubordination and stop the communist infiltration.<sup>108</sup> He interpreted 1964 as necessary to avoid communists from taking over his government.

João Paulo Moreira Burnier's interview also shows internationalist and anticommunist officers were not willing to let sergeants and sailors, who were their subordinates, influence the status quo. He claims that in 1964, when sergeants fought to be elected, they were looking to act beyond their military functions. According to Burnier, sergeants and soldiers could not, and cannot, command in the military hierarchy. They are told what to do and they execute the action. When they decided to run for elections, as the sergeants did, they disrespected military hierarchy because they were trying to plan actions and not only follow orders.<sup>109</sup> Burnier further stated that the Communist Party exploited the dissatisfaction among the troops, provoking among sergeants and soldiers the wish to command and the revolt against their superior officers.<sup>110</sup> By March

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<sup>107</sup> Deoclécio Lima de Siqueira, *Deoclécio Lima de Siqueira, depoimento, 1993* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2005), 15.

<sup>108</sup> Lima de Siqueira, *Deoclécio Lima de Siqueira, depoimento*, 15.

<sup>109</sup> João Paulo Moreira Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento, 1993* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2005), 25.

<sup>110</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 27.

1964, Burnier claimed to be completely sure that a communist revolution would take place in Brazil. The “revolution” of 1964, he argues, was the internationalist officers’ last attempt to prevent Brazil from falling “in the hands of bolsheviks.”<sup>111</sup>

Teixeira, however, who was a nationalist officer, claims that the accusations Goulart received of planning to implement a “syndicalist republic” in Brazil were unfounded. He argues it would be impossible to think of a leftist coup like this without the support of military sectors, and no one, Goulart or anyone in his staff, had ever asked to talk to Teixeira, a high-ranking nationalist officer, about such plan.<sup>112</sup> He admits that it is possible that groups who had the ears of the president thought about this. But Goulart’s administration did not engage with the idea. Furthermore, the failure of the sergeants’ rebellion in Brasília on September 1963 also indicated that the likelihood of a communist coup supported by the armed forces were slim.

### **Ideological Divides**

The Cold War rhetoric that divided the world into capitalists and communists had a visible result inside the armed forces in Brazil. In the eyes of interventionists and anticommunists inside the armed forces, officers and soldiers who criticized foreign influence, who advocated for progressive policies, who sought a more independent position from the United States, or who had a favorable or noninterventionist view about president Goulart, were seen as communists. Air Force Brigadier Burnier, for example, claims that Brigadier Francisco Teixeira, was “completely communistic.”<sup>113</sup> In addition to a political and ideological rejection to communism, interventionist officers offices also opposed the ideology for a moral reason, as they often

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<sup>111</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 76.

<sup>112</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 239.

<sup>113</sup> Burnier claims Teixeira “*era um homem totalmente comunista.*” Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 132.

equated it with pornography and obscenity.<sup>114</sup> Thus, the economic and political aspects of the conflict between factions inside the military were important, yet the moral views of what communism represented provided another reason for interventionist officers to reject leftism. The representation of communism as depraved and obscene would be determinant to officers who fought to cleanse the armed forces from “communist infiltration.” Nationalist and communist officers were, therefore, seen as perverted or, at least, accepting of sexual perversion.

The ideological divide between nationalists and anticommunists gained strength in 1961—after the Cuban Revolution took place, Jânio Quadros resigned and João Goulart took office—but it started taking shape inside the forces since the end of World War Two. If on a first moment anticommunist officers identified mostly as “internationalists,” during the first half of the 1960s many of them identified as anticommunists and interventionists. An analysis of the discourses of these men shows that being a nationalist or a non-interventionist officer, on one side, or an internationalist or interventionist, on the other side, did not mean these officers were blind followers of the communist or capitalist ideologies, respectively, nor that they agreed as a group in all strategies and purposes collectively. The faction that became known as the hard-liners during the military dictatorship in Brazil did not remain homogeneous in their ideology or strategy between 1961 and 1978.<sup>115</sup> A generation of radical junior officers which emerged in the 1960s were not as interested in participating in the national process of decision-making like hard-liner generals, as they struggled to keep control of the core of the police state in Brazil. These officers enforced the military state’s clandestine actions inside the military barracks and in public spaces, justifying their actions in the name of the 1964 “revolution.”

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<sup>114</sup> Cowan, *Securing Sex*, 245.

<sup>115</sup> Chirio, *Politics in Uniform*.

These divisions existed among officers who enforced the military dictatorship between 1964 and 1985, and they also existed among non-interventionist officers. Among the nationalist and non-interventionist faction of the armed forces there were officers who identified with different ideologies, some of them who considered themselves leftists, but others who saw themselves as conservatives and anti-communists. Nelson Werneck Sodré and Francisco Teixeira, for example, considered themselves to be leftists, but not communists. In his interview to CPDOC, Teixeira claims he had always been a little bit more to the left in terms of his political views.<sup>116</sup> Sodré affirmed that nationalist and non-interventionist officers in the beginning of the 1950s represented the Left in the armed forces. Therefore, even though he states there were no officers connected to the Communist Party among them, they presented themselves as the Left and were seen by others as the Left. Sodré himself endured numerous accusations that he was a communist, which, according to him, were all false.<sup>117</sup>

Sodré framed the 1964 coup in the context of the Cold War. He claims that what he just calls “imperialism,” referring to the United States, tried to control the armed forces in Brazil, which had shown a progressive side since the 1950s, in the context of the discussions inside the Military Club and the failed attempt of a coup in 1955 at Jacareacanga. “Imperialism’s” strategy was, thus, to arm and indoctrinate the armed forces.<sup>118</sup> This same anti-imperialist speech, which can be identified in Sodré’s discourse, is also present in the narratives of many servicemen I interviewed. Simão Kerimian, who was an Army sergeant in 1964, claims he started to identify

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<sup>116</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 24.

<sup>117</sup> In his interview to CPDOC, Sodré claims that he had become a free man and could affirm that he considered an honor be called a communist then. However, during his time as an active officer he categorically states he was not a communist and he did not support the state monopoly for the petroleum for being a communist. Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Nelson Werneck Sodré, depoimento 1987* (Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC/FGV – SERCOM/Petrobrás, 1988), 12-13.

<sup>118</sup> Candido Mendes, *Cadernos Candido Mendes, História Oral: A Crise Político-Militar de 1964* (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Cultural Candido Mendes, 1974), 26-27.

with the nationalist faction of the armed forces after he learned that the profits of Brazil's riches were not benefiting the population. He identified the United States as the main force that prevented the population from benefitting from the country's natural resources.<sup>119</sup> Cavalheiro, the Army sergeant who was declared ineligible in 1963, also highlighted the role of the United States in the military coup, arguing the discourse of interventionists, or *golpistas*, was false, as its real purpose was, in fact, to "impose colonialism."<sup>120</sup> These discourses fit into a Cold War narrative criticizing the United States for its capacity to exert power and manipulate smaller countries like Brazil.

However, not all nationalist officers had the same interpretation of the world and Brazil at the time. Marshal Henrique Teixeira Lott, for example, was conservative and a self-proclaimed anti-communist, but also nationalist. An advocate of the state oil monopoly, when speaking about the nationalization of the petroleum Lott argued that the issue was not related to communism, socialism, centrism or the right, but that it was a national problem.<sup>121</sup> According to Lott, communism, which emerged with the apparent goal of benefitting the proletariat, was idle talk, or a lie, because the world had already seen that the Soviet Union was not able to "fulfill its promises to the proletariat."<sup>122</sup> Lott condemned communism, and even identified Jânio Quadros—initially supported by interventionists such as Burnier—as a communist. When remembering the 1960's election he claimed he knew at the time that Jânio Quadros was connected to "the communists:" "I knew he was a communist and, therefore, would be a dangerous man for the presidency."<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Simão Kerimian, interview with author, São Paulo, July 27, 2016.

<sup>120</sup> Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião dos Sargentos*, 103.

<sup>121</sup> Lott, *Henrique Teixeira Lott, depoimento*, 67.

<sup>122</sup> Lott, *Henrique Teixeira Lott, depoimento*, 67.

<sup>123</sup> Lott, *Henrique Teixeira Lott, depoimento*, 102.

The division between interventionists and non-interventionist officers was not immutable. Although certain officers, such as Air Force officer João Paulo Moreira Burnier, an interventionist, or Air Force officer Francisco Teixeira, a nationalist, remained part of one or another group throughout their careers, many others transited between supporting interventionism and opposing it. For example, a large percentage of the armed forces demanded president Getúlio Vargas' resignation in 1954 or João Goulart's ousting in 1964. However, between 1955 and 1960 there was a smaller group of interventionist officers demanding Juscelino Kubitschek's resignation. Furthermore, among the interventionist and non-interventionist officers there were spectrums of how inclined they were to the Right and to the Left. The example of Marshal Henrique Teixeira Lott, in contrast to Teixeira, for example, shows this well. In 1954, Lott signed a document demanding Vargas' resignation, which also served as a threat of a coup. Nevertheless, during the second half of the 1950s the marshal fought to protect the elections and results that elected Kubitschek. Furthermore, although Lott became known as a nationalist and non-interventionist officer, he was a confirmed anticommunist. On the other hand, Francisco Teixeira claims that at a certain moment in his life Lott stopped discriminating against communists and started to give them military commands.<sup>124</sup>

The examples of Army Marshal José Machado Lopes and Army General Amaury Kruel also show how some members of the military oscillated between interventionism and non-interventionism. Commander of Brazil's 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, in Porto Alegre, in 1960, Machado Lopes, who was against the military's involvement in politics, voted for Lott in the 1959 elections and supported Brizola against the military attack in the Piratini Palace in 1960.<sup>125</sup> However, in 1964

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<sup>124</sup> Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira (depoimento, 1983/1984)* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 150.

<sup>125</sup> José Machado Lopes, *José Machado Lopes, depoimento áudio 1986* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 2007).

he supported the military coup. Even though he had not been a conspirator like Burnier or Muricy, at the time of the coup he became a supporter of military intervention. When asked if he participated in the military movement that led to the coup, he says no, but argues that the “1964 revolution” was the people’s revolution, “it was the women who went to the streets against Dr. Jango’s [Goulart] violations, which were provoked by Brizola, that idiot, João Goulart’s black angel.”<sup>126</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes argues that Krueel also changed positions throughout the 1950s and 1960s, what made him “a living contradiction.” In 1954 he signed the Colonel’s Manifest; in 1955 he stayed on Lott’s and Kubitschek’s side and opposed interventionism; in 1961 he supported Goulart and advocated for his term; and in 1964 he initially opposed the coup, up until the last moments, when he decided to join.<sup>127</sup>

Even though the great majority of nationalists claimed they were not communists, interventionist officers would not accept that claim, and saw nationalist mobilizations in the armed forces, such as the election of Estillac Leal and Horta Barbosa in the Military Club, as a sign that the armed forces were being infiltrated by communists who wanted to turn Brazil into a syndicalist republic. Examining interviews with interventionist officers, it is undeniable that many of them believed communism was a real threat. Burnier and Muricy’s interviews show that even though they claimed the greatest problem inside the armed forces was military insubordination, the biggest issue they were trying to tackle was actually “the communist threat,” which manifested through this insubordination.

Both nationalists and internationalists claimed that military subordination was the main problem leading to the military coup. However, the fact that insurrecting officers from the

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<sup>126</sup> Machado Lopes, *José Machado Lopes, depoimento áudio*.

<sup>127</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes I, depoimento*, 225.

internationalist faction received amnesty or were never punished when being insubordinate—writing the Manifesto dos Coronéis in 1954 against Vargas and during the rebellions of Jacareacanga and Aragarças in 1955 and 1959—show that high-ranking officers were not too concerned with all sorts of insubordination. While in the 1960s the rebellious members of the armed forces were sailors and sergeants pressuring for the expansion of their rights inside the military and outside, during the 1950s junior officers had rebelled in an attempt to change the national political scenario. The differences in the conflicts during the 1950s and the 1960s were based on ideology and class. Junior officers who rebelled during the 1950s were interventionists and internationalists, which represented the same ideology of many high-ranking officers. If they were concerned with indiscipline, they would have punished these officers as harshly as they did sergeants and sailors in 1963 and 1964. The main problem, however, is that internationalist officers interpreted the sergeants and sailors’ movements as proof of communist infiltration. Since the armed forces had more concrete mechanisms to punish military insubordination, and since punishing indiscipline was a more objective way of punishing a soldier, they used the first reason. Nevertheless, the fact was that they were not simply punishing indiscipline, they were punishing “communist” indiscipline. The character of urgency to fight against communism is present throughout their interviews. Muricy claims that he and his colleagues were not “afraid” the communist ideology was penetrating different spaces in Brazil, they were “certain” of it.<sup>128</sup>

Military insubordination constituted a legitimate problem in the armed forces, because when soldiers start questioning the structure of the military they can destroy the institution, which exists based on the premise that soldiers will follow superior orders without question. If the troops became loyal to politicians or military officers influenced by “the communist

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<sup>128</sup> “Não foi medo, foi uma certeza.” Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Muricy III, depoimento*, 286.

infiltration,” in the eyes of the most radical anticommunist officers that meant the establishment of the syndicalist republic was closer to fruition. The danger of indiscipline at this point was that a percentage of the armed forces’ support of more progressive policies and the expansion of the rights to sergeants and soldiers became more tangible or possible in the beginning of the 1960s. The problem was not just that these soldiers were voicing their discontent, but how they were framing their demands.

The events between 1950 and 1964 show that military insubordination only became significantly problematic to internationalist officers when they were followed by what they identified as the communist ideology. Burnier claims that after the 1964 coup, the coup leaders created a military investigation to investigate communist infiltration inside the armed forces. After the investigation was concluded, he claims, “it became proven that they [Communist Party] had a big network, a huge penetration inside the armed forces, which was damaging all hierarchy and discipline inside the armed forces.”<sup>129</sup> Therefore, the idea of the communist infiltration was intertwined with this context military indiscipline. Interventionist officers also felt dishonored by the mobilization of sergeants and sailors because they felt it questioned their position of superiority inside the armed forces. Burnier claims, “they wanted to disrupt the military hierarchy inside the armed forces, allowing discussions of members of the armed forces from different ranks, I mean, between officers and sergeants, in a frightful way that was outrageously dangerous.”<sup>130</sup> Whenever he refers to the nationalist officers he calls them “dangerous,” when the ones who captured, tortured and killed individuals after 1964 were Burnier himself and other interventionist officers.

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<sup>129</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 70.

<sup>130</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 70.

Anti-communist officers' conviction that the government and military circles had been infiltrated by communists led them to position themselves against nationalist policies. Some interventionist officers believe that a few nationalist officers, such as Lott were not communists. However, they also believed that these nationalist officers' actions were allowing the communist ideology to circulate inside military circles. Taking Lott as an example, Muricy agreed he was an anti-communist.<sup>131</sup> General Ernesto Geisel, however, claims that what worried officers like him the most was the increasing influence of communist officers like Lott and "the excessive centralizing way" in which he administered the Army. He stated that when Lott was running for president in 1960, he was surrounded by communist Army officers.<sup>132</sup> This shows that officers such as Lott, Teixeira and Sodré were all put in the same category. Following the maximum that "those who are not with us are against us," interventionist officers demonstrated that in their view, those who did not support their policies were communists who had to be stopped.

Turning to an analysis of non-commissioned servicemen, even though the sergeants and sailors connected to the 1963 and 1964 movements were considered communists, they tended to distance themselves from the term. Sergeant Cavalheiro, for example, claims that he had been influenced by his father, who was a *getulista*, or follower of president Getúlio Vargas' policies and ideas.<sup>133</sup> When he arrived in the Army as a sergeant he noticed a gap between the military hierarchies in terms of ideological and political thought. Other sergeants positioned themselves, overwhelmingly, in a similar ideological spectrum of left-wing labor groups, or the *esquerda trabalhista*, which they also called nationalist and anti-imperialist. In his view, higher ranking

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<sup>131</sup> In his words, "o Lott era católico e anticomunista. O Lott era um homem sério. Ele não ia fazer barganha com os comunistas." Antônio Carlos da Silva Muricy, *Antônio Carlos Murici III (depoimento, 1981)* (Rio de Janeiro, CPDOC, 1993), 365.

<sup>132</sup> Maria Celina Soares d' Araújo and Celso Castro, *Ernesto Geisel*, 5th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getulio Vargas, 1998), 133.

<sup>133</sup> Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

officers, on the other hand, overwhelmingly identified with “the imperialists.” Remembering these divides, Cavalheiro recognizes that in the context of the Cold War, or “the fight between socialism and capitalism,” individuals who were politically educated had difficulties to escaping the binaries or remaining neutral and were pushed to take one of the two sides. From his interview, it also seems that even though members of the military might have been more leftist but also critical about some aspects of the communist ideology, they were simply categorized as communists. Cavalheiro claims that the Cold War rhetoric, which was adopted by interventionist who believed the sergeants’ movement was a communist movement, pushed the sergeants to an association with the Communist Party. He claims that the persecution they started to endure because of their political views led him to become associated with the Party for a period of time.<sup>134</sup>

Army sergeants Darcy Rodrigues and José Araújo Nóbrega—whose life trajectories I examine in more detail on chapter three—claim the fight of the sergeants was in favor the constitution and against injustice and inequality. Like Cavalheiro, Rodrigues explains it was the Right, and the interventionist officers, who pushed the sergeants into the arms of the Communist Party.<sup>135</sup> When he was a teenager, Rodrigues had participated in the student movement and even helped create a student association, the Associação de Secundaristas of Três Lagoas, in Mato Grosso. He, therefore, had a history with activism. Nóbrega, who became a member of the guerrilla movement Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária (VPR) claimed that him and others who fought against the dictatorship after 1964 were concerned with the need to transform Brazilian

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<sup>134</sup> Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

<sup>135</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

society to bring social benefits to the entire population, and these ideas were seen as communistic in the eyes of interventionist officers.<sup>136</sup>

Therefore, the conflicts between interventionist and non-interventionist officers and soldiers inside the armed forces show how the sentiment of internationalists against more social change—which were interpreted as communism—increased throughout the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s and culminated in the military coup of 1964 and in the expulsion of thousands of members of the military throughout the dictatorship.

### **The Influence and Intervention of the United States**

Analyzing the reach of the United States in Brazil at the time, Teixeira argues that the influence of the North American neighbor changed the way military officers in the South American country approached military intervention. The armed forces had repeatedly intervened in politics during the republican period in Brazil. However, Teixeira explains that until 1964 the military provided support to a domestic group that struggling for power with another domestic group, and when winning or being defeated, they would give power to the winning faction. In 1964, however, Teixeira states that the opposing factions were not both domestic; they were the United States and the Brazilian people. Because the interventionist officers could not give power to the U.S. Americans when they emerged victorious from the coup, they retained it.<sup>137</sup> Teixeira's statement suggests that in his opinion Brazilian interventionist officers worked to protect the United States' interests throughout the era of the dictatorship, and not the interests of the Brazilian people.

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<sup>136</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 241.

Teixeira also understood that the United States was trying to influence officers in Brazil. He claims that the interference of the U.S. in the Brazilian armed forces, and especially in the Air Force, was strong during the Cold War. He says he personally met U.S. ambassador Lincoln Gordon during Kubitschek's term, when he was invited to a cocktail party and spent a "great amount of time" speaking with Gordon. In the following day, Gordon sent him three books about "Brazilian problems." Teixeira remembers that, at the time, he understood that Gordon took advantage of the opportunity to talk to him. As a member of the nationalist faction in the military, Teixeira believes Gordon approach him to try to influence him somehow, or, at least, learn something about nationalist officers.<sup>138</sup>

A systematic way in which the United States attempted to influence Brazilian politics, through the military, was providing training to Brazilian officers in Brazil and abroad. The U.S. military sent U.S. American staff to work in Brazil and also invited Brazilian officers to receive training in the United States.<sup>139</sup> Such training changed Brazilian military tactics and organization in specific ways. Internally, Paulo Pinto Guedes argues that the United States strongly influenced the Escola Superior de Guerra (ESG). Guedes tells that the ESG had resisted the interference of the U.S. for some time, but that during the context of the Korean War and the Cold War military officers responsible for the school allowed some U.S. Americans to teach there. According to Guedes, they not only taught English as a Second Language, but also translated articles published about the Korean War about the efficiency of U.S.'s armament, which suggests that even teaching only a language course U.S. officers would have been able to influence students ideologically at the school.<sup>140</sup> Guedes also explained that the United States supplied tanks,

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<sup>138</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 241.

<sup>139</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 191.

<sup>140</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes I, depoimento*, 218.

armored vehicles, machine guns and cannons to the Brazilian Army in Rio de Janeiro. These resources, which Brazil did not purchase but borrow, were supplied under certain conditions. They could only be used with the permission of the United States' government in conflicts that interested the superpower.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, the U.S. American military officers who arrived in Brazil were considered diplomats and received criminal immunity to certain crimes.<sup>142</sup> Guedes highlighted that many internationalist officers believed that due to the Cold War geopolitics, Brazil's destiny, for better or worse, was to side with the United States.<sup>143</sup>

Guedes explains that Algeria's movement of independence, which pushed France to change their war tactics and conceptualize strategies for the "revolutionary war," also changed the Brazilian military approach to war. The United States learned from the French experience, and especially from torture techniques they created to extract information from Algerian revolutionaries. Guedes explains that it was mostly through the United States that these tactics arrived in Brazil during the Cold War, especially after April 1964. Being trained in Panamá, at the School of the Americas (SOA), Brazilian officers came back to Brazil "adapted and prepared" to fight against subversion.<sup>144</sup>

Leslie Gill, examining the United States' imperial reach during the Cold War, studies the SOA, which he describes as "a repressive military apparatus" that trained over sixty thousand Latin American soldiers in combat and counterinsurgency strategy since its inception in 1946.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes I, depoimento*, 222.

<sup>142</sup> Guedes remembers that once, a U.S. American officer ran over someone and took the injured person to his house, since there he was protected by immunity agreements between Brazil and the United States. He then called the U.S. Embassy and was able to get the immunity deal. However, because this process took too long, the injured person died, and the U.S. officer was never held accountable. Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes I, depoimento*, 223.

<sup>143</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento, 1984* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1989), 56.

<sup>144</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 97.

<sup>145</sup> Lesley Gill, *The School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, Kindle Edition, 2004), Kindle Location 325.

During the Cold War, military training at SOA was geared towards fighting communist infiltration in Latin America. The school invested in providing training on counterinsurgency doctrine, which taught officers to defeat leftist revolutionary movements.<sup>146</sup> Gill also highlights that SOA's Latin American students were identified and convicted for murder, kidnapping and torture in their own countries. The U.S. Army, however, claims the ones who committed crimes against civilians, in opposition to guerrilla insurgents and drug traffickers, as they were trained to do, represented the few "bad apples" who received training from the school.<sup>147</sup>

At the United States National Archives, documents from the School of the Americas show Brazilian officers travelling to Panamá from 1954 until 1989. Still in 1954, most of the captains and majors studying at SOA were receiving more technical training, attending classes called "Radar 584" or "Gunnery," to mention a few examples.<sup>148</sup> In 1957 and 1958, lieutenants started to take a course called "*curso de policía militar para oficiales*," or "course of military police for officers," which involved studying "defense" and a subject called "civilian commotion," which suggests a turn to learning how to deal with an internal enemy in opposition to a focus on external border defense.<sup>149</sup> The number of Brazilian students at SOA also increased significantly from the 1950s to the 1960s. According to their records, in 1954 the School taught ten Brazilian officers, in 1958, twenty-one, in 1960, twenty-six. In 1962, Brazilian officers took a 10-week course called "Counterinsurgency Operations." At this time, only three officers participated.<sup>150</sup> In 1964, however, these numbers rose dramatically, with twenty-three Brazilians

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<sup>146</sup> Gill, *The School of the Americas*, Kindle Location 392.

<sup>147</sup> Gill, *The School of the Americas*, Kindle Location 333.

<sup>148</sup> SOA graduates, RG 548, Brazil, National Archives II, D.C., NN3-338-02-005, Box 28.

<sup>149</sup> SOA graduates, RG 548, Brazil, National Archives II, D.C., NN3-338-02-005, Box 26 and Box 24.

<sup>150</sup> SOA graduates, RG 548, Brazil, National Archives II, D.C., NN3-338-02-005, Box 19.

taking an “Operations in the Jungle” course, where it seems they would learn how to defeat rural guerrillas.

In the following three years few Brazilian officers would attend SOA, until 1967, when a group of thirty-one students, including General João Paulo Moreira Burnier, received training in Panama. A section of Burnier’s record at SOA entitled “comment on the quality of student’s participation during instructional discussion” reads, “an outstanding, mature officer. Leads by example. A ‘doer’ and positive thinker.”<sup>151</sup> Taking into consideration Burnier’s anticommunism and interventionist actions throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the commentary from his SOA instructor likely means that Burnier showed he was willing and eager to fight against communism in Brazil. The training he received in Panama and data he gathered in Brazil about the British and U.S. American Intelligence, gave him resources and skills to contribute to the creation of the Núcleo de Informações da Aeronáutica in 1968, which would precede the Centro de Informações de Segurança da Aeronáutica (CISA), from 1970.<sup>152</sup> CISA was one of the three military intelligence agencies operating during the military regime, which conducted surveillance and collected information on civilians and members of the armed forces who the regime saw as subversives.

Therefore, nationalist officers who were not included in the anticommunist conspiracy inside the armed forces were able to identify and condemn the United States interference in the Brazilian armed forces and in national politics. By March 1964, when the coup took place, these nationalist officers knew their fight was not only against the interventionist officers and the most conservative sectors of Brazilian society, but also against the United States, which they knew

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<sup>151</sup> “João Paulo Moreira Burnier, Academic Report,” SOA graduates, RG 548, Brazil, National Archives II, D.C., NN3-338-02-005, Box 14.

<sup>152</sup> Burnier, *João Paulo Moreira Burnier, depoimento*, 72.

they would not be able to defeat. President João Goulart's response to the crisis reflected this knowledge. Although some groups were more articulate than others when referring to the United States, most nationalist and non-interventionist officers and soldiers voiced their impression that their opposition to the military intervention in politics was also their opposition to U.S. interference in Brazilian affairs.

One encounter between Latin American and U.S. American military officers in 1963 gives a clear picture about the United States' concern and interest in politics inside the Brazilian armed forces before the coup. On September 23, 1963, São Paulo governor Adhemar de Barros hosted a dinner party in honor of the Inter-American Defense College, an international military institution founded in 1962 in the United States where military officers from American states could receive training. A document from the U.S. Department of State reports that U.S. General Roland H. del Mar informed the U.S. Embassy that during the dinner there was a "continuous, heated exchange of words" between the governor, Barros, and General Euryale de Jesus Zerbini, who was also present. Although General del Mar could not understand what the altercation was about, he understood it was related to politics. When the dinner ended the governor approached the U.S. General, explaining he was afraid "the United States did not seem to understand how dangerous" the imminence of the communist threat in Brazil was. According to him, president Goulart was encouraging communists to take over Brazil, what would happen in weeks or in months. The governor stated he had prepared 60,000 men to resist and claimed governors in Guanabara (Rio de Janeiro) and other two states were also taking the same measures. He also warned del Mar against General Zerbini, as his wife, Terezinha Zerbini, "was an aggressive

‘socialist’ and practically dominated her husband whom the Governor described as a weak personality and physically infirm.”<sup>153</sup>

As guests were about to leave the governor’s home, General Zerbini invited the del Mar and other generals from Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay to grab drinks at his house. According to del Mar, however, Terezinha Zerbini’s purpose with the invitation was to tell del Mar that “Brazil would soon be a country like Castro’s Cuba” and that the Pentagon should not interfere. According to the report Terezinha repeated the message and made sure del Mar understood what she was saying, requesting that he informed his U.S. American military contacts in Washington about it.<sup>154</sup> The consul general who wrote down the document included one more note, which said,

“NOTE: Information available to Consulate General sources indicates that General Zerbini is part of President Goulart’s leftist apparatus—*dispositivo*—and that Mrs. Zerbini is aggressively pro-Communist.”

This document shows the U.S. interests in Brazil at this time and indicates what kind of intelligence was being collected in the country at this moment. The “ghost” of communism was present in these conversations over six months before the coup of 1964 took place. Furthermore, the report on this dinner party shows that the U.S. Embassy was aware of the “danger” of the nationalist faction of the armed forces, represented by General Zerbini in this particular case. The way the document portrays and refers to General Zerbini and his wife shows that governor Barros and the U.S. Embassy did not consider Zerbini a nationalist, but a communist. Supporters

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<sup>153</sup> National Archives II, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, 1963, POL BRAZ-US, BOX 3839, A-95, Commandant of Inter-American Defense College Reports Political Conversations Held in São Paulo, September 27, 1963.

<sup>154</sup> National Archives II, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, 1963, POL BRAZ-US, BOX 3839, A-95, Commandant of Inter-American Defense College Reports Political Conversations Held in São Paulo, September 27, 1963.

of interventionism evaluated Zerbini and other nationalist officers as products of the communist infiltration in the armed forces. Therefore, when the military intervention took place in the end of March 1964, the interventionist officers who took power knew that Zerbini would be one of the first men they would have to imprison and expel from the Army. At last, this document also shows that the U.S. Embassy believed it was important to take the Zerbini family's "subversion" seriously due to their proximity to president Goulart. They suspected that if Brazil's political situation escalated to a war, Zerbini would be an important supporter of Goulart inside the Army.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter shows the long history of conflicts within the armed forces decades before the 1964 coup. Military officers in Brazil during the 1950s and 1960s were conscious of the crucial role of the armed forces in national politics. They understood that as military officers they had the ability to influence politics. The conflicts in the Military Club and the revolts among sailors and sergeants indicated the possibility and likelihood of a change that internationalist and more conservative officers were not willing to accept. The battles inside the armed forces were a reflex of the conflicts that were taking place not only in the Brazilian society, but across the world. As social groups across the world pushed for more inclusive societies—either based on a communist ideology or more progressive ideologies—they faced a push back from more conservative groups that were not willing to accept a change in the status quo. Inside Brazilian society and the armed forces, a similar process took place. As certain associations in Brazil, such as student unions, labor unions, and also associations of non-commissioned officers and sailors, pressured for change and won president João Goulart's support, the likelihood that Brazil would endure significant social changes became more tangible. Interventionist officers and Right-wing

politicians, in order to stop these changes, created the myth of the syndicalist republic, and were able to successfully oust president Goulart and implement a dictatorship that lasted twenty-one years.

Although the 1964 coup needs to be understood in the domestic context of politicization of the armed forces, it cannot be separated from the context of the Cold War. Interventionist officers started conspiring significantly against Vargas in the beginning of the 1950s, but after the Cuban Revolution their movement gained strength and more supporters. The victory of the Cuban Revolution and the appearance that communist global forces were able to reach military circles alarmed military coup generals the most. The ability of nationalist officers, sergeants and sailors to influence national politics during the 1950s and 1960s—from the campaign to nationalize petroleum, to sergeants' success in being elected (even if later deemed ineligible)—were some of the most significant events that led interventionist officer to install the dictatorship. During the first days of April 1964, nationalist officers, sergeants and sailors involved with the movements of 1963 and 1964, would face the wrath of internationalist officers, who expelled from the military ranks all members of the military they believed could offer any resistance to the coup.

## CHAPTER 2. EXPULSIONS AND RESISTANCE IN THE WAKE OF THE MILITARY COUP (1964-1968)

### Introduction

On March 31, 1964, the most conservative forces in the Brazilian military, with the support of various sectors from civil society—especially the private sector—ousted president João Goulart from office. Immediately after taking power, the coup leaders started imprisoning individuals affiliated with the Goulart government or connected to leftist movements and political parties. To rid the armed forces of opposition, the generals in power imprisoned and expelled thousands of officers and soldiers from the military. The expulsion of the members of the military considered communists and subversives was, for the officers who took power, a crucial and carefully thought out project. On April 9, 1964, the military government issued the first expulsions through Institutional Act number one, where hundreds of military officers and non-commissioned officers had their careers interrupted by either compulsory retirement, being sent into military reserves or fired.<sup>1</sup> These purges were part of a strategy of the military leaders in power to cleanse the armed forces of opposition and transform the institution into a body that would enforce the maintenance of military rule.

This chapter discusses the first years of military rule in Brazil, from 1964 to 1968, focusing on the experiences of officers and soldiers who were expelled from the forces in the wake of the coup. I examine the treatment these servicemen received from the military regime, which changed depending especially on how high they ranked in the military hierarchy and, often, on the color of their skin. I also recount the initial wave of resistance in the armed forces

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<sup>1</sup> APERJ, Pol-Pol, Ministério da Aeronáutica, Atos da Revolução de 1964, Volume I.

to show that the conflicts that existed in the armed forces before the coup did not disappear but took a new shape. Even though the political views and experiences of these expelled servicemen differed drastically, all of them were simply categorized as “subversive” and thrown out of the armed forces. Rank or military hierarchy did not determine if a serviceman would be safe from expulsion from the armed forces. The tactics certain groups used to resist military rule did not determine their expulsion either. Political and social engagement prior to the military coup, a political opinion, and even knowledge about the political scenario, did. Officers and soldiers from all ranks and from the three branches of the armed forces were imprisoned and expelled, depending on whether the military coup leaders and enforcers identified them as “subversive individuals.”

Most officers and sergeants who either worked at the service of president Goulart or who supported the legality of his government in 1964 were expelled from the forces. Some who had stood for the elected government in 1961 but who shifted their support to coup leaders in the wake of the coup were spared and continued their military careers. Colonel Paulo Pinto Guedes, who was purged and imprisoned in 1964, remembers that certain officers such as Machado Lopes, who had stood for legality in 1961, reconciled with the generals who took power in 1964 and stayed in the military, albeit being relocated to more remote military regions or less important positions.<sup>2</sup> Many officers and soldiers who opposed the coup of 1964 and were expelled from the forces stayed in Brazil and decided to pursue other careers outside the barracks. Other groups, however, decided to take a more active role in opposing military rule, asked for political exile and organized resistance movements against the dictatorial government. A third group of servicemen who opposed the coup were allowed to stay in the armed forces

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<sup>2</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento, 1984* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1989), 268.

after 1964 simply because the officers in power failed to identify them. Chapter three focuses more closely on this third group.

Servicemen from all ranks joined resistance movements to fight the dictatorship. Officers who had supported president Goulart taking office in 1961, and who identified as legalist officers, were the first ones to attempt to resist the coup in 1964. Many sergeants who participated in the movement of the sergeants prior to the coup also joined the resistance immediately after the coup. But also, many low-ranking soldiers and sailors who had developed social consciousness and supported Goulart's reforms participated in guerrillas to fight the generals in power. The experiences of sergeants, soldiers and sailors, however, were more distinct than officers as for most of them it did not matter if they opposed the dictatorship or not. For non-commissioned officers and soldiers, their superiors' perceptions of them mattered the most. In the name of cleansing the military from communist infiltration the officers in power expelled many soldiers that were not involved with any political or subversive activity at the time they were serving the military.<sup>3</sup>

By focusing on a diverse group of former servicemen from different ranks and political backgrounds, I show that for the generals in power all members of the military who had been expelled in the wake of the coup, as communists, were potential terrorists and should be treated as such. That meant that all of them, regardless of current or past political and social associations, were put under surveillance and treated as potential terrorists. Nonetheless, certain elements such as race and class mattered to how the regime's police and the military treated "subversive" subjects. The experiences of expelled officers, sergeants and soldiers were not all

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<sup>3</sup> In addition, soldiers and sailors tended to suffer more with human rights violations than officers, but this will be discussed more on chapter four.

the same, as military rank, social class, and the color of one's skin, were often important to how the regime treated men when it expelled, imprisoned and harassed them once they had been marginalized from the military.

### **The Imprisonment of Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Officers**

The imprisonment of “subversive” officers and soldiers started on the first day of military rule, April 1, 1964. Officers who conspired against Goulart knew he had supporters inside the armed forces that would attempt to rise against the coup, and they acted quickly to stop any opposition from gaining strength inside the institution. News of the government's takeover by the generals who were conspiring against Goulart led to different reactions from the officers and soldiers who did not share the same ideals of coup leaders. In Rio de Janeiro, from the Duque de Caxias Palace, building of the War Ministry, Army captain Ivan Cavalcanti Proença waited for orders after being informed Goulart had already left Rio de Janeiro. Member of the First Cavalry Regiment called *Dragões da Independência*, he responded to the president's office. At a certain moment during that day, he recalls that two sergeants arrived in the building saying that a paramilitary group had surrounded students at the National Law School of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro with automatic machine guns. When about 400 students had gathered in front of the University to protest against the military intervention, what newspaper *O Nacional* characterized as “police forces in support of the military coup,” arrived at the building to end the students' mobilization.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64: 40 Anos Depois* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficina do Livro, 2013), 199.

Even though he knew he should have stayed put and waited for orders, captain Proença decided to go to the scene. Upon arriving at the university, the armed men—who were never interrogated or charged for that event, and who remain unidentified in the historical record—had already opened fire against the students as an attempt to disperse them.<sup>5</sup> As he approached the building, he claims the situation was worse than he had imagined. Windows were broken, the paramilitary forces had their guns pointed inside at the building’s gates, and the students were trapped inside. Proença then proceeded to order the paramilitary group to move away from the building, and only after his second announcement the group lowered their guns and left. Only then the captain entered the building to help the students.<sup>6</sup> This was the main event that led to Proença’s imprisonment and expulsion from the Army. After aiding the students to exit the building, the captain returned to his post at the Ministry of War and learned then that a lieutenant had already informed his superior officers of Proença’s whereabouts and actions. A colonel and a lieutenant colonel approached and imprisoned him accusing him of being one of the “red ones.”<sup>7</sup>

Proença was insubordinate, actively breaking hierarchy when he decided to act on his own, and he knew he would have to face disciplinary action. However, not only officers who were insubordinate in the wake of the coup were expelled from the military. Many officers who participated in the Goulart government were imprisoned and expelled from the armed forces independently of their reactions to the coup. Paulo Pinto Guedes, for example, lieutenant colonel in the Army and the Secretary General of the National Security Council (Conselho de Segurança Nacional) during Goulart’s presidency, was also expelled. Officers who supported the coup, however, conducted his imprisonment and expulsion carefully. On April 4, Guedes was called at

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<sup>5</sup> Proença, *O Golpe Militar*, 125.

<sup>6</sup> Audiências da Comissão da Verdade, YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKCgYvEzwEY>

<sup>7</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

the Planalto's Military Command (Comando Militar do Planalto) in Brasília and ordered to leave for Rio de Janeiro and report to the Estado Maior.<sup>8</sup> Upon arriving in Rio, two officers met him in his house and "invited" him to the First Military Region in Rio de Janeiro. Even though these officers approached him cordially and politely, he realized he was being imprisoned.<sup>9</sup> Guedes explains that after this approach no officer seemed to want the responsibility of imprisoning him. When he arrived at the First Army, he overheard that he was supposed to be taken to Forte de Copacabana. An officer he knew met him, hugged him, asked him personal questions about his family, and only then asked if Guedes would "accompany" him to the Fort of Copacabana. By the end of the day he was taken to the Fort Leme, where he was greeted by a major who apologized because they only had a room and a bed for him, which, the major admitted, was not a proper accommodation for an officer.<sup>10</sup> From Fort Leme, he was transferred to Fort of Santa Cruz, where he met about 60 other officers who had been captured, and although he was not treated with hostility, Guedes said he was completely isolated from the outside world. Prisoners could talk to each other, but they could not have visitors, read the newspaper or listen to the radio.<sup>11</sup>

Proença's incarceration had been issued for insubordination and he was accused of being a communist. However, the officers who imprisoned Guedes did not immediately accuse him of subversion nor were they hostile to him. Although both men understood why they were imprisoned, Guedes did not foresee he would be transferred to the military reserves and stripped of his political rights. He believed he would face disciplinary action, be transferred to a remote military region and taken from the decision-making process inside the armed forces. Guedes

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<sup>8</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 436-438.

<sup>9</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 439.

<sup>10</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 442.

<sup>11</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 444.

presumed there would be at least an investigation before the officers in power took any actions. He did not imagine they would be expelled with no proof of the crimes they were accused of.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the military police maintained that he was a criminal for voluntarily taking part in Goulart's government and this was enough to expel him from the armed forces. The authorities claimed that Guedes was a criminal for supporting the subversive acts of the former president and not questioning his authority, and that the least he could have done was to "abdicate from the post he occupied voluntarily."<sup>13</sup>

After about seven weeks at the Fort, Guedes testified in an IPM, and on May 31, he was released from prison.<sup>14</sup> Even though he did not appreciate being imprisoned, he seemed to believe that he and other officers who opposed the coup were safer in prison than outside. He claimed that when he was captured the climate of persecution outside the ship was worse than inside. This shows that high-ranking officers who were captured received a relatively good treatment, so that Guedes' perception of the situation was that it was best to be in prison than to be outside. With the escalation of the violence, and as the military government started to take shape in the following years, being imprisoned for political motives meant one could disappear. However, during the first months of military rule officers such as Guedes seemed to believe that they were in a better position inside prison because he did not imagine his life was in risk or that he would be physically hurt. Furthermore, he compared his situation with the conditions of others who the regime was harassing outside of captivity, who often had to resort to exile and clandestinity.

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<sup>12</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 450.

<sup>13</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 496.

<sup>14</sup> Guedes, *Paulo Pinto Guedes II, depoimento*, 478.

Proença, Guedes and hundreds of other officers and soldiers were imprisoned in different locations, spaces that were not necessarily used for incarcerating individuals. In the first days following the military coup, its leaders resorted to the isolation of ships to imprison both civilians and members of the armed forces who were seen as subversive. Upon being captured most officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and sailors were incarcerated on the ships *Raul Soares*, *Princesa Leopoldina*, *Custódio de Mello*, *Canopus*, *Bracuí* and *Guaporé*.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the ships, members of the military were also imprisoned at military harbors and forts. Due to the high numbers of arrests in the wake of the coup, the political prisoners had to be constantly moved to make space for incoming detainees.

Not even the highest-ranking nationalist officers escaped imprisonment. Brigadier Rui Moreira Lima, who received several medals of honor for participating in ninety-four missions in World War Two, was also purged from the Air Force and imprisoned for subversion. One day after the coup he was ordered to leave the command of Base Aérea de Santa Cruz for not opposing the military intervention. In addition to being imprisoned and expelled from the Air Force, military pilots like Moreira Lima also had their flying licenses revoked, which prevented them from flying private airplanes after the coup.<sup>16</sup> This was also the case for lieutenant Roberto Baere, another Air Force pilot. After 50 days of imprisonment, the lieutenant was purged and had his flying license revoked.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Comissão Nacional da Verdade, Volume I - Parte 4: Dinâmica das Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos, Capítulo 15: Instituições e Locais Associados a Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos, 823.

<sup>16</sup> Comissão Nacional da Verdade. Depoimento de Rui Moreira Lima. March 11, 2014.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7\\_hlZA&list=FLXk2ZyG\\_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7_hlZA&list=FLXk2ZyG_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10)

<sup>17</sup> Comissão Nacional da Verdade. Audiência com militares perseguidos pela ditadura: Coronel Roberto Baere. June 13, 2013.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkXjiaRiGvY&index=5&list=PL9n0M0Ix12jfu8pdAYm7iHaxbaq0yR9qI>

Brigadier Francisco Teixeira was captured at his home on April 5. Four days before, he had met with other officers to evaluate the viability of an immediate reaction to the coup. After realizing they had very little chance of succeeding—as they realized president Goulart did not show any willingness to resist—they decided to dissolve the group, go home and wait for what would come next.<sup>18</sup> On April 5, Brigadier Emmanuel Nicoll called Teixeira warning him that regime’s officers had arrived at his house to imprison him and that Teixeira would be next. On that same day, Brigadier Armando Perdigão and two colonels approached him with a term of imprisonment.<sup>19</sup> Teixeira was first sent to the military reserves, and after a month of his release from prison he was fired from the Air Force. Differently from Guedes, Teixeira seemed to have a better understanding of how serious his situation was. He claimed he was actually relieved to be only fired, as he assumed the coup leaders would execute him.<sup>20</sup>

While imprisoned at the ship *Princesa Leopoldina*, Teixeira and his colleagues from the Air Force gave testimonies to Military Inquiries (Inquérito Policial Militar—IPM). This caused a great deal of stress since every day a different political prisoner was required to testify. As a way to protect themselves as a group, Teixeira and others tried to make sure that the imprisoned officers coached each other to give testimonies that would not incriminate themselves. They trained each other to prevent “saying something foolish” and blaming others as a way to escape punishment.<sup>21</sup> During Teixeira’s first days on the ship he could only meet other imprisoned officers during meals at the common cafeteria. However, the men in charge started to decrease the rigor of the prison and after a little over a week, and inmates could play cards and sunbathe

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<sup>18</sup> Later in this chapter I will discuss the memory of these officers towards Goulart. Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, (depoimento, 1983/1984, Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 264.

<sup>19</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, *depoimento*, 266-267.

<sup>20</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, *depoimento*, 331.

<sup>21</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, *depoimento*, 272.

on the ship's deck. After about forty days of imprisonment, doors remained opened at all times and the prisoners could walk around the entire ship. As Teixeira tells, "We were the ship's owners."<sup>22</sup> Similarly, when Teixeira's mother passed officers in charge authorized him to go to the funeral even before he asked. Thus, although the general environment was one of fear and uncertainty, the high-ranking officers who were imprisoned in the wake of the coup were treated with relative respect by the ones who held them captive. Even though Teixeira could only stay half an hour at the funeral and could not bury his mother, he was able to attend. As a higher-ranking officer, he experienced a higher degree of mobility even during imprisonment. This shows officers had some autonomy to talk and organize themselves. Therefore, even though high-ranking nationalist officers endured some hardships while in prison, their officer status provided them with leeway to negotiate the terms of their incarceration better than soldiers and sailors.

Junior officers were also imprisoned and expelled. The Army in Porto Alegre suspected and started to investigate Sub-lieutenant Emígdio Mariano dos Santos for communist infiltration. At the time of the coup he was on medical leave and did not plan to return to the military as he was going to retire soon. However, it seems the military did not want to allow him to be able to do so. One month after the coup one agent of the regime in disguise gained his trust and deceived him, lying about his wish to organize an opposition movement to the coup. This man, who called himself Trajano, got close to Mariano, gathered information about him, several sergeants, and civilians who were willing to join their fight, and later imprisoned him.<sup>23</sup> When the police approached Mariano they had proof that he was actively trying to challenge the dictatorship. The

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<sup>22</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 273.

<sup>23</sup> José Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho* (Porto Alegre: AGE, 2011), 195-200.

Army Police locked him in the basement of their headquarters for over ten days in August 1964, and after that he was transferred to another location, where he was put on solitary confinement until the end of November. While in this second location, he was expelled from the Army with no rights to retire or stay in the military reserves, which meant that after reaching the age of retirement the Army denied him his pension.<sup>24</sup>

The imprisonment and expulsion of sergeants and soldiers were harsher than officers. After the sergeants' movement, Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro was condemned to four years of reclusion and relocated to Morto Murтинho, town in the border of Brazil and Paraguay. After the coup, the imprisonment and expulsion of members of the military who participated in the sergeants' movement—which was already taking place before March 31, as Cavalheiro's case shows—became systematized. After the coup, instead of imprisonment and relocation, the rebellious sergeants were expelled from the armed forces. After purging Cavalheiro, the Army changed his sentence from reclusion to incarceration, and transferred him to respond to charges in São Paulo, where he continued serving his four-year sentence in Carandiru state penitentiary. On December 1964, when certain prisoners were allowed to leave prison temporarily to spend Christmas with their families, the prison's director added Cavalheiro's name to the list, as it had been one year since he had started serving his sentence. Cavalheiro tells that by luck or irony president Castelo Branco mistakenly signed his release—as political prisoners usually did not receive this benefit—he was able to leave the prison and never returned, fleeing to Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Emígdio Mariano dos Santos. Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Secretaria da Justiça e da Segurança. 6763-1200/98-4. Porto Alegre, RS, August 27, 1998, page 3.

<sup>25</sup> Almoré Zock Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

As the military government became more violent and less concerned about explaining its actions to the public, unlawful imprisonments and torture increased. The history of sergeant Manoel Raimundo Soares became one of the most iconic and well-known cases of human rights violations in Brazil as his body was found after he was killed, and his case showed the violence of authoritarianism in Brazil during this era. After deserting the Army in 1964, Soares was a wanted man who lived clandestinely until March 11, 1966, when the regime captured him in Porto Alegre. He was sent to the headquarters of the Army police, where he was tortured, and later incarcerated at the Island of Pedras Brancas, a prison-island.<sup>26</sup> There he remained completely isolated from the outside world. By the time Soares was captured, the regime was certain of his opposition and resistance to the military government, which led to brutal efforts to extract information from him. In the Army police headquarters in Porto Alegre, DOPS agents tortured him as a way to acquire information about resistance cells.<sup>27</sup> While the first imprisonments of military men in 1964 aimed at neutralizing efforts that could emerge for a counter-coup, the imprisonment of individuals such as Soares aimed to eliminate movements that were already in place. Furthermore, a couple of years into the dictatorship the police and the members of the military who enforced the dictatorship already knew they did not need to be too concerned about how they would treat members of the forces who were being imprisoned, since the military government would protect them.

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<sup>26</sup> Manoel Raimundo Soares. Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Secretaria da Justiça e da Segurança. 2345-1200/98-4. Porto Alegre, RS, March 31, 1998, page 8.

<sup>27</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo. Pol-Pol. Departamento de Ordem Política e Social. 50-D-7-205. Tortura e Morte do Sargento Manoel Raymundo Soares, 10.

## **The Imprisonment of Soldiers and Sailors**

In Rio de Janeiro, the sailors who were on meeting of the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB) at the steelworkers' union headquarters were among the first to be imprisoned in the days following the coup. On April 1, José Alípio Ribeiro was sent to the prison-ship Princesa Leopoldina, anchored at Guanabara Bay.<sup>28</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho and the other marines who had joined the AMFNB meeting, when they were supposed to suppress it, were also imprisoned on April 7, 1964.<sup>29</sup> By October 1964, 170 sailors who were part of the AMFNB meeting were excluded from the Navy.<sup>30</sup> After two weeks at Princesa Leopoldina, Ribeiro was transferred to the basement of ship Ari Parreiras, where he met with many imprisoned soldiers from different military branches and many sailors and marines he recognized.<sup>31</sup> Coutinho, who was held in the same ship, claims that Ari Parreiras was in under no condition to have prisoners—as the ship was broken, dirty and unfurnished. Coutinho also tells the prisoners were fed only twice a day, for breakfast and lunch.<sup>32</sup> From Ari Parreiras, they were taken to Ilha das Flores for two months, and then separated. While Ribeiro was sent to a sailors' barrack, Coutinho was transferred to the transport ship Custódio de Mello. After the barrack, Ribeiro was again transferred to a “warehouse for prisoners” at Alto da Boa Vista, where he received his last payment from the Navy and was informed he was being expelled.

After about a month at Custódio de Mello, Coutinho was sent to Frei Caneca penitentiary for only a week, and then transferred the same “prisoner deposit” in the Alto da Boa Vista, where

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<sup>28</sup> José Alípio Ribeiro, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 13, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>30</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo. Pol-Pol. Departamento de Ordem Política e Social. 50-D-7-204. “Isenta de Formalidade a Expulsão dos Marinheiros e Cabos Indisciplinados”, *O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro: 1 outubro, 1964.

<sup>31</sup> José Alípio Ribeiro, *Unidade de Mobilização Nacional pela Anistia*, DVD.

<sup>32</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

he met with other military political prisoners, including Ribeiro. He claims that in this last location, the sailors and marines imprisoned there were dishonorably discharged and forced to take part on a ceremony that expelled them *à toque de caixa*, where the military troops turned their backs on the ones being expelled, played snare drums and read a document listing the reasons for their expulsion. This ritual of expulsion exposed these sailors to public humiliation before their peers. In the next days, a lawyer issued a writ of *habeas corpus*, which authorized them to respond to their criminal charges in liberty. When they left prison their lawyer instructed them to leave Rio de Janeiro immediately before the police imprisoned them again.<sup>33</sup> Coutinho fled immediately from Rio de Janeiro to the countryside of Bahia to hide from the military authorities.<sup>34</sup> Ribeiro worked at a private company in Rio until his IPM was concluded and he was condemned for subversion, and then he left for São Paulo and hid in a safe house, or *aparelho*, organized by a group of opposition to the dictatorship.<sup>35</sup>

Luiz Carlos Figueiredo claims that separately from the AMFNB meeting, he and other sailors stationed at ship Cruzador Barroso protested their working conditions with a hunger strike before the coup. At the time Figueiredo was relocated to another ship. However, after April 1, 1964, he and another twenty-nine sailors were imprisoned, tried for rebellion and many were expelled from the Navy.<sup>36</sup> Like Coutinho, Figueiredo was first imprisoned at the naval prison at Ilha das Cobras. According to him, however, when more sailors were sent to the island he was transferred to a penitentiary in Bangú. There he learned that even though the judge assigned to his case had first given him one to four years in prison, now his sentence had changed to a minimum of five years. Due to prisoner overcrowding the former sailor was again transferred to

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<sup>33</sup> José Alípio Ribeiro, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 13, 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> José Alípio Ribeiro, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 13, 2017.

<sup>36</sup> Luiz Carlos Figueiredo, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 6, 2017.

penitentiary Lemos Brito, in Rio de Janeiro, another common prison shared by both political prisoners and other inmates.<sup>37</sup>

The dictatorship not only imprisoned low-ranking soldiers who had participated in political protests or political associations. Several soldiers of the Air Force claimed that even though they were never connected to political organizations or never resisted the coup, they were expelled from the military and put under state surveillance because the military authorities suspected they had connections with revolutionary leaders. Soldier Norberto Batista Simões, for example, was incorporated into the Air Force only in 1965. When he was transferred to the Air Base of Galeão, which held several political prisoners, he started to face problems with his superiors. Among the prisoners who were supposed to be executed on a certain date was one of his neighbors, Genésio, who saw him and asked for help. Genésio asked Simões to warn an officer from another base about his prison, for he knew this officer would be able to help him. A few days later his superiors discovered that Simões had helped Genésio, and from this moment on he was immediately labelled a subversive and incarcerated with other military and civilian political prisoners at Base Aérea do Galeão. He endured torture sessions and had to work under dire conditions for four years.<sup>38</sup> In January 1969, when he completed four years in the Air Force, he was expelled through Decree 1104.<sup>39</sup> This decree regulated the contract of low-ranking soldiers in the Air Force and determined soldiers would be hired on four-year contracts, only being allowed to serve in the same post for eight years.

Soldier João Martins de Oliveira, who joined the Air Force in Rio de Janeiro a couple of months after the coup, was also dishonorably discharged. After six months of military training he

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<sup>37</sup> Luiz Carlos Figueiredo, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 6, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Norberto Batista Simões, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> I will discuss Decree 1104 in more detail on chapter five to examine how soldiers from the Air Force who were expelled from the military through this law continued attempting to be amnestied after 1985.

shot a rifle by mistake and was imprisoned for insubordination for the first time. Upon being released and returned to his duties, the same sergeant who had first imprisoned him caught him discussing political figures, politician Leonel Brizola and Darcy Ribeiro – the last who had been João Goulart’s former Chief of Staff. His superiors gave him eight days of prison immediately after the event, and Oliveira started to be incarcerated constantly. Oliveira was sent to temporary incarceration for small mistakes in service, and his officers told him he “would meet with Brizola’s comrades” in prison. After two years and a half being harassed inside the barracks, Oliveira was dishonorably discharged from Air Force.<sup>40</sup>

The imprisonment and expulsion of Norberto Batista Simões at Base Aérea do Galeão was similar to Oliveira’s in the way that both kept their soldier status for another four years while being incarcerated and harassed inside the Air Force. Simões was imprisoned for subversion during the first months of 1965 and was only expelled from the forces in 1969. During these four years, when he was not incarcerated he performed the regular services of a soldier. However, at moments an officer would stop him while he was performing a task and punish him, making him carry heavy stones or crawl on hot asphalt until his body was in raw flesh.<sup>41</sup>

Soldier Belmiro Demétrio also endured similar punishment at Canoas Air Base, close to Porto Alegre. After making sympathetic remarks about Leonel Brizola and João Goulart at a soccer match in 1969, he was imprisoned for four days. Upon being released he faced other sorts of punishment. During the night officers ordered Demétrio to monitor a military structure in the woods with no ammunition in his rifle, which put him in danger as he would not be able to

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<sup>40</sup> João Martins de Oliveira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 22, 2015.

<sup>41</sup> Norberto Batista Simões, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

defend himself or the structure in case of an attack. When the sun came out his officers made him carry stones during the day, at a certain moment in the afternoon he was put in jail, but at 11 pm they would order him to guard the woods again. Until he was expelled in December, during the time he served the Air Force at the Base Aérea de Canoas he was either doing this circuit, in jail or being beaten and tortured.<sup>42</sup> The experiences of these Air Force soldiers show that often individuals like Simões, Oliveira and Demétrio, who were hired under a contract with the Air Force but were later seen as communist infiltrators in the military, would continue their lives as soldiers while facing constant periods in jail, torture and interrogations. When their contracts expired with the Air Force they were discharged through Decree 1104 or they were dishonorably discharged.

In order to clean the armed forces from political opposition the military authorities who took power in April imprisoned and expelled thousands of officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers from the Navy, the Army and the Air Force. A close look into these men's experiences shows that not only officers and soldiers who resisted the military coup were imprisoned. Often the mere fact that an officer was affiliated with the Goulart government was enough for the military police to capture them. At other times, even though many of low-ranking soldiers who were captured had participated in political activities—as was the case of sailors from AMFNB—that was not a necessary condition for their imprisonment. Soldiers were often imprisoned for having known a political prisoner, or for sharing information about what they saw inside the military bases where they worked. For the leaders and enforcers of the coup almost any actions inside the armed forces, which were not considered completely aligned with theirs, could be considered communist infiltration.

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<sup>42</sup> Belmiro Demétrio, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

## **Reacting to the Coup, Imprisonment and Expulsion**

Officers and soldiers who opposed the coup reacted differently to the dictatorship. While many officers and soldiers chose not to resist, were imprisoned, released and continue their life trajectories as far as they could from the armed forces, others organized ways to challenge the coup already on April 1, 1964, and throughout the era. Despite the efforts of the generals in power to dampen military opposition inside the armed forces, many expelled officers and soldiers continued fighting against the regime outside the military barracks.

Some expelled servicemen went into exile and did not return to Brazil until the end of the dictatorship, while others left for a few months and even years, but upon returning to the country were still sought out by the regime. Lieutenant José Wilson da Silva fled from Brazil and was able to escape incarceration for a few years. In 1963, as the Tribunal Superior Eleitoral and the Supremo Tribunal Federal ruled against the eligibility of the sergeants, junior officers started to discuss the possibility of selecting one of them to run for office in support of sergeants' rights. The candidacy of Da Silva emerged from this plan, and the lieutenant was appointed to run for city council of Porto Alegre in 1963 through PTB (Brazilian Labor Party).<sup>43</sup> On January 2, 1964, he took on the position at the city council, where he stayed for only three months.<sup>44</sup>

On March 31, as the coup leaders started to mobilize their troops, legalist officers in the south started to organize their response. Those in favor of legality took command of the military regions where they suspected there was support for the coup. The plan did not work, as many officers in the south pledged support to the coup leaders and the officers in command of those military regions denied leaving their posts.<sup>45</sup> The next step would be to wait for orders from the

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<sup>43</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 68.

<sup>44</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 70.

<sup>45</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 89.

president, who was already in Porto Alegre. However, these orders did not arrive. As president Goulart started to get ready to flee the country he told Da Silva that he did not want bloodshed and that he was not a revolutionary. The president's lack of desire to resist at this moment weakened the movement for a counter offensive. Furthermore, Goulart started to suspect that they did not have the popular support to resist. Yet, Da Silva and other officers still planned to mobilize the troops in Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>46</sup> However, upon realizing coup leaders and supporters were already looking to imprison him, Da Silva started to live clandestinely.<sup>47</sup> After twenty days attempting to organize opposition forces he understood the Army police would continue seeking to imprison him, that he would not be able to turn himself in safely, and he decided to ask for political exile in Uruguay. Only seven years later he returned to Brazil and turned himself in to be tried by the military authorities. He was immediately imprisoned but was only expelled from the Army on November 8, 1973.<sup>48</sup>

Da Silva's experience shows that even before being expelled, in March 1964, many officers who supported Goulart strategized ways to stop the coup from taking place. However, after realizing that the conspiracy had a lot of support and was in an advanced stage, they decided to refrain from further action. During the first years of military rule, officers such as Army colonel Paulo Pinto Guedes and captain Ivan Cavalcanti Proença decided not to openly challenge the dictatorship. While opposing and resisting the dictatorship by not taking part in the military government, at this moment they stayed out of more structured political organizations. One of the most important factors that discouraged these and other officers from openly resisting

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<sup>46</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 111.

<sup>47</sup> Wilson da Silva, Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Secretaria da Justiça e da Segurança. 2152-1200/98-1. Porto Alegre, RS, March 26, 1998, page 11.

<sup>48</sup> Wilson da Silva, Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Secretaria da Justiça e da Segurança. 2152-1200/98-1. Page 21, 27.

the coup was that they believed president Goulart had failed to handle the democratic crisis of 1964.<sup>49</sup> In their minds, as the president failed to deal with the opposition, the discontent against him increased and the coup leaders gained support from different sectors of society.

Remembering the events from March 31st, 1964, some officers who supported Goulart claimed that in the weeks prior to the coup he did not believe there was a conspiracy against him, and on the days following the coup he fled to Uruguay instead of fighting against the coup. If the president himself was not willing to resist, many of his supporters in the armed forces assumed they did not have the support to do so.<sup>50</sup>

Proença claimed that before the coup supportive officers attempted to tell the president about the interventionist officers who were conspiring against him. Both brigadier Francisco Teixeira and Army lieutenant José Wilson da Silva confirmed this.<sup>51</sup> Da Silva claims he wrote reports about supporters of the conspiracy against Goulart who made plans to imprison “communist” members of the armed forces. Goulart, however, did not believe these reports as they implicated men who he believed were his allies.<sup>52</sup> Teixeira also stated that he called the president’s office to suggest initial steps to avoid a political crisis, but that the president did not take them into consideration. When some officers among Teixeira’s troops expressed their wish

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<sup>49</sup> Skidmore explains that even though Leonel Brizola called for an immediate resistance in the South, Goulart refused to join in. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*, 4.

<sup>50</sup> For a more personal perspective on João Goulart’s decision to flee Brazil abdicating from armed resistance see Jorge Luiz Ferreira, *João Goulart: Uma Biografia* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2011).

<sup>51</sup> Eugênia Zerbini, the daughter of General Euryale de Jesus Zerbini, also tells that her father tried to warn João Goulart specifically about General Kruel’s adhering to the coup. However, Goulart did not believe him as Kruel was the godfather to one of his sons, and their personal relationship was for Jango a sign that Kruel would not betray him. Comissão Nacional da Verdade. Audiência Militares de Resistência à Ditadura: Eugênia Zerbini. April 9, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYPbAAwngIk&index=2&list=PL9n0M0Ix12jcN4eQM9FzEB2potwxTdhqy>

<sup>52</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 76.

to meet the president in the Rio Grande do Sul and gather forces to resist the coup, Teixeira revealed that Goulart had not contacted him about a resistance movement. He believed the president was not able to deal with the military crisis because he did not have competent military counsel during his time in office.<sup>53</sup>

Proença claimed that at the time it would have been possible to prevent the coup peacefully imprisoning the most invested conspirators. According to him, if Goulart had neutralized these antagonistic forces, the coup could have been avoided as the elimination of those actors would dissuade other officers who only decided to join the coup in the last minute.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, Goulart did not act and did not change the commands of the military bases, as he thought such action would anger his opponents even more and strengthen a conspiracy against his government.<sup>55</sup> While it seems that some expelled officers like Guedes opted to abstain from public political actions or involvement with resistance organizations in the next years and tried to live a quiet life, others such as Teixeira and Da Silva decided to resort to different strategies to challenge the dictatorship.

The men who decided to resist the dictatorship disagreed about the methods they wanted to employ. Teixeira did not agree that the armed struggle should be sought out as a tactic of resistance. Like Proença and Guedes, Teixeira had been a Goulart supporter, coming from a Vargas tradition. They, however, had never been involved in political parties or activist movements outside of the armed forces. In the first months following the coup, Teixeira joined a group of military opponents of the dictatorship.<sup>56</sup> Initially, Teixeira agreed with the group that a military offensive coming from the barracks was ideal. He believed that a military insurgency

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<sup>53</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 237.

<sup>54</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 87.

<sup>55</sup> Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64*, 64.

<sup>56</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 275.

starting in Rio Grande do Sul, where Goulart had the most support within the military, could have been viable with the support of Brizola and Goulart, who were living in Uruguay.<sup>57</sup> However, due to increasing tensions between the politicians, this plan fell apart, and Teixeira did not believe that other types of armed reactions to the coup that would involve the Brazilian population were viable.<sup>58</sup> The former officer trusted that the failed attempts of a military offensive indicated that the best strategy of resistance was through unarmed popular political mobilization.

Many expelled officers resisted the regime when they simply did not agree to serve the military while interventionist officers were controlling the armed forces and the national political scenario. A few individuals believe that there were some officers who opposed intervention but who decided to keep quiet and proceed with their careers in the armed forces.<sup>59</sup> Other officers, however, such as Proença, claimed they could not serve with servicemen who enforced the authoritarian state. After spending forty days imprisoned at Fort of Imbuí he met with four generals who proposed to transfer him to an isolated military region in Campo Grande, state of Mato Grosso. In return for being allowed to continue his military career, Proença had to agree he

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<sup>57</sup> The southern state of Rio Grande do Sul (RS) had become a center of resistance since the 1930s, when Getúlio Vargas, who was born in the city of São Borja-RS, led the “revolutionary movement of 1930” in Brazil. Vargas took presidential power, ending the republican period in Brazil known as the “*Política dos Governadores*,” in which the oligarchies representing the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais altered in power. Being the first republican representative of RS, Vargas gained civilian and military support in the country’s south. João Goulart, who was also from São Borja, had a close relationship with Vargas, even becoming his Minister of Labor in 1953. His close connection with Vargas and southern origin led different groups in the south to support Goulart, including a large part of the Army in Porto Alegre. Because of this support, Rio Grande do Sul became a center of resistance to the 1964 coup. For more see Skidmore, *Politics in Brazil, 1930-1964*, and Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*.

<sup>58</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 284.

<sup>59</sup> Comissão Nacional da Verdade. Audiência Militares de Resistência à Ditadura: Eugênia Zerbini. April 9, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYPbAAwngIk&index=2&list=PL9n0M0Ix12jcN4eQM9FzEB2potwxTdhqy>.

would not get involved in politics or be imprisoned. The captain, however, understood that this required him to consent with the decrees and actions of the military government and to work with coup leaders and its supporters. He rejected the proposal and was expelled from the Army on the next day.<sup>60</sup>

### **Armed Insurgency**

In addition to everyday acts of resistance, expelled members of the forces also organized armed movements against the dictatorship. Former officers and sergeants created and ran two of the first organizations that emerged to challenge military rule, the Nationalist Armed Resistance (Resistência Armada Nacionalista—RAN), created with the support of politician Brizola, and the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement (Guerrilha do Caparaó), implemented at Caparaó mountain, between the states of Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo.

In the days following the coup, lieutenant Da Silva realized that the Army wanted to imprison him and went into hiding. After Goulart left Brazil, although a group of officers was discouraged to continue resisting, Da Silva and other servicemen attempted to create a plan to challenge the coup, which involved mobilizing military troops in the south. They soon realized they had little civilian support for a reaction on the first days of April. After accepting that the armed forces would not stop chasing him, after twenty days in clandestinity Da Silva decided to move to Uruguay and plan actions from exile.<sup>61</sup> In Montevideo he met with colonel Jefferson Cardin de Alencar Osório, who had also been expelled from the Army. In the next months, they planned an action to take the Chuí, a city at the frontier of Rio Grande do Sul and Uruguay,

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<sup>60</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 125.

which did not succeed. Even though their initial plan failed, the group of exiles in Uruguay increased and was able to create a network of about 470 men in Brazil who were willing to participate in an offensive in the country's south. Colonel Átila Escobar was responsible for accessing the support of the Rio Grande do Sul's police, the Brigada Militar, and former Air Force Captain Alfredo Ribeiro Daudt coordinated military and civilians in Porto Alegre. Former colonels José Lemos de Alencar, Guerreiro Brito and others kept relationships inside the Army in order to access support. Manoel Raimundo Soares and sub lieutenant Emígdio Mariano dos Santos were also part of this network.<sup>62</sup>

The Brazilian military intelligence service found out about this group only a few months after it had come together. In October 1964, for example, the Centro de Informações da Marinha (CENIMAR) circulated a report about the existence of a political apparatus formed mostly by former military personnel. "Sá" was the leader of the group of sergeants who sought to form a board with all groups who were willing to fight against military rule through armed insurgency. Their plan was to take control of a region between Goiás and Mato Grosso in order to establish an operational base. According to the document, this group had "200 men, money and material conditions."<sup>63</sup> On October 5, the Centro de Informações de Segurança da Aeronáutica (CISA) issued a report about the activities of Leonel Brizola in Uruguay. The Air Force knew Brizola was trying to articulate a counter coup together with purged members of the military who were living in Uruguay: generals Ladário Pereira Telles and Henrique Cordeiro Oest, colonel Dagoberto Rodrigues, sergeants Leoni Lopes and Narciso Julio Gonçalves, lieutenant José Wilson da Silva, and sailor Duarte, who they believed was Antonio Duarte dos Santos.<sup>64</sup> By the

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<sup>62</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 140.

<sup>63</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Atividades Subversivas. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_047A\_0183.

<sup>64</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Atividades contra revolucionárias. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_047A\_0188.

end of 1964, however, when sergeant Avelino Capitani arrived in Uruguay he claimed that these networks of resistance in Brazil had been already destroyed. When he told Brizola that the agents of repression were dismantling the movement in Brazil, the politician did not believe him.<sup>65</sup> Brizola would also refuse to believe that there were regime informants amongst them.<sup>66</sup>

The military intelligence agencies continued informing on the activities of political exiles in Uruguay and trying to imprison the ones they could find in Brazil in the following years. In April 1965, former colonel Jefferson Cardim and former sergeant Albery Vieira dos Santos, together with a group of sixteen men, were captured at the border of Santa Catarina and Paraná states with a plan to attack several locations such as airports, military barracks, bridges, radio stations, and farms. Jefferson Cardim told his captors that his group was acting outside of Brizola's command, as they were not in good terms with the politician. He also confirmed that in Uruguay he had been in contact with Brizola, Dagoberto Rodrigues, Daudt, Da Silva, and other exiles to discuss Brazil's redemocratization.<sup>67</sup> One year later, the police also captured sergeant Manoel Raimundo Soares who had deserted from the Army in 1964 when he heard officers in Campo Grande (Mato Grosso) were asking for his arrest warrant. He was expelled from the Army on July 30, 1964, and in January 1965 he travelled to Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>68</sup> In March 1966 sergeant Soares, who was also a member of the Movimento Revolucionário 26 de Março (MR-26), was captured and tortured. After months in prison, he was killed between August 13 and

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<sup>65</sup> José Caldas da Costa, *Caparaó: A Primeira Guerrilha Contra a Ditadura* (São Paulo: Editora Boitempo, 2007), 116.

<sup>66</sup> The regime's surveillance records clearly show that there were informants amongst them, as they have detailed descriptions of what happened inside the meetings in Uruguay.

<sup>67</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Grupo de Guerrilheiros chefiados por Jefferson Cardim de Alencar Osorio. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_122\_0160.

<sup>68</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, Pol-Pol, Departamento de Ordem Política e Social. 50-D-7-205. Tortura e Morte do Sargento Manoel Raymundo Soares, 6; CNV, Volume I - Parte 4: Dinâmica das Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos, Capítulo 13: Casos Emblemáticos, 601.

August 20.<sup>69</sup> An autopsy showed that he had been murdered by drowning.<sup>70</sup> The case's prosecutor reached the conclusion that as government agents tortured Soares by drowning on the river, they accidentally let the rope that tied the sergeant to their boat they were using loose, and the prisoner disappeared into the deep river.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, while the former military prepared for a counter offensive, the agents of repression monitored their activities from a distance if they were in Uruguay and as soon as they appeared in Brazilian soil they attempted to imprison them. Their surveillance operations were organized and detailed. The CISA archive, contains numerous reports about the whereabouts of exiled servicemen, indicating places they visited and people they talked to.<sup>72</sup> In one of these documents written in May 1966, an Air Force agent reported about a meeting of exiles in the house of former Navy Admiral Cândido Aragão. Alfredo Ribeiro Daudt, Emmanuel Nicoll, Henrique Cordeiro Oest, and Alvaro Moreira de Oliveira Filho were among the participants who met to approve the creation of the Movimento de Resistência Militar Nacionalista (MRMN).<sup>73</sup> This group's purpose, composed mainly of former members of the armed forces, was to organize clandestine operations in Brazil, but from Uruguay. According to CISA its members were willing to conduct operations to destroy property that involved exploding cars, kidnapping and

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<sup>69</sup> CNV, Volume I - Parte 4: Dinâmica das Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos, Capítulo 13: Casos Emblemáticos, 605.

<sup>70</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, Pol-Pol, Departamento de Ordem Política e Social. 50-D-7-205. Tortura e Morte do Sargento Manoel Raymundo Soares, 3.

<sup>71</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, Pol-Pol, Departamento de Ordem Política e Social. 50-D-7-205. Tortura e Morte do Sargento Manoel Raymundo Soares, 26.

<sup>72</sup> Beyond the documentation I mention in the next footnotes, see also BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_054\_0058 (24 Jun 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_054\_0059 (06 Jul 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_055\_0278 (19 Jul 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_055A\_0014 (30 Jun 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_055A\_0028 (05 Jun 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_001\_006, 35, 74 (17 Out 66), BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_001\_007, 5, 16, 74 (3 Nov 66)

<sup>73</sup> On some secondary sources (namely José Caldas Costa's book) and interviews, this group is referred by other acronyms, such as MNR (*Movimento Nacionalista Revolucionário*), or MORENA (*Movimento Revolucionário Nacional*). However, in all primary sources I found this group is called MRMN and later RAN.

attacking citizens of the United States. They would, however, avoid operations that could cause damages to Brazilian citizens. The members of MRMN believed that these actions would lead to more repression, which would in turn bring more supporters to the resistance. The plan's final stage would be armed insurgency. Expelled officers who were still in Brazil, such as Francisco Teixeira, would articulate the implementation of these actions.<sup>74</sup> Da Silva was one of the members of the movement who had the role of bridging mobilization between Rio Grande do Sul and Uruguay. In 1966 he reentered Brazil to contact members of the Brazilian communist party, the PC do B. Militants in Brazil like former sergeant Antonio Garcia Filho asked Da Silva to convince Brizola to be more active in Uruguay. According to Filho, the servicemen who opposed the dictatorship in Brazil were losing enthusiasm about Brizola's leadership.<sup>75</sup>

Da Silva explains that exiles in Uruguay constantly disagreed about their plan of resistance, and as Jefferson Cardin's case shows, these disagreements ultimately led to ruptures in the group.<sup>76</sup> They disagreed about the locations where the actions would take place, about how they should take place, and from whom they would seek and accept support. While Brizola believed the best strategy was for expelled officers to head an insurgency and takeover in Rio Grande do Sul, expelled officers such as Cândido Aragão, Nicoll and Daudt trusted the best approach was to form a social movement with the support and involvement of the masses, including urban and rural workers and students, which would result in guerrilla warfare. The former officers raised the point that an insurrection at the west frontier of Brazil, the region of Acre and Rôndônia, was the most favorable location for starting an armed struggle.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. 21 Jun 66. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_054\_0057.

<sup>75</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Mensagem do ex-sargento Garcia ao asilado Alfredo Daudt. Participação de José Wilson da Silva. 12 Jul 66. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_001\_003\_16.

<sup>76</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 152.

<sup>77</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. 18 Jun 66. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_082\_0008.

In Montevideo, these officers criticized Brizola's reluctance to support and join forces with the clandestine communist movement in Brazil. They also complained that the politician was wasting resources on members of the resistance in Brazil who were not accomplishing anything.<sup>78</sup> This group also believed that if MRMN wanted to organize a structured network of resistance in Brazil they needed to seek financial aid from Moscow or Beijing. Former sergeant Amadeu Felipe da Luz Ferreira and other sergeants such as Araken Vaz Galvão started to prepare a plan to start a guerrilla at Serra do Caparaó, yet Brizola was reluctant to support it.<sup>79</sup> Brizola seemed to want to explore the disagreements between the leaders of the dictatorship, hard-liners and moderates, whose conflicts, he believed, could implode their movement. He wanted to first exhaust the less violent resistance options to avoid involving the population and prepare public opinion for the possibility of armed struggle.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, he believed that in Rio Grande do Sul they had the best conditions to successfully resist and bring down the dictatorship. At first the politician was able to convince former officers and sergeants like Ferreira to try the insurrection in the South and then resort to the guerrilla warfare if the first plan failed.<sup>81</sup> However, he was not able to contain these individuals for a long time. By the end of 1966, MRMN's members had changed the movement's name to Resistência Armada Nacionalista (RAN), and its main leaders were Cândido Aragão, Daudt and Nicoll.<sup>82</sup>

Soon, the regime's intelligence agencies had discovered all of Brizola's insurrection plans. In February 1967, the Air Force uncovered a plan of action organized by former sergeant Ferreira. CISA was informed that Brizola had been responsible for organizing an armed

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<sup>78</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, "Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai," 11 Jul 66, 50-D-26-376.

<sup>79</sup> Caldas da Costa, *Caparaó*.

<sup>80</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. 05 Jul 66. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_055A\_0033.

<sup>81</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 153.

<sup>82</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Atividades do grupo militar de asilados RAN. 29 Dez 66. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_055\_0093.

movement that had mobilized forty men and would unfold in December 1966, in Mato Grosso. Brizola, however, had allegedly postponed the action for ninety days. The report claimed Brizola had done so to make his plan coincide with other actions that were developing in Brazil.<sup>83</sup> By October 1967, due to disagreements and splits in the group, the group of former officers and soldiers in Uruguay had lost members, and RAN was functioning with a lack of resources. This, however, did not discourage members of the group, who continued to plan an offensive against military rule. According to surveillance records, Cândido Aragão, Emmanuel Nicoll, Brizola and others had a new long-term plan. In order to increase their resources, they would seek Cuba's and China's help.<sup>84</sup> By 1967, military intelligence believed Dagoberto Rodrigues was the head of the intelligence service of Brizola's movement in Uruguay.<sup>85</sup>

The group of exiles planning a counter insurgency was not, however, confined only to Uruguay. Brazilian militants were travelling throughout Latin America, going to Chile, Argentina, Mexico, and Cuba. Former sergeant José Mendes de Sá Roriz, for example, who was part of the network of former military in Uruguay, had moved to Mexico before going to Montevideo, and in 1967 he also travelled to Argentina and Chile.<sup>86</sup> He also maintained ties with leftist movements in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.<sup>87</sup>

At the same time that the officers in Uruguay were trying to keep the resistance alive in exile, because the attempts of insurrection were failing one after another, a group of sergeants

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<sup>83</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, "Atividades subversivas no Brasil," 14 Fev 67, BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_014\_018.

<sup>84</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, "Resistência Armada Nacionalista (RAN)," BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_050\_0137; Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_112A\_0049; APESP, Polícia Política, "Resistência Armada Nacionalista (RAN)," 50-D-26-1236.

<sup>85</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Atividades dos asilados. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_054\_0177.

<sup>86</sup> Arquivo Nacional, SNI, Atividades de asilados brasileiros. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_002\_002, 4, 27.

<sup>87</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, José Mendes de Sá Roriz. BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0052\_0006, 13.

who had been planning the creation of a guerrilla movement at Serra do Caparaó decided to implement it in 1966. Many expelled servicemen, however, rejected guerrilla warfare as a resistance tactic. Francisco Teixeira, for example, considered that while they should keep fighting against military rule, guerrilla warfare was not the way to do so as it could backfire and strengthen the regime.<sup>88</sup>

As Brizola's insurgency plan in Rio Grande do Sul collapsed, the group decided to implement what they had planned for Caparaó.<sup>89</sup> The guerrilla movement, which was mainly comprised of former members of the military who were expelled from the forces for subversion, was established in the Caparaó mountains.<sup>90</sup> Later, its members admitted the guerrilla movement had wide support from Cuba and was part of a larger project to fight against capitalism in Latin America. After eight months in Cuba receiving training in guerrilla tactics in the jungle and in the mountains, Avelino Capitani, Amaranto Jorge Rodrigues Moreira, and others returned to Brazil with the goal of forming the guerrilla movement at Caparaó in the end of 1966.<sup>91</sup> However, before the members of Caparaó could implement any their plans, the regime found out about their existence and location. Since its creation, police forces in both Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo states started investigating Caparaó as a joint effort. Police agents organized daily trips to survey the territory of the region. By March 1967, the reports that emerged from this

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<sup>88</sup> Francisco Teixeira, depoimento, 284.

<sup>89</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Depoimento de Avelino Bioen Capitani. 30 Nov 87. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_132A\_0114.

<sup>90</sup> In an interview years later, former sergeant Amadeu declared that Caparaó was the "depositário do movimento dos sargentos." Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Convenção Nacional de Sargentos da Ativa e da Reserva. 15 Abr 1981. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_132A\_0115.

<sup>91</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Depoimento de Avelino Bioen Capitani. 30 Nov 87. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_132A\_0114.

investigation had already been able to identify a group of forty armed men who were infiltrated in the mountains of Caparaó.<sup>92</sup>

On March 24, the police found and imprisoned expelled second-lieutenant Jelcy Rodrigues Correa and sergeant Josué Cerejo Golçalves at a barber shop at Espera Feliz, Minas Gerais, with armament and “incriminating correspondence.”<sup>93</sup> In April, when one member of the guerilla was taken ill, the rest of the group decided to purchase medication at the closest town. Eight members of Caparaó set camp close to a trail and were discovered by the authorities, who sent thirty soldiers to capture them.<sup>94</sup> Of the eight, seven were former members of the Army and the Navy: sergeants Amadeu Felipe da Luz Ferreira, Araken Vaz Galvão, Edval Augusto Mello, soldier Jorge José da Silva, and sailors Amaranto Jorge Rodrigues Moreira, Avelino Capitani, and João Jeronimo da Silva.<sup>95</sup> By mid-April, the police had captured the rest of the group, which included former captain Juarez Alberto de Souza Moreira, second-lieutenant Itamar Maximiniano Gomes, and sergeant Deodato Baptista Fabrício.<sup>96</sup>

Twenty-one members of the guerrilla movement were prosecuted, and Brizola, Paulo Schilling, who was a civilian and militant exiled in Uruguay, former colonels Dagoberto Rodrigues, Pedro Espinosa da Silva, Dario Viana dos Reis, and second-lieutenant Leonor Tuasco and lieutenant Samuel Schuler were also investigated for their involvement in providing support to the guerrilla movement’s activities.<sup>97</sup> The outcome of this process for each one of the investigated was different. While former sergeant Ferreira, for example, was condemned and

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<sup>92</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Boletim de Relações Públicas do Exército,” Agosto 67, 30-Z-160-28.

<sup>93</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Boletim de Relações Públicas do Exército,” Agosto 67, 30-Z-160-28.

<sup>94</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Convenção Nacional de Sargentos da Ativa e da Reserva. 15 Abr 1981. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_132A\_0115.

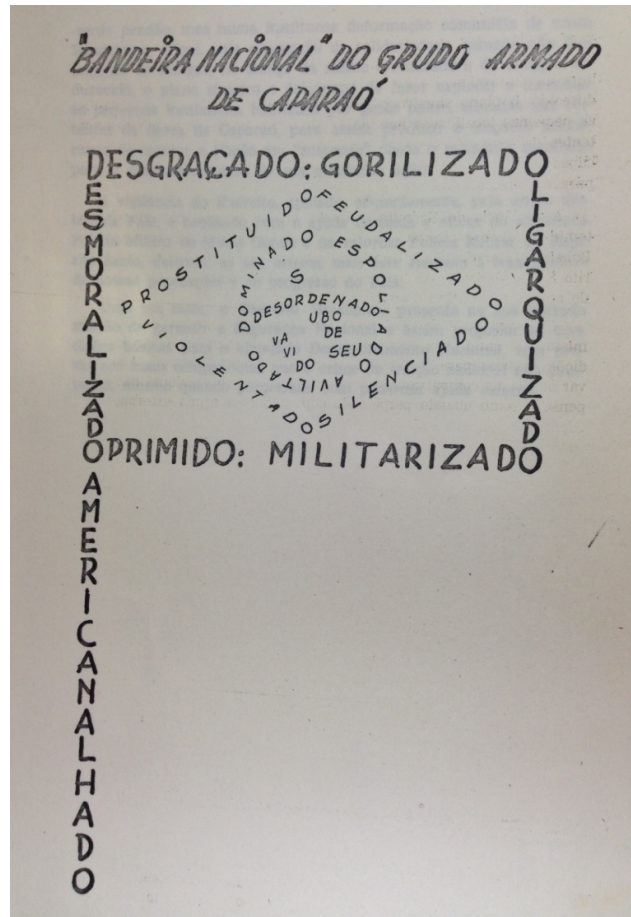
<sup>95</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Boletim de Relações Públicas do Exército,” Agosto 67, 30-Z-160-26.

<sup>96</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Boletim de Relações Públicas do Exército,” Agosto 67, 30-Z-160-25.

<sup>97</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Guerrilhas de Caparaó. 20 Set 67. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_121A\_0133.

served time in prison until April 1971, Dario Viana dos Reis was imprisoned but acquitted for lack of proof of his involvement.<sup>98</sup> Yet, while the outcome for the former each of the participants in the guerrilla movement was different, in less six months of existence Caparaó was completely eliminated.

Figure 1: National Flag of the Armed Group of Caparaó<sup>99</sup>



<sup>98</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Convenção Nacional de Sargentos da Ativa e da Reserva. 15 Abr 1981. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_132A\_0115; Dario Viana dos Reis. Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Secretaria da Justiça e da Segurança. 4147-1200/98-8. Viamão, RS, June 4, 1998, page 10.

<sup>99</sup> The Caparaó Guerrilla Movement transformed the Brazilian national flag and substituted the lines of its margins for the following words: disgraced, *gorilizado* (from gorilla, which was how they called the military who adhered to the coup), oligarchized, oppressed, militarized, demoralized, Americanized, prostituted, feudalized, violated, silenced, dominated, plundered, demeaned, disordered. This is what they thought Brazil had become under military rule. APESP, Polícia Política, “Boletim de Relações Públicas do Exército,” Agosto 67, 30-Z-160-18.

## United Against the Coup

Officers and soldiers interpreted, embraced or rejected the ideologies that marked the era of the cold war in different ways. While very few identified as communists, many others believed in the construction of a strong nation-state that would control certain resources but encourage private enterprise. This rejection of the communist ideology can also be interpreted as a rejection of the moral and cultural elements associated with the ideology in Brazil, as discussed in chapter one. Most of the officers who were expelled from the armed forces identified as constitutionalists or legalists, but not communists. They shared a strong anti-interventionist and nationalist sentiment. Collectively they did not support the ousting of president Goulart, military rule, and the influence of the United States in Brazil. A rejection of military interventionism and an internationalist dependent on U.S. interests in Brazil united officers and soldiers who supported the maintenance of the constitution and the democratic process. Therefore, although diverging in tactics, expelled members of the forces who opposed the coup were united in fighting against these ideologies.

The members of the *Guerrilha do Caparaó* communicated what they believed military rule represented in a drawing of a modified version of the Brazilian flag (Figure 1). It is possible to identify in this flag a strong anti-interventionism and nationalist ideology that condemned the influence of the U.S. American interests in Brazil. The group criticized interventionist officers for having transformed Brazil into a country that was “disgraced, oligarchized, oppressed, militarized, demoralized, Americanized, prostituted, feudalized, violated, silenced, dominated, plundered, demeaned, disordered and *gorilizado*” —from gorilla, which was how interventionist officers became known inside military circles. The words “disgraced, oppressed, militarized, demoralized, violated, silenced, demeaned disordered and *gorilizado*” condemned the violent

aspects of authoritarianism, as under military rule the police took on an increasingly repressive role that subjugated the population and silenced the regime's opponents. They used the terms "oligarchized and feudalized" to condemn the fact that a small group composed of members of the elites were governing the country. These were the military elites who implemented the coup and the economic elites in Brazil and abroad who were contributing to and benefiting from this order, such as private companies and multinationals, namely represented by the Institute of Research and Social Studies (Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Sociais, IPES) and the Brazilian Institute of Democratic Action (Instituto Brasileiro de Ação Democrática, IBAD).<sup>100</sup> Members of the Caparaó guerrilla movement were accusing these elites of controlling Brazil and using the country for their own personal benefits.

The last words on the flag, "Americanized, prostituted, and plundered," represented an outcry about the role and support of the United States to the military regime. Furthermore, the words "demoralized, prostituted, violated and dominated" had gendered meaning. They compared Brazil to a prostitute, suggesting the generals in power and the elites were serving as "pimps," selling the country and its resources to domestic and foreign private agents, especially the United States. This can be interpreted as Caparaó members' response to the regime's portrayal of communists as morally perverse.<sup>101</sup> As the officers in power suggested communists were depraved, the guerrilla movement accused coup leaders of immorality against its own nation and citizens.

Although the flag reflected members of Caparaó's analysis of the political scenario, most of the men I interviewed who opposed the coup expressed similar views on anti-interventionism

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<sup>100</sup> For more on the actions of IPES/IBAD in Brazil see René Armand Dreifuss, *1964, a Conquista do Estado: Ação Política, Poder e Golpe De Classe* (5a. ed., rev. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1987).

<sup>101</sup> Cowan, *Securing Sex*, 8.

and nationalism. In his interview Proença, for example, discussed the influence of IPES and IBAD in the implementation of the coup. He claimed these institutions were responsible for creating propaganda to manipulate the population into believing Brazil was under a real risk of becoming a communist nation, which raised support for military intervention.<sup>102</sup> Proença, Da Silva, Teixeira and others who never participated in the guerrilla movement criticized military rule for the same reasons members of Caparaó did.

One of the strongest sentiments that circulated among legalist officers who supported the policies of former president Getúlio Vargas (1930-45, 1951-54), including Proença and Da Silva, was an economic nationalism that rejected U.S. American influence in Brazil. This sentiment emphasized that the South American country should explore its own natural resources and revert the profits to its population. This idea was strongest during the Vargas' campaign to keep petroleum a public national enterprise during the beginning of the 1950s, the campaign "*O Petróleo é Nosso*."<sup>103</sup> Private multinational corporations pressured the Brazilian state to grant them exploration rights, but these "nationalist" groups fought to keep petroleum a national and state enterprise. Among the legalist officers who were expelled in 1964, many were influenced by this economic nationalism, and believed that the riches that were generated in Brazil should have stayed in the country. Revenues generated by the exploration of natural resources should have been reverted to the general population, instead of allowing international companies, especially U.S. American ones, to explore the wealth and send the profits to their headquarters. The words "Americanized, prostituted, and plundered" were a direct claim to how members of Caparaó thought the military leaders were prostituting Brazil to the interests of the U.S.

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<sup>102</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

<sup>103</sup> "The Oil is Ours." For more on the campaign and the idea that the oil extraction had to stay in control of the Brazilian state see Maria Augusta Tibiriçá Miranda, *O Petróleo é Nosso: A Luta Contra o "Entreguismo," Pelo Monopólio Estatal* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1983).

American Empire, which would benefit from military rule ransacking the South American country's resources. However, these words were also representative of sentiments shared by legalist officers who did not believe in the armed struggle.

Therefore, even though this flag intended to represent the beliefs of members of Caparaó, many officers who were never involved with guerrilla warfare shared the same ideals. Former officers would often express a belief that the U.S. interests in Brazil were central for the viability of the coup. Teixeira, for example, claimed that the main force that coordinated the military movement for the coup and the political struggle against president Goulart was the American Embassy.<sup>104</sup> Proença also expressed a similar belief, claiming that for the United States' imperial interests, it was not advantageous that a country of Brazil's size and potential implemented the reforms Goulart proposed. The Army captain believed the U.S. supported the military coup in Brazil because it wanted to prevent it from becoming a powerful economic and political force in South America.<sup>105</sup> Sergeant Almoré Zock Cavalheiro, who was also expelled from the Army in 1964, claimed that U.S. American officers had trained Brazilian military personnel and "brainwashed" officers at Academia Militar das Agulhas Negras—the largest school for combatant officers of the Brazilian Army—into thinking according to U.S. interests.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, even though members of the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement created this flag, it relates to the larger movement of military opposition to the dictatorship.

In addition to indicating the guiding principles of these officers' and soldiers' opposition to the dictatorship, this flag connects the fight of thousands of members of the forces to the context of the global Cold War, as the struggle against authoritarianism was part of a larger

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<sup>104</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 8.

<sup>105</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

<sup>106</sup> Almoré Zock Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

struggle that advocated for Brazilian autonomy and sovereignty. Non-interventionist officers and soldiers resisted a type of militarism, which was interventionist, anticommunist and authoritarian, and advocated for ideas that were aligned to what they understood as military honor. Upon being expelled and marginalized from the armed forces, these men did not reject the institution or their connection with it. On the contrary, they continued identifying with the military, and as expelled officers and soldiers, they developed strategies to resist the dictatorship and remove the armed forces from the government.

Not all expelled soldiers were conscious of the reasons that led to their expulsions, only the ones who became involved with movements of resistance against the dictatorship were. Nationalist officers and sergeants were aware that the circumstances of their struggle had changed. Before the coup they fought against an interventionist conservatism inside the military, which would suppress nationalist ideas inside the institution and would not allow sergeants to be elected for political office. After 1964, however, such conservatism consolidated its power inside the barracks and gained authority in national politics. The struggle of expelled soldiers who opposed military intervention, just like the fight of all civilians who resisted military rule during the period, was now to stop this military ideology from “disgracing,” “oppressing,” “militarizing,” “demoralizing,” “violating,” “silencing,” and “demeaning” the population inside and also outside the armed forces.

## **Conclusion**

The military coup altered the political landscape in Brazil revoking political mandates, suppressing members of political movements and unions and imprisoning their members. In addition, the military dictatorship instituted in 1964 also drastically transformed the environment

of the armed forces. Aiming to hinder opposition from within the military barracks, some of the first initiatives of officers who conspired against the Goulart government were to imprison and expel hundreds of servicemen from the Army, Navy and Air Force whom they believed could interfere with their plan and resist the coup.

These servicemen's encounters with the military regime show that their imprisonment and expulsion from the armed forces was a thought-out operation of military coup leaders to cleanse the institution from opposition. Officers, sergeants and soldiers were expelled because they were considered communists and military rank did not spare any of them. However, their captors treated them differently depending on military hierarchy, the year they were expelled, and even the color of their skin—I will examine this last element in chapter four. These rituals of expulsion show that although those labeled as communists were marginalized from the institution, those responsible for imprisoning and expelling members of the military respected a military and social hierarchy, where those on the top of the pyramid would be better treated than those on the bottom.

Expelled servicemen followed different life trajectories after expulsion. While some decided to follow a different career path and abstain from politics, others chose to actively oppose military rule. Nationalist officers were among the first to receive information about the coup and react. When they realized that interventionist officers had initiated the coup, many nationalists started to immediately plan a counter coup. Military opponents to the dictatorship, however, did not make a homogeneous group. They disagreed about the tactics they should employ to resist the military government, and they also disagreed ideologically. Most rejected an identification with the communist ideology, yet most of their ideas fell between the center and the left of the political spectrum.

Although the MNR and the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement failed, the emergence of these movements shows that officers and soldiers who opposed the coup were in the forefront of the resistance. A discourse analysis of these men's interviews shows certain nationalist ideas that marked their personal and military formation, such as an anti-imperialism and state-led economic development, united them and shaped their resistance in multiple ways. After the debacle of MNR and Caparaó, many the men who participated in these movements continued opposing the dictatorship, some joining other guerrilla movements. The next chapter will focus on another guerrilla movement that emerged after Caparaó's demise, the *Vanguardia Popular Revolucionária* (VPR), a movement comprised mostly of former sergeants that lasted until the beginning of the 1970s. While Caparaó was a rural guerrilla movement, VPR was formed mostly in an urban setting and later settled in a rural area. If Caparaó had a very short history, not being able to survive for six months, VPR endured a few years and was able to successfully implement revolutionary acts against the military regime.

### CHAPTER 3. OUSAR LUTAR, OUSAR VENCER: SERVICEMEN IN THE GUERRILLA MOVEMENT AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF REPRESSION, THE CASE OF VANGUARDA POPULAR REVOLUCIONÁRIA (1968-1974)

#### Introduction

The fight of expelled officers and soldiers against the dictatorship continued after the failure of the Nationalist Armed Resistance and the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement. The next battles of these servicemen against the regime would be marked by the historical context of the last years of the 1960s, an era of political mobilization around the world. From student protests in the United States, Senegal and France, to protests against the Olympics in Mexico, groups of diverse social backgrounds rose in demonstrations around the globe.<sup>1</sup> In Brazil, even with the regime's suppression of political mobilization, popular movements still took the streets in demonstrations against the government. One example was the student movement, which had one of their members killed by the police in one of their protests against the price and quality of the food at a university restaurant in 1968 in Rio de Janeiro. After Edson Luís de Lima Souto was killed, students organized demonstrations across the country against the violence of the military regime.<sup>2</sup>

With the intensification of the demonstrations, military authorities increased social control, and the first years of the 1970s marked the most violent era of military rule in Brazil. The Institutional Act number 5 (AI-5), issued by General Artur da Costa e Silva's government in

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<sup>1</sup> Elaine Carey, *Protests in the Streets: 1968 Across the Globe* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016).

<sup>2</sup> For a study about the student movement in Brazil during military rule see Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

December 1968, closed Congress, instituted a stricter National Security Law that allowed the government to detain anyone and strip them from their political rights, suspended habeas corpus in cases of political crimes, and outlawed political meetings, strikes and demonstrations.<sup>3</sup> After 1969 a peaceful protest against the government could be categorized as an act of terrorism. In contrast, the increase of state violence also motivated more regime opponents to resort to armed struggle.

This chapter focuses on military resistance to the regime in São Paulo during the governments of Costa e Silva and Emílio Garrastazu Médici, as it was in this state that a group of servicemen organized a movement of opposition to the dictatorship from within the Army. While Costa e Silva imposed AI-5 and set the tone for the state violence that would ensue, during Médici's government, which lasted between 1969 and 1974, the institutional act would be enforced. Médici's police forces violated more human rights than any other republican government in Brazil until then. The perceived calm in the country during the Médici years, and the absence of student marches, union pickets or rallies, was precisely due to the intense government censorship.<sup>4</sup> The violence of the Costa e Silva and Médici presidencies led many militants to disbelief in pacific resistance. If during the first four years of the dictatorship some of its opponents were still trying to resist the dictatorship peacefully, in the next years many militants started to believe this strategy had reached its limits. Opponents to military rule who were previously affiliated with the Communist Party in Brazil, for example, started to move away from the party as its leaders were against guerrilla tactics.

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<sup>3</sup> Presidência da República, Casa Civil, Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos. Ato Institucional nº 5. December 13, 1968. [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/ait/ait-05-68.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/ait/ait-05-68.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*, 106.

Between 1964 and 1968, a group of servicemen in the São Paulo Army who opposed the dictatorship but were able to stay under the regime's radar and escaped expulsion, continued their military careers and developed strategies to challenge the regime from inside the armed forces. They joined the resistance clandestinely while still in the Army and diverged resources from their regiments to the guerrilla movement. Right after the coup, this group started discussing ways to resist authoritarianism, but only in the end of 1967 they created their own organization and began engaging in violent acts to challenge the dictatorship, such as explosions of government and military buildings and armed robberies. Thus, by the time the regime issued AI-5, these servicemen who opposed the dictatorship had already been using guerrilla tactics, even killing of one member of the U.S. military stationed in Brazil. After 1968, however, as state violence increased, and the police captured many members of their organization, these servicemen felt forced to desert from the Army and change their resistance tactics.

At this moment, this group of officers and soldiers created the Revolutionary Popular Vanguard (*Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária*, VPR), which became one of the most important and successful armed movements against the regime. From 1968 to 1974 members of this clandestine organization resisted the military authorities taking up arms in the city and in the rural area of the state of São Paulo. Even though some students, intellectuals, and steel workers participated in the movement, the organization was mainly formed by low-ranking servicemen who had been expelled from the armed forces in 1964 or who would desert a few years later.<sup>5</sup> This chapter's main goal is to focus on the former officers and soldiers who created and joined the guerrilla. Therefore, I will examine the guerrilla's institutional history as it pertains to the

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<sup>5</sup> Wilma Antunes Maciel, *O Capitão Lamarca e a VPR: Repressão Judicial no Brasil* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2006), 24.

participation of the servicemen who joined it. The interviews of Darcy Rodrigues, José Araújo Nóbrega, and Carlos Roberto Pittoli, three Army sergeants who fought against the regime in its harshest years, heavily inform my analysis.

Just as the officers who took power believed they needed to protect the country against communism, members of the armed forces who resisted the regime also understood their role as protectors of the nation. The military identities of these opponents of the dictatorship heavily informed their resistance, as they believed the armed forces were a necessary institution that could, and should, fulfill their purpose to protect the Brazilian population and the country's resources. An ideal military "honor" encouraged them to fight to restore the armed forces to its "rightful place," as they believed the enforcers of military rule had dishonored the military and corrupted it. While expressing contempt for the regime, these men advocated for the existence of the armed forces as an institution and believed their mission was to take it back from the ones who had perverted it. Their military identities also informed the tactics they employed in the struggle. Since they had been trained in war tactics in the Army, they applied this training in the fight against the regime.

While the first sections of this chapter focus on the historical context, including document analysis and former sergeants accounts of historical events, the last two sections have a specific focus on memory and trauma. I examine how Rodrigues, Nóbrega and Pittoli remember their colleagues, former servicemen who joined the VPR but did not survive the years of military rule. Using the examples of three former members of the military who were killed during the era, Carlos Zanirato, Carlos Lamarca and Onofre Pinto, I show that the lack of investigation and punishment of the human right violations the dictatorship committed informed the ways in which the interviewees remember these figures. For example, while Rodrigues, Nóbrega and Pittoli

remember Lamarca in very “tangible” ways as a revolutionary hero, their memory about Onofre Pinto is “hazier”, in the sense that they seem not to want to talk about him. I argue that there are several aspects of each one of these deaths that explain these reactions. The main, however, seems to be that no one knew what had happened with Pinto for twenty years, and after the truth came to light, the men responsible for his death were not punished or held accountable. The memorialization of guerrilla movement members, or lack thereof, seem to have highly influenced the ways other members of the movement remembered this history.

### **Resistance from Within: The Armed Forces after the Coup**

In April 1964, while many members of the military were being expelled from the armed forces for subversion, some servicemen who did not support the coup were able to continue their military careers. Some officers, albeit being favorable to the Goulart government, decided to stay quiet and perform their services in the armed forces to avoid being expelled. Furthermore, unlike servicemen in Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, and Porto Alegre, who had rallied for changes in military laws and later against the military coup, officers and soldiers serving in São Paulo had conducted fewer and smaller mobilizations.<sup>6</sup> Thus, some of the servicemen who opposed the coup, but who had not publicly resisted it, were probably spared because regime authorities did not notice their revolutionary leanings. In addition, some lower-ranking officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers were also spared because even though they had been involved in political debates before the coup, the personal relationships they formed inside the armed forces spared them from expulsion. Some of them were close to superior officers who considered them valuable to the Army and respectable men, who decided to vouch for them. This was the case of sergeant José

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<sup>6</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

Araújo Nóbrega, for example, who claims his superior officers were fond of him and liked his attitude as a sergeant. When high ranking officers from his regiment asked for his expulsion, his commanding officer Colonel Eugênio Pinto Paca transferred him to another military unit, a recruiting center in São Paulo's downtown, and that was enough to spare him from imprisonment and expulsion in the wake of the coup.<sup>7</sup>

In the first days after the coup, sergeant Darcy Rodrigues was imprisoned at the ship *Raúl Soares*, anchored in São Paulo's shore, where he stayed for about two months. After an investigation the Army allowed him to return to military service.<sup>8</sup> Although the motive for his release is not clear, he seems to believe he was able to convince the colonel who interrogated him that he was not a communist. When interrogating him in the ship, the colonel asked Rodrigues about mistakes he committed in the Army. Rodrigues believes the officer was trying to pressure him to talk about his political involvement with leftist movements. However, instead of discussing political views and actions, the sergeant confessed to committing bureaucratic mistakes that concerned sergeants' code of conduct, such as getting married before completing five years of service and getting angry in certain situations. Instead of lying about his personal political convictions, he evaded the interrogator's questions or answered them in a different way to not incriminate himself. After being interrogated he was released, and this led Rodrigues to believe his responses "saved" him.

A more plausible explanation for why he was not indicted in 1964 is that Rodrigues was not involved with the movement of sergeants discussed in chapter one. Most likely, he was captured in 1964 for his participation in a protest against the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*.

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<sup>7</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Antonio Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy, Lugar Tenente de Lamarca* (Bauru: Centro de Estudos Sociais, Políticos e de Preservação da História, 2003), 49.

As previously discussed, the newspaper had published an article claiming the Soviet Union was manipulating sergeants who participated in the movement of the sergeants.<sup>9</sup> Rodrigues' participation in this protest, which led to his incarceration for ten days right after the protest, was most likely what caused his incarceration for two months in 1964. Participation in the protest alone must have not been a serious enough reason for his expulsion from the forces in 1964, and after two months in prison Rodrigues was freed and returned to military service.<sup>10</sup> When he returned to military service, however, other servicemen became suspicious of him and his likely revolutionary tendencies. Carlos Roberto Pittoli, who would become a sergeant only in 1966, claims that when he arrived at Quitaúna to serve as a conscript soldier, he was advised to stay away from Rodrigues as he had just been released from prison.<sup>11</sup>

Carlos Lamarca, who became one of the most well-known revolutionary leaders in Brazil during the Médici era, was an officer at Quitaúna at the time of the coup. Even though he was a leftist and supporter of the legality movement among officers in 1964, both the documents from the intelligence agencies and the personal accounts of those who knew him seem to indicate he kept his political views to himself during the first four years of military rule. Reports from the military intelligence about him only start in 1969, after he deserted from the Army—an event I will examine in the next pages. The public relations office from the Army released a note to the press in 1971 stating that before 1969 the armed forces were not aware of Lamarca's "communist" leaning. According to this note, nothing appeared to indicate that the officer was a "communist traitor infiltrated in the military."<sup>12</sup> In 1964, when he was serving the Army in Porto Alegre he aided the escape of captain Alfredo Ribeiro Daudt from prison, yet he was able to talk

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<sup>9</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 37.

<sup>10</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> Carlos Roberto Pittoli, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Vida Progressiva de Lamarca, BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0023, 13.

himself out of being investigated by pledging his loyalty to military authorities. Other accounts seem to confirm that Lamarca was never investigated during the first years of military rule because he did not publicly oppose the government and continued honoring his obligations as an officer. According to some, Lamarca was “exemplary” and “rigorous” in the military service; he was also an excellent shooter, winning internal championships in his 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in São Paulo and representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> military region in a national championship. And despite opposing the dictatorship, he continued following his duties in the Army.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, even though he did not criticize the government publicly during its first years, he opposed military authoritarianism from its start. Since the first political crises of the 1960s, which started with the resignation of president Jânio Quadros in 1961, Lamarca started meeting with members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment who were favorable to leftist ideas to discuss Brazil’s social and political problems, and to debate possible solutions.

As the previous chapter has shown, while union members, students, politicians and other civilians started to build movements of resistance against the dictatorship, members of the military also reacted. Officers and soldiers who continued their military careers after the coup, but who were against the military intervention, also mobilized inside the military barracks. Several members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Quitaúna, São Paulo, had been already meeting before the coup in a clandestine study group to discuss Brazil’s social, economic and political issues, and they continued meeting afterwards.<sup>14</sup> This group’s motivations to meet before and after the coup were twofold. On one hand, some soldiers and officers in São Paulo were concerned about inequality and injustice in Brazil and wanted to discuss possible solutions to

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<sup>13</sup> Emiliano José and Oldack Miranda, *Lamarca, o Capitão da Guerrilha*. 8th ed. (São Paulo: Editora Global, 1984), 40.

<sup>14</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

these problems. In José Nóbrega's words, while some people were imprisoned for stealing a bag of beans, others who stole millions would not face any consequences.<sup>15</sup> He also states, "the goal, in the long term, was [to build] a homeland for all Brazilians, where there would be no hunger, inequality, illiteracy, corruption, unemployment... The overthrow of the dictatorship, however, was our immediate goal."<sup>16</sup> And although some servicemen in those study groups were more educated on Marxist theory and were connected to the Communist Party, many did not know much about communism and did not identify as communists, but still believed in social justice and in the democratic process for Brazil.<sup>17</sup> Nóbrega, for example, says that his goal was to build a society where social justice would be above all else, but that he was not a communist.<sup>18</sup> He claims that "if there was Cuban influence [in the movement], it was only in the method of struggle, or in the use of the irregular warfare."<sup>19</sup> Darcy Rodrigues and many other sergeants were also motivated by the issues of social injustice in Brazil. When Rodrigues arrived in Quitaúna in 1961, Lamarca approached him and invited him to his study group. In the next years, Darcy Rodrigues started to develop relationships with other sergeants in his regiment and realized that several of them had a leftist view on Brazil's social problems. These sergeants also created a group to discuss solutions to some of the issues the sergeants were facing inside the Army, and also larger national problems, which would later become the movement of the sergeants in São Paulo.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 71.

<sup>17</sup> In his interview, Nóbrega told me that no one he knew who were expelled from the armed forces in 1964 was a communist. He said, "Houve uma grande caça às bruxas, aos oficiais inclusive de alta patente, entendeu, não foi só sargento não, muita gente. Ninguém era comunista, entende? Ninguém era comunista nem nada." José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 52.

On the other hand, as the political order changed after 1964 and popular political participation decreased, the servicemen who opposed the regime started to discuss how they would approach Brazil's social problems in light of this new political environment. After being imprisoned in 1964, upon returning to Quitaúna, Rodrigues resumed his political activities inside the barracks. The clandestine study group he participated in with Lamarca and others continued after the coup. One of the most important actions this group was the politicization of troops. Slowly, Rodrigues and other sergeants drew several soldiers near them who decided to become part of the movement, such as soldiers José Mariane, Carlos Zanirato, Eduardo Leite (later known for his codename, Bacuri) and Pittoli. When the leftist sergeants noticed that certain soldiers were more vocal or sympathetic to issues of social justice, they invited them to the meetings. This allowed them to recruit a few soldiers to the resistance movement that started to form after the coup.

Shortly after the coup, as part of an effort to transform the debates they were having inside the barracks into action some of the servicemen in São Paulo, which included Nóbrega and Rodrigues, joined the MNR—discussed in chapter two. They continued meeting clandestinely to discuss Brazil's social problems and the resistance to military rule, yet now they were also connected to a larger movement of opposition through the MNR. In addition to the exiles in Uruguay, they were also meeting with sergeants who were expelled from the forces but kept living in Brazil. They participated in Brizola's plans to occupy Rio Grande do Sul with military troops but realized that the movement MNR was disorganized and its chances of succeeding were low. Furthermore, Rodrigues claimed Brizola was not committed enough to the movement.<sup>21</sup> When professor Bayard de Maria Boiteaux, who was the MNR's emissary from

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<sup>21</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, "Entrevista para O CAASO", 20-C-44-11033.

Uruguay, was captured in 1967 the movement of servicemen in São Paulo decided to become independent.<sup>22</sup> Some men from the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and others who were operating in São Paulo, both from other regiments and who had been expelled and were hiding from the police, started to discuss the creation of their own movement. They decided to finally separate from Brizola and the MNR in July 1967.<sup>23</sup>

Some of the groups who opposed military rule in Brazil slowly started to realize that with the intensification of state violence it became more difficult to find strategies to pacifically influence Brazilian politics. In October 1966, the military authorities expelled eight deputies from congress, releasing them from their official posts, and closed congress for a month. Pedro Lobo, a former sergeant in São Paulo who was expelled in 1964, said that by 1966 they knew that they would not bring about a revolution through elections. He stated, “If the dictatorship closed Congress, ripped out the Constitution, prohibited the people to choose the president, governors and capital mayors, how would I be under the illusion that this same dictatorship would allow me to elect someone?”<sup>24</sup> According to him that was when his and other groups he was in contact with started realizing that they would need to resort to armed insurgency. Nevertheless, this was not the consensus among the left in Brazil. The Brazilian Communist Party, and especially its leader Luiz Carlos Prestes, did not agree with guerrilla tactics, but believed in educating the population to take the streets in protest.<sup>25</sup>

This group in São Paulo first called their movement the Organização, or the Organization. The movement was composed predominantly by former servicemen, and all of

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<sup>22</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> João Roberto Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos: Os Anos de Chumbo na Trajetória de um Guerrilheiro Urbano* (São Paulo: Ava Editorial, 2010), 141.

<sup>24</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 127.

<sup>25</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 128.

their resources were acquired from the incomes of the members who still held employment. Since most of them were living clandestinely and were not employed or worked on informal jobs, the resources were scarce and, at first, they only had a few guns that were sent from Cuba. The Organization had a rigid structure and was disciplined, trait that was inherited from the members' military training and from the structure of the Communist Party.<sup>26</sup> Although this movement started in 1966 independently from the MRN, it was only in 1968 that it was structured into the Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária.

### **The Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária**

The VPR was created by two main activist groups, former members of the Revolutionary Marxist Political Labor Organization (Organização Revolucionária Marxista Política Operária, POLOP) and military officers and soldiers who were still in active duty and others who had been expelled.<sup>27</sup> Former members of the POLOP, who were mostly students and intellectuals, ruptured with the organization for ideological conflicts, claiming it had taken a reformist and pacifist position with regards to capitalism and authoritarianism. These individuals left the POLOP and joined forces with expelled members of the military who had been acting together with the MNR, and with members of the military who were still in active duty in the Army in São Paulo. The servicemen who composed VPR also criticized POLOP for its approximation with the PCB (Brazilian Communist Party), claiming it had brought about very few results to the formation of militants, mostly a few courses on Marxist theory but very little practical action against the

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<sup>26</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 141, 144.

<sup>27</sup> Although members of the organization say it was founded in the last months of 1967, state documents mark the founding date of VPR in March 1968. APESP, Polícia Política, Delegacia Especializada de Ordem Social, "Organizações Subversivo-Terroristas," 50-Z-30-1955.

government.<sup>28</sup>

One of the most important events that increased the radicalization of servicemen who built the VPR was the imposition of the Institutional Act number 5.<sup>29</sup> The AI-5 made all opposition to military rule illegal and created a vacuum for dissent where the armed movement would insert itself.<sup>30</sup> As the authoritarian regime stripped Brazilian citizens from legal and civil rights that were guaranteed by the constitution, the members of the Organização started to believe they would need to resort to more violent forms of resistance. If the regime classified all organizations that opposed the dictatorship as a terrorist group, the tactics they chose for resistance did not matter any longer. If any group opposing the dictatorship would be considered illegal, they would choose the resistance strategy which they believed was the most effective in fighting the regime: the guerrilla warfare.

Some servicemen who served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (RI) were founding members of the VPR but continued serving the Army for over one year after the creation of the organization. During the first year after the creation of VPR, the movement formed *aparelhos*—safe houses the militants occupied that served as a space for meetings and organizing, but that could also serve to lodge and hide resistance members who were living clandestinely—and started to educate their own members and plan the first actions of the urban guerrilla. Members of the VPR started stealing weapons and automobiles, and robbing banks to gather resources. In addition, the revolutionaries also started to attack certain locations they considered important to the regime as a way to insult the officers in power and “create propaganda for the revolutionary

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<sup>28</sup> Brasil Nunca Mais, Arquidiocese de São Paulo, Tomo 3, Perfil dos atingidos, Petrópolis: Vozes, 1988, 57. <http://www.docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=BibliotBNM&PagFis=4624&Pesq>

<sup>29</sup> Brasil Nunca Mais, Arquidiocese de São Paulo, Tomo 3, Perfil dos atingidos, Petrópolis: Vozes, 1988, 57. <http://www.docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=BibliotBNM&PagFis=4624&Pesq>

<sup>30</sup> Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule*, 84.

cause.”<sup>31</sup> In the end of 1968, influenced by Darcy Rodrigues, Carlos Lamarca decided to join the VPR, and both of them started to steal weapons from the 4<sup>th</sup> RI to arm their organization.<sup>32</sup>

Rodrigues would use his position as the sergeant in charge for the armory’s accounting to change documents and increase the expenditures of the Army with ammunition for training, so no one would notice that the weapons were disappearing.<sup>33</sup>

Resisting the regime from within the Army, however, was not sustainable in the long term. As the intelligence agencies started to discover resistance cells, it became increasingly dangerous for servicemen who opposed the regime to continue their military careers, and many of these servicemen started to think about deserting. Nevertheless, many of the members within the organization did not want to lose their assets inside the military. Furthermore, VPR members who were not in the Army thought that if their military associates deserted from the institution, once the government realized a group of servicemen spent years in the Army while conducting actions against the government, the regime would increase its violence against movements of resistance. Due to these conflicting ideas, the movement did not establish a thoughtful plan for these officers and soldiers to desert.

When in January 1969, the police captured a few members of the VPR, these servicemen realized the Army would find out about them, and they had to desert from the institution suddenly. The VPR was planning a large-scale action for January 26, 1969, to break into the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and steal 500 rifles and 60 automatic rifles.<sup>34</sup> In order to do so, the militants needed to transport other non-military members of the VPR inside the military regiment. Their plan would be to paint a truck olive-green, disguise it as a military vehicle, and deceive other

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<sup>31</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 158.

<sup>32</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Auto de Qualificação e Interrogatório, Onofre Pinto,” 30-Z-160-1195.

<sup>33</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 67.

<sup>34</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 62.

servicemen in the regiment into letting them enter the regiment. For this purpose, the VPR secured a location at an isolated region close to São Paulo to paint the truck.<sup>35</sup> Pedro Lobo, admitted that the group's first mistake was to cover the truck with a bamboo structure that made it look like a circus tent. Instead of drawing attention away from what they were doing, it only made people curious. A child who lived in the neighborhood approached the tent in curiosity but was brusquely cast out of the property. The child told his mother about the incident, and she approached the police claiming that the farm had become a lair of smugglers. A few hours later the police arrived in the farm and captured four VPR militants.<sup>36</sup> José Nóbrega was not there at the time of the arrests, and when he arrived at the site later in the day he was able to escape imprisonment convincing the police that he was a salesperson.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, the VPR members who were sent to jail accepted the accusation of being smugglers in order to make the police believe they were not revolutionaries. They were able to trick the police into believing that story for three days.<sup>38</sup>

The arrests worried the members of the VPR, as, under interrogation, the militants who were captured could reveal every detail of how the organization operated and who were the VPR operatives inside the Army, which would destroy their movement. Thus, after discovering the police had ruined their plan, the VPR members who were still serving the Army decided on a quick desertion plan. Nevertheless, instead of just leaving the Army, on January 25 they executed part of the plan they had scheduled for the 26<sup>th</sup>. Lamarca entered the 4<sup>th</sup> RI driving his own van and had his soldiers load it with 63 rifles, 3 automatic gun machines, one pistol, and ammunition. When leaving the barracks, the sergeants posted on the gates assumed he was

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<sup>35</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>36</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 10.

<sup>37</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 13.

<sup>38</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 68.

leaving for a shooting training. No one at the 4<sup>th</sup> RI who saw Lamarca take the weapons suspected he was deserting from the Army, and he drove away with no problem.<sup>39</sup>

The police operation that discovered VPR members painting the truck transformed the ways the organization functioned. After a few hours interrogating the combatants they had captured, the police started suspecting they were involved in a leftist organization and turned them in to the Department of Political and Social Order (DOPS) of São Paulo, the state's institution responsible for investigating political crimes. After torturing the militants for hours, police agents were able to "break" Hermes Camargo Batista, who told the authorities about the existence of VPR and how it operated.<sup>40</sup> Batista revealed organization secrets that ranged from the names and locations of members of resistance movements to how much ammunition the leftist servicemen were able to take from the Army.<sup>41</sup> He also told the interrogators about the movement's ideology and mission, including that he and his colleagues aimed to get support from both the urban and rural working class, that it relied on the guerrilla war, and that it had connections with other guerrillas across Latin America. Lastly, Batista gave the names of some of VPR members, including Sergeant Carlos Roberto Pittoli.

Pittoli entered the Army as a conscript soldier in 1965, and he was assigned to the Fourth RI in Quitaúna. After a few weeks in the Army he saw Darcy Rodrigues and recognized him, as they knew each other from their shared hometown, Avaí. Rodrigues recruited him to participate in his resistance meetings, and when VPR was formed, Pittoli joined it. As a conscripted soldier, Pittoli claimed he had no intentions to stay in the Army when he first arrived in the regiment. The servicemen who were also members of the resistance movement, however, convinced him to

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<sup>39</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 70.

<sup>40</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Delegacia Especializada de Ordem Social, "Organizações Subversivo-Terroristas," 50-Z-30-1954.

<sup>41</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Departamento de Ordem Política e Social, 30-Z-163-100.

take the exam to enter the school for sergeants of the Army, which he did. Differently from most of the servicemen studied in this dissertation, Pittoli's decision to become a sergeant was strategic. He served as an infiltrator of the resistance inside the armed forces from the beginning of his military career. In 1966, when he graduated as sergeant, Pittoli was assigned a post at the Army's Police, which was one of the epicenters of imprisonment and torture of political prisoners in São Paulo.<sup>42</sup> He stayed at this regiment for about three years, until VPR members were imprisoned and Batista revealed to the police that Pittoli was, in truth, a subversive. Even though Hermes did not have much information about Pittoli and his role in the movement, as they did not know each other, Pittoli was immediately imprisoned.

According to Rodrigues, Batista's deal with the police became a model for other militants, who also decided to reveal important secrets about the resistance movements in Brazil.<sup>43</sup> Hermes was not the only one to "break." Pedro Lobo, who was another one of the four men painting the truck who was imprisoned, claims that he and the three VPR members who had been captured tried to hold information for as long as they could. When torture became unbearable, in order to "rest," they would give the authorities a fake address, claiming it was an *aparelho*. When the police agents discovered such address was a wasteland, they resumed the interrogations, and the militants were not able to resist after a few days. On January 27, for example, Pedro Lobo told his interrogators that Lamarca came up with the idea to paint the truck in olive-green to transport members of VPR inside the regiment.<sup>44</sup>

After these events, most of the members of VPR who were still serving the Army deserted from the institution. When Lamarca robbed the 4<sup>th</sup> RI and deserted, Darcy Rodrigues

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<sup>42</sup> Carlos Roberto Pittoli, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Antonio Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 68.

<sup>44</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Secretaria da Segurança Pública, "Carlos Lamarca," 52-Z-0-2433, 2.

and the soldiers Carlos Roberto Zanirato, José Mariane Ferreira Alves and Celso Lugaretti followed him.<sup>45</sup> Nóbrega also left his post at the Federal Police on the same occasion, yet he was not initially considered a deserter because he was on medical leave and his military unit failed to report he had not returned to service.<sup>46</sup> Getting ready for a clandestine life as wanted members of the guerilla movement, both Lamarca and Rodrigues met in the airport in São Paulo to send their families away from Brazil. They had decided to send their wives and children to Cuba in order to protect them from the police, which could capture and use them as a way to get to the Army deserters.<sup>47</sup> The “newest former” members of the military started to prepare for the storm they suspected would come from the dictatorship’s police force.<sup>48</sup>

### **Life as Wanted Members of the Guerrilla Movement**

When these servicemen abandoned the Army in 1969, the regime found out about their activities inside the 4<sup>th</sup> RI, and the deserting officers and soldiers, especially Lamarca, became some of the most wanted “terrorists” in Brazil.<sup>49</sup> Newspapers often printed their photographs to report them as wanted by the police and ask readers for information on them. Folha da Manhã published pictures of Lamarca, Rodrigues, and soldiers Mariane and Zanirato on May 15, 1969. Onofre Pinto and José Araújo Nóbrega appeared in the same article, described as responsible for a few

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<sup>45</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Delegacia Especializada de Ordem Social, “Organizações Subversivo-Terroristas,” 50-Z-30-1954.

<sup>46</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 75.

<sup>48</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 75.

<sup>49</sup> Mariguella was the leader and founder of another resistance movement in Brazil called the Ação Libertadora Nacional, ALN. For more on Mariguella see, Mário Magalhães, *Mariguella: O Guerrilheiro que Incendiou o Mundo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012); and Cristiane Nova and Jorge Nóvoa, *Carlos Marighella: O Homem por Trás do Mito* (São Paulo: UNESP, 1999).

bank and gun robberies, and some explosions.<sup>50</sup> The government was able to capture many members of the VPR, which weakened the movement, and the ones who were not in prison had to restructure the organization. In June, then, VPR and members of revolutionary movement COLINA (Comando de Libertação Nacional), who were also enduring losses of members and resources due to the state investigations, gathered forces, uniting the organizations and creating the Armed Revolutionary Vanguard (Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária—Palmares, VAR-Palmares.)<sup>51</sup>

Throughout 1969 the members of the former VPR and new VAR-Palmares continued using similar guerrilla tactics they had been using throughout 1968 in the city, robbing banks and cars to gather resources for the organization. One of the most emblematic actions, or expropriations—as the revolutionaries called these actions—Nóbrega and Rodrigues organized was the robbery of governor Adhemar de Barros's safe. The group received information that the former governor of São Paulo, who had just passed, had left a substantial amount of money hidden in a safe in his mistress' house in Rio de Janeiro, and 13 members of the movement headed from São Paulo to Rio in July with a plan to rob the safe.<sup>52</sup> Pedro Lobo claims that many people knew that the governor was corrupt and took bribes. VAR-Palmares believed, therefore, that the safe contained some of this corrupted dirty money.

The members of the organization planned to arrive in the house where the safe was hidden with an order to search and seize subversive documents, tricking house workers into believing they were the federal police, which would allow them to enter the house. Nóbrega tells

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<sup>50</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Folha da Manhã, 15 maio 1969. “DOPS e DPF procuram 20 suspeitos de terrorismo em São Paulo,” 30-Z-160-626.

<sup>51</sup> Brasil Nunca Mais, Arquidiocese de São Paulo, Tomo 3, Perfil dos atingidos, Petrópolis: Vozes, 1988, 63. <http://www.docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=BibliotBNM&PagFis=4624&Pesq>

<sup>52</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 272.

that since he had worked for the federal police before leaving the Army, he knew how these operations functioned. He claims that he and the members of VPR and then VAR-Palmares always attempted to conduct operations pacifically, not to hurt anyone, as much as they could. In this case, instead of storming into the house threatening to hurt people if they did not cooperate, they tricked people working in the house into letting the militants in, and once they were in they calmly explained what they were doing and handcuffed the house employees inside.<sup>53</sup> The operation went as they planned. Nóbrega identified himself as the lead police officer in the investigation and was allowed to enter the house. The operation was successful, and they were able to steal the safe. For their surprise, when they opened the safe, it contained more money than they had anticipated: about 2.5 million dollars.<sup>54</sup>

Even though they were conducting successful operations together, the different, and often conflicting, ideas civilians and former servicemen brought to VAR-Palmares led to many disagreements. The second half of 1969 started with conflicts from the two groups in the movement, as while former members of the military such as Lamarca and Rodrigues wanted to form a rural guerrilla movement, the civilians in the movement believed the group had to raise awareness for the revolutionary war in the city and take a step back from the armed struggle.<sup>55</sup> The former servicemen advocated for the rural guerrilla movement as a way get closer to the Brazilian population in the countryside and educate them about why the resistance movements conducted certain actions the media classified as terrorist attacks.<sup>56</sup> Nóbrega claims that the

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<sup>53</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>54</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 274.

<sup>55</sup> The idea was not to completely abandon the armed fight, but not focus so much on the armed operations in order to focus on educating the population about the politics of the resistance movements. Brasil Nunca Mais, Arquidiocese de São Paulo, Tomo 3, Perfil dos atingidos, Petrópolis: Vozes, 1988, 63. <http://www.docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=BibliotBNM&PagFis=4624&Pesq>

<sup>56</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 120.

civilian members of VAR-Palmares aimed to publicize the revolution through “petty actions,” such as robbing meat trucks and distributing the food in poor neighborhoods. He considered those actions dishonest and thought they would not bring true engagement from the population.<sup>57</sup> Rodrigues, however, reflecting about these conflicts years later, claims that the disagreements took place because the former members of the military, including himself, were politically immature and simply decided to leave the group instead of working through their tactical disagreements.<sup>58</sup>

After only a couple of months of collaboration, some former servicemen from VPR, including Lamarca, Rodrigues and Nóbrega, decided to break with VAR-Palmares and reconstruct the VPR. Even though their alliance with former COLINA members in VAR-Palmares had not been fruitful, the former servicemen refused to abandon the armed struggle. As Army men, all the training they had received—aside from some informal readings of Marxists works, including *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*—was military. These men believed that in order to win against a military power—as was the regime—they would have to use of military tactics, and guerrilla warfare. The sentence “*ousar lutar, ousar vencer*”, or “dare to fight, dare to win,” expression Lamarca used when signing letters he sent to other members of the revolutionary movement, was a literal call to arms, specifically to the guerrilla warfare.<sup>59</sup>

### **Military Identity among Purged Servicemen**

The oral histories I conducted with Rodrigues, Nóbrega and Pittoli show that a military mindset continued being integral to how these men self-identified after leaving the armed forces. The

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<sup>57</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>58</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 121.

<sup>59</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Secretaria da Segurança Pública, 30-Z-160-9603.

conditions that led these servicemen to desert are key to understanding why they continued identifying as military men, as they did not leave the Army for disliking military service, or for being critical about the existence of the institution. These servicemen were pushed out of the armed forces because they disagreed with what the institution had become. Military members of VPR fought against the generals who, they believed, had transformed the armed forces into an institution that protected the military government. While many members from the MNR and the Caparaó Guerrilla movements were expelled from the military before they had the chance to oppose the military regime as officers and soldiers, the men who created VPR decided to use their positions inside the military to resist against the regime. Nevertheless, neither the ones who were expelled, nor those who deserted the Army, opposed the military as an institution. They opposed the military government. Even though the military members of MNR, Caparaó and VPR had different trajectories, the mission of returning the armed forces to its “rightful” place, and removing military officers from government, connected them. Even though members of the VPR decided to leave the Army, they still identified as military men. When joining the resistance movement, these men trusted that their war was against what the armed forces had become, not against the armed forces as an institution.

During my interview with former sergeant Darcy Rodrigues, he spent an hour talking about his view on the modern history of the Brazilian armed forces. His goal was to clarify how the ideology leftist servicemen fought against in 1964 was born when Brazil became a Republic in the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>60</sup> One of the most important events in military history Rodrigues highlighted was the Lieutenants’ Movement, briefly examined in chapter one. He

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<sup>60</sup> In his words, “é muito importante isso que eu tô falando pra você ver onde nasce a ideologia... na qual eu sempre fui contra dentro das forças armadas.” Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

claims that during this movement of junior officers, the ideology that considered the armed forces an “exceptional” force started to become prevalent in the armed forces. This ideology led many officers to believe they could intervene in politics whenever they felt civilians were not being able to manage a crisis. Many of the *tenentistas* of 1924, such as Olympio Mourão Filho and Juarez Távora, became coup leaders in 1964. By focusing on the Lieutenants’ Movement history for one hour of his interview, Rodrigues chose to contextualize his own life’s trajectory using the history of the armed forces in Brazil. This shows how much his history with the military continued being an important aspect of how he identified himself. Even though he was seventy-five years old in 2017 and he only actively served the Army for nine years, he continued identifying as a sergeant. Instead of telling his life story from the perspective of a revolutionary, or merely an opponent to military rule in case he did not want to be remembered as a member of the guerrilla movement, during most of the interview he described himself as a member of the military. He also discussed *tenentismo* to highlight where the ideology he identified with emerged. Luiz Carlos Prestes, who was a *tenentista* in 1922, ruptured with the movement and created his own arm of the revolt called the *Coluna Prestes*, before joining the Communist Party in Brazil in the 1930s.<sup>61</sup> Prestes, a former military officer, was one of Rodrigues’ main influences.

In his interview Rodrigues also highlighted very clearly his favorable position on the armed forces in Brazil, repeatedly expressing how he and other colleagues from the resistance movements “loved” the Army.<sup>62</sup> He claims that when military rule ended, a friend of his—who

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<sup>61</sup> Daniel Aarão Reis, *Luís Carlos Prestes: Um Revolucionário entre Dois Mundos* (São Paulo: Editora Schwarcz S.A., 2014); Anita Leocádia Prestes, *Tenentismo Pós-30: Continuidade ou Ruptura* (Rio de Janeiro: Consequência Editora, 2014).

<sup>62</sup> In Portuguese, Darcy used the term “*adorava*.” He said, “o Lamarca também adorava o exército... o Apolônio de Carvalho [another former military] também adorava o exército... e, pô, foi só cadete, ele foi expulso do exército como cadete.” The verb “adorar” can mean to love, adore, worship. On my

believed Rodrigues left the Army because he disagreed with how the institution functioned—told him he had been always right for believing that the Army was not an institution that accomplished its purpose. The former sergeant denied ever believing or stating that, and assured that he always trusted only two institutions were worthy of respect in Brazil, and one of them was the armed forces – the other was the clergy.<sup>63</sup> Thus, for him the Army was not inherently flawed as an institution. Some individuals had made “bad decisions,” and had a “bad influence” on the armed forces.<sup>64</sup> Thus, although Rodrigues was very critical about the kind of institution the armed forces had become, his goal as a member of VPR was not to destroy it but take it from the hands of the interventionist officers who had taken power in 1964.

As Rodrigues’ case reveals, military identity was an integral part of how some of the former servicemen I interviewed in São Paulo identified themselves. In addition to asserting their role in history as members of the Brazilian military and identifying with important figures who had served in the armed forces nationally, such as Prestes, they also highlighted the importance of international military figures in their movement in Brazil. While Rodrigues highlighted the importance of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the imaginary of the militants from VPR, Nóbrega remembered how they would study and seek inspiration in the fighting of military officers from other countries, such as Dominican Republic officer Caamaño Denó. Rodrigues first heard about Gamal Abdel Nasser through his grandfather, and he claims the Egyptian leader became a great

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understanding, the translation that fits best to how he described the Army, is to love. Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>63</sup> “... Ele inexplicavelmente falou o seguinte pra mim, ‘você que tinha razão, o exército realmente não cumpre a sua finalidade.’ Eu falei, ‘não, calma, eu nunca falei isso. Pelo contrário, pra mim existe duas instituições no país dignas de respeito, as forças armadas e o clero. São os dois setores da sociedade mais organizados.’ Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>64</sup> “Se o exército sofreu influência de alguns equivocados, eu não posso absolutamente achar que o exército tá errado. O que tá errado são os elementos que assumiram posturas equivocadas.” Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

influence for the sergeant movement in São Paulo during the 1960s. As a lieutenant colonel in the Army, Nasser fought to liberate Egypt from the rule of the British Empire. From 1938, when he became a commissioned an Army officer, to Egypt's independence in 1952, Nasser organized clandestine opposition movements, which culminated in the Free Officers Movement. The Free Officers tactics to liberate Egypt from colonial rule was to operate clandestinely from within the armed forces without being detected. The movement of the Free Officers activated the revolution, conquered independence from the British, and Nasser assumed the presidency from 1956 until 1970.<sup>65</sup>

The sergeants in Brazil saw Nasser's case as a model for their own activism in the resistance movement in Brazil, and even used his name when creating their own codenames at VPR. Rodrigues claims that after he was imprisoned for the first time in 1964 and started to plan resistance actions against the regime, members of the movement decided to start using codenames. He claimed that while Onofre Pinto chose the codename "Abdel," another sergeant chose "Gamal," and Rodrigues chose "Nasser."<sup>66</sup> This identification with Nasser shows how important it was for the former members of the military who joined VPR to take acclaimed honorable military men as models. While members of other resistance movements in Brazil sought an identification with leaders such as Ernesto Che Guevara, former officers and soldiers who opposed the dictatorship identified more closely with military leaders who they saw as "honorable" and "successful" in their fight against an oppressive state force.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement: Egypt's Free Officers and the July Revolution* (New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2016).

<sup>66</sup> Darcy: "E eu me lembro que, que, que o nome do Onofre era Abdel". Interviewer: "Abdel?" Darcy: "É, por causa do Nasser, Abdel Nasser né. Gamal Abdel Nasser. Aí o do Lubé era Gamal, aí eu falei, 'pô, então me põe Nasser né'. Então ficou os três, 'Gamal Abdel Nasser'. Então essa influência realmente existia." Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>67</sup> On the student movement's identification with Ernesto Che Guevara, see Langland, *Speaking of Flowers*, 62.

Similarly, Nóbrega stressed the influence of Francisco Alberto Caamaño Deñó to the servicemen from VPR. Officer Caamaño Deñó fought against the United States invasion in the Dominican Republic in 1965. Like Nasser, Caamaño Deñó also organized a resistance movement within the armed forces.<sup>68</sup> Nóbrega claimed that Deñó was a symbol to the servicemen in the resistance movement in Brazil because of his role of leadership in the Army. In addition, he compared Caamaño Deñó's role in the Dominican Republic with Lamarca's in Brazil, saying the Brazilian captain also became a symbol for military resistance.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, the former servicemen in São Paulo who created the VPR purposefully chose military revolutionary figures who they saw as honorable, as inspirations for their own movement and for the kind of honorable military men they aspired to be, which indicated that although they had a critical view of the armed forces in Brazil, they still identified as military themselves.

Furthermore, even after a lifetime of running and hiding from the Brazilian military regime many former members of VPR were proud of their military formation. When I met Rodrigues for his interview, he welcomed me in his apartment and almost immediately showed me a picture he had taken a few years before with a group of men. He claimed that the men posing in the picture were sergeants who had graduated with him in the school of sergeants in 1961. The picture was taken at an event they had organized to celebrate fifty years of their graduation as sergeants, and Rodrigues was pleased to tell me that even though he had a complex history with the armed forces, his fellow colleagues, retired sergeants, still treated him like one of them. And more than that, he still proudly identified as part of that group of men.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Claudio Caamaño, *Caamaño: Guerra Civil 1965* (Dominican Republic: Mediabyte, 2007).

<sup>69</sup> "Esses militares pra gente tinha um papel importante. E o Lamarca também perante à esquerda ele começou a desempenhar esse papel, entendeu? Era um símbolo, assim, de resistência." José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

## **The Fiasco of the Rural Guerrilla Movement**

Shortly after the group of servicemen who broke with VAR-Palmares decided to rebuild VPR in 1969 they left the city to start a rural guerrilla movement. They used part of the money from Adhemar de Barros' safe "expropriation" to purchase a ranch at Jacupiranga, in the southern region of the São Paulo state, where they planned to train militants in guerrilla tactics.<sup>71</sup> In addition to believing the rural guerrilla was their best option for tactical reasons, some members of the movement trusted that moving to the valley region would increase their chances of surviving the fight. Posters with the militants' faces were displayed in public spaces, and each day it became more difficult for them to hide in São Paulo. Many members of the resistance were being imprisoned, and the ones who were still hiding had to quickly abandon one house—*aparelho*—and find a different place to move to, which the comrades who were imprisoned did not know about. These constraints led Nóbrega to believe that the rural guerrilla was imposed upon them, as they did not seem to have another choice.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, it seems that the VPR's actions in the city were reaching its limits. Nóbrega's testimony shows a frustration regarding the lack of support the movement had from the population. He seemed to believe that the media was successful in portraying the revolutionaries as terrorists, and that by 1969 they had more resources than they could use because they were not being able to attract more people to the resistance. In his words, they had the guns, but very few people to hold them.<sup>73</sup> This combination of tactical and circumstantial factors led them to move from the city to the Vale do Ribeira and organize a guerrilla training center headed by Carlos Lamarca.

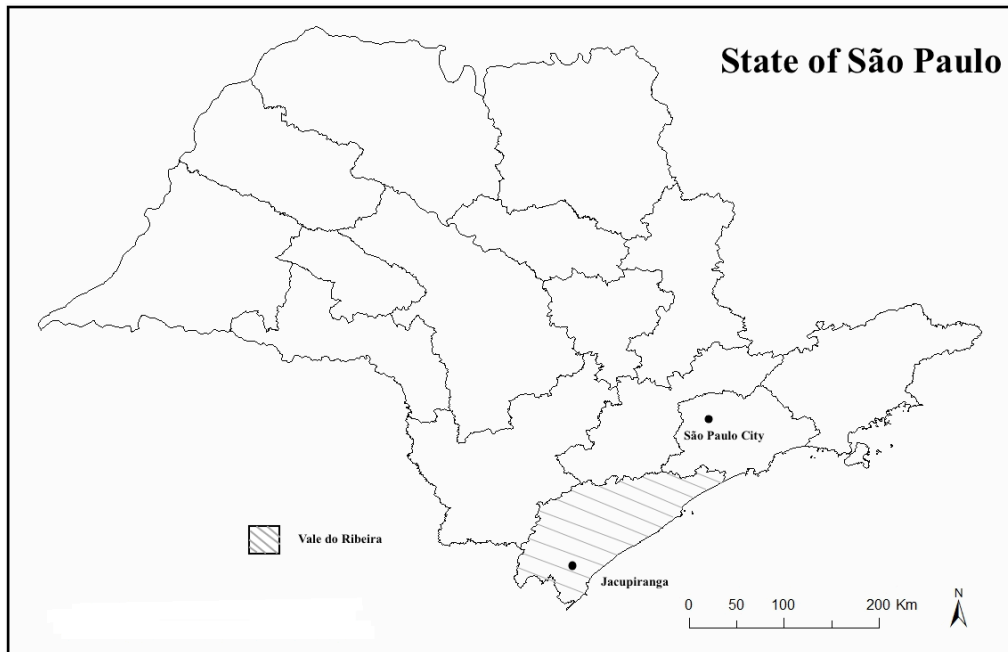
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<sup>71</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 125.

<sup>72</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>73</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

Figure 2: Map of Vale do Ribeira Region



Under Lamarca's leadership, the militants organized two training centers, one led by Darcy Rodrigues, and another by Yoshitame Fugimore.<sup>74</sup> Members of the VPR would be trained in this military site and then sent to rural areas in Maranhão and Rio Grande do Sul to start organizing the rural population in those states.<sup>75</sup> Nóbrega arrived in Jacupiranga during the last week of 1969, and adapting to life at the training site was not easy for him, as he had been serving in an administrative position in the Army before deserting and was not in his best physical shape. The group's day was divided so they had time to be trained in several different areas such as physical training, instruction, political discussion, adaptation and reconnaissance of the region, and shooting training. They used Cuban and Vietnamese manuals, adapting them to

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<sup>74</sup> On May 14, 1970, while Darcy Rodrigues was being questioned by the police, he revealed to his interrogators the structure under which the training center operated. APESP, Polícia Política, "Resumo das Declarações Prestadas por Darcy Rodrigues," 50-Z-9-25935.

<sup>75</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 324.

the conditions of rural São Paulo. The training on politics included reading the works of Karl Marx, Leon Trotsky, Mao Tse-Tung, Regis Debray, Ernesto Guevara and Ho Chi Minh.<sup>76</sup> In total, they were able to gather twenty-five people in Jacupiranga.<sup>77</sup> From Nóbrega's account of the events, it seems that even though some of the movement's leaders, such as Lamarca and Rodrigues, had the ideological framework of the movement clear in their minds, many did not. In the letters he wrote, for example, Lamarca stated clearly that his life and the relationships he built were connected to the "Revolution and the construction of Socialism."<sup>78</sup> Nóbrega, however, says he was never a communist and that most of the militants who he had contact with wanted to fight the dictatorship, but did not know what communism was or did not identify as communist.<sup>79</sup>

Due to the discovery of other resistance cells in Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro, the government agents discovered VPR's guerrilla training site on April 1970.<sup>80</sup> When the group saw Army helicopters on April 20, they picked up some provisions they had prepared—in case something like this happened—and left camp. The ones who were not known to the police were advised to go to the closest town. However, nine militants stayed behind, including Lamarca, Rodrigues and Nóbrega. The government sent about 2,500 servicemen from the Army, Navy and Air Force to capture the militants in the valley.<sup>81</sup> Rodrigues was the first to be caught, together with another militant called José Lavecchia. They were taken to a military camp at Vale do Ribeira and tortured for days. Rodrigues believes they were not executed at the valley only due

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<sup>76</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 325.

<sup>77</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, José Araújo Nóbrega – Entrevista. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_128A\_0079, 7.

<sup>78</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, "Carta-Diário de Carlos Lamarca para sua amante Iara Iavelberg, cujo portador era Cesar Queiroz Benjamin," BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0023\_0009, 2.

<sup>79</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>80</sup> On April 19, 1970, Celso Lungaretti revealed to his interrogators about the existence and the location of the ranch where VPR was conducting guerrilla training. APESP, Polícia Política, "Resumo das Declarações Prestadas por Celso Lungaretti," 30-Z-160-6855.

<sup>81</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 341.

to the presence of one journalist who was close by reporting to Rio de Janeiro on the police operation and the names of the prisoners who were captured. In addition, the remaining of the militants who had escaped had captured a lieutenant, and the regime forces were afraid these VPR members would kill the lieutenant if they realized the military had killed the Rodrigues and Lavecchia.<sup>82</sup> The duo was first taken to one of the most violent torture centers in São Paulo, the Bandeirantes Operation (Operação Bandeirantes—OBAN), and later moved to Galeão Air Force Base, in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>83</sup>

The group that included Nóbrega and Lamarca ran and hid in the woods for about twelve days, but they decided to leave the valley due to the harsh living conditions. They rented a truck in a city close by, but as soon as they reached the highway they ran into the military police. They were able to escape during this first confrontation. However, after a few more days on the road they ran into the police again, and to avoid a trap the group had to abandon the truck and walk. Nóbrega remembers that there was little visibility, as it was a rainy night. They also had to move silently because the Army was surrounding the area. Due to these conditions, Nóbrega ended up falling about thirty-two feet down from a cliff and got separated from the rest of the group.<sup>84</sup> He was alone in the woods for a couple of days until he decided to ask for food and medicine from an area resident, as he had contracted a hookworm infection. But Army soldiers, who had already been to this man's house looking for the VPR's militants, surrounded the area and captured Nóbrega, who was held in the region for a while and then transferred to the Galeão Air Force Base, where he stayed for one month.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 143.

<sup>83</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 146.

<sup>84</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, "José Araújo Nóbrega – Entrevista," BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_128A\_0079, 8.

<sup>85</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

Meanwhile, Lamarca and the remainder of the group continued hiding in the woods. In a document, which transcripts can be found in their entirety in Darcy Rodrigues' biography, Lamarca tells that on the days they spent running from the Army they witnessed the armed forces committing atrocities against the population in an effort to find the militants. He wrote, "afraid the population would support us, they started to bombard and burn vast areas with napalm, terrorizing the population, who started to abandon the area."<sup>86</sup> On May 31, after escaping the 2,500 men who were sent to capture the group, Lamarca arrived in São Paulo on a military truck he stole from the Army.<sup>87</sup>

Upon returning to the city Lamarca started to speed up the timeline of an action whose members of the VPR in Rio de Janeiro had started organizing.<sup>88</sup> The plan to kidnap the German Ambassador in Brazil, Ehrenfried Anton Theodor Ludwig Von Holleben, and trade him for the release of several political prisoners was implemented in Rio de Janeiro on June 11, 1970. In order to trick the police, the VPR signed the letter claiming the kidnap of the Ambassador on the name of sociologist Guimarães de Brito—who had just died in a confrontation with the police in April. Nevertheless, one day later the United States Embassy already knew that Lamarca, who was in São Paulo, was involved.<sup>89</sup> The letter stated, "We regret we are once more compelled to resort to methods we have always tried to avoid. However, as long as patriots are tortured and killed in prisons we will have no other choice, even knowing that physical integrity and lives of persons not directly involved in revolutionary fight are at stake."<sup>90</sup> On June 14, the Ambassador's

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<sup>86</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 231.

<sup>87</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 356.

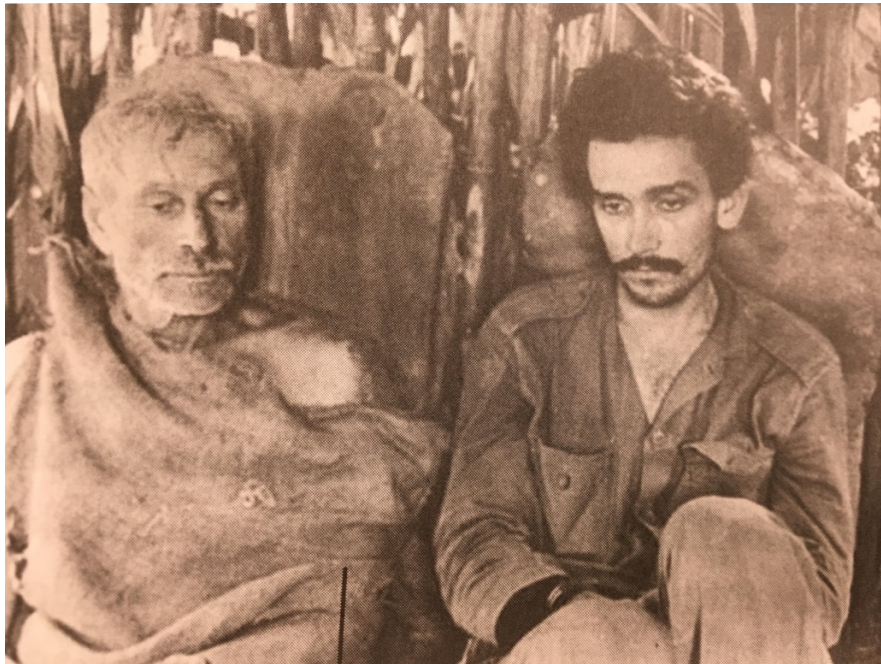
<sup>88</sup> Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 152.

<sup>89</sup> RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Subject Numeric Files, 1970-1973, Political and Defense, Pol 23-8 BRAZ, Telegram, 6/12/70, Rio 4035.

<sup>90</sup> RG 59, General Records of the Department of State, Subject Numeric Files, 1970-1973, Political and Defense, Pol 23-8 BRAZ, Telegram, 6/12/70, Rio 4074.

kidnappers from VPR and another movement called the National Liberation Action (Aliança Libertadora Nacional—ALN) released a list with forty names, demanding the government to “obtain political asylum for those released either in Algeria, Mexico or Chile.” Ambassador Ludwig Von Holleben would only be released if the military regime freed these political prisoners, which included many former servicemen who were participants of the guerrilla movement, such as former captain Altair Lucchesi Campos, former sergeant José Ronaldo Tavares de Lira e Silva, former major Joaquim Pires Cerveira, and Oswaldo Soares, Pedro Lobo de Oliveira, and the main protagonists of this chapter, Darcy Rodrigues and José Nóbrega.<sup>91</sup> On June 14, the forty prisoners boarded a plane to Algiers and were banned from Brazil.

Figure 3: Photo of José Lavecchia (left) and Darcy Rodrigues (right)<sup>92</sup>



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<sup>91</sup> Arquivo Estadual do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Pol-Pol, “Elementos Banidos do Território Nacional, pelo decreto nº 66.716 de 15 de junho de 1970,” Terrorismo 6, 104.

<sup>92</sup> This photo was taken after they were captured in Jacupiranga in April 1970. Antonio Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 137.

## Scars of the Revolution

The guerrilla warfare brought immense loss to those who part of it. According to the São Paulo Truth Commission, of 436 individuals who were killed or disappeared for political reasons during the era of the military regime, thirty-five were members of the armed forces.<sup>93</sup> Three who participated in the resistance movement in São Paulo stood out in the interviews I conducted and in the state documents. They were Carlos Roberto Zanirato, Onofre Pinto and Carlos Lamarca. Darcy Rodrigues claims the harshest punishment he suffered in his life was Zanirato's death. The soldier, who deserted from the 4<sup>th</sup> RI together with Lamarca, joined VPR and started living clandestinely after deserting the Army. In July 1969, while the revolutionaries were still debating amongst themselves whether they would stay with VAR-Palmares or rebuild VPR, Zanirato was captured. The former soldier had scheduled to meet his girlfriend at a movie theater, and she mentioned the date to a group of women at the beauty parlor she worked. The wives of many Army officers attended this salon and some of them told their husbands what they had heard. Surveillance agents followed Zanirato's girlfriend and set a trap inside the movie theater so the former soldier could not escape. Zanirato was captured and tortured for days, as the police pressured him to reveal the whereabouts of other members of the resistance movement. Although he admitted to his interrogators who were his contacts at VPR—which included saying that “Alberto”, one of Nóbrega's code name, was his group coordinator—the former soldier resisted revealing where the police could find them.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Comissão da Verdade Rubens Paiva. Relatório, Tomo I. “A Perseguição aos Militares que Resistiram à Ditadura,” 16. Accessed October 30, 2017. [http://comissaodaverdade.al.sp.gov.br/relatorio/tomo-i/downloads/I\\_Tomo\\_Parte\\_1\\_A-perseguiçao-aos-militares-que-resistiram-a-ditadura.pdf](http://comissaodaverdade.al.sp.gov.br/relatorio/tomo-i/downloads/I_Tomo_Parte_1_A-perseguiçao-aos-militares-que-resistiram-a-ditadura.pdf)

<sup>94</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Terrorismo,” 30-Z-160-1436.

After a few days resisting torture sessions, Zanirato decided to tell his interrogators he had scheduled to meet one of VPR's militants.<sup>95</sup> In order to capture his colleagues, the police took him to the street corner where the encounter would take place, left the former soldier there and placed disguised agents surrounding the area.<sup>96</sup> However, before anyone could arrive, Zanirato threw himself in front of a bus, and died at the scene. At the time, the event's official report claimed the man who died was a "John Doe" who committed suicide, but the autopsy of the body showed that the man died handcuffed, which proved that he had been arrested.<sup>97</sup> The public only had access to Zanirato's file with the SNI recently, which attests that he was in DOPS's custody when he stepped in front of the bus and died.<sup>98</sup> The former soldier's mother believed the government agents intended to murder him, throwing him in front of the bus. However, Rodrigues and Nóbrega believe Zanirato made a sacrifice and killed himself not to inform the government agents on his colleagues.<sup>99</sup> The sentiment of comradeship between the servicemen who opposed authoritarianism created a deep bond between them. Rodrigues claims that Zanirato was a son to him. Since the soldier incorporated in the Army Rodrigues got close to him, and noticed the soldier was vocal about social issues and was eager to join the fight against the dictatorship. When they formed the VPR, Rodrigues introduced him to the organization. When remembering Zanirato, Rodrigues claims that the scars he acquired from physical tortures

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<sup>95</sup> The members of VPR already believed in this thesis at the time of Zanirato's death, and they continued believing in it until today. APESP, Polícia Política, 30-Z-163-134; and José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Both Darcy and Nóbrega claimed Zanirato told the authorities he was meeting them. However, a DOPS document citing Nóbrega assures the former sergeant told the authorities the meeting was between Zanirato and Carlos Lamarca. APESP, Polícia Política, 30-Z-163-134.

<sup>97</sup> Comissão da Verdade Rubens Paiva, Dossiê Ditadura: Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos no Brasil, "Carlos Roberto Zanirato," 141.

<sup>98</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Informação número 470/SNI/ASP, "Carlos Roberto Zanirato," AC\_ACE\_32170\_70, 44-45.

<sup>99</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, "Carlos Roberto Zanirato," BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0025\_004, 3.

started to disappear with time, but that the scars he carried from the friends he lost in the fight still hurt.<sup>100</sup>

Another expelled sergeant who became a symbol in the movement was Onofre Pinto. A leader in the VPR, the regime captured him on March 1969. Many former servicemen remember Pinto as being one of the most important figures of the military opposition to the dictatorship. A noteworthy leader in the sergeants' movement before the coup, Pinto was captured in 1964 and imprisoned at the ship Raúl Soares, Fort of Itaipú, and Fort of Andradas, and expelled from the Army because he was one of the directors of the Sergeants' Club and candidate for its presidency. After being released he started working at a paper factory in São Paulo, job that he was only allowed to keep for three years, as the military government created legislation to prevent businesses from hiring individuals who had been punished by the Institutional Acts.<sup>101</sup> Expelled sergeant Simão Kerimian, Onofre Pinto's close friend who did not participate in the resistance movements after the coup, claims that his colleague joined the guerrilla because he had ran out of options, since the military government did not let him hold formal employment. He claims Onofre met with him and confessed that he would either die of hunger or join the resistance and be part of a network that provided some sort of support to its members.<sup>102</sup> In 1967 Pinto joined the VPR and completely submerged into clandestinity.

When he was captured in 1969, it seems that Pinto resisted informing his interrogators on his colleagues as much as he could. Carlos Roberto Pitolli, who was being held at another military regiment, claims he was taken to be interrogated at the Army Police when Pinto was imprisoned there. Pitolli recounts in detail the day when a group of nine soldiers arrived in his

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<sup>100</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>101</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Auto de Qualificação e Interrogatório, "Onofre Pinto," 30-Z-160-1197.

<sup>102</sup> Simão Kerimian, interview with author, São Paulo, July 27, 2016.

cell, handcuffed him, and took him to the Army Police. When he arrived, soldiers led him to a cell where he saw Pinto laying on a wood bench. Pittoli remembers the leader of VPR had an electricity wire attached to one of his ears and his penis. He was bleeding. The interrogators proceeded to ask him about Pittoli, and Pinto confessed he knew about Pittoli's role in the movement.<sup>103</sup> The torturer held on to Pinto's hair, raised his head, and said, "look who is here." As Pinto realized who was there he said, "I am sorry, Pittoli."<sup>104</sup> The former sergeant stopped talking and cried when remembering these events. After explaining that he noticed Pinto had been so beaten up that he could not walk, he apologized, "I am sorry, but, this moment... I have not been able to solve this, here, with me. I have talked to myself and tried to straighten this, but it is difficult."<sup>105</sup> Talking about Onofre Pinto, who was the closest person of VPR to him after Rodrigues, generated in Pittoli a similar reaction that Rodrigues had when talking about Carlos Zanirato. He also cried, and instead of continuing to talk about Pinto and explaining how he felt about his deceased colleague, he started to talk about what happened to him after that, explaining how after this encounter with Pinto he was tortured. After this, he did not mention Pinto again. Both Rodrigues and Pittoli's interviews show how the deepest traumas that stayed with the former militants were connected to losing colleagues who went through similar life events they had endured. Nevertheless, while Zanirato and Pinto died, Rodrigues and Pittoli survived.

While Onofre Pinto was imprisoned, members of the October 8 Revolutionary Movement (MR-8) and the ALN, decided to conduct an action to release political prisoners. They kidnapped United States Ambassador Charles Burke Elbrick, and asked for the release of fifteen political

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<sup>103</sup> A report on Onofre Pinto's interrogation shows that he told the agents of repression about Pittoli's involvement in VPR. APESP, Polícia Política, Auto de Qualificação e Interrogatório, "Onofre Pinto," 30-Z-160-1187.

<sup>104</sup> Carlos Roberto Pittoli, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>105</sup> Carlos Roberto Pittoli, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

prisoners in ransom.<sup>106</sup> One of the names on this list was Onofre Pinto's, who was exiled to Mexico City and banished from Brazil on September 7, 1969. From Mexico, Pinto traveled to Chile and Argentina, always participating in the resistance against the Brazilian dictatorship. On July 11, 1974, he said goodbye to his wife in Buenos Aires and returned to Brazil clandestinely with a group of five militants. The group, which was returning to Brazil to give support to militants supposedly starting a new guerrilla movement, disappeared at the time and was never seen again.<sup>107</sup> For years their family and friends did not know for sure what had happened to them. Only in the 1990s it became known that Alberi Vieira dos Santos, a former serviceman who was also expelled from the armed forces in 1964, started to inform on the militants after the government captured him in 1965. A former state agent revealed that dos Santos tricked his colleagues, who were living in Chile and Argentina, into believing that they were headed to a guerrilla training site in Brazil. Upon arriving to the fake training site in 1974, the group was executed.<sup>108</sup> Aluizio Palmar, journalist and former militant, claims the police agents tried to convince Pinto to inform on other militants, but upon realizing VPR's leader did not have valuable information, they killed him.<sup>109</sup> I believe that the sudden disappearing of Onofre Pinto and the absence of proof of what had happened to him deeply marked the servicemen who fought by his side. Rodrigues, Pittoli and Nóbrega seem to remember him with a tone of melancholy, sign they did not express when talking about Carlos Lamarca.

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<sup>106</sup> Detailed reports and telegrams from the United States' Department of State about the ambassador's kidnapping can be found at the National Archives and Records Administration. RG 59, General Records of the Department of State. Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Political and Defense, Pol 23-9 BRAZ to POL 29 BRAZ.

<sup>107</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, "Onofre Pinto," BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0068\_0006, 8.

<sup>108</sup> Comissão da Verdade Rubens Paiva, Dossiê Ditadura: Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos no Brasil, "Operação Juriti: Militantes da VPR Desaparecem na Fronteira," 587.

<sup>109</sup> Aluizio Palmar, *Onde foi que Vocês Enterraram Nossos Mortos?* (Curitiba: Travessa dos Editores, 2005), 230.

After the debacle of the guerrilla at Vale do Ribeira, Lamarca returned to the city to find VPR tattered by the government, and was compelled to hide for months.<sup>110</sup> While hiding in *aparelhos*, or safe houses, in São Paulo, the captain conducted kidnappings as part of a successful effort to release more political prisoners, as was the case of the kidnapping of the German ambassador that led to the release of forty prisoners who were sent to exile in Algiers, Algeria.<sup>111</sup> Due to internal tactical conflicts inside VPR and to the belief among the movement's leadership that Lamarca should leave Brazil and go to Cuba for a while, in the beginning of March 1971 the former captain decided to leave the organization and join MR-8—which had an expansion project in Brazil's northeast that drew the captain in. Lamarca hid in Rio de Janeiro until the end of May, when a militant who had gotten close to him, José Gomes Teixeira, was captured. The captain had to leave the city in case Teixeira was not able to resist torture and told the agents about his location. Lamarca then moved to Bahia inner lands in an effort to hide but also to continue his dream of developing the rural guerrilla.<sup>112</sup>

A series of events led the government to discover Lamarca's location in Bahia. The police intercepted Lamarca's diary and many letters he had written to Yara Yavelberg, a member of the guerrilla movement and his girlfriend, who was living in Salvador. After examining these letters, the police discovered that "Cirilo", who was signing them, was actually Lamarca using a code name.<sup>113</sup> In addition, José Carlos de Souza was captured in the beginning of August and revealed, under torture, that he had taken Lamarca to Brotas de Macaúba. The government agents also examined the letters for clues, trying to determine where the mail was coming from,

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<sup>110</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 361.

<sup>111</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 406.

<sup>112</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 434.

<sup>113</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, "Carta-Diário de Carlos Lamarca para sua amante Iara Iavelberg, cujo portador era Cesar Queiroz Benjamin," BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0023\_0009.

in order to discover his location.<sup>114</sup> Upon determining Lamarca's location, the Army, with the support of the Navy, the Air Force, the Federal Police, and the Military Police from Bahia, São Paulo and Guanabara, organized Operação Pajussara to capture the captain. This operation was planned based on reports from Operação Registro, which was conducted to capture members of the VPR at Vale do Ribeira. The idea was to learn from the armed forces' mistakes in São Paulo and produce a different outcome—to capture Lamarca.<sup>115</sup> The police did not find him immediately, as the former Army captain noticed police presence close to where he was living and hid in the woods for weeks. They searched for the captain for almost twenty days before finding him lying under a tree about thirty miles from Brotas de Macaúba. After exchanging a few words with the captain, who was ill and malnourished, the police executed him.<sup>116</sup>

### **Representations of Heroism**

The sergeants I interviewed saw Pinto and Lamarca in similar ways, as important leaders in the movement, and as martyrs. However, the servicemen who remembered Pinto talked about him in a different way than when talking about Lamarca. The conditions surrounding Pinto's death influenced the ways his colleagues from VPR remembered him, as even though the regime killed both Pinto and Lamarca, while Lamarca died on the field as a hero to the sergeants, weakened for running from the police for weeks, Pinto was caught in a trap set by an informant, and for

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<sup>114</sup> Estado do Paraná, Departamento da Polícia Civil, Divisão de Segurança e Informações, Documentos Referentes à: VPR – Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária. “O Mito Lamarca, um ‘Messias’ sem Deus.” 12 April 1980, BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT2366.270, 32.

<sup>115</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos, Ministério do Exército, “Relatório da Operação Pajussara,” BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0023\_0005, 6.

<sup>116</sup> The word exchange was limited to certifying if the men they had captured was really Lamarca and telling him he was a traitor to the Brazilian Army. Arquivo Nacional, Comissão de Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos. Ministério do Exército, “Relatório da Operação Pajussara,” BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0023\_0005, 73.

almost twenty years the details about his death were still a mystery. At the time of their death, Lamarca's body was present, and both the regime and the movements of resistance knew what had happened with him, which allowed his colleagues to mourn his death. Pinto, on the other hand, had disappeared without any explanation.

Carlos Lamarca appears in the documents of the dictatorship as one of the most important and dangerous elements of the resistance, and this is how the interviewees also remember him. The events at Vale do Ribeira eternized Lamarca as a hero, as the news that he was able to escape 2.500 servicemen hunting him were spread out Brazil. If before this event the military leaders already treated him as a terrorist, after 1970 capturing him became essential to the regime as they could not admit he would be victorious against the state. In an issue of the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, Luiz Fernando Emediato calls Lamarca a pathetic figure for the Brazilian Left but admits that even though he was only active in the resistance militancy for about 32 months, he became a myth. In the same article, Emediato interviewed Darcy Rodrigues, who said Lamarca left Vale do Ribeira strengthened (or *fortalecido*), for he had been responsible for transforming the strategic decision of VPR to take the guerrilla to the rural area, into praxis.<sup>117</sup>

Another factor that contributed to how Lamarca's image was constructed in the imaginary of the men I interviewed is military ranking, which indicates the kind of relationship the sergeants in the movement had developed with the captain. Even after he deserted from the Army, for the sergeants and soldiers who were expelled from the armed forces Lamarca was still viewed as an Army captain as he continued exerting a role of leadership in the guerrilla. Even though the revolutionary servicemen claimed the Army's hierarchical structures did not constrain

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<sup>117</sup> Estado do Paraná, Departamento da Polícia Civil, Divisão de Segurança e Informações, Documentos Referentes à: VPR – Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária. “O Mito Lamarca, um ‘Messias’ sem Deus.” 12 de abril 1980. BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT2366.270, 32.

them, and that they did not feel they needed to defer to Lamarca, they still believed they needed to treat him with respect. Nóbrega claims that Lamarca assumed a position of leadership especially among those who had come from the military. He explained that in the resistance movement they had to trust one another, which was difficult because they never knew if one of them could be working for the military regime as an infiltrated agent. Since the Army sergeants in São Paulo knew Lamarca and each other prior to their involvement in the resistance, they trusted the former captain.<sup>118</sup> Nóbrega guarantees that the trust the servicemen at VPR deposited in Lamarca was due to their friendship. However, at the same time that Nóbrega talks about Lamarca as a friend, he refers to him as an officer, which indicates that even though their relationship was different from the hierarchical relationships they had inside the Army, the servicemen at VPR still transferred some of the hierarchies from the Army to the resistance movement.

Lamarca became “the captain of the guerrilla,” and their example of what an “honorable men” looked and acted like.<sup>119</sup> He was known as a revolutionary for conducting actions that demoralized military rule: deserting the Army while stealing dozens of armaments from the armed forces, and especially for escaping a party of thousands of soldiers who were sent to Vale do Ribeira to capture him. The media covered these events and Lamarca’s image as a revolutionary myth started to be constructed in 1969. The military generals found it crucial to capture him in order to legitimize the strength of the regime; in order to show the public that one “communist” could not win a fight against the regime. When he was killed in Bahia, his death was immediately publicized as a victory for the military government, a win against the

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<sup>118</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>119</sup> José and Miranda, *Lamarca, o Capitão da Guerrilha*.

“subversives” who “terrorized” Brazil. Lamarca’s cadaver was exposed to the public at Brotas de Macaúba as a trophy for the military government.<sup>120</sup> In addition, and because the former servicemen who fought by his side could mourn over Lamarca’s death immediately and start constructing the narrative that would immortalize him as a hero, almost fifty years after his death they remembered the captain with affection but not with as much pain as they remember Pinto’s death.

Although Lamarca is portrayed as the “captain of the guerrilla”, it seems Onofre Pinto held a position of leadership at VPR similar to Lamarca’s. Nevertheless, the archives of the dictatorship and newspapers do not seem to consider him as “dangerous” as Lamarca—probably because the most dangerous aspect of Lamarca’s reputation was to publicly challenge the regime in the ways he did. One of the reasons that explain why Pinto and Lamarca were portrayed, and are now remembered, differently is their distinct life trajectories. Pinto was imprisoned and sent into exile by the time Lamarca started to act as the guerrilla leader he became. Pinto built his role as a leader in the movement across more than ten years. Before 1964 he was a leader in the sergeants’ movement, and after being expelled from the Army he became a leader at VPR. According to Rodrigues, Pinto was “the most important person in the sergeants’ movement.”<sup>121</sup> Historian Marcelo Ridenti also asserts that in 1968 Pinto “*mandava*” in the VPR; in other words, he was the movement’s “boss.”<sup>122</sup>

Lamarca, on the other hand, became a resistance leader only in 1969, after he deserted from the Army. During the years that would later be used to construct Lamarca’s image as a hero, Pinto was in prison or in exile. Furthermore, because he acted in the resistance movement

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<sup>120</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 436.

<sup>121</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>122</sup> Ridenti, *O Fantasma da Revolução Brasileira*, 215.

for so long, Pinto committed a few mistakes that were used to accuse him of contributing to some militants' deaths. After suspecting that former sailor José Anselmo dos Santos was betraying VPR in the end of 1971, Pinto confronted him. The sailor, however, convinced Pinto he was not an infiltrator, and VPR's leader gave him twenty thousand dollars to build a base for the organization in Brazil's northeast.<sup>123</sup> Nevertheless, the actions of the former sailor continued signaling that he was working for the political police, and one year after Pinto gave him these resources, he became convinced that Dos Santos was a traitor. It was too late. Dos Santos gave information that led to the execution of several militants from VPR in an event that became known as the massacre of São Bento's ranch.<sup>124</sup> Luiz Felipe Campos asserts that Pinto carried such a heavy burden for the massacre and felt so responsible for these deaths that he moved from Chile to Argentina, and disappeared from the lives of the militants who were still living in Santiago.<sup>125</sup> Instead of learning from this mistake and being more careful about who he would trust, Pinto died in 1974 in the hands of another traitor, Alberi Vieira dos Santos. Thus, both were executed by the dictatorship, Lamarca in 1971 and Pinto in 1974, and the former sergeants I interviewed seem to view both as martyrs. However, they seem to proudly remember Lamarca as their captain, while they exhibit a tone of melancholy and sadness for Pinto's death.

The time of the death of each militant is also significant to the ways they were remembered. While the military police force killed Lamarca at the peak of the guerrilla movement's actions in Brazil, by the time of Pinto's death the leftist movements were almost extinguished in the country. This is also determining to how the servicemen remember Pinto as someone who gave his life for a cause that, perhaps, was already lost. This becomes evident in

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<sup>123</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 442.

<sup>124</sup> Luiz Felipe Campos, *O Massacre da Granja São Bento* (Recife: Editora CEPE Kindle Edition, 2017).

<sup>125</sup> Campos, *O Massacre*, Kindle Location 1516.

Pedro Lobo's accounts of how Pinto reacted when Lobo told him that he would move to East Germany with his wife and son. Lobo attempted to convince Pinto that returning to Brazil at that moment was suicidal, and that the VPR leader should move to Paris with his wife and daughter. Pinto, however, was not convinced and stayed in Argentina preparing more combatants to return to Brazil.<sup>126</sup> Even though Lamarca could also have left Brazil in 1970 in order to save himself, at that time the militants from VPR were not aware of how fragile the resistance movement had become. By 1974 they were sure of it, and the former sergeants trusted Pinto's death could have been prevented as he was already in exile and committed a mistake going back to Brazil when the movements of resistance were so weak.

The lack of information surrounding Pinto's death for almost twenty years was another element that influenced the ways he was memorialized. The public only discovered what had happened with Pinto in 1993, as a former police agent from the Army, Marival Dias do Canto Chaves, admitted that someone who the militants thought was their colleague in the revolution, Alberi Vieira dos Santos, had actually become an informant for the regime. According to Chaves, Vieira dos Santos had helped the police to set a trap for the group of militants, which included Onofre Pinto, when they decided to return to Brazil clandestinely in 1974.<sup>127</sup> Until then, although his colleagues suspected the regime had killed Pinto, they did not have a story they could use to construct a narrative around his disappearance. The fact that there were no investigations about the ones who disappeared in Brazil in the hands of the regime was crucial to how the former sergeants remembered Pinto fifty years after the coup. Lamarca's body was used as a trophy for the officers in power, and as a symbol of martyrdom for the revolutionaries. Since

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<sup>126</sup> Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos*, 527, 528.

<sup>127</sup> Comissão da Verdade Rubens Paiva, *Dossiê Ditadura: Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos no Brasil*, "Operação Juriti: Militantes da VPR Desaparecem na Fronteira," 588; Revista Isto É. "Os Matadores," *Isto É*, March 24, 2004, [https://istoe.com.br/27937\\_OS+MATADORES/](https://istoe.com.br/27937_OS+MATADORES/).

Pinto's body had disappeared and no one knew what had happened to him, his family and friends had trouble constructing a narrative around his death. Scholars have explained how the activism of the mothers of the Plaza de Mayo was important to help families who watched individuals disappear in Argentina to process their trauma. The public protests against the Argentinian state transformed what was opened the secrets of the dictatorship to the public.<sup>128</sup> In Brazil, public manifestations like these were rare and the disappearances of the individuals who were considered as enemies of the military regime were barely resolved.<sup>129</sup>

Such absence of reports about Pinto's death is also evident in the Brazilian government archives. Anyone who arrives at the National Archives in Rio de Janeiro can quickly find pictures of Lamarca's cadaver and detailed reports of how the military killed him in Bahia. Documents from the armed forces about the events that led to Pinto's death are completely absent, as the operation to kill him remained a secret even after democratization. The historical record only knows how he was killed because one former government agent decided to come forward years after the end of military rule.<sup>130</sup> This speaks to how the democratic governments of the 1990s and 2000s did not open military archives or investigate cases of human rights violations and to how determining this was to the construction of memory about the dictatorship in Brazil.

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<sup>128</sup> Antonius Robben, *Political Violence and Trauma in Argentina* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 317.

<sup>129</sup> During the 1990s the Brazilian state provided the families of the ones the military regime had killed with monetary indemnifications. Audiences to hear these stories were held especially from about 2012 to 2016 with the work of the federal and state Truth Commissions in Brazil. The ones who lost friends and family members, however, were only able to start dealing with their trauma after more than twenty years that the events took place.

<sup>130</sup> Palmar, *Onde foi que Vocês Enterraram Nossos Mortos?*, 77.

## **Conclusion**

The case of the servicemen who founded and participated in the Revolutionary Popular Vanguard illuminates how and why some of the officers and soldiers who opposed the dictatorship engaged with violent tactics of resistance. Army officers, sergeants and soldiers in São Paulo employed urban and rural guerrilla tactics in response to the violence coming from the military regime. While attempting to resist from within the military ranks, men such as Rodrigues, Nóbrega and Lamarca joined the MNR clandestinely when they were still serving the Army. Upon realizing they were compromised and in risk of being discovered by the regime as members of the resistance, they deserted, continued engaging in guerrilla actions in urban areas and later resorted to the rural guerrilla warfare.

Members of the VPR trusted that their mission was to help end military rule. Even though some claim to have been forced into the guerrilla warfare, instead of fleeing from Brazil or hiding from the regime, the servicemen studied in this chapter decided to actively challenge the government. A military mentality that made them understand their role as protectors of the nation led military members into this course of action. These men's military identities informed their resistance, ideologically and tactically, as they believed the armed forces were necessary to protect the Brazilian population and the country's resources against particular threats. While the officers who took power believed the enemy was "communism," the officers and soldiers who joined VPR and other resistance movements believed the interventionist officers were the real enemies of the nation—in addition to other forces such as private businesses and the United States government.

An ideal of a military "honor" urged VPR servicemen to challenge military rule in order to reconstruct the armed forces, as they believed the military rulers had dishonored the institution

and corrupted it. Even though VPR servicemen fought against the officers in power, they advocated for the armed forces and for its role of protector of the Brazilian nation. Thus, as honorable military men their mission was to take the armed forces from the hands of those who had perverted it and return governmental power to civilians. They pursued this goal using their military training in the guerrilla warfare, both in urban and rural settings. Therefore, their military backgrounds informed the ways these servicemen thought and practiced resistance; it informed both their ideology to resist and their praxis.

Thus, to properly understand the resistance movement against the dictatorship it is important to understand that some of the men who fought against the dictatorship were guided by a similar set of patriarchal and military norms that also informed the leaders military rule. It shows that contrary to what was probably the case in many other resistance movements, the military revolutionaries did not want to destroy the armed forces; they wanted to “cleanse” them from the forces that subverted them into an institution that oppressed its own population. The institution itself was not problematic; the problem was in what it had become under the leadership of interventionist officers.

Chapter two examined the first reactions of servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces and showed that while many decided to step down quietly and transition to a non-military career in civil society, others went into exile to escape incarceration and harassment, and others decided to join political resistance movements. This chapter focused on the case of one resistance movement, the VPR, and examined how some members of the military resorted to violent tactics to resist military rule. The mission and dream of ending military rule was a task for honorable men. In pursue of this goal, however, VPR servicemen were severely injured, physically and psychologically, and the scars they acquired in the guerrilla fight marked them for

life. The next chapter will continue examining the life trajectories of the servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces in 1964 and those who deserted from the Army to join VPR, including Proença, Teixeira, Rodrigues and Nóbrega, during the 1970s. Studying the different paths former officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers chose to follow—or were forced into—chapter four shows how class and race were determining factors in how successfully these men were able to survive the era of military rule. Shifting the analysis from guerrilla warfare to everyday forms of resistance, the following chapter studies how many former officers and soldiers challenged the dictatorship by working informally, as the regime would not allow companies to employ “subversives,” pursuing other careers, or by organizing informal meetings to discuss how to resist military rule. Lastly, it also shows how the “politically persecuted” servicemen, who were imprisoned, expelled from the armed forces, surveilled by the regime, and marginalized in different ways, were subjected to a gendered trauma they spent the rest of their lives trying to overcome.

## CHAPTER 4. SURVIVING MILITARY RULE AS EXPELLED OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS IN BRAZIL AND ABROAD

### Introduction

Officers and soldiers categorized as subversives and expelled from the armed forces had very distinct life trajectories after being pushed out of their military careers. After Captain Ivan Cavalcanti Proença's two months incarceration and expulsion from the Army in 1964, he decided to return to school to become a teacher, and in 1965 he entered the university to pursue an undergraduate degree in literature. Upon being expelled from the Army, however, the regime established he needed to report to DOPS every three months, and on these visits the police told him that the regime would allow him to earn his diploma, but it would not allow him to become a teacher. On two separate occasions, when he secured a job position as a teacher, DOPS agents visited the establishments and demanded their directors to fire Proença. When DOPS discovered he was a contestant for a teaching position, its agents would visit the schools he was applying to and tell their directors not to hire him. Proença says that he was "persecuted" for twenty-years, not being able to hold stable employment until the final years of military rule, even though he had acquired a master's degree and a doctorate in literature.<sup>1</sup>

Former sergeant José Araújo Nóbrega, who was imprisoned in 1970 and released as part of the ransom of German ambassador Von Holleben, was exiled in Algeria. After a few months in the country's capital, Algiers, he decided to move to Chile. Since he would be closer to Brazil, he believed it would be easier to bring his family to live with him. In Salvador Allende's Santiago, he worked for a state company as a technician for almost three years. As he

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<sup>1</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

remembers, his wife and three children moved there, they “found a house and started to live a normal life.”<sup>2</sup> On September 1973, however, as a military junta ousted Allende and put Augusto Pinochet in power, Nóbrega, who the Chilean military authorities saw as a leftist revolutionary political exile, became a person of interest of the government.<sup>3</sup> As he was trying to flee to Argentina, Nóbrega was imprisoned at the soccer stadium Estadio Nacional and taken to Cajón del Maipo, an area close to Santiago, where he and a group of political prisoners were to be shot and killed. As soldiers were preparing to execute the prisoners, in a last attempt to survive Nóbrega jumped on one of the soldiers, created a distraction and escaped. He was able to reach the Embassy of Sweden in Santiago, where he acquired a license to travel to Europe, found exile in Sweden, where he stayed for the next ten years, worked as a metalworker, became a math teacher and even started a PhD in economics.<sup>4</sup> He only returned to Brazil after the end of the dictatorship.

After Air Force soldier Robson Ferreira’s superior officers conducted a locker inspection and found a recording of Chico Buarque—who was considered a subversive artist—in his locker, and after money that belonged to one of his superiors disappeared, Ferreira was categorized as a subversive and a thief, imprisoned, harassed and tortured inside the Galeão Air Base. In 1980s, after months of interrogation, Ferreira was released from the Air Force and prohibited from reengaging in the military. Upon leaving military service he attempted to find employment in several institutions including Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico (BNDE), the

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<sup>2</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> For an analysis on Chile’s foreign relations during the first half of the 1970s see Tanya Harmer, *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011); and for more on Chile’s transition to the dictatorship from the perspective of Brazilian political exiles who were living in the country see, Mila Burns Nascimento, “Dictatorship Across Borders: How Brazil Influenced the Chilean Coup d’état of 1973” (PhD diss., CUNY, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016; AN, CISA, “José Araújo da Nóbrega – Entrevista,” 28 Jan 1980, BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_128A\_79, 9.

Casa da Moeda, and Petrobrás. He claims he was not selected for many of the jobs for odd reasons, such as being too slim, or he was fired after a couple months in the job. Ferreira believed that the armed forces were responsible for him being denied these employment opportunities. He claimed the Air Force destroyed his dream to be a pilot and stopped him from seeking opportunities outside the military. As an Afro-Brazilian who was raised in a poor neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, the *favela* Parada de Lucas, after leaving the armed forces Ferreira did not have opportunities to build another career. Scholars have shown that until the early 1900s military service offered an opportunity for many Brazilians to escape their own situations of poverty and destitution.<sup>5</sup> This was also truth during the era of military rule, especially for men in similar situations as Ferreira. The military career was his way out of impoverishment and after he was expelled he was only able to work in the informal sector.

Proença, Nóbrega, and Ferreira's drastically different trajectories show how servicemen across military branches and ranking constructed their narratives about political persecution. Even though they went through different experiences, they created similar narratives about the difficulties of surviving military rule in Brazil, specifically as men. While Nóbrega claims military rule in both Brazil and Chile attempted to "neutralize" him, denying his right to exist in these countries, both Proença and Ferreira—the first a white Army officer, and the second a black Air Force low-ranking soldier—highlighted that the military authorities were actively trying to prevent them from occupying spaces in Brazilian society, holding employment or accomplishing any financial and social goals during this era. I argue that this process, which started with the expulsion and imprisonment of these servicemen and continued with government

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<sup>5</sup> Peter Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 5.

surveillance and harassment after they had left the forces, subjected them to a specifically gendered trauma.

Low-ranking soldiers were harassed inside military barracks even before they were expelled, and most officers and soldiers continued being surveilled on the streets, in their houses, and at work after they left the armed forces. Throughout the era of military rule and even after democratization, many of these men remained quiet about what they had lived through. If they shared these experiences when the military generals were still in power, they would be called subversives and would likely have to endure more torture and harassment. After the dictatorship was over, however, some of them believed the armed forces could still punish them, and others felt so ashamed about the experiences they had lived through that they could not even share them with their families. Most of these men expressed the belief that with these rituals of violence, which included expulsion, torture, harassment and surveillance, the military government aimed not to just to eliminate them from the military, but from society in general. This feeling of marginalization had a particularly gendered character, as when these servicemen were expelled from the armed forces they felt emasculated. Being soldiers defined them as men, and when this status was taken from them it made them feel like their manhood was being questioned or challenged. They experienced a gendered trauma that intersected military rank, social class, and racial identification.

These expelled officers and soldiers remained creative in building strategies to survive military rule even when there were a set of governmental mechanisms preventing them from doing so. Different accomplishments in other careers outside the military, being involved in resistance movements or even handling their suffering in different ways influenced how these men dealt with gendered trauma. Finding spaces in which they could continue performing their

masculinity mattered to how they tried to overcome the experiences they had endured. However, in several cases even forty years after experiencing expulsion and imprisonment, many expelled soldiers still struggled to discuss the ways in which the military regime affected their lives. These men's ability to attain material and social gains depended on a variety of issues, as while the imprisonment of "subversive" officers and soldiers was systemic, it affected men differently depending on how much social capital they held, how much they had suffered physically and psychologically in the hands of security agencies, and also on the broad works of race relations in Brazil. Another factor that influenced the ways in which many of them remembered military rule was whether they were able to benefit from the Amnesty Law of 1979, and the reparations that followed the law. I will examine in depth how the amnesty process affected these men in the next chapter, but here I will briefly discuss how being excluded from this law influenced the memory of low-ranking soldiers from the Army and Air Force.

This chapter maps out the different experiences of expelled servicemen specially during the 1970s, after the demise of the guerrilla movements, particularly the VPR. While many expelled officers and soldiers stayed in Brazil and sought employment in the public and private sectors, others did that in exile, and others who were more deeply involved with the movement of resistance hid from the regime either in Brazil or in other countries. Independently of which path they followed, both servicemen who stayed in Brazil and those who were exiled faced different challenges surviving this era, which depended on a variety of factors. The first was whether the former soldiers had been currently or formerly involved in the guerrilla struggle. Members of the guerrilla movement endured more drastic government surveillance and harassment and struggled to attain employment opportunities in Brazil. In exile, others were often able to access opportunities that they could not in Brazil, yet, in order to do so they needed

to know people who were able to help them, or they needed to be familiar with the language spoken. Social class also influenced how these men faced the challenges this era brought upon their lives. Individuals of middle and upper class had better connections and were able to hold on to better opportunities even when they were being harassed by the regime. Usually these men had family ties that helped them to access education and employment opportunities. Lastly, the color of one's skin could also hamper a former servicemen's ability to succeed during this era. Even though the black soldiers I interviewed did not discuss race consistently, some men's skin color influenced the ways police agents questioned and harassed Afro-Brazilian "subversive" servicemen and denied them access to new opportunities outside the military. These three factors influenced the ways in which expelled servicemen remembered military rule. The access they had to different material and social resources in this era and the type of life they were able to attain after expulsion were determining to how they remembered this period.

### **Military *Guerrilheiros* in Exile**

As the Médici government weakened guerrilla organizations in Brazil, during the first half of the 1970s many former servicemen who had fought the dictatorship had either been either killed or were in exile, as was the case of José Araújo Nóbrega. State archives, interviews and biographies indicate that instead of continuing planning actions against the Brazilian dictatorship, former servicemen in exile focused more on their personal lives and on their families. Nonetheless, this different approach to resisting through the era and its hardships, which involved surviving and waiting for a new window of opportunity to oppose military rule more aggressively, was still challenging for expelled officers and soldiers. Many servicemen were never able to adapt to life in the foreign country they were forced to live, and many continued being investigated and

surveilled—either by Brazilian agents or by new authoritarian regimes that were established in some Latin American nations they moved to. Furthermore, all faced the difficulty of having to learn another language and find employment in a job market they were not familiar with.

Although the Brazilian intelligence agencies claim high subversive activity between political exiles during the 1970s, the interviews I collected and biographic material suggest that former servicemen who had joined the guerrilla in Brazil did not continue to be heavily invested in the armed struggle against the military regime in exile.

Towards the end of the 1960s the Uruguayan government started revoking authorizations many political exiles from Brazil had received to be able to live and work in Uruguay, and many members of MNR started to struggle, including former admiral Cândido Aragão, one of MNR's leaders and president of the Association of Brazilian Exiles in Uruguay.<sup>6</sup> In June 1969, the Uruguayan police captured Aragão for holding illegal residency and ordered him to leave the country. The former admiral claimed he had already been circulating between Brazil and Uruguay clandestinely since the Brazilian government had ordered his arrest, even though the Air Force intelligence report on him states he was lying about having returned to Brazil, as they believed he had been to Chile, Mexico and Peru.<sup>7</sup> In September he left Uruguay and travelled to Chile, and according to the CISA archives this trip was organized by the Communist Party of Uruguay.<sup>8</sup> The CISA reports show the intense traffic of Brazilian exiles in Latin America. Former sergeant José Mendes de Sá Roriz travelled to Chile and Mexico in order to take money

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<sup>6</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Uruguai. Asilados Brasileiros. 13 Jun 69. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_004\_006, 25.

<sup>7</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Uruguai. Atividades de Cândido Aragão. 20 Jun 69. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_004\_6, 33.

<sup>8</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. Cândido da Costa Aragão. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_4\_9, 12.

to a few Brazilian exiles.<sup>9</sup> Vitor Luiz Papandreu, another expelled serviceman CISA heavily investigated, supposedly travelled to Czechoslovakia, Algeria, France, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay.<sup>10</sup> By late 1970, CISA reported that some members of VPR, including Onofre Pinto and Nóbrega, had moved to Chile.<sup>11</sup>

These surveillance records suggest that the Brazilian political exiles used Brazil's neighboring countries as stages for the resistance movements they had organized. The men I interviewed suggested that they wanted to stay close to Brazil if they saw a window of opportunity to act against military leaders. Since they had been forced out of Brazil, they decided to prepare for a counter offensive that could be more quickly mobilized if they were living in neighboring countries. From 1971 to 1973, Salvador Allende's Chile seems to have been their most favorable location of residency and resistance organizing. However, the surveillance agents seemed to overemphasize this "waiting for an opportunity" of former *guerrilheiros* as a structured plan. The Army intelligence acquired information in Chile that former colonel Joaquim Pires Cerveira and a group of exiles were organizing a "scheme of infiltration" in Brazil, counting on Cuba's aid.<sup>12</sup> The Center even reported that on February 1972 many Brazilian exiles, including Cerveira and Nóbrega, got to meet Fidel Castro and discussed tactics of resistance in Brazil.<sup>13</sup> The Air Force intelligence believed that after Allende took office, a school of guerrillas had formed in Chile "with the purpose of training terrorists capable of

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<sup>9</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Asilados Brasileiros no Uruguai. José Mendes de Sá Roriz. 15 Sep 69. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_4\_9, 11.

<sup>10</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Refugiados Brasileiros na Argélia, Cuba e Chile. Atividades Subversivas. 8 Dec 70. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_5\_10, 51.

<sup>11</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Refugiados Brasileiros na Argélia, Cuba e Chile. Atividades Subversivas. 8 Dec 70. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_5\_10, 52.

<sup>12</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Refugiados Brasileiros no Uruguai e no Chile. Atividades Subversivas no Brasil. 19 Abr 71. BR\_AN\_BSB\_IE\_6\_4, 16.

<sup>13</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Fidel Castro – Atividades no Chile – Banidos Brasileiros. 29 Fev 72. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_84\_71.

developing the urban and rural guerrilla in Brazil.”<sup>14</sup> Although some Brazilians were still invested in the fight against the Brazilian dictatorship from abroad, they were few.

After the coup in Chile in 1973 the reports of Brazilian exiles in the country almost stop, as all left the country to escape the Pinochet regime. Although Nóbrega was able to escape to Sweden, as I showed in this chapter’s introduction, in 1973 the Brazilian regime reported that he was killed in Chile.<sup>15</sup> While some were able to escape from Latin American regimes, others such as Cerveira were caught and, like the former colonel, disappeared during this period. Cerveira’s wife received an anonymous phone call that informed her husband had been kidnapped in Buenos Aires, and later she learned that he was sent to the Brazilian military authorities in the same occasion.<sup>16</sup> After democratization, Cerveira’s name was found in a file labelled “deceased” at DOPS’s headquarters in Curitiba, Paraná, which, in the least, shows the regime knew he had been dead since the 1970s.<sup>17</sup>

The intelligence reports in Chile after the coup diminish drastically, and instead of detailed reports on meetings and regime opponents plans to resist, they seem to offer brief descriptions on the physical characteristics of political exiles, their addresses, and reports on document forgery.<sup>18</sup> Although many documents from the Army and the Navy intelligence agencies have not been released to the public, the lack of documentation about resistance plans in exile suggests that the regime knew the organizations against the regime had been heavily

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<sup>14</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Brasileiros Cursando Escola de Guerrilhas no Chile e Desencadeamento, no Brasil, de Ações de Sabotagem. 5 Jul 71. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_79\_9, 1.

<sup>15</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Brasileiros Mortos no Chile. 23 Nov 73. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_122\_195.

<sup>16</sup> Arquivo Nacional. Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos. Dossiê Resumido do Desaparecido Político Joaquim Pires Cerveira. BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0047\_0009, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Arquivo Nacional. Mortos e Desaparecidos Políticos. Dossiê Resumido do Desaparecido Político Joaquim Pires Cerveira. BR\_DFANBSB\_ATO\_0\_0\_0047\_0009, 14.

<sup>18</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, Subversivos Brasileiros no Chile. 1 Ago 73. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_37A\_241. This report describes Cerveira’s appearance, and his and Onofre Pinto’s addresses in Santiago, Chile.

weakened and did not represent much of a threat to the military government. Therefore, the regime's insistence on a narrative that demonized movements of opposition served the purpose of scaring the population and keeping them contrary to armed resistance.

Many exiles who were members of resistance movements also established residency in Cuba. Even though the plan of some expelled servicemen in exile was initially to acquire guerilla training in Cuba and return to Brazil to fight the dictatorship, as the military regime weakened the movements domestically, militants took longer to return to Brazil than they had anticipated. After about forty days in Algiers, Darcy Rodrigues moved to Cuba to meet his family, who were in the island since 1969, and he became a math teacher in Havana. He also had different jobs, including in construction, school security and farming of bananas, oranges and tobacco.<sup>19</sup>

Although the intelligence records suggest that the revolutionaries in exile were maximizing their organizational capacities during the 1970s, the interviews I collected suggest otherwise. Many interviewees, in exile and in Brazil, claim that the most important task they were trying to attain especially after the 1970s was surviving. Nóbrega and Rodrigues, for example, suggest that they already knew that the movements of resistance were weakened, and they would not be successful in defeating the regime by mid 1970s. Nóbrega claims that after he was exiled he decided to break with VPR and with the resistance movement in Brazil, as he did not agree with the direction the organization started to follow.<sup>20</sup> In the few pages of his biography that deal with life in exile, Rodrigues does not mention resistance. The description of his time in Cuba shows that Rodrigues spent his years in the island waiting for the demise of the Brazilian military rule.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Antonio Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 167.

<sup>20</sup> Arquivo Nacional, CISA, José Araújo da Nóbrega – Entrevista. 28 Jan 1980. BR\_AN\_BSB\_VAZ\_128A\_79, 9.

<sup>21</sup> “Sentia o tempo passar e nada da Ditadura Militar cair, propiciando seu retorno ao convívio de parentes e amigos”. Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy*, 166.

The capturing of many members of the resistance in the beginning of the 1970s gave an important advantage to the regime. Through torture, blackmail and promises of a better life, they were able to turn a few members of the guerrilla movement into regime informants. José Anselmo dos Santos and Alberi Vieira dos Santos are only a couple of examples of dictatorship opponents who shifted loyalty to the regime after they were captured and offered deals. Anselmo dos Santos, popularly known as “cabo Anselmo”, had been a president of the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB). Expelled from the Navy in the wake of the coup, Anselmo became an important leader in the resistance movement. However, in the beginning of the 1970s was captured by the regime, became an informant to the regime and was responsible for providing intelligence that led to the incarceration and killing of several members of the resistance, including the killing of six members of VPR in Pernambuco’s countryside in January 1973, episode that became known as the massacre of São Bento Farm.<sup>22</sup>

In his biography, Anselmo dos Santos claims that since his involvement in the Sailors Association in 1964, the role of leader in the movement called on his ego and made him feel important. He claimed to have gotten involved in the movement “*de gaiato*”, or without fully considering what he was becoming a part of.<sup>23</sup> He also suggested that as he hid from the regime after the coup and met the leaders of the resistance movements, especially the ones who believed in the guerrilla struggle, he started to understand that they did not have Brazil’s interests in mind. He claimed that since 1964 he understood that the resistance movements, with their “fanaticism and propaganda,” would deceive people and hide the “real totalitarian goals of the armed left.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Campos, *O Massacre da Granja de São Bento*. Recently published, the author provides detailed information on the episodes that led to the massacre of these VPR members.

<sup>23</sup> José Anselmo dos Santos, *Cabo Anselmo: Minha Verdade* (São Paulo: Matrix Editora, Kindle Edition, 2015), Kindle Location 1178.

<sup>24</sup> Anselmo dos Santos, *Cabo Anselmo*, Kindle Location 2235.

He justified his actions of becoming an informant by blaming the resistance movement. Throughout his book he refrained from speaking ill of specific people and, instead, focuses on explaining to the reader how the guerrilla needed to be stopped or it would cause too much destruction. In his words, “they [the “leftist fanatics”] must be demobilized or sacrificed, eliminated, killed in the name of the public safety and its set purpose.”<sup>25</sup> Anselmo dos Santos claimed that if he helped the regime to catch its opponents, the attacks from the left would stop, and that would facilitate the democratization process.<sup>26</sup> He, however, never explained whether he ever attempted to influence the movement in any way in order to make it more pacific. He made himself seem to be the victim of forces beyond his control. He claimed that he was never able to choose his own path after the coup and used personal and “altruistic” excuses—that he needed to stop the “terrorists”—to justify his collaboration with the regime.<sup>27</sup> According to his narrative, he only started to exercise agency when he decided to become an informant. The entire biography reads as anti-communist propaganda and represents his attempt to convince the reader that instead of a communist who betrayed his comrades, he needed to be seen as a hero, a sailor who was first deceived by leftist ideologies and then who decided to act on his moral convictions.

Thus, with the support of informants like cabo Anselmo and an effective intelligence apparatus, by the mid 1970s the military regime had annihilated the guerrilla movement in Brazil. Like Nóbrega and Rodrigues, the expelled servicemen who lived in exile, sought to find employment opportunities and wait for the end of military rule in Brazil. While some decided to stay connected to discussions about democratization and amnesty, others decided to wait more passively. Nevertheless, by the mid 1970s most former servicemen who got involved in the

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<sup>25</sup> Anselmo dos Santos, *Cabo Anselmo*, Kindle Location 2422.

<sup>26</sup> Anselmo dos Santos, *Cabo Anselmo*, Kindle Location 2282.

<sup>27</sup> Anselmo dos Santos, *Cabo Anselmo*, Kindle Location 2274.

guerrilla fight in Brazil had either been killed, as was the case of Pires Cerveira, Lamarca, and Onofre Pinto, or had already understood that the guerrilla movement was no longer an option for that context. Due to their status as political exiles, some expelled servicemen who found safe haven in a nation that had not been taken by a military dictatorship were able to find employment and opportunities to study. However, others were not able to adapt to their host countries and even tried to return to Brazil, as was the case of José Wilson da Silva—examined in the next section.

### **Working as a Potential Terrorist in Brazil**

In Brazil, the regime treated expelled officers and soldiers who did not join the guerrilla movement as potential participants of opposition movements. As the military leaders made efforts to strengthen the regime, in 1967 they created National Security Law number 314, which determined that individuals who were accused of political crimes against national security would not be allowed to exercise their profession and would not be allowed to be employed by private or public institutions.<sup>28</sup> This law had devastating consequences for the expelled servicemen who stayed in Brazil. Not only were they prevented from continuing their military careers, they were also not allowed not hold formal employment outside the armed forces. A document from DOPS São Paulo, for example, shows that in October 1969 the department was investigating the hiring of former sergeant Santinho Alves Pescinelli by a security company called SEPTM. The document asked that this company be investigated for its true intentions in hiring expelled

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<sup>28</sup> Câmara dos Deputados, “Legislação Informatizada - Decreto-Lei nº 314, de 13 de março de 1967 - Publicação Original,” Accessed on January 19, 2018, <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/declei/1960-1969/decreto-lei-314-13-marco-1967-366980-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>.

military personnel.<sup>29</sup> DOPS agents believed that the company could be a potential site for subversion. They saw the gathering of expelled servicemen in a security company as suspicious and thought they could be organizing resistance movement against the dictatorship. Even though I could not discover how this case was solved, this document shows evidence that the regime continued investigating expelled servicemen and considering them as potential terrorists after they transitioned to different careers.

The interviews I conducted, and those I consulted at CPDOC, show that Law 314 was enforced in different ways. Expelled servicemen who had received more education in the armed forces, the ones who studied to become officers, and the ones who held a higher social status, were able to use social capital to resist and endure being harassed by the military regime and its security forces. Thus, many former servicemen who had the support of family and friends and/or who had acquired resources prior to their expulsion had better chances to endure the regime's harassment throughout this era. At any rate, even former servicemen who held high status were creative and found ways around the national security law that aimed to prevent them from holding formal employment.

Former brigadier Francisco Teixeira, for example, was imprisoned in the wake of the coup and for a second time after the establishment of AI-5. His second time being imprisoned, however, was significantly different from the first. While in 1964 another brigadier approached him to take him to prison, in 1969 three policemen threatened to publicly beat Teixeira in front of his house if he resisted imprisonment, which shows a clear difference in police approach after the AI-5.<sup>30</sup> Teixeira was taken to an Army battalion, and at first, he was incommunicable. After a

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<sup>29</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, Departamento de Ordem Política e Social, "Pedido de Busca n. 1257/69," 50-Z-9-9939.

<sup>30</sup> Francisco Teixeira, depoimento, 285.

while his wife and grandchildren started to visit him. At this moment, his son Aluísio, who was living clandestinely for being considered a subversive, was also imprisoned. Aluísio had already been questioned and tortured by the time Teixeira was released from prison. In order to prevent his son from being tortured again in prison, Teixeira called several colleagues who he knew were still in active duty in the armed forces and asked them to help Aluísio. Teixeira also asked Nelson Barbosa, a Military Justice General Attorney, for help. Barbosa took the former officer to talk to the prosecutor of his son's case, called him "Brigadier Teixeira," said he was a "brother" to him, and told the prosecutor to do whatever he could for Teixeira's son.<sup>31</sup> The expelled brigadier claims he did not know if these contacts helped but during the second questioning session Aluísio was not tortured, and he was not as badly treated while he remained imprisoned.

This shows how personal relationships that were created before 1964 were still important at this moment and how social capital helped expelled servicemen move throughout Brazilian society while they were still considered potential terrorists during the era of military rule. Thus, although Teixeira was still considered a subversive character by the regime, his status as a former Brigadier and the relationships he had established as a high-ranking officer in the Air Force were determining to the ways in which he could still act and move in Brazilian society.

This did not mean former high-ranking officers faced no social constraints. Thanks to personal connections he had established prior to the military coup, Paulo Pinto Guedes found a position at a computer company called Cirus Impresso Contínuo. While he was working for this business, the state bank Banco do Brasil issued a document communicating that it would not work with companies that hired individuals who had been punished by the regime's institutional acts. Guedes claims that even though his employer protested the situation, in order to avoid

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<sup>31</sup> Francisco Teixeira, depoimento, 287.

embarrassment for the company, which would had to explain itself to the regime, he resigned from his position in 1970.<sup>32</sup> After this event, however, he was able to stay in this same company as manager, a position of lower status. He claimed that the regime did not want him to occupy a position of high status, yet he was still able to hold employment at Cirus Impresso Contínuo. Guedes was prevented from occupying a position of prestige. Nevertheless, he still had access to employment.

Although some expelled officers were able to attain material opportunities at certain moments in spite of the regime's restraints, at different moments they faced more difficulties to do so. In 1973, Guedes, who was able to continue holding employment even after the regime created Law 314, had trouble acquiring a Brazilian passport to visit his daughter who was living in Algeria. On a different occasion, he received a regular identity document with an error and tried to have it fixed, but regime agents interrogated him about his status as an expelled Army officer. Whenever he needed to move within the bureaucracies of the Brazilian government to get a simple document, government officials would question him on why he had his political rights revoked. Every time something like this happened he had to re-experience what he had been through and remember people around him that he was imprisoned and was now a pariah in Brazilian society.<sup>33</sup>

The mobility constrains many expelled officers were subjected to throughout military rule could be sporadic, as in Guedes' case, but they were often also periodic. In 1966, Ivan Cavalcanti Proença started to be required to report to DOPS every three months to testify about his professional and personal activities, including giving information about what he did during

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<sup>32</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, depoimento, 484.

<sup>33</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, depoimento, 506.

his leisure time and who were his political contacts.<sup>34</sup> During the first sessions, he claimed he answered the agents' questions "correctly." However, when he realized doing so was harming him professionally, Proença stopped answering the agents' questions. The police started visiting his employers and demanded school directors to dismiss him from teaching positions. On several occasions, DOPS agents also secretly followed Proença in his leisure activities, such as soccer matches at ranches and clubs.<sup>35</sup> Based on the former officer's biographical accounts, it seems that he was subjected to consistent surveillance due to the change in his status from expelled serviceman to university student. The regime was concerned that he would use the university as a space of resistance. Proença, however, claimed that was never the case, as he never participated in the student movement.<sup>36</sup>

Wilson da Silva experienced the challenges of exile in Uruguay and also in Brazil, as he returned home in 1971, seven years after the start of the dictatorship. In exile, as a member of the resistance movement, he lived in places funded by Goulart and Brizola, and also in the houses of Uruguayans who supported the opposition movements in Brazil. When he had a disagreement with Brizola and left the resistance movement, he moved to the countryside with his family to work in farming. However, his farm failed financially, and he had to search for other sources of employment in Uruguay. He finally found employment at an industry, where he stayed for four years. Whenever Wilson da Silva talked about his family at this time, he expressed shame for, as a man, not being able to successfully provide for his wife and children. One year after he moved to Uruguay, when he moved to the countryside, he said he had to "give" his family "back" to his

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<sup>34</sup> Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64*, 148.

<sup>35</sup> Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64*, 149.

<sup>36</sup> Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64*, 152. In Proença's biography, he lists all persecutions that he was subjected throughout military rule, from being prevented to apply for jobs in the public arena, to being fired from private schools.

parents-in-law, with “interest.” Although it is not clear what he meant by “with interest”, Da Silva treats his family as property that he was not able to keep due to his failure to sustain them. When he found employment at an industry, his family returned to Uruguay.<sup>37</sup>

Employment, however, was not stable and in 1970 Da Silva moved from Durazno back to Montevideo and worked for another company for one year. Da Silva claims he was not satisfied with his situation because as a political exile in Uruguay he felt imprisoned in a “fenceless jail.”<sup>38</sup> His impatience and eagerness to return to Brazil combined with political instability in Uruguay in the beginning of the 1970s were the main factors leading to his return to Rio Grande do Sul when he was still a wanted man in his home country. Da Silva decided to return legally and respond to his criminal processes. He went to the Brazilian consulate in Montevideo and asked to return. In Brazil he was first held at Porto Alegre’s DOPS for thirty days, and then was transferred to an Army facility.<sup>39</sup> Between 1971 and 1972 he responded to legal processes and was kept as a prisoner for one year and two months. He did not explain in detail his employment activities after this period in his interview or in his biography, only mentioning that he separated from his wife, moved to Rio Grande do Sul’s countryside, tried to work in a few other jobs before he finally ended up working with property sales. Like other expelled servicemen, he also claims that Law 314 prevented him from finding stable employment.<sup>40</sup> According to him, the generals in power expelled officers and soldiers from the armed forces and persecuted them aiming to eliminate them from society, driving them into marginality or into resistance movements.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> José Wilson da Silva, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 2, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> José Wilson da Silva, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 2, 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 158.

<sup>40</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 165.

<sup>41</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 166.

Therefore, even though these former officers had to endure the restraints the military government imposed onto their lives, due to connections they were able to establish or to their status as former military officers, they were still able to move in society and attain material gains in creative ways. Servicemen who had not been part of the “*oficialato*” were not able to move in Brazilian society in the same ways as former officers. Sergeants who participated in guerrilla activities had their own network of support they could rely on. Nóbrega, for example, and a group of political prisoners who were sent to Algiers, received financial aid from a wealthy political exile. These funds allowed them to move from Algeria to Chile in 1970.<sup>42</sup> These revolutionary connections were their social capital. However, many sergeants who stayed in Brazil and decided not to resist the dictatorship through guerrilla tactics did not have such a wide network of support as the members of the resistance movements and officers. They experienced more difficulties in accessing good opportunities during this era and had to be more creative to survive military rule.

After sergeant Almoré Cavalheiro was freed from prison and expelled from the Army, he returned to Porto Alegre and reentered law school, which he had started when he was still a sergeant in 1962-1963. After being captured and freed for a second time in 1964 he decided not to get involved in any political activity while the military were still in power. He arrived at this decision when his girlfriend was captured to be interrogated, and he decided he did not want to put himself or anyone close to him in that situation again. The regime, however, continued treating him as a potential terrorist. He started working for a club/fraternity of Army officers to recruit more members, but the Army learned about it and soon ordered the group to fire not only him, but other expelled servicemen who were working in the same position. Although he was not

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<sup>42</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

able to formally continue working there, he worked out a system with the club's manager where Cavalheiro continued exerting the same function, but his girlfriend would sign documents as if she had done the work. After this, he also worked selling property. In his professional life, Cavalheiro was able to trick the regime and still be able to work informally. However, the police constantly surveilled and harassed him, capturing him several times. Even when he tried to travel to Uruguay in 1966 for his honeymoon, agents from the Brazilian regime captured him. He was taken to an Uruguayan Army headquarter and questioned. On another occasion, when he finished his law degree in the end of the 1960s and was chosen to be class valedictorian, the Army threatened to imprison him again if he gave a public speech, afraid he would use this position to speak against the military leaders. On graduation day, he claims the Army sent armed troops to surround the event and intimidate him. But since he decided to write a speech without explicit political content, the police did not approach him or interrupt the event.<sup>43</sup>

The former sailors and marines I interviewed were also surveilled and harassed by the regime after being expelled from their military ranks and also had trouble finding employment. One of the elements that helped many of these Navy servicemen was their affiliation with the Sailors and Marines Association (AMFNB), which provided them with the social capital to survive through the dictatorship. Even Paulo Novaes Coutinho, who was not a member of the association and only participated in their notorious meeting at the steel workers' union days before the coup, later formed links with the resistance movement that benefitted him. Right after he received a conditional release from prison, his lawyer instructed him to disappear because the Navy would find a way to imprison him again. With his brother's help, he travelled to Itapetinga, in Bahia's countryside, where he hid for years, but where he also joined the Communist Party.

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<sup>43</sup> Almoré Zock Cavalheiro, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 6, 2015.

Since he was afraid the military government would find him, he started travelling around Brazil. His brother purchased a truck and he transported cargo between Recife, Salvador and São Paulo. He took advantage of this occupation to also deliver clandestine newspapers from the Communist Party.

In 1971 Coutinho claims that government agents went looking for him in Bahia, but he was travelling, and the police only found his father and brother, who later told him about their visit.<sup>44</sup> He returned to Rio de Janeiro where he worked as a travelling vendor for a while. All of the employment opportunities he found were clandestine. He also claims to have travelled without proper identification for more than ten years. Only after 1977, as the movement for amnesty became stronger, with the help of a lawyer he was able to have his conviction cancelled, which put him back into legality.<sup>45</sup> But up until the end of the 1970s Coutinho worked clandestinely and escaped further imprisonment with the help of family and friends from the Communist Party. His relationships were the main resource that he had to survive military rule. As Coutinho, the network formed in the resistance movements also helped other expelled sailors, such as Alípio Ribeiro, who stayed in Rio de Janeiro for some time after being released from prison, but also moved from the city afraid that the military authorities would find him and imprison him again. Members of the resistance movement in São Paulo invited him to stay at a small farm in São Paulo's countryside, which served as a safe house for members of the resistance movement who were hiding from the regime.<sup>46</sup>

Low-ranking soldiers who did not participate in political association or movements endured even worse conditions to survive military rule than many of the sailors who participated

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<sup>44</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>46</sup> José Alípio Ribeiro, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 13, 2017.

in the AMFNB, as they did not have the support of other groups who were enduring a similar situation. Non-politically active expelled soldiers were isolated from movements of resistance and had few members of their family and friends they could rely on during this era. They did not have a network of solidarity built in the resistance movement, and they were very young and had not had the chance to build a material life for themselves by the time they were expelled. When officers were expelled from the military, they were relatively older, had received the wages of officers for at least a few years and had faced a better financial situation if compared to low-ranking soldiers. Guedes, for example, had already purchased an apartment when he was expelled.<sup>47</sup> Thus, in 1964 he did not lose his home. When low-ranking soldiers were expelled they left the military without any material resources.

### **The Cases of Low-Ranking Soldiers from the Army and Air Force**

Low-ranking soldiers have the most distinct experiences and sentiments towards the armed forces compared to the rest of the servicemen I interviewed. The memory they constructed on the period is especially informed by the period post-1985. While the officers, non-commissioned officers, sailors and marines I interviewed were reincorporated into the military ranks after democratization, these low-ranking soldiers were not. Their memory on military rule, thus, is heavily shaped by whether they received reparations from the democratic state after 1985, and especially whether they were reincorporated into the military ranks. Receiving formal state recognition and reparations for being considered political subversives drastically informed the ways they remembered military rule. Almost all of the low-ranking soldiers I interviewed cried

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<sup>47</sup> Paulo Pinto Guedes, depoimento, 481.

or had trouble talking about their experiences, showing remembering military rule was still painful to many of them.

In the case of officers and non-commissioned officers, only a few of them cried during interviews and only when they talked about friends who died, as was the case of Darcy Rodrigues when he referred to Zanirato. As I showed on chapter three, Rodrigues suggests that he was able to come to terms with the state violence he was individually subjected to, even if he was still troubled by the destiny many of his comrades had to face. In the case of the low-ranking soldiers I interviewed, the physical and psychological toll of expulsion, torture and harassment they endured still drastically affected the ways in which they remembered military rule. Ultimately, they felt betrayed by the democratic governments established after 1985, which did not acknowledge or remedy the suffering they were subjected to. The servicemen who got reincorporated into the military ranks through amnesty laws, on the other hand, had closure, and although they still criticized military rule, many of them were able to talk about the period with a certain “distance” and put the violations they endured in their past.<sup>48</sup>

All officers and sergeants who I examine in this dissertation were expelled from the armed forces either in the wake of the coup or during the context of the guerrilla fight, and mainly by institutional act. This was also the case of all sailors and marines I interviewed, who were also expelled in 1964 due to their involvement with the sailors’ and marine’s movement. The low-ranking soldiers from the Army and Air Force I interviewed, however, were expelled for political reasons throughout the era of military rule and even after democratization—as is the

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<sup>48</sup> In terms of national collective memory, the cases of servicemen who the dictatorship expelled and harassed are largely absent. Although personally the higher-ranking officers and Navy sailors and marines I interviewed showed they had some closure, collectively they still feel for the friends who were killed and disappeared and for how absent these stories are from the Brazilian collective memory about the era of military rule. I will develop these ideas further on chapter six.

case of one of my interviewees. Robson Ferreira, for example, whom I briefly examine in the first paragraphs of this chapter, was only discharged from the Army in 1980. Soldiers I interviewed who were expelled from the Air Force claimed to have started being treated as “subversives” in 1964, 1966, 1969, 1979, 1980, 1982, and in one account even in 1987, two years after the end of military rule. Since these soldiers were not expelled by institutional act, many were never able to present documentation to prove they were expelled from the military for political reasons. The absence of low-ranking soldiers’ experiences in military documents and in the historical archives also contributed to how they built their memories about military rule. On chapters five and six I will continue examining this issue.

Low-ranking servicemen’s socioeconomic background was one of the most challenging aspects for surviving military rule. When they were pushed out of the armed forces many were not able to access resources or get support to construct another life for themselves. Furthermore, compared to the other sailors, marines, sergeants and officers I interviewed, the regime’s police forces tortured low-ranking soldiers from the Army and Air Force at a disproportionately higher rate. This was partially due to the fact that all low-ranking soldiers I interviewed were imprisoned but continued “serving” the armed forces for months, and even years after they were accused of subversion. Before many of them were formally discharged they were imprisoned and tortured inside the military barracks. Some endured this treatment for week or months, they were imprisoned, tortured, and then freed to resume their work as soldiers at a daily or weekly basis. Only months, and often years, later they were expelled from the forces.

The expulsions of former Air Force soldiers I interviewed were issued through Air Force Decree 1104. Many of these former soldiers believed their superiors wanted to expel them immediately after determining they were subversives but were prevented by this decree, which

required them to obey these soldiers' contracts with the Air Force for a few years. In addition, officers from all branches could keep low-ranking soldiers imprisoned for months before family members knew there was anything wrong, as often soldiers were required to stay in the barracks for service with no communication with the outside. It was also extremely difficult for these soldiers to prove human rights violations inside the military, since their superior officers had power inside the institution and whenever someone died or got hurt they claimed it happened while the soldier was in training. Many low-ranking soldiers who were accused of political subversion but who had no political ties were tortured and killed during military rule. However, differently from the officers, sergeants and sailors I have just examined, soldiers from the Air Force they endured more challenges surviving military rule since they had less social capital—were of low-income families, after redemocratization were not connected to political networks or to intellectual leftists who would know and care about their cases. Thus, if the experiences of officers and sergeants who actively opposed the dictatorship were neglected by the state for years, and continue being overlooked by the historical record, the case of low-ranking servicemen has received even less attention.<sup>49</sup>

Since the turn of the twentieth-century the military career has served as a way for many Brazilians to socially ascend and escape circumstances of poverty and destitution.<sup>50</sup> Even though there are many limitations to the opportunities the military career could provide to the men who entered the military as low-ranking soldiers, young men from low-income families in Brazil still aspired the soldier status. Many of the expelled Air Force soldiers I interviewed stated that the

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<sup>49</sup> In the next chapter I will also examine how Brazilian left also overlook these cases. Many officers who got reincorporated into the forces think these low-ranking servicemen do not deserve to be reincorporated because they did not actively oppose the dictatorship or did not participate in the movements in 1963 and 1964 to improve the situation of servicemen.

<sup>50</sup> Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood*, 5.

idea of becoming a serviceman captivated them; the dream of flying an airplane, or the mere thought of wearing the Air Force blue uniform, led them to choose military life. The military career also reflected many young men's ideal of masculinity. In the turn of the twentieth century, there was an effort from the Brazilian armed forces to change the population's perception about military service, as in the nineteenth century men felt the military draft imperiled their manhood. If the government and the armed forces wanted more men to commit to military service, the population had to see soldiering as something honorable. The armed forces were able to effect this change.<sup>51</sup>

The study of servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces during the Brazilian dictatorship shows that this change endured throughout the second part of the twentieth century, as soldiering was still considered honorable in this context. In the interviews I conducted the concept of honor was significant in the narratives of most former servicemen, who associated military life with honor. From soldiers to officers, all men I interviewed believed serving in the armed forces, in any capacity, was honorable. But for the low-ranking servicemen in particular, the armed forces represented one of the few "honorable" careers they were actually able to access in Brazilian society. Men from higher social classes had options, and when they decided on the military career they could spend time and resources to study and take the military exam to become an officer. However, young men who were not raised with access to decent secondary education and had to work to help their families financially were not competitive for openings in schools for officers or even sergeants. Furthermore, the education of an officer lasted years and many men claimed they could not spend years studying before taking active duty. Darcy Rodrigues, for example, claims that when he was accepted to the school of sergeants, one officer

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<sup>51</sup> Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood*, 208.

suggested he take the exam for the officers' military academy. Rodrigues, nevertheless, decided not to pursue the officer career because it would take him four years to graduate and start receiving a decent salary, while to become a sergeant he would graduate in one year.<sup>52</sup>

Low-ranking soldiers who entered the Army and Air Force as *soldados* and *cabos* counted on the military career provide them a better life with stability. Many of them, however, did not want to remain low-ranking soldiers, they had a career plan to ascend in the military ranks. Many of the men I interviewed claimed that while they were performing their duties as soldiers they were studying to take the sergeant's exam. Some of them passed the exam but were expelled from the forces before being able to start being trained as a sergeant. José Bezerra da Silva claimed he joined the Air Force because commercials in the radio and on television recruited soldiers with the promise they could build a career in the military.<sup>53</sup> Belmiro Demétrio claimed that his dream and purpose when he entered the Air Force as a soldier was to become an aviator and fighter pilot.<sup>54</sup> Laureano dos Santos told me that he took the exams to become a marine seven times before he finally decided to join the Air Force.<sup>55</sup> When these men were expelled from the forces they felt like their superior officers interrupted their dreams to build a military career, and they had to go back to a life that offered them few options.

Impediments to future career plans did not only present due to the lack of employment perspectives their communities already offered. Combined with the few opportunities was the fact that the military authorities were after them. Ferreira claims he took various exams in different public institutions. He was called to work at Petrobrás but was quickly fired due to "internal reasons," as the company claimed. Ferreira, however, was sure he was fired because the

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<sup>52</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>53</sup> José Bezerra da Silva, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

<sup>54</sup> Belmiro Demétrio, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

<sup>55</sup> Laureano dos Santos, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 23, 2015.

Air Force would not let any institutions hire him. He also took exams to work at the Brazilian Postal Service (Correios), but the company told him he had failed in the psychological tests—which, since he passed the other stages of the selection process, for him was the only way the company could deny him employment without openly saying it was for political reasons. Ferreira also claims he was stopped from working at Correios due to the influence of the Air Force in preventing him from getting employment.<sup>56</sup> With few options of employment, he had to work informally “*fazendo bicos*,” or performing short term jobs at different locations, without any stability. The same happened to Laureano dos Santos, who was expelled from the Air Force in 1970. At the time his superiors discharged him they did not give him any certificate that he had passed to the military reserves or a document stating he had been fired, and without this documentation he had trouble finding employment. For years he worked in short term jobs like Ferreira. Only in 1976 he was able to get a certificate that said he had worked as a soldier for the Air Force, and he was able to get a job as a construction worker. However, after one day in the job he was fired. When I interviewed him, he was sure that this happened because the company’s owner, who was an Army major, learned about his subversion accusations. Later he decided to become a private investigator and opened his own company, but until then the constraints he faced for being expelled from the Air Force prevented him from building a career outside of the military.<sup>57</sup>

When I interviewed Dailton Soares he did not discuss his work life after he left the Air Force. However, on the day of our interview he arrived hours later than expected bringing with him a box of pastries. He was late because he was selling pastry on the streets of the city:

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<sup>56</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

<sup>57</sup> Laureano dos Santos, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 23, 2015.

decades after his expulsion from the Air Force he was still doing *bicos* and struggling with his finances.<sup>58</sup> Another interviewee, Belmiro Demétrio tried to work at several metallurgical industries in Rio Grande do Sul, but since he did not have personal identification, as the Air Force did not give him his documents at the time of his expulsion, the industries did not employ him. Furthermore, he claims coronels controlled the industries and that they did not hire servicemen who had been expelled from the forces. He then moved to Santa Catarina, where an uncle helped him work at a furniture shop. When he was finally able to get his military certificate he moved to Rio de Janeiro, where he still lived at the time I interviewed him.<sup>59</sup> João Martins de Oliveira, who stayed in the Air Force from 1964 to 1967, was dishonorably discharged when his superiors discovered him talking about politics with other soldiers. He said he went through many hardships financially, even living as a homeless person downtown Rio de Janeiro. Months after he was discharged, he claims the lieutenant responsible for his expulsion approached him on an Air Force vehicle and shot him five times. After recovering from the gunshot wounds, and terrified of being killed, he escaped to the state of Paraíba where he stayed hidden for years before returning to Rio de Janeiro.<sup>60</sup> In the end of his interview, Oliveira made sure to tell me that even when he lacked money and food he never stole from anyone or used drugs, showing how important it was to show me that even when he was stripped of everything he did not lose his dignity. He wanted me to know that even in the lowest point of his life, even though the Air Force tried to strip him from his manhood, he did not become a dishonorable man.

A few soldiers also reported their marginalization process from the armed forces was different from some other soldiers because they were black. Although this was a subject that was

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<sup>58</sup> Dailton Soares, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 16, 2015.

<sup>59</sup> Belmiro Demétrio, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

<sup>60</sup> João Martins de Oliveira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

not explored by many black servicemen I interviewed, two of my interviewees claimed to be specifically targeted and harassed due to the color of their skin. The silences on race extend from government and military archives to oral interviews, and they reflect the myth that Brazil was a racial democracy, idea that was widespread throughout the twentieth century.<sup>61</sup> The armed forces in particular wished to reinforce the notion of military hierarchy, as, in theory, men were categorized by their status as soldiers, sergeants, junior officers or high-ranking officers. In practice, however, few Afro-Brazilians were able to reach the status as officers, and most occupied positions of sailors or soldiers.<sup>62</sup>

The military dictatorship also reinforced the idea of Brazil as a racial democracy inside and outside of military barracks. Civilians and soldiers would, then, be judged by their morally and honorability and not by the color of their skin. Although many authors have explored the fallacy of this idea, many sectors of Brazilian society incorporated and reproduced this myth as truthful, which explains why many black expelled soldiers do not discuss racism inside the armed forces.<sup>63</sup> Both Robson Ferreira and Dailton Soares claim they were the targets of racism in the Air Force at the time they were expelled. From recruiting to expulsion, Ferreira claimed he was called by racial slurs several times. When he was imprisoned his lieutenant explicitly told Ferreira he would ruin his life because he “did not like blacks or subversives.”<sup>64</sup> Whenever this lieutenant talked to him, he called him “*negro*,” or “*crioulo*.” Soares also claims that in the

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<sup>61</sup> For more on race and racismo in Brazil see Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães, *Racismo e Antirracismo No Brasil*. 3rd ed. (São Paulo: Editora 34, 2009), Peter Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood*, 2001; Paulina Alberto, *Terms of Inclusion: Black Intellectuals in Twentieth Century Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Jerry Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness: Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>62</sup> The Revolt of the Whip, which took place in 1910, exemplifies the role of Afro-Brazilians in the armed forces. For more see Nascimento, *Cidadania, Cor e Disciplina na Revolta dos Marinheiros de 1910*.

<sup>63</sup> See Christen A. Smith, *Afro-Paradise: Blackness, Violence and Performance in Brazil* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2017).

<sup>64</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

barracks he noticed that most of the black men serving the military were low-ranking soldiers, and that very few were able to become high-ranking officers. Although subtler, the ways they remember military rule and how it affected their lives were also influenced by enduring racism while the regime harassed them.

The fact that these low-ranking soldiers were never formally involved with movements of resistance against the dictatorship also factored greatly in how they remembered military rule. During their interviews they actively attempted to convince me that they endured state political persecution, and in order to do so many of them claimed that while they were in the armed forces they would talk to each other about certain politicians the dictatorship labeled as subversive and about democratization, showing they were politically conscious. However, when I asked them if they ever participated in political parties or if they had ever consistently participated in discussions against the dictatorship, all of them said no and told me they had only talked about political figures or discussed democratization informally with other soldiers during their leisure time. The low-ranking soldiers who attempted to convince me they were opposing the dictatorship did so in order to convince me of their value; and even though I kept my interview questions open and allowed them to drive their own narratives, I believe many of them often emphasized that they opposed the dictatorship because that was what they believed I wanted to hear. Even though their superior officers accused many of these low-ranking soldiers of communist tendencies, I have not seen evidence that support this claim. Low-ranking soldiers I interviewed stated they were not connected to any communist parties or study groups during the era of the dictatorship. Furthermore, up until the time of their interviews many of them had no familiarity with leftist theories or thinkers.

Many aspects of these men's narratives show that they did not know individuals who resisted military rule and that they were not aware of the actions of movements of opposition. One tendency that points out to this unfamiliarity with the resistance groups is that they reproduced inaccurate information about them. Antonio Rodrigues da Costa, for example, claimed that in the end of the 1970s his superiors accused him of participating in a political group called "Grupo dos Onze"—which operated especially from 1963 to 1964, before the military coup, and that had been disbanded for years by 1970. He also incorrectly claimed that Grupo dos Onze, which operated to mobilize the population in favor of Goulart's social and economic reforms, was a "group of extermination," and that he was never a part of it because he was a man "of peace." He claimed he had been involved in the movement "Diretas Já" in the end of the 1970s, when this movement's demonstrations only started in 1983. As Rodrigues da Costa, many interviewees reproduced the dictatorship's discourse that its opponents were actually terrorists. Instead of choosing to criticize the armed forces for its authoritarianism, these former soldiers chose to distance themselves from guerrillas and leftist groups that the regime portrayed as subversive groups, and they wanted to highlight that they had never used violence or conspired against the military regime.

Even though these young soldiers were not participants of guerrillas and leftist organizations, their narratives still show they endured state violence during the dictatorship. Most aspects of their interviews align with testimonies about how the regime harassed civilians. For example, Rodrigues da Costa claims that one week before he was taken to be interrogated a bearded man approached him in his house claiming he wanted to talk to him about resisting the dictatorship. Days later, when he was imprisoned, a man interrogating him in the Army revealed that he was the man who visited Rodrigues da Costa at his house. Many other soldiers claim the

authorities used a similar approach to investigate them. José Bezerra da Silva had a police agent come to his house, talk to his family, and go through his belongings claiming he was Bezerra's friend from the Air Force.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, when taken to be interrogated about opposing the dictatorship, intelligence agents questioned them about political statements they had made, or “subversive” material they owned—such as records, books or pamphlets. They also claim to have been expelled from the Army and Air Force after being interrogated on these matters. When talking about how mistreated they were in the barracks and about their experiences with expulsion these former soldiers were particularly frustrated because they did not believe they deserved to be expelled, since they had never opposed the dictatorship, and also because they had still not been compensated by the state for being unjustly accused of subversion.

Beyond facing challenges to holding formal employment due to their socio-economic conditions and continuous regime surveillance, many former low-ranking servicemen I interviewed claimed that after being subjected to torture sessions they suffered from illnesses and from injuries, which prevented them from being able to perform regular services. Antonio Rodrigues da Costa, who was a paratrooper from 1977 to 1982, was subjected to tortures in a training site. After learning he was discussing politics with other soldiers, his superiors took him to a training site in the woods and put him in cold water during winter as an effort to make him talk about his subversive connections, even though he claimed he never had any. He was also tied to a tree on rainy nights and beaten repeatedly. Although he said he lost count of the days he was at the training site, he estimated the questioning lasted about a week. Months later, when Da Costa was able to get medical treatment, the doctors discovered he had no pulse, and later they diagnosed him with a disease called Takayasu Arteritis. According to Da Costa, at the time he

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<sup>65</sup> José Bezerra da Silva, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

entered the Army he was in perfect healthy and only after the tortures the disease manifested. He claims that due to the violence he was subjected to, the lack of work opportunities and his illness, he was not able to work for twenty years after he was expelled. When he was finally able to be formally employed he worked only for a few years and the state authorized him to retire because of his illness.<sup>66</sup> Norberto Batista Simões, who was imprisoned and tortured at Galeão Air Base, said he developed heart and lung disease, a skin disease called psoriasis, and he lost part of his hearing during the time he served the Air Force. Like Da Costa, he also said his superiors used cold water to torture him. However, differently from other expelled servicemen, Simões found employment in civil aviation to work with equipment. But even there he claims the Air Force had him under surveillance.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to the physical consequences of torture, the psychological marks of marginalization appeared strongly in my interviewee's narratives. Most of the former servicemen I interviewed expressed sadness when talking about life under military rule. However, former low-ranking servicemen sobbed and opened up to me in a different way than former sergeants and officers I interviewed. One low-ranking soldier I will keep anonymous because he did not discuss these issues with his own family revealed that he became suicidal as a result of the tortures he endured. The suicidal thoughts manifested at the time of his imprisonment, but also decades later. For many of these former soldiers, these interviews seem to have been cathartic, as they had never told their stories to anyone, not even their own families. During the era of the dictatorship they were not able to tell anyone because talking about human rights violations the Brazilian state committed was considered a subversive act. However, even after democratization

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<sup>66</sup> Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, October 6, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> Norberto Batista Simões, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

many never told people they trusted about what happened to them because they were either afraid of what the armed forces could still do, or they were ashamed of what their relatives could think of them.

Many of the former soldiers I interviewed felt that their experiences with expulsion and the tortures many of them endured imperiled their manhood. They believed that if they told their relatives what their peers inside the armed forces had done to them, this would change the way their fathers, mothers, wives or sons and daughters saw them. I interviewed one former soldier who claimed his superior officers tortured and raped him but that for decades he did not share the rape portion of the torture with anyone. He was finally only able to talk about it with a psychologist, but he asserted he would never tell his family.

### **Surviving Military Rule: Psychological Marks**

As I started conducting interviews with former servicemen I started to evaluate the deeper ways in which the dictatorship affected their lives. Even though I focused on asking them questions about their past, the signs of trauma in the present were still very visible. There were certain topics of conversation that affected them in particular. One of them, as I explored on chapter three, was discussing close friends who had died or disappeared during the era of military rule. This was not only true for servicemen who participated in the guerrilla movement, as Darcy Rodrigues and Carlos Pittoli, since low-ranking servicemen also demonstrated distress over the deaths of their colleagues. Rodrigues da Costa, for example, became sad when discussing the story of one colleague who was killed by their superior officers. According to Da Costa, one day in 1977 when he met with a group of six to ten soldiers he started to encourage all of them to fight for “a better Brazil,” and on the following week the Army took all of those soldiers to

questioning. One of them, Azevedo, was from the state of Rio Grande do Sul and, according to Da Costa, his birthplace influenced his superiors into seeing him as a communist. After questioning these soldiers, the Army officers sent them to a survival training in the woods, and some officers tortured his friend Azevedo, who died a few days later from the injuries he sustained when he was tortured. Da Costa claims the officers who tortured Azevedo called him “Brizola’s son,” hit him and ordered him to turn over other subversive soldiers. The torturers then locked Azevedo in a wooden box in the mud and later Da Costa helped him to get out. When he did so Azevedo told Da Costa he had not informed on anyone, and that he knew he was weak and would die from his injuries. Army officers took Azevedo from the training site and Da Costa never saw him again. Days later the Army officers informed the troop of Azevedo’s death, claiming he had not survived due to the intensity of the military “training.”

Da Costa claimed that when Azevedo died he “felt guilty.” As he finished telling me about the role he had in his friend’s death, he started crying and seemed ashamed and uncomfortable. He continued saying that he knew Azevedo “died not to snitch,” and that he would have been killed even if he had given the names of other soldiers who had had “subversive” conversations to his superiors. Nevertheless, even though Da Costa was rationally aware of this fact, he still showed signs of guilt. He kept trying to convince me that there was nothing he could have done, since the Paratrooper Brigade was very violent and did not need the help of any other governmental agencies like the DOPS to torture and kill. His attempts to convince me seemed to have been actual reminders for himself. He continued the interview saying that during the following year he cried a lot as he could not erase the image of Azevedo being tortured from his memory. Da Costa claimed that Azevedo’s death was the most remarkable experience he had ever lived. I believe that since the episode he had been trying to

come to terms with the fact that there was little he could have done to actually help Azevedo, but that up until the time of the interview he still felt guilty about the role he thought he had in his friend's death.

When remembering the most challenging and hurtful moments of their lives during the period of military rule, the low-ranking soldiers I interviewed manifested more ongoing pain than officers and sergeants. For example, when I asked Nóbrega about difficult moments in his life—being almost killed in Brazil and in Chile, and how he felt when he learned another political prisoner who was supposed to be killed at Cajón del Maipo with him survived—his eyes watered. But the episode seemed more distant to him. In the case of former low-ranking soldiers, some of them wept during their interviews and told me the dictatorship destroyed their lives. I believed they expressed such discontent for the armed forces because they were physically and psychologically hurt and were never included in the amnesty law, but also because they were accused and sentenced for “crimes” they never committed. The low-ranking soldiers I interviewed felt the armed forces wronged them because they were accused of participating in resistance movements even though they never actively opposed the dictatorship while serving the military.

In addition, former low-ranking soldiers from the Air Force told me in interviews that many soldiers who endured similar state violence disappeared or were not able to endure the burden of their experiences, started to drink, used drugs, and many died because they were not able to overcome those situations. In João Martins de Oliveira's case, as discussed, he was homeless in Rio de Janeiro for a while but was able to come out of that situation. However, the former soldiers remembered that many of their colleagues did not have the same fate as Oliveira. Losing these colleagues throughout the years was also traumatic.

Therefore, expulsion from the armed forces and the continuous violence of the military regime created traumas in former servicemen's lives they were able to overcome or not depending on their socioeconomic status, solidarity networks they build among family and friends, and on their ability to find employment. All of these resources were also able to help them overcome—or not—the most striking traumatic experience that emerged from expulsion and marginalization, which was the ways former servicemen viewed and identified themselves as men.

### **Imperiled Manhood**

The interviews I collected showed that expelled servicemen's experiences and perceptions about the era of military rule varied greatly. One of the only factors that unified the experiences of officers and soldiers, politicized and non-politicized servicemen alike was that they were men who were expelled from the armed forces. The process of expulsion influenced these men's lives and how they perceived themselves. Being subjected to torture, imprisonment, and especially expulsion, took from them the space they had chosen to perform manhood. When soldiers, sailors, marines, sergeants and officers chose to build a career in the military they elected the stage where they would be men and perform their masculinity.<sup>68</sup> When they were expelled, that stage was not available to them any longer.

Being a man during the second part of the twentieth century in Brazil had specific meanings in society. One's abilities to culturally fulfill the requirements of being a man, which

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<sup>68</sup> Matthew Gutmann has argued that “masculinity is what men think, say and do to distinguish themselves as men,” but he also shows that there is a negotiation process in which certain men are able to argue that certain qualities of traits they carry make them more masculine than others. Matthew Gutmann, *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 3. In Brazil and Latin America masculinity has been usually associated with toughness, stoicism, acquisitiveness and self-reliance. Men who carry these specific traits have argued for their “superior masculinity.”

included providing to one's family, and being courageous and independent were central characteristic of manhood in Brazilian society. Men who had decided to serve in the armed forces incorporated all these requirements and more, as, in theory, they were not only willing to sacrifice their lives and provide for their own families, but for the entire nation. While culturally men were expected to protect and provide for women and children, servicemen were responsible for protecting the nation. While there are limitations to how sustainable these ideals are, the willingness to commit to these principles was expected of them. Throughout the twentieth century, but especially since World War II, the military career became seen as an honorable profession for men in Brazil. Both men and women saw the armed forces as a place for "honorable and strong men" who were willing to give their own lives to protect the nation. In the interviews I collected, when referring to the time they served in the armed forces most men talked with pride. They were proud of their decision to serve the nation, and if given the opportunity, most said they would return to military service. For these men, military service gave them a defining view to how they understood their manhood. This connects to Judith Butler's definition of gender performativity as "the way in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself", and "not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration."<sup>69</sup>

Servicemen knew what was expected of them as men and performed the ritual of manhood in the armed forces every day, from dressing up in uniform, to performing the specific tasks they did in the barracks. In the moment they were expelled from the Army, Air Force, or

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<sup>69</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Tenth Anniversary Edition* (New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, Kindle Edition, 2002), location 186.

Navy the stage where they performed their gender was stripped from them. From that moment they started to search for new spaces and ways to perform their gender. The ways in which many servicemen reacted to their expulsions informed how they resolved the internal crisis the expulsions caused. Some of them, as explored on chapter three, decided to join guerrilla movements. In doing so, they were able to transfer performativity from the armed forces to the guerrilla fight and reclaim their masculinity. In the context of the guerrilla warfare they transferred the same ideas of “serving and protecting” they used from the armed forces to the resistance movement. If before expulsion servicemen believed they were protecting the population by being soldiers, now they were doing it as a para-military force to protect the population against “reactionary officers” who took power by force. Furthermore, they continued operating in similar ways as they did inside the military, strategizing actions and conducting training. The most visible aspects of how they performed masculinity were still in place in the guerrilla training, shooting trainings, actions to rob banks, conduct kidnappings, and in the trainings in the rural areas that involved surviving in the woods with scarce resources, as explored on chapters two and three when I examine the Guerrilha do Caparaó and the VPR.

The amnesty and the reincorporation of some into the military ranks, which I will examine in detail on chapter five, were different processes that helped many expelled servicemen to deal with the traumas inflicted onto them in the context of their expulsions. When these men were expelled from the armed forces they felt like they had their manhood imperiled. Joining guerrillas and participating in non-violent resistance movements was one of the ways in which they reclaimed their masculinities. Receiving the benefits of the amnesty laws and broader state recognition of wrongdoing was another way they could say argue that they had always been honorable men, and now the state recognized it. Being called subversives and being told they did

not have any value was traumatic to the expelled servicemen, as when they were questioned about their loyalty to the armed forces many felt that their superiors were also questioning their honorability and their manhood, as these two qualities were interlocked. Certain expelled servicemen were able to overcome this trauma and find their value, which happened especially with individuals who at the time understood the ideological battle that was taking place in Brazil. The men who resisted during the first years of the dictatorship together with the MNR or the Caparaó Guerrilla Movement, for example, believed that the officers who took power were implementing a dictatorship and they immediately acted against it, reclaiming their place as men to continue protecting the nation and its population.

Nevertheless, over thirty years after democratization the majority of expelled low-ranking soldiers from the Army and Air Force I interviewed who were less politicized still expressed the belief that the tortures and marginalization process they were subjected to had imperiled their manhood. During the interviews I conducted with the former soldiers, while some seemed sad for having their honor questioned, others kept affirming how brave and honorable they were at the time they were expelled—which seemed like they were trying to affirm their manhood for me and for themselves. Robson Ferreira, for example, cried and got embarrassed when he told me that he got locked in a cubicle for days in the Air Force, complaining about how “humiliating” it was to be locked in a small space where he had to sleep, defecate and urinate all in the same place.<sup>70</sup> He claimed that this experience, combined with the tortures and other humiliations Ferreira was subjected too, made him feel extremely embarrassed as a man. He stated that he wished the Air Force had just not given him a pleasant experience, but instead it “destroyed” him. His interview showed the experiences he lived marked him for life, and that he

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<sup>70</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

was still in recovery over thirty years after the fact. Rodrigues da Costa, on the other hand, had a different approach to his narrative. Even though he also cried during his interview, he put on a brave face and kept affirming how strong and courageous he was when he served the Army. In his interview, he chose to counter the sentences about the violations and tortures he endured—which in his mind emasculated him—with stories that affirmed his “manliness.” Throughout the interview he claimed that the exam to become a paratrooper was extremely difficult, but that he passed and became one of the best paratroopers in his group. He also claimed that when he was persecuted he escaped from the military base where he was held. When the Army searched for him he hid for almost one month, and when the police was about to capture him he tricked them and escaped again. Lastly, he also claimed he was “one of the greatest fighters for a better Brazil.”<sup>71</sup>

By making these claims, Da Costa attempted to show that despite the torture and harassment he endured, he was still a man. He took control of his narrative and agency. He did not want his audience—me, on that occasion—to perceive him merely as a victim but as a man. He wanted to reclaim his masculinity, which Army officers tried to strip from him. Luiz Carlos Figueiredo, who had been expelled from the Navy in 1964 and received the benefits of the amnesty, had a similar approach to his interview process. Figueiredo, or Índio, as he liked being called, repeatedly stated he had become an intellectual after prison. He claims that during the five years he spent in prison he read books, learned about Marxism and leftist movements, and also about astronomy. He also suggested that I should have read Marx. When he was released, he claimed that he joined resistance movements and actively resisted the dictatorship. He wanted to make sure I understood not only his value in the history, but also that I was not speaking to

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<sup>71</sup> Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, October 6, 2016.

someone divested from such history. He tried to show that even though he did not have formal instruction or a graduate diploma, I should consider him a knowledgeable peer. This represented a slightly different understanding of masculinity where the interviewees wished to show they maintained control of their lives and of their masculinities. Both Da Costa and Figueiredo tried to take control of their narratives and show me their value as men. Their attempt to show control of their narratives, their lives, and their masculinities, nevertheless, cannot be separated from the fact that they were talking to me, a young Brazilian female historian who was pursuing a PhD degree in the United States. Their audience determined the ways in which they portrayed themselves and framed their narratives. The way they presented themselves as strong men was an attempt to balance the narrative that portrayed them as victims.

Lastly, the case of imperiled manhood of expelled servicemen is also connected to how they were denied the right to work. As stated previously, to have a job that allowed men to have families and to provide for them financially was one of the most important qualities that defined them as men.<sup>72</sup> Not being allowed to work made them feel less valued as men and made it more difficult for them to find a new space where they could perform masculinity. Wilson da Silva's account of "giving" his family "back" to his father in law indicates that at the time he felt as he had failed as a man. However, throughout the era of military rule and later he was able to secure employment, return to Brazil, and ultimately receive compensation for having been expelled from the military, which represented the most significant recognition of state wrongdoing. All of these "achievements" provided him with new spaces and situations where he could reaffirm himself as a man of honor.

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<sup>72</sup> See also Norma Fuller, "The Social Constitution of Gender Identity among Peruvian Men." *Men and Masculinities* 3, no. 3 (January 2001): 316–31.

## **Conclusion**

The servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces for political reasons were subjected to state violence not only during the period they served the military. After expulsion the regime continued surveilling them and treating them as terrorists or potential terrorists. In interviews these men expressed that living throughout this era was a challenge. Nevertheless, servicemen experienced the ongoing violence of the regime differently from one another. Higher-ranking soldiers had a better socioeconomic status or had been in the armed forces long enough to be able to acquire some economic stability. Low-ranking soldiers, however, endured the most challenges when trying to recover from their expulsion. If a low-ranking soldier was of low socioeconomic status, of Afro-Brazilian origin, or had been severely tortured, the challenges he had to overcome were even greater.

Expulsion from the armed forces and the challenging social conditions these men were subjected to afterwards led them to continue experiencing trauma. When they were expelled and denied access to the military and to the status of servicemen, the place and conditions where they had been performing masculinity was no longer available to them. After expulsion, and throughout their lifetimes, these men attempted to recover or recreate stages where which they could and would perform their masculinities. Some were able to recreate this stage participating in the guerrilla movement, in political organizing, acquiring new forms of employment, receiving recognition for being expelled from the military and benefitting from the amnesty laws. Yet, many did not have access to these spaces and thirty years after the end of the dictatorship continued feeling as if they were never able to recover from these violations. Therefore, the dictatorship transformed the lives of expelled servicemen not only by stripping them from formal employment but also altering the ways they understood themselves as men.

## CHAPTER 5. THE STRUGGLE FOR AMNESTY: INCOMPLETE TRANSITIONS FOR FORMER SOLDIERS

### Introduction

As I entered Darcy Rodrigues' apartment in Bauru, a city in the countryside of São Paulo, the former VPR militant welcomed me and invited me to sit on his couch. Before I could ask if I could record our conversation, he showed me a recent picture of him and the group he had graduated with in the school of sergeants in 1961. The picture was from a reunion he participated where the group celebrated fifty years since graduation. When I turned on my recorder he introduced himself as a captain on the military reserves, the title he received after receiving amnesty and being reincorporated into the Army.

Days before our meeting, I called Rodrigues and told him I was interested in learning about his experience with military rule, his expulsion from the Army and his life trajectory afterwards. As we met in his home, it surprised me that he immediately introduced himself as a military officer. He showed me the 50-year anniversary picture proud to be part of that group of sergeants and stated that after a lifetime of persecution his colleagues welcomed him back into the armed forces. Despite his complex history with the institution, retired servicemen from that group still treated him like one of them. Rodrigues explained that not everyone from the Army treated him well after he returned from exile, and a few individuals still tried to insult him calling him a communist and a guerrilla member. Yet, he claimed this was the exception, as for the most part he was accepted as part of the group.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017. Differently from Rodrigues, José Wilson da Silva believed the servicemen who were politically persecuted faced discrimination among the armed forces. José Wilson da Silva, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 2, 2015.

The fact that Rodrigues started our conversation affirming his military identity was surprising to me since he had only actively served in the Army for about eight years, and at the time of our interview almost 50 years had passed since he had last been an active member of the institution. Furthermore, during the time he served in the institution he had been disciplined for his involvement in the sergeants' movement in 1963 and later he deserted from the Army with other VPR members. This tempestuous history could have distanced Rodrigues from any identification with the armed forces. However, he was proud to be calling himself a captain and identifying with an institution that held captive thousands of Brazilians, including himself; the same institution he fought against for decades.

When Rodrigues deserted from the Army he removed himself from the space he was comfortable performing masculinity. This did not immediately traumatize him as he quickly replaced the armed forces with the guerrilla movement. He was pushed out of the institution because he believed it was time to fight the regime from the outside, but this was his decision. This was important to how he felt as a man since at the time he left the Army he was conscious of his agency and of his convictions about how harmful military rule was for the country. In the context of the guerrilla movement he felt empowered. I believe the years that followed changed the perception he had about himself because after decades enduring state imprisonment and torture, exile, and the ultimate failure of the resistance movement he felt discouraged. During our interview and in his biography, Rodrigues emphasized his actions in the Army and with VPR, and later in his life, when he returned to Brazil and started working for the public sector. However, he did not discuss his time in exile and his return to Brazil extensively. I believe his silences reveal how he felt about the years he did not want to remember. Being marginalized from Brazilian society, ultimately having to be exiled, made him feel as he had lost the fight.

Amnesty represented an official statement of wrongdoing from the state, or an admission that it had harassed Rodrigues for unjust causes. Receiving amnesty, being allowed to return to Brazil from Cuba in the 1980s and getting reincorporated into the military ranks changed him and restored the ways in which he defined himself as a man.

When the VPR movement failed and security forces dismantled it in the beginning of the 1970s, Rodrigues started to search for different activities he could engage with and other ways to resist. Although he felt welcomed in Cuba, he conveyed the idea that he was waiting for something to happen, for another opportunity to bring down military rule, or wait to return to a democratic Brazil. From Cuba he claimed to have supported a few international resistance movements, namely in Angola and Nicaragua. However, his involvement seems to have been brief and cut short by different circumstances. Ultimately, being welcomed back into his country in the 1980s and getting reincorporated in the Army returned his sense of self-worth.

This chapter discusses Rodrigues and other expelled servicemen's involvement in the amnesty movement, the laws that the transitional governments issued in 1979, the 1980s, 1990s and 2002, and how they affected these officers and soldiers. Although my main focus is on the memory of politically expelled members of the armed forces, it is also necessary to examine the legal implications and institutions created in the transition to democracy. Besides providing context to these men's remembrance of the period, a historical reconstruction of the movement for amnesty also shows the great participation of the expelled servicemen in the battle for amnesty. During General Ernesto Geisel's government, from 1974 until 1979, different sectors from Brazilian society started to demand political amnesty. Expelled members of the armed forces, in particular former officers and sergeants, identified an opening for political mobilization for amnesty during the 1970s and joined other civilian movements to fight for democratization.

After years of pressure, in 1979 the subsequent government of General João Figueiredo issued amnesty law 6683. After this amnesty law was issued, servicemen who were expelled and harassed during the dictatorship started to gradually receive reparations. Law 6683 foresaw that everyone who had committed a political crime and who had their political rights suspended between September 1961 and December 1978 would receive amnesty.<sup>74</sup> Those who were fired from public posts would be able to plea for reintegration.

For the servicemen I interviewed, the most important benefit of amnesty was reincorporation into the military ranks, which influenced Darcy Rodrigues, and many other amnestied servicemen, to change the way they viewed themselves and felt respected as men. These reparations did not resolve all the problems of expelled servicemen. However, they returned to these men the sense of military honor they had lost when they were expelled. Rodrigues, and other officers I interviewed, felt like their reincorporation into the armed forces served as a validation of what once the state considered “subversive actions.” They felt acknowledged for their patriotism. I argue that these events shaped expelled servicemen’s memory about military rule. Fighting for amnesty together with organizations they created gave expelled soldiers a stage to perform masculinity. While they felt dishonored when the government destroyed their resistance organizations during the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, participating in the movement for amnesty from the mid-1970s to the 2000s, and receiving reparations made them feel empowered as men.

The previous chapter discussed how men struggled to reclaim their sense of self-worth and participation in society during military rule. Involvement in guerrilla movements and finding

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<sup>74</sup> Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas com o Futuro: A Anistia e suas Consequências: Um Estudo do Caso Brasileiro* (São Paulo: Associação Editorial Humanitas; FAPESP, 2006), 39.

employment that gave men a certain degree of financial autonomy were great contributing factors that helped them deal with gendered trauma. However, oral histories show that one of the main factors, if not the most important, that allowed these men to reclaim their manhood and see military rule more as part of their past than of their present were reparations awarded with the amnesty law. Economic reparations and the relative success of the movement for amnesty allowed expelled servicemen to overcome many of the traumas military rule inflicted onto them.

The amnesty law was issued in 1979 but altered in the next twenty years. In 1985, the Brazilian Congress incorporated Constitutional Amendment 26, in 1988 the new Brazilian constitution came into effect, in 1995 it created the Lei dos Desaparecidos, and in 2002 Law 10.559, which created the Amnesty Commission. Gradually, the servicemen who had received amnesty saw an expansion of their rights. The Amnesty Commission, for example, aimed to remedy damage to professional and economic life, and focused on individuals who had been deterred from exercising economic activities.<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, not all who plead to receive such benefits attained them. At the same time the law allowed many to return to the military ranks, it denied the requests of many who claimed to have been expelled and imprisoned for political reasons. The amnesty laws of 1979 and 2002 determined that only individuals who had their expulsion framed on the Institutional Acts could ask for amnesty and reincorporation into the forces. However, the AIs were not the only mechanism the military government used to expel servicemen. The soldiers who were expelled because their superiors started to see them as subversive and punished for disciplinary reasons, were excluded from the Amnesty Law.

Therefore, since many soldiers continued fighting for the expansion of the amnesty law well into the twentieth-first century, the fights for reparations did not end in 2002. In the next

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<sup>75</sup> Schneider, "Amnestied in Brazil, 1895-1985," 24.

pages I will also discuss the cases of several expelled soldiers who had not received financial reparations at the time I interviewed them. These men were not reincorporated into the forces and thirty, forty, fifty years after their expulsions still showed signs of trauma. Thus, the amnesty law of 1979, and all the changes it was subjected to until 2002, did not complete a transition to democracy as it failed to provide reparations to individuals who claim to have been persecuted during the era of military rule.

### **The Fight for an Ample, General and Unrestricted Amnesty Law**

When president Ernesto Geisel was instated in 1974, the period that characterized the most intense chase and harassment of opponents to military rule ended. Geisel, a general from the “moderate”, or “castelista,” faction of the armed forces, would be recognized for his efforts to start a process of political “opening.” From the moment he took office, he expressed a willingness to prevent the police from harassing and torturing the regime’s opponents. One of the president’s goals was to make the armed forces return to a more “professional” role. His government would strip the repressive national police from the central role it occupied during the two previous governments, and would focus on investing in military equipment, organization and planning.<sup>76</sup> As a follower of former military president Castelo Branco (1964-1967), he started planning a slow and peaceful return to representative democracy, a “gradual and highly controlled opening.”<sup>77</sup> Despite his apparent intentions to decrease police repression, military intelligence agencies continued monitoring opposition and the political police continued imprisoning individuals. Furthermore, documentation from the United States intelligence shows

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<sup>76</sup> Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*, 163.

<sup>77</sup> Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil*, 167.

that Geisel even encouraged the incarceration and summary execution of political criminals.<sup>78</sup>

However, during the Geisel era the police did not act as freely to imprison and torture individuals as it did during the government of General Emílio Garrastazu Médici years.<sup>79</sup>

In this context, social movements demanding amnesty for individuals who had been affected by the regime's institutional acts, political prisoners and groups in exile gained strength.<sup>80</sup> Former employees of the state-owned oil industry, Petrobrás, who had been fired from their jobs for political reasons, consisted in one of these groups. They fought for the right of amnesty, which included financial reparations for having been stripped of a stable career in Petrobrás.<sup>81</sup> Expelled servicemen had similar demands to oil workers, as their conditions of employment and job stability were similar. In addition, like many oil workers, expelled servicemen had been in the forefront of the mobilization for amnesty. Nevertheless, the literature on the amnesty law barely studies their cases. Some works that do mention these cases only state the consequences of the law to expelled servicemen, barely discussing their long-term fight to expand the law or how meaningful the fight and the law was for them.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume E–11, Part 2, Documents on South America, 1973–1976. 99. Memorandum from Director of Central Intelligence Colby to Secretary of State Kissinger, Washington, April 11, 1974. Accessed August 23, 2018, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve11p2/d99>.

<sup>79</sup> It is important to note that inside the armed forces this supposedly intended liberalization of Geisel's government, was even less visible. Inside the military barracks and military bases, soldiers continued being punished for expressing political opinions.

<sup>80</sup> See Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas com o Futuro*, 2006; Maria Helena Moreira Alves, "Grassroots Organizations, Trade Unions, and the Church: A Challenge to the Controlled Abertura in Brazil," *Latin American Perspectives* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1984): 73–102; Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985); Maria Helena Moreira Alves, "Dilemmas of the Consolidation of Democracy from the Top: A Political Analysis," *Latin American Perspectives* 15, n. 3 (Summer 1988): 47-63; Rebecca J. Atencio, *Memory's Turn: Reckoning with Dictatorship in Brazil* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014); Elio Gaspari, *A Ditadura Encurralada* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2004); Elio Gaspari, *A Ditadura Acabada* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Intrínseca, 2016).

<sup>81</sup> See Schneider, "Amnestied in Brazil, 1895-1985," 228-231.

<sup>82</sup> Gláucio Ary Dillon Soares, Maria Celina D'Araujo, and Celso Castro (org.), *A Volta Aos Quartéis: A Memória Militar Sobre a Abertura* (Rio de Janeiro: Relume-Dumará, 1995); Renato Lemos, "Anistia e

Expelled officers were leading actors in the public debate about amnesty even before the military government created the first law of 1979. One of the first movements that emerged to demand amnesty was the Movimento Feminino pela Anistia, created in 1975.<sup>83</sup> One of the main leaders of the movement, which was founded and run by women, was Terezinha G. de Jesus Zerbini, who was married to Euriale de Jesus Zerbini, general expelled from the Army in 1964. Although Terezinha Zerbini was the movement's leader, general Zerbini was an active participant. On April 1978 he gave a speech in celebration of the anniversary of the amnesty of 1945. In what was his first public speech since he was expelled from the Army in 1964, the general contended that amnesty laws are not favors that governments could concede but political acts. Zerbini quoted deceased coronel Euclides Figueiredo, the father of João Batista Figueiredo who would become the next, and last, military president. Euclides opposed president Getúlio Vargas, was imprisoned and expelled from the Army, but received amnesty and was reincorporated to the military ranks in 1946. Using Figueiredo's words, Zerbini stated that if he could have altered his actions in 1964 and supported the coup he would have not acted differently. He would endure the suffering he had been exposed to again because of his love for the Brazilian people and for their right to be free.<sup>84</sup>

Other expelled servicemen, such as General Peri Bevilacqua, took on more active roles in the fight for amnesty. In February 1978 the Comitê Brasileiro pela Anistia (CBA) was created in

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Crise Política No Brasil Pós-1964." *Topoi* (Dezembro 2002): 287–313; Danyelle Nilin Golçalves, *O Preço Do Passado: Anistia e Reparação de Perseguidos Políticos No Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Expressão Popular, 2009).

<sup>83</sup> For more on women's mobilization in the transitional period in Brazil, see Sonia E. Alvarez, *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

<sup>84</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná. Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS. Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Jornal do Brasil*, 18.04.78. "Zerbini Cita Palavras do Pai de Figueiredo." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 97.

response to the ten-year anniversary of the Institutional Act number 5. The Committee demanded an amnesty law “ampla,” for everyone who had manifested opposition to the regime, “geral,” for all who had endured political persecution, and “irrestrita,” without any restrictions or discriminations.<sup>85</sup> Lawyers, family and friends of political prisoners organized to demand an ample and universal amnesty to all whom were targeted by the institutional acts. The founders of the movement assured they wanted to work together with other institutions such as Amnesty International and the Movimento Feminino Pela Anistia.<sup>86</sup> Bevilacqua, who was expelled from the Army in 1969 and forcibly retired, was an important voice in the movement. In a speech he gave when CBA was being launched, he asked for a “general and unrestricted” amnesty that included people who had been accused of communism but were never convicted, individuals who had participated in peaceful actions to oppose military rule, and even those who had joined the guerrilla movement. In other words, he asked for amnesty for all who opposed the regime in any way, arguing an amnesty law in these terms would bring reconciliation. Bevilacqua, however, also advocated for amnesty on “both sides,” which included not only political prisoners but individuals who imprisoned, harassed, tortured and killed prisoners of the state. He stated that even when torture ended in death, these torturers must be given amnesty. Bevilacqua also mentioned the patriotism of former captain Sérgio Carvalho, who was expelled from the Air Force because he refused to lead a mission that would cause the explosion of natural gas storage tanks in Rio de Janeiro. Carvalho, nevertheless, did not want to give any statements to the media

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<sup>85</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná. Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS. Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 06.11.78. “Um Manifesto à Nação.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 36.

<sup>86</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná. Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS. Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 14.02.78. “Peri Beviláqua Lança Movimento Pela Anistia.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 157.

about his case or the amnesty at the time claiming he understood this was a subject to be dealt with the armed forces.<sup>87</sup>

On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1978, the first National Congress for Amnesty took place in São Paulo and gathered about 700 people mobilizing to demand an amnesty law in different Brazilian states, such as Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Rio Grande do Sul, Mato Grosso do Sul, Goiás, and Minas Gerais.<sup>88</sup> Representatives fighting for amnesty of each state presented the main problems they faced regarding human rights violations and the amnesty.<sup>89</sup> The media coverage around the congress, however, barely covered the case of expelled servicemen. Carlos Lamarca was remembered mostly due to his actions as a guerrilla member, and not as an Army captain who decided to fight against the dictatorship. Former sailor Edgard de Aquino Duarte's name was also mentioned due to his disappearance in 1973.

In Porto Alegre, members of the Associação dos Militares Atingidos Pelos Atos de Exceção, or Associação de Defesa dos Direitos e Pró Anistia dos Atingidos por Atos Institucionais (AMPLA) pressured the government of Rio Grande do Sul into supporting the amnesty law. This organization was created by former servicemen mostly from Rio Grande do Sul who had been expelled from the military and endured state harassment throughout military rule. In AMPLA's by-laws its members claimed that the association's goal was to fight in favor of individuals who were persecuted for ideological reasons and to support servicemen who were

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<sup>87</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná. Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS. Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Jornal do Brasil*, 20.02.78. "Capitão do Parasar Prefere Ficar Calado." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 162.

<sup>88</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Veja*, 08.11.78. "O CBA Discute a Questão dos Desaparecidos." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 1.

<sup>89</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Folha de São Paulo*, 03.11.78. "Começa em São Paulo Congresso Pela Anistia." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 24.

compulsorily retired, reformed, expelled, transferred, fired, imprisoned and those who were subjected to any other sorts of embarrassments.<sup>90</sup> Among its members were expelled servicemen Alfredo Ribeiro Daudt, Wilson Santos, Pedro Martins Arbuez Alvarez, Silvio Palma and Avelino Yost.<sup>91</sup> These were mostly the same expelled servicemen who had created the Nationalist Armed Resistance (*Resistência Armada Nacionalista*, RAN) in 1964. At the time of the military coup they rose in arms against the regime. After their insurgency plans were frustrated, many of them decided to focus on their private lives and families and wait for another window of opportunity to resist the regime. Francisco Teixeira claims that after the AI-5 and the intense repression that followed, even the most politically conscious former servicemen stopped trying to promote actions against the regime because they understood actions at that moment would only hurt them.<sup>92</sup>

During the mid-1970s, when they realized there was a possibility for democratic reaction, they started to reorganize themselves.<sup>93</sup> In Rio de Janeiro, Teixeira claimed that expelled servicemen tried to influence local elections especially in 1974 and 1978. They organized meetings that gathered about one hundred officers and selected two candidates they would support collectively per election.<sup>94</sup> Among AMPLA's main actions in the South was meeting with local politicians to convince them into pressuring the military government for an amnesty law. On May 1979, for example, Pedro Alvarez, Dario Vieira dos Reis, José Wilson da Silva, Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, Alfredo Ribeiro, and Avelino Yost were among seventeen expelled servicemen who met with the president of the Rio Grande do Sul Legislative Assembly

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<sup>90</sup> APERJ POL-POL, DGIE 356, 26.08.81

<sup>91</sup> APERJ POL-POL, DGIE 354, 26.08.81

<sup>92</sup> Teixeira used the expression, "dar murro em ponta de faca." Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira (depoimento, 1983/1984)*. (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 308.

<sup>93</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 308.

<sup>94</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 308.

to ask for his support to the project of an amnesty “*ampla, geral e irrestrita*” to all who were accused or condemned of committing political crimes through the era of military rule.<sup>95</sup> Although the political police still labelled these men as subversive and continued surveilling them, they were still able to mobilize in favor of the amnesty. In August 1981, after the amnesty law had been established for two years, AMPLA promoted a public act in protest. They claimed that the amnesty law of 1979 was not being enforced and condemned its restricted and discriminatory character.<sup>96</sup> The police report on the mobilization refers to AMPLA’s activities and to its members as “subversive.”<sup>97</sup> Due to its transitional character, Figueiredo’s administration did not enforce the imprisonment of individuals who participated in the amnesty movement, as it intended to return power to civilians. According to Proença, the political police knew about their meetings and activism but never tried to stop them. He believed it would have been scandalous for the government to have tried to prevent amnesty movements from mobilizing. After the law of amnesty was issued and political exiles started returning to Brazil, stopping an organization that was fighting for amnesty would not have been a strategic decision for the military government since it was trying to arrange a peaceful transition to civilian rule.<sup>98</sup>

Amnesty was a contentious process because the armed forces’ officers and the military government wanted control of the transition to democracy. Even though Geisel and Figueiredo presented themselves as moderate presidents who wanted to return power to civilians, they wanted to prevent “communists,” “subversives” and “terrorists” from returning to positions of power—in the government but also inside the armed forces. Members of the military government

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<sup>95</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, O Estado de São Paulo. 23.05.79. “Anistia, Pedido de Militares Cassados.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 187.

<sup>96</sup> APERJ, POL-POL, DGIE 305-B, 25.08.81

<sup>97</sup> APERJ, POL-POL, DGIE 353, 26.08.81

<sup>98</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

such as Figueiredo claimed that they could not support an ample amnesty since they could not pardon “common terrorists and criminals.”<sup>99</sup> Therefore, they started drafting an amnesty law that was much more restricted than activists of the amnesty movements had been demanding.

One of the factors that delayed the amnesty law was that officers on active duty feared that expelled officers would return to the barracks and influence the institution ideologically. Many officers who supported military rule and were in active duty in 1979 believed the amnesty law was being drafted prematurely.<sup>100</sup> They claimed that prior amnesty laws issued throughout the twentieth-century in Brazil were different to this one as the military revolts from the 1920s and 1930s were “truly nationalist,” and that they could not be compared to the recent “opportunistic nationalism used by the left.”<sup>101</sup> According to this understanding, individuals who supported the ousted government in 1964 should not receive amnesty because they were endorsing a communist government. This shows an ideological approach to amnesty, as these interventionist officers believed in the continuous punishment of “communists.” Many officers in active duty also claimed that even if expelled servicemen were given amnesty, they should never be allowed to return to active duty.<sup>102</sup> According to advocates of this view, former officers and

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<sup>99</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná. Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS. Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Jornal do Brasil*, 07.05.78. “Castelo é Contra a Anistia.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 112.

<sup>100</sup> It is important to note that this was not the first amnesty law in Brazil. Throughout the republican period, groups who had risen in opposition to Brazilian leaders had later received state pardon. In the twentieth-century, for example, president Getúlio Vargas passed laws both in 1930 and 1945 to provide amnesties to individuals who had participated in revolutionary movements challenging his government. As I show in chapter 1, João Goulart also gave political amnesty to the marines and sailors who had participated in the movement of the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB) in March 1964. For more on previous amnesty laws in Brazil see Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas com o Futuro*, 13.

<sup>101</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Folha de São Paulo*, 08.07.79. “Militares Conservadores acham Anistia Prematura.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261d.28, 75.

<sup>102</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *O Estado de São Paulo*, 12.04.79. “Militares Punidos Não Devem Voltar.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261f.28, 38.

soldiers would not be prepared nor able to perform their military duties after so many years outside of the institution.<sup>103</sup> They supported a restricted amnesty to all expelled servicemen and the individual examination of all cases.<sup>104</sup> The real reason these officers did not want expelled servicemen to return to active duty was ideological. They opposed their return to active duty as they did not want them, especially former officers, to have any sort of influence in the forces, on military education, and among the troops. Upon transitioning to democracy, interventionist officers were going to lose control of national politics, but they wanted to make sure they would not lose control of the armed forces and the ideologies circulating inside the institution. Their goal was to preserve the institution's anti-communist stance attained after decades of expulsions and the punishment of "subversive" officers and soldiers.

A few expelled soldiers decided to give interviews to the media after listening to the statements of interventionist military officers. In 1978 former colonel Pedro Alvarez and former captain Alfredo Ribeiro Daudt claimed that if they had to renounce their reincorporation into the armed forces so the amnesty law could be issued, they would. Aiming to pressure for the amnesty law, they agreed to abdicate from the right of reincorporation into the military ranks or from receiving any reparations from the armed forces as long as the amnesty law freed political prisoners and benefited individuals who were in exile.<sup>105</sup> This discourse was used to pressure the government into issuing legislation that would benefit individuals who were convicted of political crimes, and not only those who were ousted from their positions but were never involved with movements of resistance. This, however, seems to have been just a tactic to

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<sup>103</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Folha de São Paulo, 22.02.79. "Militares Não Crêem em Anistia para Ex-Colegas Cassados." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 158.

<sup>104</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, 20.04.79. "Militares Preferem Rever as Punições." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 176.

<sup>105</sup> APERJ, POL-POL, "Oficiais Nada Querem se a Anistia Favorecer Exilados." DGIE 7, 09.03.78.

pressure for amnesty, as most expelled servicemen looked forward to returning to active military service.

The amnesty law document president João Batista Figueiredo initially drafted excluded individuals who were condemned for terrorism, robbery and kidnapping, which would prevent expelled servicemen who had participated in guerrilla organizations from being eligible to receive amnesty.<sup>106</sup> General Argemiro de Assis Brasil, expelled from the Army in 1964, critiqued the proposed law as it excluded many servicemen who resisted military rule. He also critiqued the law since it required servicemen to apply for reinstatement if they wished to return to military service.<sup>107</sup> Brasil complained this condition would subject expelled servicemen to a trial. He contested that if they did not have the right to a trial at the time of their expulsion now was not the time to do so.<sup>108</sup> Francisco Teixeira also critiqued the law, comparing it to amnesties that had been issued in Brazil in 1922, 1924 and 1932. He explained that after military revolts, expulsions of servicemen from the military, and the consequent amnesties they received, all servicemen returned to the armed forces. In his view, the amnesty law of 1979 must have given the servicemen expelled between 1961 and 1979 the same rights. In addition, he contested that an amnesty that was not automatic, was not an amnesty. When the state made people apply to the benefit, for him that disqualified the measure as an amnesty.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 28.06.79. “Anistia Exclui Terroristas Condenados.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261d.28, 93. For more on the first draft of the amnesty law see Gonçalves, *O Preço do Passado*, 46-52.

<sup>107</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. O Estado de São Paulo, 26.06.79. “Militares Terão Direito de Requerer Retorno à Ativa.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261f.28, 4.

<sup>108</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 28.06.79. “Capitão Sérgio pode ‘Contar a Verdade.’” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261d.28, 96.

<sup>109</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 315.

On August 28, 1979, Figueiredo's government promulgated Amnesty Law n. 6683. The final document granted amnesty to all who had committed political crimes, and, for that reason, had their political rights stripped from them through institutional acts between September 1961 and August 1979.<sup>110</sup> Despite opposition from officers in active duty, the law allowed expelled servicemen to request reincorporation into the armed forces. However, this law reflected all demands and insecurities that officers in active duty had expressed about giving amnesty to expelled soldiers. Reincorporation did not happen automatically, as individuals needed to apply for amnesty with a commission that would examine case by case.<sup>111</sup> Expelled servicemen started to send their applications immediately, and in February 1980 the military branches began releasing the first lists of those who received amnesty. Although the Air Force allowed seventy-eight expelled servicemen to be reincorporated into their ranks, Minister Délio Jardim de Matos denied all of their requests to return to active duty, claiming they were too old to perform the activities they used to and should be retired.<sup>112</sup>

At the time the Air Force published this list, Matos also expressed that with reincorporation, the ones in the list would also start to receive earnings and five years' worth of bonuses. From the moment they were expelled, many servicemen who were now being reincorporated into the forces were considered legally dead and their wives received their pensions as widows. Receiving military wages would dramatically change these men's financial situation.<sup>113</sup> In March 1980 the Navy and Army followed the Air Force and also released lists of servicemen who would be reintegrated to the military ranks but who would not be allowed to

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<sup>110</sup> APERJ, POL-POL, DGIE 192.

<sup>111</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, maio 1979. "Délio Vê a Volta de Militares Cassados." BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 189.

<sup>112</sup> APERJ, POL-POL, DGIE 273-A, 264, 02.10.79, "Aeronáutica Reincorpora 78 Militares Anistiados."

<sup>113</sup> APERJ POL-POL, DGIE 264, 26.02.80.

serve in active duty.<sup>114</sup> In June 20, 1980, another 188 servicemen received amnesty, including Francisco Teixeira, and Sérgio Ribeiro Miranda de Carvalho.<sup>115</sup> After these documents were issued the expelled servicemen who were living in exile started to return to Brazil.<sup>116</sup>

The amnesty law of 1979 did not fulfill the expectations and hopes of most sectors fighting for amnesty. The CBA, the student movement, family and friends of individuals who were killed or who had disappeared, and the leftist newspapers and alternative press complained that this amnesty law was not “*ampla, geral e irrestrita*.”<sup>117</sup> These sectors also complained about the reciprocity character of the law, which protected perpetrators of human rights violations. Expelled servicemen echoed these complaints and also contested that the armed forces were not allowing them to return to active duty. Purged servicemen in Rio de Janeiro published a document on June 26, 1980, condemning the military ministers for failing to implement the amnesty law as they should, since they did not allow individuals who were reincorporated to return to their former occupations. They claimed that the amnesty law only existed on paper, not in practice.<sup>118</sup> Sergeant Antonio Garcia Filho also publicly condemned the armed forces for “using bureaucracy” to prevent the return of the expelled officers and soldiers. He claimed that military recipients of the amnesty law were still being punished for the same crimes they had been accused of over twenty years before. Miguel Camolez, who had been a captain-lieutenant in the Navy, complained that the Navy never sent him an official notice about his amnesty and that

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<sup>114</sup> APERJ POL-POL, DGIE 283, 12.03.80.

<sup>115</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, 20.06.80. “Délío Inclui Capitão Sérgio em Lista de 188 Anistiados.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 209.

<sup>116</sup> Former soldier Paulo Roberto Telles Frank, for example, returned to Brazil on October 6, 1979. APERJ, POL-POL, DGIE 96, 09.10.79.

<sup>117</sup> Antonio Torres Montenegro, Carla S. Rodeghero, Maria Paula Araújo (org.), *Marcas da Memória: História Oral da Anistia no Brasil* (Recife: Ed. Universitária da UFPE, 2012), 61. Accessed August 16, 2018, <http://docvirt.com/DocReader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=DocBNM&PagFis=74249>.

<sup>118</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, 27.06.80. “Anistia: A Denúncia dos Militares.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 210.

he had to learn he was included as one of its beneficiaries in the newspaper. Furthermore, he complained that among hundreds of officers who received amnesty, except for a few soldiers, no one had been able to return to military service.<sup>119</sup>

The armed forces used two excuses to explain why they would not allow expelled servicemen to return to active service. The first was the same excuse of Minister Matos: officers and soldiers who were being reincorporated into the ranks were too old to perform their military duties. When a reincorporated member of the military was clearly young enough to return to work and they could not use this excuse, military officers in duty would claim that they did not have enough positions to assign for all of servicemen asking to be reinstated. In reality, however, these servicemen were not allowed to return to the barracks because interventionist officers did not want them there physically, as they were afraid these men could influence the troops “negatively.” Therefore, expelled servicemen continued not being welcomed in the armed forces in the 1980s, yet they kept fighting to change the amnesty law in the following decades. For senior officers in the forces, however, these men’s return to active duty seems to have been one of the most nonnegotiable terms of the amnesty. Throughout the next decades many were able to fight and receive promotions and compensation for lost wages, yet, aside from a very small percentage of them, most were never allowed to serve again.

### **Organizing in the Age of the Amnesty Law**

Expelled servicemen continued organizing to expand their rights after 1979, as they understood the amnesty law was limiting. Their main complaints were that after being reincorporated into

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<sup>119</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, 27.06.80. “Anistia: A Denúncia dos Militares,” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT178.20, 210.

the armed forces they were not allowed to return to active duty, and that that they did not receive any promotions at the time of their reincorporation.<sup>120</sup> If a sergeant was expelled from the Army in 1964, in 1980 he was reincorporated as a sergeant and received the wages of a sergeant. However, reincorporated servicemen argued that a career of 20 or 30 years in the armed forces would have awarded them many promotions and that the armed forces should have considered access to these promotions when stipulating former servicemen could be reincorporated into the forces. They also argued that they should have received the same promotions of individuals who studied with them in military school who were not expelled from the armed forces. During the 1980s, expelled servicemen formed a lobby to pressure congress to change the amnesty law of 1979.<sup>121</sup> Some of the most active individuals in this lobby were members of the Associação Democrática e Nacionalista dos Militares, ADNAM (formed in 1980 initially as the Associação dos Militares Cassados, AMIC), which included two expelled servicemen I interviewed, Fernando de Santa Rosa and Ivan Cavalcanti Proença.<sup>122</sup>

In June 1980 the Ministry of the Air Force issued a report on ADNAM, which at the time was presided by former officers Francisco Teixeira and Kardec Leme. According to the document, the Association was coordinating a legal battle to pressure the government into giving reparations to those who had not received the benefits of the amnesty law. It specifically mentions that ADNAM would try to pressure for the retroactive payment of wages officers did not receive from the time they were expelled until they were reintegrated into the military ranks.<sup>123</sup> Servicemen I interviewed who talked about their involvement in the amnesty movement

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<sup>120</sup> Machado, “As Forças Armadas,” 116.

<sup>121</sup> Machado, “As Forças Armadas,” 129.

<sup>122</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015. The association changed its name to ADNAM in 1983. For a more detailed study on the mobilization around expanding the amnesty law see Glenda Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas*, 55.

<sup>123</sup> APESP, Polícia Política, “Associação de Oficiais Cassados – Organização,” 24.6.80, 50-D-26-6373.

were deeply frustrated with how the state enforced the law after 1979. José Wilson da Silva claimed that the flaws of the law motivated him and others to continue fighting for amnesty. According to him, Law 6683 was “crooked” and benefitted torturers more than the ones who had been tortured.<sup>124</sup> The law’s reciprocity clause, he argued, excluded part of the group who had been persecuted and was broad and restorative to the government agents.<sup>125</sup> The problem was that these groups could not be put under the same amnesty rights because their histories with military rule were opposed. While one group enforced the state violence, the other was its target. Enforcers of state violence could not be prosecuted, but their situations were different because they had never been punished and they built their careers within the state apparatus—even after democratization. Individuals who had basic civil rights removed from them for decades needed reparations. Nonetheless, not all received such reparations and the law benefitted torturers more than the individuals who the regime had treated as criminals.

Amnesty “for all” meant that no one would continue being incarcerated or banished from national territory for their political or ideological convictions. Examining the application of the law, Mezarobba shows that one of its main problems was that although the law determined that servicemen who were punished by institutional acts could ask for reincorporation in the forces, that did not happen immediately for all of them since the law was not enforced in all cases.<sup>126</sup> Da Silva complained that most of the people the law benefitted had a higher socio-economic background. Many individuals who had faced different forms of persecution but were not punished via institutional acts were not allowed to receive reparations. Individuals of lower-socio-economic status, such as sailors and other low-ranking soldiers who claimed to have been

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<sup>124</sup> José Wilson da Silva, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 2, 2015.

<sup>125</sup> Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 258.

<sup>126</sup> Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas*, 55.

politically persecuted, either did not receive amnesty for a long time or never received any economic compensation.

Therefore, organizations of expelled servicemen fighting for the expansion of the amnesty law continued emerging around the country after 1979. In addition to ADNAM, I interviewed men who were members other organizations, namely the Entidade Nacional dos Civis e Militares (ACIMAR), and UMNA, first named União dos Marinheiros Nacionalistas, and then Unidade Mobilização Nacional Pela Anistia. The organizing of these associations showed to be fruitful in a few cases. In 1985, groups were able to negotiate the inclusion of Constitutional Amendment 26 to the amnesty law, which allowed servicemen who had already received amnesty to obtain the promotions they could have received if they had continued their military careers.<sup>127</sup> This change in the law allowed Darcy Rodrigues, for example, who was expelled as a sergeant, to be retired as a captain. The judges who examined his case observed the rank and position of colleagues who had graduated with him in the Army, and who were allowed to continue their careers, and determined that if he had been allowed to continue his career he would have been able to reach the rank of a captain.

Although this change benefitted certain groups, only officers and soldiers who were expelled by institutional acts were considered in the amnesty law. Because the law continued failing to include all who had been endured the violence of the regime, servicemen continued trying to influence congress into changing the law. According to Da Silva even the most significant change in the law in 2002 did include groups who were expelled from the forces through different mechanisms. He regretted that Law 10.559 of 2002 did not make amnesty “ampla, geral e irrestrita.” However, he recognized that it was important as it authorized the

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<sup>127</sup> Machado, “As Forças Armadas,” 132; and Mezarobba, *Um Acerto de Contas*, 121.

creation of the Amnesty Commission together with the Ministry of Justice, which would enforce the amnesty law, individually examining the cases of those asking to be included in it. In this moment, the state started to adopt the term “reparations” together with the term “amnesty.” The idea was that individuals who the military government punished not only needed to be pardoned but should also receive reparations for the civil and human rights violations they endured.<sup>128</sup>

The term amnesty acquired an ampler meaning after 2002, as the Amnesty Commission’s became responsible for repairing and reintegrating people who were fired for political reasons to their former public occupations.<sup>129</sup> The servicemen who had received amnesty benefited from the institutionalization of the Amnesty Commission because the institution enforced the law. Although the constitution of 1988 had allowed a great number of these expelled servicemen to be reincorporated into the forces with promotions, it failed to pay them for years. José Wilson da Silva claimed that the Commission enforced the law, and many servicemen who were reincorporated into the military received retroactive payments.<sup>130</sup>

Therefore, the amnesty law of 1979, and the transformations it was subjected to in the following decades benefited mostly officers who were punished by institutional acts. It allowed them to receive promotions, compensation for lost wages, and it allowed them to call themselves servicemen again. The process of fighting for amnesty and receiving reparations transformed many officers and soldiers who had been marginalized from the armed forces throughout military rule. Not only the reparations themselves but being a part of the movements that pressured for these changes helped many to deal with trauma. In these organizations these men found a space for agency, where they could perform their military masculinities fighting within

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<sup>128</sup> Montenegro, Rodeghero, Araújo (org.), *Marcas da Memória*, 62.

<sup>129</sup> Montenegro, Rodeghero, Araújo (org.), *Marcas da Memória*, 62.

<sup>130</sup> José Wilson da Silva, interview with the author, Porto Alegre, June 2, 2015.

the realm of the law. I believe the process of feeling that they were instigating significant change led many individuals who I interviewed to feel that they had reclaimed their masculine military honor. Although the amnesty law did not incorporate all the factors they wished it would, officers who were involved with organizations fighting for amnesty, like Darcy Rodrigues, José Araújo Nóbrega, Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, Fernando de Santa Rosa, Simão Kerimian, Francisco Teixeira, and even José Wilson da Silva, the most critical of the law, reclaimed their honor inside the fight for amnesty and were able to find peace and a sense of justice in their old age. Da Silva, for example, emphasized his role in the fight for amnesty saying he and others “worked” for advancements and “succeeded” to a certain degree. When he made such claim, he used the verb “*conseguimos*,” or “we got it,” which implies that he was conscious of his role in the movement. He believed his agency in this moment was significant to implementing change in the amnesty law, and this changed the ways he saw himself.

Although these men found ways to deal with the traumas experienced during military rule, the Brazilian democratic governments that emerged after 1985 did not eliminate the amnesty law’s discriminatory character. Officers who were expelled via institutional act were reincorporated into the forces and, after decades, started receiving decent incomes and identifying as members of the military again. Nevertheless, they were denied one of the most important aspects of reincorporation, which was to be allowed to return to active duty. In addition, the amnesty law continued excluding all individuals who could not necessarily prove, with official documentation, that they had been expelled for political reasons. Hundreds of soldiers who claim they were fired from the armed forces because of a political opinion—as their superiors called them subversives and questioned them about communist activities—were never included in the amnesty law as the armed forces insisted that their expulsions were a result of

their acts of indiscipline or to their contracts with the forces having expired. The Amnesty Commission received 73,000 applications. By 2014 it had granted amnesty to over 40,000 applicants. However, of all people contemplated by the law, only 15,000 received economic reparations.<sup>131</sup>

### **Reparations for Low-Ranking Soldiers**

Many officers who were expelled in 1964 and received amnesty had their names published in the *Diário Oficial*, the government's main avenue of communication, at the time of their expulsions. Their expulsion was framed based on the Institutional Acts. Servicemen who were expelled during the first years of military rule were punished legally through the Institutional Act number 1, and the expulsions of servicemen after 1969 were framed based on the Institutional Act number 5. This was the case of many members of the Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária. The amnesty laws of 1979 and 2002 determined that only these individuals could ask for amnesty and reincorporation into the forces. However, the institutional acts were not the only mechanism the military government used to expel servicemen. Many soldiers were expelled because their superiors started to see them as subversive and fired them, claiming they had been punished for insubordination.

Many sailors and marines fought for decades to receive political amnesty. Only after the establishment of law 10.559/2002 they were able to present their cases to the Amnesty Commission and receive the benefits of the law. Sailor João Barroso, expelled from the Navy in 1964, claimed that he had been fighting for amnesty with a group of sailors and marines since the

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<sup>131</sup> Sigmund Freud Associação Psicanalítica (org.), *Clínicas do testemunho: Reparação Psíquica e Construção de Memórias* (Porto Alegre: Criação Humana, 2014), 17. Accessed August 16, 2018, <http://www.justica.gov.br/central-de-conteudo/anistia/anexos/livro-clinicas-do-testemunho.pdf>.

first law was issued in 1979. According to marine Paulo Novaes Coutinho, after the law was issued the group of sailors and marines went to Brasilia to ask why they did not receive amnesty. After analyzing their case, a minister told them that according to his opinion although the groups should benefit from the law they did not have political strength to pressure and lobby for amnesty.<sup>132</sup> In order to build political strength they created the União dos Militares não Anistiados, UMNA, in 1983, and changed its name to Unidade de Mobilização Nacional pela Anistia in 1984.

In 1985, Wilson da Silva claimed the lobby of servicemen fighting for an expansion of the amnesty was almost able to influence a change that would in the law to include individuals who were punished through other mechanisms and not only institutional acts. But in the end of the process, Constitutional Amendment 26 did not impose any practical change to the law. Only individuals punished by the institutional acts continued being allowed to receive amnesty.<sup>133</sup> Barroso regrets that whenever there was a possibility for the law to be changed, such as in 1985 or in 1988, low-ranking soldiers continued being excluded. Most of the sailors and marines involved with UMNA were expelled in the wake of the military coup due to their involvement with the Associação de Marinheiros e Fuzileiros Navais do Brasil (AMFNB). According to Barroso, in 1985 the group presented certain documents to the Navy that proved their expulsions was politically motivated.<sup>134</sup> The Navy, however, denied their right to most of these sailors and marines, and claimed they had been expelled for disciplinary reasons—they been insubordinate and did not respect the regulations of the armed forces.<sup>135</sup> Coutinho was one of the few who started to receive amnesty benefits after 1988, and he was reincorporated into the military as a

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<sup>132</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>133</sup> José Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 262.

<sup>134</sup> João Barroso, interview with the author, Salvador, June 19, 2017.

<sup>135</sup> João Barroso, interview with the author, Salvador, June 19, 2017.

third-sergeant in 1989. However, legal processes lingered in the justice system and only a few sailors received the benefits of amnesty during the 1980s. In 1994 the group retrieved a document from the Navy's archives with a list of 273 sailors and marines who were being condemned to 1320 years in prison altogether.<sup>136</sup> This document was significant for the group because it proved that according to military regulations the Navy could not condemn these soldiers to all of these years in prison just for military insubordination, and it proved that there was political motivation since all or most of the individuals in that list were linked to the AMFNB. The Amnesty Commission recognized this group's claim for amnesty and demanded the Navy to enforce the law. Barroso claims he only received amnesty after 2002. Therefore, members of UMNA were successful because they could find proof against the Navy they had been expelled for political reasons. This, however, was not the case for all low-ranking soldiers.

While many Navy sailors and marines received financial reparations for having been expelled from the military, imprisoned and even tortured for political reasons, the great majority of soldiers from the Air Force did not receive amnesty and continued fighting. In the interviews I conducted with low-ranking soldiers from the Air Force, mainly *soldados* and *cabos*, they claimed that they were fired because their superiors caught them performing some sort of "subversive act." Enforcers of military rule infiltrated conversations of soldiers to identify any leftist soldiers who could have infiltrated the forces to influence the troops in order to suppress any sort of mobilization contrary to the regime inside the armed forces.<sup>137</sup> As I showed in chapter three, Pitolli entered the Army as a conscript soldier, but decided to become a sergeant to be the eyes of VPR inside the institution. Therefore, sometimes the movements of resistance did use

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<sup>136</sup> Paulo Novaes Coutinho, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, May 25, 2017.

<sup>137</sup> Several former soldiers confirmed this, such as Dailton Soares, Belmiro Demétrio, and Antonio Rodrigues da Costa.

this strategy to infiltrate the armed forces. However, military officers who enforced the coup started to punish soldiers who were not connected to any resistance movements and who had never participated in any political activity. Officers who enforced military rule and anti-communism in the armed forces at the time, identify the most diverse set of behaviors as subversive. The soldiers I interviewed were imprisoned, tortured, harassed and fired for knowing someone who had been accused of a political crime, for mentioning the names of leftist politicians or public figures, such as Leonel Brizola, João Goulart and Darcy Ribeiro in private conversations, and even for having a pamphlet, book, music record or any material that could be considered of subversive character.

Most of the *soldados* and *cabos* I interviewed in Rio de Janeiro claimed they were fired through Air Force Decree 1104. The Air Force conducted a study and discovered that the number of low-ranking soldiers was a problem for the institution, since they outnumbered officers in seven to one. This meant that in case of an uprising, officers and sergeants would not be able to physically contain the troops of low-ranking soldiers. Therefore, in 1964, Air Force officers decided to create this decree, which aimed to loosen the regulation of soldiers' permanence in the Air Force.<sup>138</sup> Soldiers would only be able to remain in the institution as a *cabos* for eight years. If they wished to build a career in the Air Force, they would need to take exams to move up in the military ranks. According to retired coronel Rui Moreira Lima 1104 was created when Air Force officers realized that soldiers had an association. It was, then, an attempt to stop the group's political mobilization.<sup>139</sup> The decree served as a legal mechanism within the Air Force to authorize the discharge of thousands of Air Force soldiers throughout military rule. Furthermore,

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<sup>138</sup> Costa, "Do Banimento à Luta pela Anistia," 14.

<sup>139</sup> "Comissão Nacional da Verdade: Depoimento de Rui Moreira Lima," YouTube, accessed August 9, 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7\\_hIZA&list=FLXk2ZyG\\_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7_hIZA&list=FLXk2ZyG_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10).

although the decree was only valid from 1964 to 1966, the Air Force continued to use it to expel soldiers after 1966.<sup>140</sup>

When expelled soldiers from the Air Force started to demand to be included in the amnesty law, the Air Force claimed they were not excluded for political reasons, but that because they had been hired under a contract that had expired. Nevertheless, the testimonies of the soldiers I interviewed show a clear political motive for their expulsions. Rui Moreira Lima, member of ADNAM who was expelled as a colonel but reintegrated into the ranks after amnesty as a Brigadier, was one of the greatest allies of Air Force soldiers fighting for amnesty. At first Moreira Lima was not aware of these soldiers' cases and, as he admitted, was only fighting for his "elitist" officer amnesty. However, after he heard about the soldiers' cases and the context of the creation of decree 1104, he became a supporter. The Brigadier tells that after law 10.559 was issued in 2002, these soldiers took their cases to the Amnesty Commission, which ruled in favor of many of them. However, the interpretation of the law is subjective, and even though these soldiers have won rulings in many instances in certain governmental institutions, other state organs have annulled their amnesty concession. For example, in 2002 the Amnesty Commission granted amnesty to a group of 495 soldiers expelled through law 1104/64, but in 2004 the Minister of Justice annulled the decision. In 2015, congressman Daniel Coelho argued for the suspension of the 2004 decision, since it had already been determined that these soldiers had the right to amnesty.<sup>141</sup> This is a contentious process, as even though purged soldiers claim they were expelled for political reasons, the armed forces and their political allies have the power to

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<sup>140</sup> "Comissão Nacional da Verdade: Depoimento de Rui Moreira Lima," YouTube, accessed August 9, 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7\\_hIZA&list=FLXk2ZyG\\_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuY1K7_hIZA&list=FLXk2ZyG_JFyJdH9yoqEOrOg&index=10).

<sup>141</sup> "Projeto de Decreto Legislativo n 99, de 2015, do Sr. Daniel Coelho." Câmara dos Deputados. Accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.camara.gov.br/sileg/integras/1345125.pdf>

interpret the law in a different manner and continue denying them amnesty. The greatest impediment to these soldiers' right to amnesty is being able to convince or prove to the judicial system that they were fired for political reasons. This is, however, a political fight. Low-ranking soldiers were not able to attain the political influence of other lobbyists, such as officers of ADNAM or sailors and marines from UMNA. Furthermore, it is also possible to identify the class conflict into this issue. As Moreira Lima pointed out, the amnesty law was elitist and benefitted individuals of higher economic status more than the lower classes, such as it was the case of Air Force soldiers.

In Brazil the dictatorship often used legal mechanisms to enforce military rule, such as creating institutional acts to punish individuals and strip them from their civil rights. Trials for political prisoners were used more consistently in Brazil than in Argentina and Chile, countries that endured similar authoritarian cycles.<sup>142</sup> Although this was true in the case of many politicians, activists, and many servicemen, hundreds of people were still killed or disappeared in Brazil during military rule. The cases of low-ranking soldiers who did not have political connections show that the military did not always resort to legal mechanisms to deal with soldiers it deemed subversive, especially when they had little to no social capital. In addition to discussing their own personal experiences with imprisonment and harassment during military rule, low-ranking soldiers I interviewed also remembered human rights violations they witnessed taking place inside the barracks with other individuals. They saw colleagues being imprisoned and disappearing. In chapter four I discussed the case of former paratrooper Antonio Rodrigues da Costa, who remembered the killing of his colleague, Azevedo. Rodrigues' colleague was

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<sup>142</sup> Anthony Pereira, *Political (In)Justice: Authoritarianism and the Rule of Law in Brazil, Chile, and Argentina* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).

called “Brizola’s son” and subjected to dangerous conditions while doing military training in the woods. The treatment he received made him so ill that he did not survive. Da Costa, and others, remembered that after soldiers were tortured and killed, the armed forces would tell their families that they simply did not survive a dangerous military training.<sup>143</sup> Therefore, officers subjected their subordinates to all sort of torture inside the military barracks, calling them subversives, torturing and even killing them. Former Air Force soldier Luiz José Medeiros claimed that once one of his colleagues did not return home for months and his mother came to their military base asking for him. His superiors lied and told her he had been killed in an altercation while attempting to steal a car. Medeiros, however, claims the soldier was, in fact, tortured and killed.<sup>144</sup> Afraid that the military could come after her as well, the mother did not question the Air Force narrative.<sup>145</sup> These soldiers disappeared without leaving any trace. After they died, there were no documents attesting to their side of events. Their superior officers could omit that they were ever suspected of subversion and make their deaths completely non-political.

Therefore, servicemen were not only expelled from the armed forces for political reasons through institutional acts. Many Air Force soldiers claimed they were imprisoned in the military bases they worked while still in active duty. After their superiors held them for months and often years making them work during the day and imprisoned during the night, they fired them using decree 1104. Some were also dishonorably discharged for being “undisciplined.” These men lack the documentation to prove or convince different legal institutions in Brazil that they were expelled for political reasons. Although the Amnesty Commission says they should receive the benefits of the law, saying the creation of decree 1104 was politically motivated, the Supreme

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<sup>143</sup> Antônio Rodrigues da Costa, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, October 6, 2016.

<sup>144</sup> Luiz José Medeiros, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

<sup>145</sup> Other soldiers such as Robson Ferreira and José Bezerra da Silva also told me that many of their colleagues disappeared from their military base.

Court denies them that right. At the time I interviewed many former soldiers of the Air Force, they had been fighting to receive reparations for decades and continued to do so. Half of the interviews I conducted were with Air Force soldiers. They were eager to meet with me and give interviews because they believed my research could potentially inform individuals about their cases, which could help them in their fight. They had sent many letters asking for the help of different organizations and institutions, such as Organization of American States (OAS), the Barrack Obama administration in the United States, and even the Catholic Pope Francis.

The struggle of former low-ranking soldiers for amnesty is crucial to understanding how they remembered military rule. Their fight to be recognized as politically persecuted made military rule part of their present. The ones who imprisoned, tortured and expelled them from the armed forces were never punished, while they continue not being recognized as victims of the dictatorship. The stigma of being excluded from Brazil's "transitional justice" continued traumatizing them even decades after the end of military rule. This "lack of justice" gave them the impression of an ongoing state of persecution.

### **Restoring Manhood in the Context of the Amnesty**

In the interviews I conducted there was a discrepancy in how officers and low-ranking soldiers remembered the period of military rule. Individuals who received amnesty seemed to have dealt better with the trauma they had experienced. Servicemen who were reincorporated into the forces seemed proud of themselves and their history with military rule, while the ones who did not receive amnesty seemed ashamed of themselves.

Many factors helped expelled and marginalized servicemen to regain and reclaim their sense of honor. As discussed in chapter four, one of the main accomplishments that allowed

individuals to “feel like men” again was finding employment and being able to provide financially for themselves and their families. Therefore, economic stability was important to how these men saw themselves. Another factor that helped them to deal with trauma and remember the dictatorship as part of their past was receiving political amnesty and the financial reparations that came with it.

One could argue that economic stability was the main factor that changed these men’s lives, as they started to receive income from the military after reintegration and this made them regain their confidence as men. Receiving military wages was indeed important, as for decades many of them did not have the means to support themselves and their families.<sup>146</sup> Money, therefore, helped these men regain their confidence and deal with gendered trauma. However, being accepted in the armed forces as a serviceman again, even if retired or in the reserves, was transformative for many of them. Darcy Rodrigues provided the most striking case that showed how much it mattered for expelled servicemen to identify as a member of the military again. As I already discussed in the introduction, Rodrigues was proud of his history as a serviceman. He framed his resistance to the regime as military resistance. He believed the reparations he received with amnesty indicated that society had recognized his fight as honorable.

The case of Sérgio Miranda de Carvalho, officer who did not follow Brigadier João Paulo Burnier’s orders to explode natural gas storage tanks in Rio de Janeiro, shows how important military honor was to expelled servicemen. On an interview in 1978, Carvalho claimed that since he had been expelled he moved up economically. He claimed he worked a salesman, journalist, public-relations and he even built a company. By 1978 he was making more money than he

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<sup>146</sup> On chapter four I explain how many expelled servicemen were never able to attain stable employment and a source of income.

made in the armed forces. Nevertheless, even with all he had accomplished outside the military, he claimed he was still “not a fulfilled man”.<sup>147</sup> After he was expelled he had to be helped by different people who showed solidarity to him. Thus, even though he had succeeded economically, he was still frustrated and unfulfilled as a man. This shows a connection between military and masculine identities in Carvalho’s life.

Carvalho believed that he had been wronged when he was expelled because he was not a “subversive.” In 1964 he supported the coup, but in 1968 he was expelled after he refused to follow his superior’s orders. Ten years after the events he claimed he still trusted that the “revolutionary justice” would solve his case. He believed that although Brigadier Burnier was responsible for his expulsion, and that the military committed mistakes during the era, the military government as a whole still acted in the country’s best interests.<sup>148</sup> Even though he defied orders, which qualified as an act of resistance, Carvalho expressed that his case was different from all other servicemen who were expelled for political reasons. In the 1970s, Carvalho participated in a few ADNAM meetings, but after a while told Proença very frankly he would not return because he did not want to gather with subversive and leftist individuals. Proença claimed that he believed officers involved with ADNAM were communists and Carvalho would not join them in the fight for amnesty.<sup>149</sup> Carvalho spoke as if their expulsions were different from his because they had indeed committed political crimes.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> In his words, “... hoje posso dizer que ganho mais do que se estivesse na ativa, mas não sou um homem realizado.” Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Jornal do Brasil*, 20.02.78. “Capitão do Parasar Prefere Ficar Calado.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 162.

<sup>148</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. *Jornal do Brasil*, 20.02.78. “Capitão do Parasar Prefere Ficar Calado.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261b.28, 162.

<sup>149</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

<sup>150</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

Many men who always understood their expulsions as a political act and opposed the authoritarian government still dealt with the trauma of marginalization better than Carvalho. They had a system of support, and they relied on each other. Sharing their experiences in the context of the movements for amnesty reassured them that their expulsions were a consequence of their opposition to military intervention. Understanding their agency, they dealt with the marginalization during this era knowing they were on the right side of history. Carvalho's case was different since he supported military rule but was disappointed by his superiors. When he received orders to kill civilians and was expelled for not obeying them, he felt that the armed forces had betrayed him. Expulsion from the Air Force upset Carvalho so much that the life he lived outside the barracks, even if more prosperous economically, left him feeling diminished. He wished that the armed forces recognized that his expulsion was unfounded and that he had always remained an honorable serviceman. His case shows that financial security was not the only, or even main, most important aspect of reincorporation for expelled servicemen.

In the interviews I conducted with men who received amnesty and who were reincorporated into the forces, officers, sailors and marines were calm and spoke of their experiences in the past tense. Even though I asked them about their personal experiences many of my interviewees chose a style of narrative that focused on the larger history of the armed forces, or the dictatorship. This showed a distancing from the events as these interviewees were already able to remember their experiences with more objectivity. For example, when I asked José Araújo Nóbrega why he had decided to join the Army, he did not answer the question directly and narrated a series of events that provided context to the political conflicts inside the barracks decades before 1964. He explained that they faced a sensitive political situation inside the military, which was building up to a coup since the 1950s, during the second Getúlio Vargas'

government. As the interviewer I allowed Nóbrega answer the question as he wished. Yet, I was expecting a different answer which focused on a more personal reason to joining the Army, such as why as a teenager the military career was attractive to him. The way he approached the question showed a distancing from the facts as he was able to talk about it objectively.

Throughout the interview he continued narrating events about his life trajectory which saddened him, including the death and loss of family and friends. Yet he did not cry and only paused briefly at one moment or another.

In the interviews I conducted, my goal was to ask questions that encouraged interviewees to remember how they experienced military rule. Instead of asking them about sequences of events and facts, I asked what those events meant to them. However, several interviewees, such as Nóbrega, narrated history in an impersonal way. Fernando de Santa Rosa also answered my questions objectively. He remembered events from the moment he started his training in the Navy to his expulsion from the military ranks.<sup>151</sup> After he said something about himself, such as a conversation he had with another officer, he would change his narrative to teach me about history. He explained that a certain president left post, another took over, that the War Ministers changed, and that political conflicts from the 1950s and 1960s built to a coup. Even though I only asked them how they were personally affected, many seemed to have distanced themselves from the events and were more comfortable discussing Brazil's history as told in books than from their own perspectives as how these events affected them. In addition, even when they told me about the harassment, imprisonment, and torture they endured, they would not express much resentment. It seems that the reparations they received with amnesty allowed some of them to overcome some traumas they had carried throughout military rule. The only moment some of

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<sup>151</sup> Fernando de Santa Rosa, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, October 8, 2016.

them, such as Darcy Rodrigues, expressed sadness and resentment was when we discussed friends who passed away. As Rodrigues explained, the scars from his tortures started to disappear with time, but the invisible wounds from his friends' deaths still hurt.<sup>152</sup>

Expelled servicemen who participated in the amnesty movement in the 1970s and 1980s, especially sailors and marines from UMNA, and officers from ADNAM and AMPLA, chose to discuss their involvement with such institutions and the struggle for amnesty at length during our interviews. José Wilson da Silva and Ivan Cavalcanti Proença both wrote biographies about their experiences, which discuss profoundly their involvement in the fight for amnesty. Proença stated he still wished to continue writing more about the 1980s and the elitist character of the amnesty law that failed to contemplate low-ranking soldiers.<sup>153</sup> Mobilizing in the amnesty movement helped these men affirm their agency in history and reclaim their space in Brazilian society. The amnesty movement's relative success, which allowed a percentage of servicemen to be reincorporated into the forces, made many individuals who participated in the fight proud of themselves as men, which helped them reclaim their honorability. Many expelled servicemen felt beaten and disillusioned after the regime destroyed their opposition movements and guerrilla organizations. Carlos Roberto Pittoli, for example, concluded his interview regretting that the police caught him too soon and that his actions were not significant enough.<sup>154</sup> The fight for amnesty, from which these men emerged victorious, changed, in parts, the ways they saw themselves.

The outcome of the amnesty movement had a meaningful impact in the lives of many of these men. Its success finally ended the marginalization the military subjected these men to and

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<sup>152</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

<sup>153</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

<sup>154</sup> Carlos Roberto Pittoli, interview with the author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

allowed them to feel honorable. In this scenario they were able to circulate in public spaces not as failures, but as patriots who had fought the regime. Francisco Teixeira claimed that amnesty resurrected him from the dead.<sup>155</sup> After he was expelled, Teixeira was considered dead as the Air Force gave his wife a pension for widows of military officers. After he was reincorporated into the military ranks he started to receive wages of a retired officer. Even though he was speaking specifically about this pension when he claims he was “resurrected from the dead,” his “resurrection” is representative of how amnesty allowed him to become a man again, a military man. This points to how his military identity and his masculinity were connected. The status of a retired Air Force marshal resurrected him before society.

It is also important to note that although amnesty helped expelled servicemen to deal with their traumas, it did not completely satisfy many of them, and many continued criticizing the law after being benefited by its application. Wilson da Silva did not seem to still be traumatized during our interview and portrayed the dictatorship as part of his past. Nevertheless, he said that expelled and harassed servicemen still carried bitterness, frustrations, hate, and wounds from the period, which had never healed.<sup>156</sup> While some servicemen seemed less upset with the “compromise” of only being partially reincorporated into the military ranks, others complained they were not allowed to return to active duty. After Francisco Teixeira received amnesty, he was reincorporated into the armed forces and started to receive the income of a retired marshal.<sup>157</sup> However, he was not satisfied with this amnesty as it did not allow him to return to active duty. He claimed that the amnesty was ample, general and unrestricted for politicians as it allowed them to resume their partisan activities. Brizola and Luis Carlos Prestes, for example, returned to

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<sup>155</sup> Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira (depoimento, 1983/1984)* (Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 275.

<sup>156</sup> José Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho*, 259.

<sup>157</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 275.

politics and even got elected. Amnesty, however, was restricted for expelled servicemen because the great majority was not able to serve again.<sup>158</sup> He claimed this prevented him from fighting against political and ideological discrimination inside the armed forces after democratization. Proença also claimed he was young enough to return to active duty but that the Army did not allow him to do so. He stated this was one of the regrets he would have to carry with him throughout the rest of his life, “as the [military] career is beautiful.”<sup>159</sup> Therefore, although amnesty was an important factor that helped them deal with trauma, some men regretted they would never be able to return to active duty. Furthermore, not being able to influence change in the amnesty law to include servicemen who were expelled through other mechanisms and not only via institutional acts also upset some reincorporated officers, such as Da Silva and Rui Moreira Lima.

The amnesty law, therefore, impacted significantly the ones who were reincorporated into the military ranks. The main problem with it, however, continued being that it did not include all servicemen who were expelled from the armed forces for political reasons. The case of the low-ranking soldiers who did not receive economic reparations show how impactful the amnesty law was to helping servicemen deal with their trauma. The men who were not favored by the law remembered military rule and the marginalization they endured very differently from servicemen who received the reparations.

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<sup>158</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 296, 315.

<sup>159</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

### **Incomplete Transitions: The Fight for Amnesty in the 2010s**

The interviews with individuals who never received economic reparations were very different from the interviews I conducted with those who received the benefits of the amnesty law. Many soldiers still fighting for amnesty saw our meetings as an opportunity to be heard. They believed they could use my interest in their cases as a platform to convince the public of their right for amnesty. Their interviews were more personal and emotive than the ones I conducted with reformed officers, sailors and marines who were reincorporated into the military ranks. Many individuals I interviewed who did not receive economic reparations from the state cried in different moments of the interviews. They told me about their difficulties during military rule, but also about recent hardships. Many of them still lived in suburban, poor areas of Rio de Janeiro and faced many economic privations. They did not have money to pay for a health exam or medicine they needed due to the tortures they endured in the military barracks so many years ago.<sup>160</sup> It became very clear that those men were still traumatized by their experiences from military rule because they still felt persecuted.

At the time I was conducting interviews for this dissertation Brazil was going through a delicate political moment and the national political instability scared some soldiers, who refused to give me interviews. I started conducting research during Dilma Rousseff's government, which expanded investigations on human rights violations during the dictatorship through the work of the National Truth Commission (2012-2014). When I travelled to Recife on September 2016, I tried to interview expelled soldiers from the Air Force still fighting for amnesty. José Bezerra da Silva, whom I had interviewed in Rio de Janeiro, told me about the existence of an association of soldiers in Recife and contacted them on my behalf. After trying to convince them to talk to me,

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<sup>160</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

Bezerra da Silva called and told me that the men were afraid of giving interviews. This was days after President Dilma Rousseff had been impeached on August 31, and the men were afraid of how much power supporters of military rule could recover after the Partido dos Trabalhadores's president had been ousted. This event informed me about the fear individuals who did not receive amnesty still experienced in 2016. They suspected that since officers who participated in the military government were never punished for the crimes they committed, many still held governmental power and influence years decades after the end of the dictatorship. Therefore, they were afraid of what these officials could do against them if they positioned themselves publicly against the dictatorship. The issue was not whether these soldiers would be harassed for a fact, but that they were afraid they would. For them military rule was not a part of their past but of their present.

Even though they were not chased on the streets anymore, there were no laws prohibiting companies from hiring them, and they had not experienced physical torture for years, they still felt marginalized. Robson Ferreira repeated throughout his interview that the Air Force abused him, and that he felt embarrassed ever since he left the institution. He claimed that he relied on religion to help him deal with the injustices he endured. However, he said that the Air Force “castrated” him, conveying the idea that he was never able to recover from the emasculation process the institution subjected him to. In our interview he showed a sense of helplessness. He did not believe the state and society in general saw any value in his life. The only benefit from the state Robson and many other soldiers received was psychological treatment provided by psychologists of a governmental program called Clínicas do Testemunho.

Throughout the following decades since its creation, the Amnesty Commission started to build new projects to provide reparations in other forms for individuals who were marginalized

during military rule. According to Paulo Abrão, president of the Amnesty Commission from 2007 to 2016, the Commission was guided by five pillars, reparation, truth seeking, safeguarding the memory of the victims, punishing human rights violators, and reforming the institutions that perpetrated state violence.<sup>161</sup> Providing psychological treatment to people who had been the targets of the regime's violations consisted on a new stage of the program of reparations. According to members of the Commission, the care and assistance of victims of human rights was necessary to provide reparations not only in the economic and moral spheres, but also the psychiatric.<sup>162</sup> Together with the Ministry of Justice, the Commission created the Clínicas in 2013, which started to provide psychic assistance to hundreds of people who were affected by state violence during military rule in Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, São Paulo and Pernambuco.<sup>163</sup>

Amidst all the flaws of the amnesty process, as many of those who participated in the dictatorship continued holding power after democratization and torturers were never punished, the Amnesty Commission attempted to open ways for the national memorialization of the dictatorship and its numerous abuses. Intellectuals and medical doctors involved in the project were invested in helping people who experienced state violence to deal with their trauma. This indicates an effort to acknowledge trauma and understand that helping people deal with it contribute to the ways in which Brazil can move forward as a democracy. The project Clínicas

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<sup>161</sup> Sigmund Freud Associação Psicanalítica (org.), *Clínicas do testemunho: Reparação Psíquica e Construção de Memórias* (Porto Alegre: Criação Humana, 2014), 15. Accessed August 16, 2018, <http://www.justica.gov.br/central-de-conteudo/anistia/anexos/livro-clinicas-do-testemunho.pdf>.

<sup>162</sup> Vera Vital Brasil, Cristiane Cardoso, Marília Felipe, *Uma Perspectiva Clínico-Política na Reparação Simbólica: Clínica do Testemunho do Rio de Janeiro* (Brasília; Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Projetos Terapêuticos, Ministério da Justiça, Comissão de Anistia, 2015). Accessed August 15, 2018, <http://www.justica.gov.br/central-de-conteudo/anistia/anexos/clinica-do-testemunho-rj-on-line.pdf>.

<sup>163</sup> Sigmund Freud Associação Psicanalítica (org.), *Clínicas do Testemunho: Reparação Psíquica e Construção de Memórias* (Porto Alegre: Criação Humana, 2014), 23.

do Testemunho seems to have made a difference in the lives of the men I interviewed. Some of them told me that in the program they opened up about the tortures and harassment they endured for the first time. Before I interviewed expelled soldiers from the Air Force I contacted Clínicas do Testemunho psychologist Vera Vital Brasil, who introduced me to a few soldiers. I believe that if Brasil and other professionals involved in the program had not talked to these men before I approached them, I would not have been able to interview many soldiers. Robson Ferreira, for example, stated that he only started talking about the negative experiences the Air Force subjected him to in the project Clínicas do Testemunho. At the time of our interviews, even receiving psychological treatment, expelled Air Force soldiers still showed strong signs of trauma. Ferreira had started talking to other people about his history, but he still felt marginalized. Certain aspects of these men's traumas lingered for decades after the end of military rule, as Darcy Rodrigues said about the colleagues who died in the fight.

Receiving the benefits of the amnesty law transformed the ways many saw military rule as it allowed them to remember the suffering but not feel it so strongly anymore. Most of the soldiers who had still not received financial compensation were never able to overcome the physical and material constraints they were subjected to under military rule. They did not have the material resources to deal with the physical and psychological marks of torture and poverty. Norberto Batista Simões, for example, said that after he was expelled from the Air Force his health deteriorated due to the tortures he endured. Simões argued he was never able to recover financially or physically, and due to his health problems, he could not find employment. His inability to rebuild his professional life influenced the ways he identified as a man. After the Air Force expelled him he suggested he was never able to find his place in society again.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Norberto Batista Simões, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

Another aspect that showed these soldiers were still trying to deal with the trauma inflicted during military rule was their insistence in affirming that they were honorable men. Many seemed to be afraid that the narratives of their life-trajectories could suggest that they were not honorable men and tried to “convince” me that despite all they had endured, they were still “real” men. This included telling me that they never committed crimes, for example. João Martins de Oliveira claimed that when he was dishonorably discharged from the Air Force in 1967, more than 400 servicemen participated in the ritual of his expulsion, turning their backs on him as his lieutenant tore Oliveira’s uniform in front of everyone. The former soldier claims he carried the embarrassment of this moment with him during his entire life. Crying throughout most of his interview, he stated he had never told anyone from his family about this episode. He talked about his father many times, saying that he was specifically ashamed to tell him about his expulsion. His interview only lasted about ten minutes, as he had trouble to continue remembering and talking about his past. After the expulsion he was homeless for a while, but, even with everything that he endured he claimed to have “never smoked marijuana, stole, or was a pederast.”<sup>165</sup> He believed it was important to tell me that even after the Air Force stripped him of everything he had, he did not lose all of this honorability. According to his notions of masculinity, using drugs, stealing and violating a child were the most despicable actions a man could engage in. He emphasized that even though the Air Force tried to emasculate him, he never belittled himself to the point of committing a crime or an immoral act such as pederasty. Perhaps he mentioned these specific acts after seeing individuals who endured difficulties throughout life getting involved in such practices. Since he believed I could be prejudiced against him for having lived in a situation of homelessness, he wanted to reassure that he never practiced such activities.

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<sup>165</sup> João Martins de Oliveira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 22, 2015.

Expelled soldiers who had just started receiving psychological treatment for a lifetime of marginalization still showed deep signs of gendered trauma. Their memory of military rule is remarkably different from officers, sailors and marines I interviewed because they were not allowed to be reincorporated into the military ranks. These soldiers were rejected and marginalized from the armed forces, and after they started fighting for amnesty, claiming they were targeted by the dictatorship, they did not find many supporters. Although a couple of officers joined their fight and argued in their favor, especially Rui Moreira Lima and José Wilson da Silva, many individuals who received amnesty never supported them. In informal conversations with members of UMNA, some told me that the former soldiers of the Air Force I interviewed did not deserve to be included in the amnesty law because they were expelled for disciplinary reasons. Facing rejection from individuals in a similar situation also constituted a traumatic experience. This double rejection, from the armed forces and from other expelled members of the armed forces, reminded these men of their trauma prevented them from overcoming it. Feelings of persecution, economic hardships, facing rejection from the government, from the armed forces and from groups who were also harassed, made it difficult for these soldiers to overcome a gendered trauma.

### **The Struggle for Amnesty, the Struggle for Memory**

At the same time expelled servicemen were pursuing justice, they negotiated the terms in which their stories would be remembered and included in the history of the era of military rule. Several factors, however, served as obstacles to the memorialization of their cases. The fact that soldiers who were reincorporated were not able to return to the military bases and barracks, and the different ideologies that distinguished the groups of expelled servicemen prevented the

emergence of a single narrative of military persecution. Nonetheless, these men continued fighting to be remembered in the national memory.

Since most expelled servicemen who were reincorporated in the armed forces were never able to return to active duty, they were not able to influence the institution internally into opening the dictatorship's archives. Therefore, officers who enforced military rule constructed an official version about the period that excluded opposition inside the armed forces. This version of events was only fought against outside the military barracks. Francisco Teixeira claimed that if allowed to return to active duty, non-interventionist officers would have been able to contest the unanimous version of events that portrayed the institution as a unified political body.<sup>166</sup> In the context of democratization during the 1980s, he wished to return to active duty after reincorporation and reform the armed forces. His goal was to fight against military political and ideological discrimination, which caused the expulsions of thousands of servicemen since the 1930s but especially during the 1960s and 1970s. He believed that if the discrimination against "communist" servicemen ended, the armed forces would remain ideologically divided and would not have the strength to intervene in politics again.<sup>167</sup> Teixeira, however, was not allowed to return to active duty and never got to try to influence the armed forces in these ways.

In an attempt to avert significant changes within the armed forces after the democratic transition of the 1980s, interventionist officers resisted both the spirit and the application of the law when they denied the reincorporation of expelled officers and soldiers. Most of the documentation from military intelligence agencies continued hidden from the public and the armed forces controlled the narrative about internal support for the coup, emphasizing the idea

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<sup>166</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 296.

<sup>167</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, 315.

that the officers and soldiers were united in supporting and enforcing the dictatorship. When civilian opponents to military rule started criticizing this narrative, they did not emphasize the cases of expelled servicemen, and the myth of the armed forces as a united political body continued being reproduced in public spaces. This was still the narrative these men fought against at the time of our interviews, which took place between 2015 and 2017.<sup>168</sup>

Many of the men who received amnesty still gathered in regular meetings within the same organizations that fought for amnesty as a means to fight for the memorialization of their fight. From time to time someone sought for the help of one of these associations with their amnesty process. In his interview, Simão Kerimian claimed that ACIMAR needed to stay open because people still needed help with amnesty processes.<sup>169</sup> Many members of these associations also gathered to discuss issues non-related to the economic reparations of the amnesty. Members of the UMNA, for example, held monthly meetings to discuss supporting certain social projects and their standing about current political events. I believe this is one way in which they fought to be included in the national memory. By not removing themselves from public discussions about politics, they included themselves not only in past debates about human rights in the context of military rule but also in current political debates.

Fighting for amnesty also gave servicemen a sense of purpose. When I interviewed Da Silva he claimed he still regularly went to Brasília to support soldiers who were still fighting for amnesty.<sup>170</sup> Simão Kerimian started to receive the benefits of the amnesty law in 1992, but at the time of our interview in 2016 was still the vice-president of the organization.<sup>171</sup> Many sailors and

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<sup>168</sup> As I have mentioned previously, academic works started to emerge challenging this narrative only in the 2010s. But in public discourses dissent in the armed forces is barely discussed.

<sup>169</sup> Simão Kerimian, interview with author, São Paulo, July 27, 2016.

<sup>170</sup> José Wilson da Silva, interview with author, Porto Alegre, July 2, 2015.

<sup>171</sup> Simão Kerimian, interview with author, São Paulo, July 27, 2016.

marines were still trying to receive backpay the earnings they claimed the Navy still owned them, but even the ones who had already stopped fighting legally, continued as active participants of UMNA, providing service to other sailors and marines who had not received the benefits. Through the amnesty movements, these men found spaces to exert influence and perform their military masculinity. The fight for amnesty provided them with a space where they could exert influence and continue to fight for their place in history. Expanding the amnesty law and helping other expelled soldiers to be able to receive reparations contribute to the ways in which these men are attempting to construct a national memory about the dictatorship that includes them.

Due to their disagreements and differences, expelled servicemen from different ranks and military branches never agreed on one narrative about their marginalization. Perhaps this explains why they were still struggling to be included in the national memory about the dictatorship. One of the only factors that unified officers and soldiers was that they were expelled from the armed forces for political reasons. However, while some officers considered themselves anti-interventionists and actively opposed the dictatorship, many soldiers did not know why they were being expelled from the forces at the time. While some servicemen decided to organize against the coup, many tried to remain outside of politics and live quiet lives. While civilian movements of resistance against the regime were formed mainly by individuals who identified with the leftist ideology, expelled servicemen were not united ideologically.

If during the first years of military rule most servicemen being expelled were non-interventionists, by the end of the era the generals in power had excluded several officers who had initially favored the coup, such as Peri Beviláqua and Sérgio Carvalho. Beviláqua and Francisco Teixeira, for example, were opposed ideologically. While the first supported the coup

and served in the Superior Tribunal Militar until 1969, Teixeira identified as a leftist and had positioned himself against military intervention since before 1964. Sérgio Carvalho believed members of AMPLA were subversives. Carvalho was insubordinate to his superior when he disagreed with killing and injuring civilians, but he did not oppose interventionism from the start. Even after the law of amnesty was issued he still denied that his case was similar to the thousands of servicemen expelled for political reasons.<sup>172</sup> He claimed that amnesty was about pardon, and he could not be pardoned because he had not committed any crimes.<sup>173</sup> It seems he believed his case was different because he considered many expelled servicemen to be subversives, while he thought of himself as a patriot. Sailors and marines from UMNA expressed that soldiers from the Air Force did not deserve amnesty since they were expelled for disciplinary reasons. Due to the great diversity of these groups, a single narrative that included all servicemen who were expelled, imprisoned and marginalized during military rule, never emerged. Officers and soldiers of more leftist inclinations who participated in resistance movements were often included in the civilian narrative, since many of them entered resistance movement after they had already been expelled from the forces. Members of the Caparaó or the VPR guerrilla movements, for example, are often included in the narrative of movements of opposition against the dictatorship but their military connection often not emphasized.

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<sup>172</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 23.08.79. “Capitão Sérgio Critica Restrições e Nega Retorno.” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261d.28, 19.

<sup>173</sup> Arquivo Público do Paraná, Secretaria de Segurança Pública, DOPS, Pasta Comitê Brasileiro Pela Anistia. Folha de São Paulo, 28.06.79. “Capitão Sérgio pode ‘Contar a Verdade.’” BR PRAPPR.PB004.PT261d.28, 96

## **Conclusion**

Receiving amnesty and the promotions and wages that a long-term career in the military would have afforded expelled servicemen was instrumental to how they dealt with the traumas they were exposed to. In the interviews I conducted, officers who received reparations, were reincorporated into the military ranks, received promotions, and called themselves reformed servicemen, remembered the period of military rule more as part of their past than their present. They critiqued military rule and lamented the harassment and violence they were exposed to, but they were talking about their past. Soldiers who had not received reparations, cried and had difficulties remembering their experiences as if the dictatorship never ended for them.

The impression of perpetual suffering influenced the ways soldiers saw themselves as men. After they left the armed forces expelled servicemen sought spaces in which to perform masculinity but for decades after expulsion, many of them felt their manhood was constantly challenged. Both officers who were successful professionally, like Carvalho, and soldiers who lived in situations of extreme poverty, like Oliveira, suffered due to being marginalized from the armed forces. When groups of expelled servicemen were reincorporated into the institution and able to identify as servicemen again, that allowed many of them to reclaim their masculine honor. Being allowed to return to the armed forces, even if only as members of the military reserves, or retired, made many of them feel like honorable men. Nonetheless, the soldiers who did not receive economic reparations continued feeling wronged and marginalized. The fact that they thought society did not see them as valuable and honorable men influenced the ways they saw themselves.

## CHAPTER 6. THE STRUGGLE FOR MEMORY

### Introduction

From his law firm in Rio de Janeiro's downtown, by Cinelândia public square, José Bezerra da Silva started telling me about his life as an Air Force soldier during the 1970s. The interview, which lasted for over two hours, was grounded not only in his personal experiences. During the first hour of our conversation, he constructed a narrative that highlighted the political mobilization of members of the armed forces from the first decade of the twentieth century to the military dictatorship. Starting with the history of sailor João Candido, who became known for his leadership in the Revolt of the Whip in 1910, Da Silva explained that persecution within the armed forces was not an innovation of the dictatorship. During most part of the interview, however, he focused on describing the 1964 coup and the years that followed. He constructed a cohesive narrative detailing the events leading to the coup. Not exclusively focused on resistance within the military, he asserted that the dictatorship imprisoned young people, artists, and anyone who was against the regime, in the city or rural areas. He also talked about the National Security Law, which classified certain actions, such as bank robberies, as crimes against national security. He also told me about the actions of guerrilla organizations, which, according to him, were small and did not have many resources, and criticized the state's role in killing guerrilla members. Da Silva continued telling me about how Brazilian military officers received training from the U.S. military on counter-insurgency tactics, and how they used this knowledge to torture Brazilians who were seen as subversives. After this he spoke about the specific process of marginalization that members of the armed forces endured. Using a deductive reasoning method, he transitioned from narrating the events surrounding political conflicts between president Goulart and sectors of

the armed forces, to how the military fought opposition movements, to, finally, talking about his specific experience. During the first hour of our conversation, he told me about events he did not personally live through, but that he had read about, learned in newspapers and conversations. Only after he had set the stage for the dictatorship, did he start telling me about his expulsion, which took place in 1979.

Bezerra da Silva was not the only, or not even one of the few, interviewees who decided to discuss the broader historical context of military rule relative to his personal experience. Many expelled members of the armed forces I interviewed, before telling me about their own life trajectories, felt the need to put their own histories in perspective. As I have showed previously, Darcy Rodrigues also used a similar strategy in his narrative. The first question I asked him was about what led him to join the Army, and after a few minutes talking about his teenagehood, he stopped himself and asked me if he could “*fazer um breve histórico do que foi 64,*” or briefly go over the historic background of 1964.<sup>1</sup> Rodrigues proceeded to narrate Brazilian history since the mid nineteenth-century, highlighting the role of the armed forces in politics and the role of presidents Afonso Pena and Hermes da Fonseca in building a conservative ideology inside the armed forces. While the former sergeant was defending the armed forces, trying to show me that he and others had to fight against an ideology that governed the actions of military coup leaders that was not new, Da Silva was tying his own experience to the history of military rule in Brazil. Because both of these men did not know how I would interpret their personal histories, they wanted to establish the boundaries in which their cases should be understood.

Da Silva’s decision to set this context in his interview, however, seems to have had a different purpose than Rodrigues’. While the second was a documented opponent of the regime,

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<sup>1</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

fought in guerrilla movement VPR, was imprisoned, exiled and then reincorporated into the military ranks after the Amnesty Law, Da Silva did not have many ways to document he had been expelled and harassed for political reasons. Furthermore, he had never formally participated in any opposition movements. Da Silva's recollection of the period had the purpose of showing me how his personal history could be tied to the political context. He wanted to describe the cruelty of military coup leaders and agents of the regime, who harassed everyone whom they believed were connected to movements of resistance—even those who, like Da Silva, were never actually involved. In this way, he hoped to convince me that his politically motivated expulsion awarded him and his peers the right to be included in the narratives about military rule in Brazil. He was making an argument for why his and his peers' histories were an important part of the history of the dictatorship, even if they were not portrayed in the media or in the history books.

Many other expelled low-ranking soldiers resorted to similar strategies to tie their cases to more well-known narratives on the period, in order to convince that they deserved the same place in history as these individuals. As they started telling me about the days prior to their arrests, imprisonments or expulsions, they would include in their discourses what they thought I would recognize as a “more familiar” figure of the period, or an event that became iconic in historical accounts. Doing so, they attempted to include the expulsions and marginalization of officers and soldiers in the larger narratives about the era. The ways in which interviewees would do so varied especially depending on how involved they had been with movements of resistance. While certain officers were critical of certain events or individuals, such as Goulart and Brizola, soldiers who had never interacted with these figures had formed a more mythical image of them.

In this last chapter, I examine how expelled servicemen have shaped their memories and how they have used different strategies to include them into the broad national narratives about

the period. In order to do so, I show how Brazilians have memorialized military rule, examining institutions and practices of transitional justice, to then analyze how expelled servicemen have attempted to dialogue with popular narratives that emerged after 1985. Historical and popular accounts of the dictatorship, which either endorsed the actions of the generals in power or condemned them, have largely excluded officers and soldiers who were seen as opponents of the regime. Expelled servicemen were not included in important discussions about the era, and when this happened, they were not portrayed in the same light as many civilians or their military background was not emphasized. The most memorialized military personnel in this period is Carlos Lamarca, who is remembered as the “*capitão da guerrilha*,” or the captain of the guerrilla. Nevertheless, civilian circles usually remember him for his role in the guerrilla movement before emphasizing his background as a captain in the Army.<sup>2</sup>

In fighting to dismantle military rule, for amnesty and to be reincorporated into the armed forces, men who were expelled from the armed forces had many goals. In addition to reclaiming their honor and receiving financial compensation for the marginalization they endured, they have also struggled to be included in the national memory of the era. After 1985 many of them became active participants in movements for democracy and in public conversations about human rights violations, even when many left-wing activists rejected their right to be amnestied.

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<sup>2</sup> This is also due to the ways in which the leaders of the military regime constructed his image. When Lamarca deserted from the Army, stealing resources from his headquarters, this scandal discredited the Army and the military government. After this event it seems that there was an attempt to portray Lamarca mainly as a communist, subversive, terrorist, and distance his image from the figure of the military captain. In some documents circulating internally to DOPS or the intelligence agencies, they would classify him as a former Army captain (DOPS/SP, “Carlos Lamarca,” 50-Z-9-15734). However, other documents internal documents (DOPS/SP, “Cartas de Carlos Lamarca – ‘Claudio,’” 15 Jan 1971, 50-D-26-2658) and most newspaper articles (DOPS/SP, “Lamarca foi Denunciado,” O Estado de São Paulo, 18 Fev 1970) would not mention his previous military status, or would discredit his military background calling him a terrorist, subversive and even “pathetic” (DOPS/PR, “O Mito Lamarca, um ‘Messias’ sem Deus,” O Estado de São Paulo, 12 Apr 1980).

More recently, the advent of the National Truth Commission, and the discussions that returned with it, motivated more expelled servicemen to step into national conversations about the period and argue as to why and how their cases need to be in the forefront of conversations about human rights violations. They have fought to include their histories in the national memory about the dictatorship, arguing that that military governors tried to cleanse universities, labor unions, and also the armed forces of “communist infiltration.”

### **The Construction of a National Memory about the Dictatorship**

Social groups that experienced the era of military rule in different ways also remembered it differently. In 1985, when the dictatorship ended, distinct sectors from the state and civil society started to press for a reevaluation of the “official version” of history generals in power had constructed from 1964 to 1985. However, different experiences with the regime created a conflict in terms of how social groups wanted the era to be remembered.<sup>3</sup>

The national memory about the period was constructed in two different moments. In the first moment, still during the era, fragmented experiences with the dictatorship, which were mediated by the officers governing the country who imposed censorship, formed the national memory about the period. Dissenters challenged narratives of the period during the era. Nevertheless, the dictatorship still imposed an official version about what was happening and those who challenged were harassed, tortured and sometimes killed. In a second moment, which came after 1985, the mechanisms and institutions of transitional justice challenged the official narrative the military government had constructed about the period and the groups who had been

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the different ways groups in Chile constructed memory about the dictatorship see Stern, *Battling for Hearts and Minds*.

violently silenced proposed new questions and a new framework to remember the dictatorship. In both of these moments there was a battle for memory; for how Brazil must have dealt with the politics of remembering military rule. Although social groups throughout Brazil remember the period in distinct ways—as I have shown throughout this dissertation—two main memory poles have constantly battled for memory in a national scale: one that has advocated the forgiving of all sides that fought during military rule as a way to move forward; and another that believes the only way to move forward is remembering and addressing non-resolved issues so that they will not be repeated in history—in their words, “*para que não se esqueça, para que nunca mais aconteça.*”<sup>4</sup>

These memories were historically constructed during the transition to democracy in the 1980s, which took place at a slow pace. In 1974, president Ernesto Geisel claimed he would push for a slow redemocratization, which took over a decade. When power was finally returned to civilians in 1985, the Brazilian democratic state did not implement policies and practices across the nation to memorialize authoritarian rule as an undesirable system of governance. Scholars have argued that Brazilian society failed to create or recreate cultural mechanisms to remember the dictatorship after the Amnesty Movement and the creation of the Amnesty Law, showing that while there were a few state initiatives that focused on recuperating the memory about the dictatorship's human rights violations—such as the National Truth Commission (CNV) and even movies about the era—the state failed to organize “a national culture of memory and human rights” following the country’s return to civilian rule.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the “reciprocal” aspect of

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<sup>4</sup> “So we will not forget, so it will never happen again.” This sentence is commonly used by activists in Brazil and it refers to the necessity to study the era of military rule and remember the human rights violations committed in Brazil, so they would not be repeated in the future.

<sup>5</sup> Atencio, *Memory's Turn*, 19.

the amnesty law, which benefitted opponents of the dictatorship but also torturers served as a form of “institutional amnesia.”<sup>6</sup>

After Amnesty Law 6683 was issued, few instruments were put in place to overcome the legacy of human rights violations, and no mass movement materialized to demand the repeal of the Law or the creation of trials for human rights violations.<sup>7</sup> After 1985, governments chose to ignore the question on the memory about the period. In one moment or another, institutions emerged to question the lack of governmental action, such as the groups Brazil: Never Again, or the Torture Never Again Group. In addition, the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government created the Law of the Disappeared, which recognized both the state’s responsibility for political disappearances and gave disappeared individuals’ relatives the right to obtain death certificates and receive compensation. Yet the Law did not punish state agents for these disappearances.<sup>8</sup>

Transitional justice in Brazil has been a contentious political issue, and many activists argue that it was highly flawed.<sup>9</sup> Vicente Arruda Câmara Rodrigues defines transitional justice as “actions that aim to overcome the legacy of [human rights] violations, by direct intervention, as, for example, the judicial actions that aim to punish the ones who participated in cases of torture; or indirect, as in the case of initiatives of institutional reform that aim to qualify the apparatus of state security, in order to break with its culture of impunity.”<sup>10</sup> For the author, some of the main

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<sup>6</sup> Atencio, *Memory’s Turn*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> In 2013, at the time he was president of the Supremo Tribunal Federal, Joaquim Barbosa claimed that if a popular demand for changes in the amnesty law emerged, the Tribunal would support it. This statement supports Atencio’s argument as it suggests that Barbosa and other members of the Tribunal might have not felt popular pressure to implement changes. Portal EBC, Leandro Melito, “Barbosa Afirma que a Lei de Anistia Pode ser Modificada,” Accessed on December 18, 2018, <http://www.ebc.com.br/cidadania/2013/02/barbosa-afirma-que-a-lei-de-anistia-pode-ser-modificada>.

<sup>8</sup> Atencio, *Memory’s Turn*, 16.

<sup>9</sup> For more on the concept and history of transitional justice in Brazil see Schneider, “Amnestied in Brazil,” 29.

<sup>10</sup> Vicente Arruda Câmara Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis: Arquivos da Ditadura Militar e Acesso à Informação em Tempos de Justiça de Transição no Brasil* (Aracajú: EDISE, 2017), 117.

elements in the process of the transitional justice are justice, the search for the truth, reparation, institutional reforms, and national reconciliation.<sup>11</sup> The new democratic state of the end of the 1980s instituted some institutional reforms that extinguished organs of surveillance, such as DOPS and the military surveillance agencies, CISA, CIE and CENIMAR, for example. However, in terms of reparations, it provided financial compensation to some, but not to all who claimed to have been politically persecuted throughout the period. In addition, although the project Clínicas do Testemunho provided psychological treatment to some, it was only implemented in a few major capitals in the country, and people who did not live close to these central urban areas might have never received any sort of psychological assistance to deal with traumas inflicted during military rule.

The first mechanisms of transitional justice in Brazil were created between 1995 and 2005. Authors highlight the importance of the creation of the Law of the Disappeared and the Amnesty Commission, explaining that it was after the 2000s that the state initiatives addressing transitional justice became more significant. Another important change came in 2007 when Paulo Abrão took over the leadership of the Amnesty Commission and Tarso Genro became minister of Justice, adopting the language of transitional justice and reframing the work of the Commission accordingly. Authors claims that after this the Brazilian state started to abandon its discourse of “reconciliation by institutionalized forgetting” in favor of a new one focused on “reconciliation by institutionalized memory.”<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, by the second decade of the twenty first century, not even the CNV was able to generate a national mobilization that condemned authoritarian rule and the human rights violations of the dictatorship.

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<sup>11</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 122.

<sup>12</sup> Atencio, *Memory's Turn*, 17.

The investigations CNV conducted were important to calling the public's attention to human rights violations. However, the limits of the Commission became clear when, in the end of 2014, it made twenty-nine recommendations to the state, most of which the federal government never implemented. Since the Commission was only allowed to investigate the human rights violations, and not prosecute, after doing so its members posed recommendations to Dilma Rousseff's presidency, which could decide whether or not to enforce them. Among these proposals, a few worth highlighting were that the armed forces must have recognized that it was responsible for human rights violations between 1964 and 1985; that the public agents who caused severe human rights violations must be held liable for their actions; that public acts celebrating the 1964 coup must be prohibited; that victims of human rights violations must be guaranteed medical and psychological attention; that current policies and mechanisms that still allowed the violation of human rights be extinguished and replaced; and the strengthening of the policies that aimed to find and open the archives of the dictatorship.<sup>13</sup>

Most of the twenty-nine recommendations were not met. Particularly about justice measures, the Supremo Tribunal Federal refused to repeal Law 6683, and perpetrators of human rights violations remained unpunished.<sup>14</sup> The lack of urgency in implementing these recommendations prevailed in Rousseff's government.<sup>15</sup> The executive only officially signaled

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<sup>13</sup> Governo do Brasil, "Conheça as 29 recomendações da Comissão Nacional da Verdade." Accessed on November 30, 2018, [http://www.brasil.gov.br/governo/2014/12/conheca-as-29-recomendacoes-da-comissao-nacional-da-verdade?TSPD\\_101\\_R0=fc58688dae7620954487d56a284a1998j2900000000000000caff7e82ffff0000000000000000000000000000000005c01855f009d63ce6908282a9212ab20008239f52fc7fce56c3723203920500ffc1a1f47fa58c479632e899ee470460a808f6bcb67d0a2800248565abec3fbf0b1c6405bd27432d290ede3e804b097c29587b6cb8c370b0841001111788b7a906](http://www.brasil.gov.br/governo/2014/12/conheca-as-29-recomendacoes-da-comissao-nacional-da-verdade?TSPD_101_R0=fc58688dae7620954487d56a284a1998j2900000000000000caff7e82ffff0000000000000000000000000000000005c01855f009d63ce6908282a9212ab20008239f52fc7fce56c3723203920500ffc1a1f47fa58c479632e899ee470460a808f6bcb67d0a2800248565abec3fbf0b1c6405bd27432d290ede3e804b097c29587b6cb8c370b0841001111788b7a906)

<sup>14</sup> BBC Brasil, João Fellet, "Lei da Anistia é 'Escudo' Contra Reformas, diz Secretário da Justiça," Accessed on January 8, 2019, [https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2014/03/140323\\_ditadura\\_anistia\\_mdb\\_jf](https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2014/03/140323_ditadura_anistia_mdb_jf).

<sup>15</sup> André Saboia Martins and Vivien Ishaq, "O Legado da Comissão Nacional da Verdade: Dois Anos Depois da Publicação do Relatório, o Reconhecimento Judicial do Direito à Verdade Desafia a Falta de

that it had received the report in September 2015, nine months after an event where the president read and publicly addressed it.<sup>16</sup> Before enduring an process in 2016 that led to her impeachment, Rousseff formed a working group with the goal of creating a permanent organ to continue CNV's work. However, since her impeachment process this group's work did not advance.<sup>17</sup> The government could have broadcasted the conclusions of CNV's report to gather support to implement the Commission's recommendations. However, it did not.

During the commemorations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institutional Act number 5, the president of the Especial Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances, Eugênia Gonzaga claimed that there was a political pact in the government not to "embarrass" the military officers who were responsible for human rights violations. For this reason, she argues that the state took very few actions to create spaces of memory about the era.<sup>18</sup> Ultra-conservative Right-wing movements in Brazil have recently pushed back for a return to the official narrative, which claims military officers took power to protect Brazil against groups who aimed to transform the country in a communist regime. During his first days in power, president Jair Bolsonaro made a change to the Amnesty Commission, which was tied to the Ministry of Justice since its creation in 2002, to be controlled by the president's recently created Ministry of the Woman, Family and Human Rights.<sup>19</sup> It is still unclear how the new ministry, whose officer is Damares Alves,

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Justiça Efetiva." In Amy Jo Westhrop, Ayra Guedes Garrido, Carolina Genovez Parreira e Shana Marques Prado dos Santos (Orgs.), *As Recomendações da Comissão Nacional da Verdade: Balanços Sobre a sua Implementação Dois Anos Depois* (Rio de Janeiro: ISER, 2016).

<sup>16</sup> Estadão, "Comissão da Verdade Entrega Relatório Final à Dilma," Accessed on December 7, 2018, <https://www.estadao.com.br/ao-vivo/relatorio-comissao-da-verdade>.

<sup>17</sup> Martins and Ishaq, "O Legado da Comissão Nacional da Verdade", 54.

<sup>18</sup> Marina Rossi, "O Brasil não Cumpriu o Dever de pôr a Ditadura em Pauta. Há um Pacto para não Constranger os Militares." *El País*, Accessed on December 13, 2018, [https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/12/11/politica/1544556828\\_547799.html?fbclid=IwAR3Npkz7IxA\\_6qkBBUJgY--Selvn7oXNG4-BeH5bwoKtS07y0KROVbCIgtY](https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/12/11/politica/1544556828_547799.html?fbclid=IwAR3Npkz7IxA_6qkBBUJgY--Selvn7oXNG4-BeH5bwoKtS07y0KROVbCIgtY).

<sup>19</sup> BBC Brasil, "Governo Bolsonaro: Quais são as Primeiras e Principais Medidas já Tomadas pelo Novo Governo," Accessed on January 8, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-46735873>.

considered by some as a fundamentalist evangelical minister, will deal with the issue of the amnesty in Brazil. In spite of the turbulent political scenario, Eugênia Gonzaga claimed the Special Commission on Political Deaths and Disappearances will continue with its work, pressuring the state to locate the bodies of those whom the dictatorship made disappear between the 1960s and 1980s.<sup>20</sup>

While it is possible to identify a setback in the national scenario, activists pressuring for the memorialization of human rights violations have influenced positively the local spheres of governance. On December 2018, for example, law project number 136/16, created by Ceará's congressman Renato Roseno de Oliveira, was approved.<sup>21</sup> It determines that the state cannot name public buildings and roads after individuals whom the CNV's Report identified as responsible for committing human rights violations. Furthermore, all buildings and roads which had already been named after such persons should have their names changed within one year after the law came into force.<sup>22</sup> This law has the purpose of addressing the national memory on military rule and preventing the memorialization and celebration of human rights abusers, but it is specific to Ceará. This is an example of how state governments have been taking the Truth Commission's recommendations and implementing them in a localized level. Nevertheless, no measures like this have been executed in a national scale.

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<sup>20</sup> Rossi, "O Brasil não Cumpriu o Dever de pôr a Ditadura em Pauta," El País, Accessed on December 13, 2018, [https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/12/11/politica/1544556828\\_547799.html?fbclid=IwAR3Npkz7IxA\\_6qkBBUJgY--Selvn7oXNG4-BeH5bwoKtS07y0KR0VbCIgtY](https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/12/11/politica/1544556828_547799.html?fbclid=IwAR3Npkz7IxA_6qkBBUJgY--Selvn7oXNG4-BeH5bwoKtS07y0KR0VbCIgtY).

<sup>21</sup> Assembléia Legislativa do Estado do Ceará, "AL Aprova Reforma Administrativa do Estado e mais 18 Projetos," Accessed on December 18, 2018, <https://al.ce.gov.br/index.php/ultimas-noticias/item/78735-17122018votacao>.

<sup>22</sup> Projeto de Lei número 136/16, Accessed on December 18, 2018, [https://www2.al.ce.gov.br/legislativo/tramit2016/pl136\\_16.htm](https://www2.al.ce.gov.br/legislativo/tramit2016/pl136_16.htm).

Although this example shows how activist groups have been somehow successful in stopping human rights violators from being celebrated, activists have also condemned the state for not bringing these persons to justice. Into the twenty first century this continued being highlighted as one of the most noteworthy flaws of transitional justice in Brazil.<sup>23</sup> Since perpetrators of human rights abuses in the police and armed forces were not held liable for their actions, they either continued serving in these institutions, retired with high incomes, or transitioned from the state intelligence agencies and police force to other governmental organs after democratization. Many of them continued holding positions of power or influence, and some were able to influence transitional justice. Romeu Tuma, for example, who worked as an aid for police deputy Sérgio Paranhos Fleury until 1975 and then as the director of São Paulo's DOPS until 1982, was one of the agents of the military government who kept his power and influence in the transition to democracy. In 1983 Tuma became the director of São Paulo's Federal Police Regional Superintendence.<sup>24</sup> In 1986 he was nominated general-director of the Federal Police, position he exercised until 1992, and in 2000 he even ran for mayor of São Paulo.<sup>25</sup> Instead of being removed from government and investigated for possibly being implicated in cases of human rights violations while he worked at DOPS, Tuma received a promotion and gained more influence.<sup>26</sup> Activists trust Tuma and other agents who had a similar

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<sup>23</sup> National groups, such as the National Truth Commission, but even international ones, as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and Amnesty International, have argued in favor of repealing the Amnesty Law of 1979, so state agents who violated human rights during the era can be prosecuted legally. O Globo, André de Souza e Evandro Éboli, "Comissão da Verdade pede revogação parcial da Lei da Anistia e responsabiliza ex-presidentes," Accessed on January 9, 2019, <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/comissao-da-verdade-pede-revogacao-parcial-da-lei-da-anistia-responsabiliza-ex-presidentes-14788798>.

<sup>24</sup> Romeu Tuma, Verbete, CPDOC, Accessed on December 8, 2018, <http://www.fgv.br/cpdoc/acervo/dicionarios/verbete-biografico/tuma-romeu>.

<sup>25</sup> O Estado de São Paulo, "Tuma, Novo Diretor da Polícia Federal." 29 January 1986.

<sup>26</sup> Romeu Tuma's name can be found in the files of more than one cases of individuals who were imprisoned and killed at DOPS during the period, signing inquiries that were used to falsify true causes of

trajectory were likely either inflicting human rights violations or they knew about those and condoned the practice. Nevertheless, since the crimes were never thoroughly investigated, perpetrators remained anonymous figures, unknown by the general public. Eugênia Zerbini, for example, daughter of Therezinha and Euryale de Jesus Zerbini, went to visit her mother, imprisoned at the headquarters of Operação Bandeirante in São Paulo in 1970. She claimed one government agent who met her while she was waiting to talk to her mother sexually violated her. Zerbini was never able to discover his identity as “he was not wearing a badge and all the agents used codenames.”<sup>27</sup> She only came to speak on the subject in the context of the CNV investigations. Before that she had never told anyone about the assault.

Those in favor of the repeal of the Amnesty Law 6683 claim that the lack of justice which comes from the impunity of human rights violators is an impediment to national reconciliation. Activists and leftist politicians have attempted to change the amnesty law to exclude human right violators as beneficiaries. In 2014, for example, deputy Luiza Erundina, an advocate for the victims of human rights violations in São Paulo, claimed that it was preposterous that the law gave amnesty to “torturers, rapists, and murderers,” that the victims of the dictatorship deserved justice and that state criminals had to be subjected to the consequences of their crimes.<sup>28</sup> Victims felt they could not accept peace while their violators had not faced

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death of the victims or to prevent the location of bodies that had been tortured and killed. According to investigations of the Truth Commission, there have also been reports that Tuma participated in operations to combat the Araguaia Guerrilla movement. *Memórias da Ditadura*, Romeu Tuma. Accessed on December 14, 2018, <http://memoriasdaditadura.org.br/biografias-da-ditadura/romeu-tuma/index.html>. According to CNV’s report, although there is not concrete proof that Tuma participated in torture sessions at DOPS/SP, he headed the institution’s secret service for years, which, at least, suggests that he was aware of what was happening. *Relatório*, Volume I, Parte 2: *As Estruturas do Estado e as Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos* (Brasília: CNV, 2014), 167.

<sup>27</sup> Comissão Nacional da Verdade, *Audiência Militares de Resistência à Ditadura: Eugênia Zerbini*. Accessed on December 14, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYPbAAwngIk>.

<sup>28</sup> Câmara dos Deputados, “Lei de Anistia: Erundina Pede Mudanças e Diz que Lei não Pode Perdoar Criminosos,” Accessed on December 18, 2018,

justice. Therefore, although there were advances in transitional justice in Brazil, the last being the work of the CNV, the fact that state agents were never punished for crimes against humanity continued being a main topic of dissatisfaction among opponents of the dictatorship. The investigation and prosecution of state criminals continued to be a main aspect in the battle for memory. While activists attempted to pressure for the punishment of state criminals, sectors inside the police, military and the government insisted on the reciprocal aspect of the amnesty law.<sup>29</sup> Despite all efforts to bring these men to justice, they were unsuccessful and no one in Brazil has ever been prosecuted for human rights violations during the era of the dictatorship.

Another space where the battle for memory has taken place in Brazil is in the public representations on the period of military rule. For decades activists have been conducting efforts to transform buildings where torture sections and disappearances took place into spaces of memory. Thus far the only space that currently exists as a memory site for the dictatorship is the Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo. In 1999, the building where the Departamento Estadual de Ordem Política e Social de São Paulo (DEOPS/SP) operated between 1940 and 1983 was declared as a national heritage historical site, and in 2002 its renovation process was concluded.<sup>30</sup> The construction's first floor was transformed into the Memorial da Resistência, a memorial for opponents of the dictatorship, where the public can visit the rooms where political prisoners were

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<http://www2.camara.leg.br/camaranoticias/noticias/DIREITO-E-JUSTICA/450502-LEI-DE-ANISTIA-ERUNDINA-PEDE-MUDANCAS-E-DIZ-QUE-LEI-NAO-PODE-PERDOAR-CRIMINOSOS.html>.

<sup>29</sup> It is important to highlight here that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights determined that in the case of the Guerrilha do Araguaia, where guerrilla members were exterminated in the Araguaia river basin, the Brazilian Amnesty Law constitutes an international illicit that perpetuates impunity. This opened precedent to other cases of human rights violations and helped activists in Brazil to advocate for the punishment of human right violators.

<sup>30</sup> Memorial da Resistência, Secretaria da Cultura, Histórico, Accessed on January 11, 2019, <http://www.memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?mn=19&c=86&s=0>.

held and read about the history of the institution.<sup>31</sup> There is a permanent and temporary exhibitions in the building, and the Memorial also offers workshops and lectures for educators and other members of the community who aim to participate on discussions about human rights.<sup>32</sup> The Memorial da Resistência represents an advance in terms of memorializing the era, yet it is the only place in the country that was transformed to serve this purpose. Activists in other cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte have fought to transform DEOPS' buildings in memory sites.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, only the Memorial da Resistência in São Paulo has come into existence so far.

Discussions about the era of military rule in Brazil taking place during the 2010s show that the national memory about the period is still contentious in Brazil, and that different groups did not stop battling for their versions of history. Officers and soldiers who were expelled from the armed forces have inserted their own experiences and memories of military rule into these broad national narratives about the era. This is the general context and spaces where they have battled for memory. The groups who have fought to deepen the investigations of human rights violations and those who have worked to forgive, or even praise, military rulers, have historically failed to address the cases of military dissenters. When activists for human rights challenged the official narrative spread between 1964 and 1985, they failed to address the cases of expelled

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<sup>31</sup> Pinacoteca, Sobre a Pinacoteca, Accessed on January 11, 2019, <http://pinacoteca.org.br/a-pina/sobre-a-pinacoteca/>.

<sup>32</sup> Memorial da Resistência, Secretaria da Cultura, Atividades, Accessed on January 11, 2019, <http://www.memorialdaresistencia.org.br/memorial/default.aspx?mn=15&c=0&s=17>.

<sup>33</sup> Sul21, “Ministra quer que Prédios do DOPS no Rio e em POA se Tornem Memoriais,” Accessed on January 11, 2019, <https://www.sul21.com.br/noticias/2012/11/ministra-quer-que-predio-do-antigo-dops-no-rio-se-torne-em-memorial-a-vitimas/>; EBC, Agência Brasil, Alana Gandra, “Secretaria do Rio Apresenta Projeto para Transformar Prédio do Dops em Museu,” Accessed on January 11, 2019, <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/direitos-humanos/noticia/2016-12/secretaria-do-rio-apresenta-projeto-para-transformar>; G1, “Antigo Prédio do DOPS em Belo Horizonte Pode se Tornar Memorial dos Direitos Humanos,” Accessed on January 11, 2019, <https://g1.globo.com/mg/minas-gerais/noticia/antigo-predio-do-dops-em-belo-horizonte-pode-ser-tornar-memorial-dos-direitos-humanos.ghtml>.

servicemen, which continued hidden from most of the general public. As I will show in the following sections, even though these men were excluded from these narratives, they actively tried to insert themselves in public discussions about the dictatorship.

Figure 4: Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo – room where political prisoners used to be held



Figure 5: Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo – room where political prisoners used to be held



## **The Dictatorship's Archives**

Written archives provide different and particular sites where battles for memory take place. In Brazil, even after thirty years since the end of the dictatorship and the creation of the 1988 constitution, conducting research about the era remains a challenging task. Most of the documents of military intelligence agencies were never opened to the public; many documents, and sometimes entire collections, from the political police have disappeared; and some states were still in the process of digitalizing their archives, which means the general public was not allowed to access them remotely. In this section I will examine the processes of opening and closing of the dictatorship's archives. Like other aspects of transitional justice, such as the battle for repealing the amnesty law and interpreting it in a way that human rights violators could be punished, the archives of the dictatorship have also been a site of political struggle. Over thirty years after democratization, archives were gradually opened, and researchers could access many collections from intelligence agencies, such as the SNI and CISA, and also from the state political police forces. Nevertheless, the opening of archives was limited and the documents that were released to the public were not necessarily revealing and clarifying in terms of human rights violations.

The first set of documents from the dictatorship's archives to be released to the public was the collection from the group "Brasil: Nunca Mais," which contained documents produced between 1961 and 1977. This archive, which has been digitalized and made available online, contains over 8.500 documents, over one million pages of 707 proceedings of the Superior Tribunal Militar.<sup>34</sup> Three religious leaders, Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns, pastor Jaime Wright and

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<sup>34</sup> Vagner Magalhães, "Brasil Nunca Mais' Expôs os Métodos da Ditadura Brasileira," *Revista Veja*, <https://veja.abril.com.br/brasil/brasil-nunca-mais-expos-os-metodos-da-ditadura-brasileira/>.

rabbi Henry Sobel, envisioned and organized this archive between 1979 and 1985.<sup>35</sup> According to their report published in 1985, the archive “allows the ample understanding of the political and corporative action... as well as main foci of conflict, such as the struggle for land tenure and demands of the labor movement.”<sup>36</sup> During most part of the first decade after democratization this was the only set of documentation about the military dictatorship researchers could access.

In one of the volumes published by “Brasil: Nunca Mais,” called “Perfil dos Atingidos,” or “profile of those who were punished,” there is a section called “targeted social sectors” (*setores sociais visados com destaque*) where the group called “military” appears as number one on the list.<sup>37</sup> Already right after democratization, this documentation indicated that officers and soldiers from the armed forces who did not support the coup were among the groups that endured most persecution from the regime. The document states, “the sanitation of foci of disagreement inside the armed forces was one of the first decisions of priority for the emerging regime.”<sup>38</sup> The document asserts that the regime made a “surgical” effort to destroy all cores that could “reanimate the rebellious spirit” that circulated among the military bases during the Goulart government.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, the “Brasil: Nunca Mais” was the first public (and non-governmental) effort created after the 1979 amnesty law to use military archives as a way to “discover the truth,” constructing a critical memory of the period and rebuking the official narratives that had been

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<sup>35</sup> Vagner Magalhães, “‘Brasil Nunca Mais’ Expôs os Métodos da Ditadura Brasileira,” *Revista Veja*, <https://veja.abril.com.br/brasil/brasil-nunca-mais-expos-os-metodos-da-ditadura-brasileira/>.

<sup>36</sup> Brasil: Nunca Mais, Tomo VI, Vol 1, “Índices Dos Anexos (Arquivo de Material Apreendido),” 2. <https://www.scribd.com/document/93566129/Tomo-Vi-Vol-1-Indices-Dos-Anexos>.

<sup>37</sup> Brasil: Nunca Mais, Tomo III, Perfil dos Atingidos, iii. <https://www.scribd.com/document/93565832/Tomo-III-Perfil-Dos-Atingidos>.

<sup>38</sup> Brasil: Nunca Mais, Tomo III, “Perfil dos Atingidos,” 137. <https://www.scribd.com/document/93565832/Tomo-III-Perfil-Dos-Atingidos>.

<sup>39</sup> Brasil: Nunca Mais, Tomo III, “Perfil dos Atingidos,” 137. <https://www.scribd.com/document/93565832/Tomo-III-Perfil-Dos-Atingidos>.

formed during the years of military rule. Already in these documents, researchers were able to identify the regime's efforts to cleanse the armed forces from all opposition that could emerge from within the military ranks. However, even though this archive raises important questions, showing 38 trials against members of the armed forces from different ranks and military branches, at this moment these men were not included in the center of the new and critical narratives that started emerging about the regime.<sup>40</sup>

The state and federal governments only started to officially open the dictatorship's archives during the 1990s. Since each state dealt with their documentation about the era in distinct ways there was an inconsistency in how researchers could access each different collections of state political police forces. The state archives of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Paraná, Belo Horizonte and Pernambuco, and each of them have a different history. In São Paulo, the DEOPS archive, which is comprised of about 3.5 million documents, was transferred from the Federal Police to the São Paulo Public State Archive (APESP), in 1991. The documentation only became available for in site public consultation in the end of 1994.<sup>41</sup> At APESP, the DEOPS collection is well organized.<sup>42</sup> Even though researchers need to visit the archive to access the original documents or microfilms, they can order and consult the desired documentation on the same day. Conducting research there, I collected over 2,500 pages of

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<sup>40</sup> Brasil: Nunca Mais, Tomo III, "Perfil dos Atingidos," 137.

<https://www.scribd.com/document/93565832/Tomo-III-Perfil-Dos-Atingidos>.

<sup>41</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, DEOPS, <http://www.arquivoestado.sp.gov.br/site/acervo/textual/deops>.

<sup>42</sup> According to CNV's report, the DOPS/SP, or Deops, was the most active of all DOPS in Brazil. By 1964 this state institution was already well established in São Paulo, investigating even individuals considered communists who worked in the police force. Thus, after the military coup the Deops became a valuable resource to the military government. The institution, located in São Paulo, was able to monitor well-structured movements of resistance across the country during the era of the dictatorship. Relatório, Volume I, Parte 2: As Estruturas do Estado e as Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos (Brasília: CNV, 2014), 162-163.

documentation, which show evidence that the São Paulo political police surveilled and harassed former members of the armed forces.

Although most of the documentation of states' political police are of easy access to the public today these archives have faced several problems during the 1980s and 1990s. When the DEOPS archives started being organized, archivists noticed missing parts of the collections. In São Paulo, for example, because DEOPS's documentation stayed under the tutelage of the Federal Police and Romeu Tuma, there was a suspicion that part of the collection remained hidden or even destroyed after being transferred to APESP. The archive's webpage claims that by official means or individual action, "an unknown number of documents related to the period of repression of the civil-military dictatorship cannot be accessed in the country."<sup>43</sup> CNV's report states that the documentation from DOPS/SP at APESP is incomplete, as, for example, it does not hold documents about the institution's informants or about state agents who practiced torture.<sup>44</sup> DOPS/SP archivists also asserted that the state repressive apparatus destroyed and burned documents as a concealment strategy, and for decades many archivists believed that these documents were lost forever. Nevertheless, recent discoveries informed them that part of this hidden documentation was able to resist this state effort to destroy the archive.<sup>45</sup> The mishandling of the archives led archivists to believe that many documents still exist but could not be located yet.

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<sup>43</sup> Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, "Memória, Política e Resistência: Arquivos Perdidos da Ditadura," <http://www.arquivoestado.sp.gov.br/memoriapolitica/materia.php?materia=2>.

<sup>44</sup> Relatório, Volume I, Parte 2: As Estruturas do Estado e as Graves Violações de Direitos Humanos (Brasília: CNV, 2014), 16.

<sup>45</sup> In 2010 the minutes of the Comissão Especial de Investigação Primária were found as part of a professor's private archive. The Commission was responsible for expelling "communists" from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, but its documents were never found by researchers until 2010, when such professor died, and his personal documents were donated to the University of Caxias do Sul. Arquivo Público do Estado de São Paulo, "Memória, Política e Resistência: Arquivos Perdidos da Ditadura," <http://www.arquivoestado.sp.gov.br/memoriapolitica/materia.php?materia=2>.

Aside from the DEOPS archives of São Paulo, in Rio de Janeiro the DOPS documents were transferred to Rio de Janeiro's Public State Archive (APERJ) in 1992, and they also can only be accessed in person, on site.<sup>46</sup> The Arquivo Público Mineiro has recently digitalized all its collection, which can be accessed remotely, and the Pernambuco Public Archive seems to be conducting similar efforts.<sup>47</sup> In Porto Alegre, RS, the documentation from DOPS seems to have been completely destroyed. Only documents from Rio Grande do Sul's Supervisão de Ordem Política e Social (SOPS/RS) have resisted destruction efforts.<sup>48</sup> Examining the institutional history of state archives throughout Brazil, it is possible to identify the unequal history of the documentation from the political police, which has been subjected to different treatment depending on localized governmental policies.

The federal documents of the military intelligence agencies have a different history from the DOPS archives.<sup>49</sup> During the era of the military dictatorship, the armed forces created several

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<sup>46</sup> Governo do Rio de Janeiro, Casa Civil e Desenvolvimento Econômico, Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro – Acervo, <http://www.rj.gov.br/web/casacivil/exibeConteudo?article-id=2980837>.

<sup>47</sup> It seems that the Pernambuco archive has not concluded its digitalization project, as the listing of the archives in the portal *Memórias Reveladas* has not provided a link to their collection yet. Arquivo Nacional, *Memórias Reveladas*, Ministério da Justiça, Accessed on December 26, 2018, <http://www.memoriasreveladas.gov.br/index.php/entidades-parceiras>.

<sup>48</sup> I visited both the Arquivo Público and the Arquivo Histórico do Rio Grande do Sul. At Arquivo Público an archivist told me that the DOPS documents got burned in a fire. I was not able to find documentation or news reports about such event. This archivist claimed that the only documentation from the RS political police that they still had was from the SOPS, which was in charge of the surveillance in the interior of the state, and that I would find these documents at the Arquivo Histórico. This second archive's documentation was not well-catalogued, and I had to search for relevant documents in piles of paper. Surveillance documents were mixed with other documents, such as reports of stolen goods, for example. It is currently difficult to find information about the archives and investigations from the State Truth Commission of RS. The state's government took their website off the air in 2016, and individuals can only access their findings posted on social media. Facebook, Comissão Estadual da Verdade – RS, Accessed on January 14, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/Comissão-Estadual-da-Verdade-RS-425206617569429/>. Sul21, “Governo Sartori Retira do Ar Site da Comissão Estadual da Verdade,” Accessed on January 14, 2019, <https://www.sul21.com.br/areazero/2016/03/governo-sartori-retira-do-ar-site-da-comissao-estadual-da-verdade/>.

<sup>49</sup> For a summary of how state and federal archives were located and organized see Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 165-184.

agencies of surveillance. General Golbery do Couto e Silva created the Serviço Nacional de Informações (SNI) in 1964, right after the coup; Costa e Silva created the Centro de Informações do Exército (CIE) in 1967 and the Serviço de Informações da Aeronáutica in 1968; in 1970 General Médici expanded the powers of the Air Force secret service and changed its name to Centro de Informações de Segurança da Aeronáutica (CISA), and of the Centro de Informações da Marinha (CENIMAR), created before the coup, in 1957.<sup>50</sup> While CIE, CISA and CENIMAR conducted operations to kidnap, imprison and even torture and kill individuals, SNI concentrated its efforts in collecting, analyzing and disseminating information. Together, these four agencies composed the dictatorship's system of information.<sup>51</sup> The military agencies of the three branches of the armed forces were part of one organizing system called the Sistema Setorial de Informações dos Ministérios Militares, SSIMM. Only CENIMAR operated during the Castelo Branco government, as the first military president of the era prohibited the armed forces from forming new intelligence agencies. President Costa e Silva suspended such prohibition, which allowed for the creation of CIE and CISA.<sup>52</sup>

CENIMAR's goal was to produce information about any citizen in Brazil and everyone in the Navy was a potential agent and informant.<sup>53</sup> Because the military regime's intelligence apparatus was as important as violence in maintaining the dictatorship, opening these archives has always been a contentious issue in Brazil.<sup>54</sup> Since redemocratization different social groups have pressured the government for the closing and opening of the archives. During the presidency of José Sarney, the first civilian president after 1985, the armed forces were not

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<sup>50</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum: Militares e Civis na Ocultação dos Documentos da Ditadura* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2015), 17.

<sup>51</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 18.

<sup>52</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 101.

<sup>53</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 22.

<sup>54</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 25.

bothered to open their archives. Since military generals had settled an agreement with the civilian president, the issue was not even a topic for discussion.<sup>55</sup> In 1989, however, fearful of how the democratic elections could impact intelligence agencies and collaborators of the military government, the SNI decided to conduct an operation to separate and destroy all the documentation that could be used in the future against the intelligence agents who were involved in human rights violations. Only part of this documentation was preserved.<sup>56</sup> SNI agents destroyed a large part of this archive before president Fernando Collor de Mello, elected in 1990, dismantled the agency.

The armed forces followed the same path of SNI, destroying some collections and hiding others. During the 1990s the Ministry of Justice started to pressure the armed forces to answer questions regarding individuals' disappearances and deaths during the dictatorship. But while recognizing that military personnel had killed a few individuals mostly "in combat," as they claimed, military officers in charge stated they had no "data" about certain names inquired by the Ministry.<sup>57</sup> After facing more pressure from civilian governments in the 1990s, officers from the Army, Navy and Air Force claimed that the documentation they had produced from the 1960s to the beginning of the 1980s had been destroyed in routine archival operations.<sup>58</sup> Journalist Lucas Figueiredo claims that the armed forces either destroyed documentation or kept hiding them. On one way or another, he argues that these institutions broke the law and never responded for their crimes, which are the occultation and destruction of archives.

Only during the 2010s, part of the documentation of the military intelligence agencies were opened to the public. Since the transition to democracy in the mid 1980s two types of

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<sup>55</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 50.

<sup>56</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 52.

<sup>57</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 60.

<sup>58</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 65.

initiatives regarding the dictatorship's archives were put in place, one that aimed to open access to information about military rule, and another that aimed to hide and/or destroy documentation in order to prevent different narratives about the period from emerging; narratives that could contradict the official military version of the history of military rule.<sup>59</sup> Only in 2005, the Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's government approved Decree 5584, which allowed the National Archive to collect the documentation of the extinct agencies Conselho de Segurança Nacional (CSN), Comissão Geral de Investigações (CGI) and SNI.<sup>60</sup> These archives, which included the documentation on security and intelligence of the dictatorship, were transferred to the National Archives in Brasília between 2007 and 2009, and then digitalized.<sup>61</sup>

Only in 2011 Law 12527, the Lei de Acesso à Informação, regulated Brazilians' constitutional rights to access public information, and the National Archives started to allow researchers to consult and replicate this documentation.<sup>62</sup> This law allowed the National Truth Commission, also created in 2011, to investigate and collect documentation produced during the dictatorship. The advent of the CNV was one of the most important steps to the study of the Brazilian military dictatorship, as it revived public conversations about the period in a national scale and it opened the path for researchers who wished to consult the regime's archives. This development of transitional justice allowed the cases of expelled servicemen to become more visible. Nonetheless, as there was a pressure for both the opening and closing of the archives, the

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<sup>59</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*.

<sup>60</sup> Senado Federal, Subsecretaria de Informações, "Decreto nº 5.584, de 18 de Novembro de 2005," Accessed on December 26, 2018, [http://arquivonacional.gov.br/images/pdf/Decreto\\_n%C2%BA\\_5584\\_de\\_18\\_nov\\_22051.pdf](http://arquivonacional.gov.br/images/pdf/Decreto_n%C2%BA_5584_de_18_nov_22051.pdf).

<sup>61</sup> Arquivo Nacional, Ministério da Justiça, "Acervos Sobre a Ditadura Militar (1964-1985)," Accessed on December 27, 2018, [http://arquivonacional.gov.br/br/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=161](http://arquivonacional.gov.br/br/?option=com_content&view=article&id=161).

<sup>62</sup> Governo Federal, Acesso à Informação, "Conheça seu Direito," Accessed on December 27, 2018, <http://www.acessoainformacao.gov.br/assuntos/conheca-seu-direito>.

cases of expelled servicemen gained more visibility at the same time that there were forces trying to keep them invisible.

Law 12527 was not enough to pressure the military into opening their archives. CIE, CISA and CENIMAR were part of SNI organizational structure, and their documents were also requested by the National Archive. However, the armed forces did not hand these documents to the Archive, and members of the Truth Commission had to search for them outside of the armed forces.<sup>63</sup> Among the three military intelligence agencies, CNV only found part of the CISA archives, and part of CENIMAR's collection is stored at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG).<sup>64</sup> The Commission was not able to locate most of the archives from the military intelligence agencies, but its members suggest that they believe these documents still exist.<sup>65</sup> Military officers in charge, however, have not have delivered them because they probably incriminate the armed forces and individuals who possibly still held positions of power. Furthermore, the institution has a corporatist posture that claims loyalty to past military officers. Current members of the armed forces did not provide any assistance to the CNV

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<sup>63</sup> Documents from CISA and CENIMAR have appeared mysteriously, found in random locations or donated by anonymous military personnel who had access to the documentation and stole part of it before it could be destroyed. An anonymous military officer donated 2.326 pages of microfilmed documentation from CENIMAR he had preserved and hid for decades. Revista Época, Leonel Rocha, "Os Arquivos Secretos da Marinha," Accessed on January 15, 2019, <http://revistaepoca.globo.com/tempo/noticia/2011/11/os-arquivos-secretos-da-marinha.html>.

<sup>64</sup> The archives of CENIMAR have a mysterious history, to say the least. The National Archives never collected documents from the Navy intelligence, but part of the agency's microfilm archive was donated to the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais in 2015. Rodrigues claims that such donation was illegal because all documents from these agencies should be carried by the National Archives. However, the author claims that there was some sort of disagreement between the UFMG and members of the CNV, and these documents were never sent to the National Archives. CNV did not even mention this documentation on its final report, and I only learned about it for the first-time reading Rodrigues' book. Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 207.

<sup>65</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 195, 198.

because they believed such cooperation would mean denouncing fellow officers.<sup>66</sup> This scenario made research about the period in Brazil possible, but still challenging.

The National Archives, and especially the CISA collection, holds thousands of documents citing the names of expelled military officers. However, this archive mostly reveals the names and activities of opponents of the dictatorship and are usually silent about the identity and activities of the regime's collaborators. Documents describe "communist infiltration" inside the armed forces, but they do not implicate specific military officers of conducting operations to kill and torture individuals. This is especially true for low-ranking soldiers. The intelligence archives, but also the archives of the state political police, contain a great number of documents concerning the activities and imprisonment of officers and sergeants, and of servicemen from all ranks who were directly involved in movements of resistance against the dictatorship. Low-ranking soldiers, however, are practically invisible. The archive is silent about an entire population of low-ranking soldiers whose expulsions could not be decisively linked to political reasons, but who claim they were persecuted. In order to understand their persecution researchers still need to rely heavily on their testimonies. Therefore, while entire collections from military intelligence agencies continue hidden from the public, the documents that can already be accessed are limited. There is no shortage of reports about how military officers evaluated their subordinates, bureaucrats who worked in the machine of the military government, who were well-rated in their evaluations. However, the archive does not carry information of state operations that hold the military government responsible for actions such as the covert operation to eliminate the Araguaia Guerrilla movement.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 199.

<sup>67</sup> Figueiredo, *Lugar Nenhum*, 13.

Therefore, although collections were found and made accessible to the public during 2010s, the archive is far from showing a complete picture of how military rulers and intelligence agencies operated from 1964 to 1985.<sup>68</sup> The opening and closing, visibility and invisibility of the dictatorship's archive is one aspect of the flaws of transitional justice in Brazil. If on one hand part of the documentation was made accessible to the public, on the other hand the archives that are currently at the public's reach still preclude victims of the dictatorship from finding definitive proof that state agents violated human rights during this era. In the case of many low-ranking soldiers who were still fighting for amnesty in 2017, when I concluded the research stage for this dissertation, their names did not appear anywhere in the archives.

Some of these expelled soldiers were able to find or keep certain documents from the time they were imprisoned or hospitalized. However, the armed forces never gave many of them certain documents they were entitled to when exiting the military, which contained details of their history in the institution—called *folha de alterações*.<sup>69</sup> The ones who received such documents claim that they omitted certain aspects of periods they were imprisoned and the circumstances of their expulsions from the armed forces, which were politically motivated according to their superiors' actions at the time. José Bezerra da Silva, for example, claimed the *folha de alterações* was a fake document that did not represent the lives of military personnel in a truthful form because it was written by the officers who were “well-versed” in persecuting other members of the military.<sup>70</sup> Sonilson da Silva and Luiz José Medeiros also claimed that the

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<sup>68</sup> In order to give an example of the size and significance of the archives in Brazil, Rodrigues asserts that the SNI archive is larger than the archives in Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay, combined. Therefore, although incomplete, the SNI archive, which contains over three million pages, is still the largest of the Southern Cone. Rodrigues, *Documentos (In)visíveis*, 177.

<sup>69</sup> The *Folha de Alterações* is a document containing information about everything that happened to them while they were in the forces, from promotions, to transfers, to punishments for indiscipline.

<sup>70</sup> José Bezerra da Silva, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

tortures they endured were not documented. Medeiros claims that his records only stated that he joined the Air Force and that he got sick, but it does not say, for example, that officers in his base broke his finger when torturing him, which was why he was sent to the hospital.<sup>71</sup> Even officers who were expelled by institutional act said the military records did not represent what had truthfully happened to them. Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, for example, claimed that his imprisonment was not documented in his military records.<sup>72</sup>

In this context of struggle for the opening and closing of the archives, oral histories are crucial to understand the period. Understanding the limits and challenges of the usage of such sources, they provide a way to understand how expelled servicemen experienced military rule culturally and socially. Instead of examining them as facts, therefore, these sources allow researchers to examine people's memory. They show not only how the dictatorship changed individuals' material lives, but also how it affected their identities; how as a political project it transformed the ways these men understood themselves.

### **Expelled Soldiers and the Symbols of Military Rule**

Expelled officers and soldiers' struggle to be included in the national memory about the period needs to be understood in this larger context of redemocratization in Brazil, the opening and closing of the dictatorship's archives and also the international scenario that marks the end of the Cold War. These men's memory about military rule was not only built between 1964 and 1985, but also after the dictatorship came to an end, after Brazilians started dealing with policies and practices of transitional justice. As expelled officers and soldiers were trying to influence the

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<sup>71</sup> Sonilson Pereira da Silva, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 16, 2015; and Luiz José Medeiros, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

<sup>72</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

ways the era would be remembered, they were also being influenced by the different debates about transitional justice and human rights, and by the most popular narratives of the 1980s and 1990s. Their portrayal of the dictatorship is complex because they were a heterogenic group that experienced the period in different ways. These men's memories were, then, situated between narratives that portrayed the military rule as a revolution that saved Brazil from communism, and accounts that emphasized the coup as an evil process that tortured and killed its opponents. Most of them neither shared ideas that vilified the armed forces nor that exalted the fight of the guerrilla movements. Nevertheless, they felt the need to dialogue and incorporate certain aspects of these discourses to their own accounts in order to position their experiences along the portrayals that dominated the debates on the era. Still, the narratives of expelled servicemen who participated in resistance movements and those who did not are strikingly different.

During the 1990s and early 2000s, when there was little to no public debate and little documentation about expelled officers and soldiers' specific cases, these former servicemen started fighting to have their histories included in the national memory. However, since these groups did not agree ideologically, there was a lack of unity among them regarding how they wanted the period to be remembered and how they aimed to include their histories in the public conversations. While some expelled soldiers identified as opponents of military rule, others only opposed certain actions of the military government, and others claimed they never participated in political activities but were labelled subversives. Therefore, while some identified with the narratives that started being constructed by the Left and human rights activists, others still believed some individuals who resisted the period were terrorists, for example. Only in 2014, with the advent of the CNV, a collective narrative about their experiences started to form in the public sphere. The Commission organized public forums to discuss what they called, "*militares*

*perseguidos pela ditadura,*” or “servicemen persecuted by the dictatorship,” identifying officers who participated in the guerrilla movement and soldiers who did not participate in political activism as part of the same group.<sup>73</sup>

In addition to facing the challenges of redemocratization inside Brazil, the international context marked by end of the cold war and the dismantling of the Soviet Union also influenced the ways these men came to remember the period and create their own narratives. The “victory” of capitalism was an important factor to how many expelled officers and soldiers explained their struggle during the era. Although a few interviewees emphasized their connections with Cuba and communism, most of them wanted to distance themselves from an association with the Eastern Bloc. Even men who participated in the guerrilla struggle wanted to distance themselves and their history from cold war narratives. José Araújo Nóbrega, for example, claimed that among the members of the military who joined the MNR there were no communists. Explaining how he joined the movements, he stated that there was a witch hunt inside the armed forces as high-ranking officers who supported the coup started considering all of those who wanted social change, communists<sup>74</sup>. But even though he joined the guerrilla movement he distanced himself the communist ideology. Darcy Rodrigues, also a member of VPR who was exiled in Cuba, was not as clear as Nóbrega about his rejection of communism. Nevertheless, he claimed that he did not choose to join the communists, but that he was pushed or pressured to do so. He said, “the Right pushed the sergeants to the arms of the Communist Party... we did not choose, the Right pushed us.”<sup>75</sup> Throughout his interview he did not openly deny he had been a communist. Nevertheless, he never used terms associated with communism to describe himself or his fight.

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<sup>73</sup> YouTube, Comissão Nacional da Verdade, Accessed on January 25, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/user/comissaodaverdade/search?query=militares+perseguidos>.

<sup>74</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

On one occasion, while telling me about an argument he had had he claimed to have said, “I am green and yellow, I am a member of the armed forces, and I do not admit that anyone is a greater patriot than me.”<sup>76</sup> He decided to emphasize their role as Brazilian, soldier and patriot.

When examining the interviews of expelled officers and soldiers it is important to evaluate how they dialogued with these transformations that marked the transition from the twentieth to the twentieth-first-century. Expelled officers who received the benefits of the amnesty law had a larger protagonism in the amnesty movement and, as I discussed on chapter five, were able to pressure for legal change and even lobby in congress. These officers, sergeants, sailors and, in a smaller scale, a few groups of soldiers, who understood why they were being expelled at the time of their expulsions and had a larger role in the movements of resistance against the dictatorship, produced a specific kind of narrative about the period. These groups’ histories are more consistent with the narratives of civilians who endured state violence, as they were clearly identified as subversives by institutional acts and their status as opponents of the dictatorship was more well-defined. Many of them, such as José Wilson da Silva, Francisco Teixeira, José Araújo Nóbrega and Darcy Rodrigues, shared moments with individuals who became important symbols of the opposition movement, such as João Goulart, Leonel Brizola and Carlos Lamarca. Because of their proximity to these well-known historical figures, the expelled officers and soldiers who participated in resistance movements were able to access history with more critical eyes. On chapter two, for example, I explained how Francisco Teixeira, Ivan Cavalcanti Proença and José Wilson da Silva initially supported president João Goulart but criticized him for his attitude to leave Brazil without first engaging in a fight against coup leaders in 1964. Da Silva also participated on the resistance closely to Brizola in Uruguay,

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<sup>76</sup> Darcy Rodrigues, interview with author, Bauru, July 5, 2017.

and even had a conflict with him, what discouraged Da Silva to continue participating in the resistance movement at the time. Teixeira also criticized Brizolla, calling him a “caudillo.”<sup>77</sup> Therefore, when narratives about the period started emerging especially during the 1990s and 2000s, these men could directly relate to them. They could engage with the political discussions that were taking place as they had been active participants in opposition movements against the dictatorship.

The cases of many low-ranking soldiers who were not involved in political movements and debates during the period were different. The low-ranking soldiers from the Air Force I interviewed claimed that before they were expelled they were not aware of the state’s persecution of regime opponents, and that they did not understand why the armed forces were targeting them. Many only became aware of the authoritarian regime’s systemic human rights violations decades after their expulsions, as the dictatorship’s abuses started to be discussed in media outlets. During the 1990s and 2000s these expelled soldiers realized that they might have been the victims of human rights violations and started to construct a collective narrative about it. Their narratives, however, were built through the idolization of some political figures. Former officers and sergeants who acted side by side with Brizola, for example, discussed on chapter 2, became critical about the politician’s actions and discussed him in a more realistic way. Low-ranking soldiers, however, remembered the “idea” of Brizola. When they started to form a collective narrative, they decided to connect their experiences with the armed forces to very specific political issues they did not experience. They connected their stories with the more structured history of military rule that could be found in newspapers and history books.

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<sup>77</sup> Francisco Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira*, (depoimento, 1983/1984, Rio de Janeiro: CPDOC, 1992), 255.

When these soldiers realized that civilians and officers who had been marginalized during military rule started telling their experiences about the violations they endured during the dictatorship, they decided to do the same. In this moment they had to face two issues in creating a common narrative. The first was that because they were afraid of the repercussions of discussing what they had endured during the dictatorship, many of them had not discussed these events with family members, friends or professionals that could help them deal with the trauma of persecution. During the 1990s and 2000s they decided they wanted to remember events they had tried to forget for years; events that were traumatic. They could not forget the expulsion and tortures they endured. But in the process of remembering, some of them borrowed from each other's narratives, especially when it came to aspects in their discourses that gave political meaning to their persecution. The second issue they had to face when remembering was that they did not personally know many of the protagonists of this history who were appearing in books and newspapers, perpetrators and victims of human rights violations scholars and the media were writing about. These low-ranking soldiers experienced the dictatorship's persecution differently, not from the perspective of a workers' union or student movements, but from inside military bases and barracks. Because of their status as soldiers they were subjected to the authority of their superiors, who could persecute them inside the military bases and buildings without raising any questions from different sectors of society—as it happened to students and labor workers when their organizations started to be dismantled. In addition, low-ranking soldiers did not interact daily with the military officers who started to be identified as human rights violators after redemocratization, and the fact that they were not involved in politics meant that they did not experience many of the events that were being described by civilians. They knew they had experienced the dictatorship inside the armed forces. However, the lack of familiarity with the

political aspects of the history that was becoming public made them feel distant from a history they had personally experienced. I believe that this scenario led them to construct a narrative that included certain historical figures in their narratives that they were not necessarily familiar with at the time of their persecution. This resulted in them creating myths and heroes about the era.

Many expelled soldiers of the Air Force I interviewed described certain political figures from the era as symbols of the resistance against the dictatorship, and their narratives gravitated towards these figures. João Goulart, Leonel Brizola and Darcy Ribeiro were the most reoccurring names in interviews with low-ranking soldiers, as I show in Table 1. Many soldiers claimed that they were expelled from the Air Force because they were caught talking about these men inside military bases. Others claimed they were accused of participating in movements of resistance created and ran by these political figures. Often, men like Brizola and Goulart had an important place in their narratives. Belmiro Demétrio, for example, claimed that he was seen as a subversive because on one occasion he complimented Goulart and Brizola as politicians. In a moment of leisure with fellow soldiers, Demétrio made a statement about politicians who he perceived had done a good job in Rio Grande do Sul, as he had studied in one school built during Brizola's political term in Caxias do Sul.<sup>78</sup>

I said, "look, Leonel Brizola was a great governor here in Rio Grande do Sul. He... the state, built roads, highways, colleges, schools, helped the agriculture in the rural areas. I have great admiration for him."<sup>79</sup>

Another expelled soldier who asked to stop the interview only after seven minutes we had started, as he started crying and could not continue remembering and talking about his

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<sup>78</sup> Belmiro Demétrio, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

<sup>79</sup> Belmiro Demétrio, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

experiences, Luiz Cláudio Garcia, claimed he “talked so much about Brizola, so much about Brizola” that one of his superior officers believed he opposed the dictatorship and participated in a resistance movement led by the politician.<sup>80</sup> Many other soldiers said they admired and sympathized especially with Brizola and Darcy Ribeiro. Although they also mentioned other symbols such as João Goulart, Carlos Lamarca, Miguel Arraes, and Rui Moreira Lima.

Table 1: Opponents of the Dictatorship in the Narratives of Air Force Soldiers in Rio de Janeiro

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Year of expulsion</b>	<b>Leonel Brizola</b>	<b>Darcy Ribeiro</b>	<b>Other</b>
Jorge de Souza	1973	Claimed he was targeted because he sympathized with him	Claimed he was targeted because he sympathized with him	-
Luiz Cláudio Garcia	-	Mentioned his name to his superiors	-	-
Belmiro Demétrio	1969	Said he was a good politician	-	João Goulart
Dailton Soares	1982	Discussed and admired him	Discussed and admired him	Sérgio R. M. de Carvalho, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Paulo Freire
João Oliveira	1967	Talked about him and was imprisoned	Talked about him and was imprisoned	-
Luiz José Medeiros	1970	Claimed to have attended his political rallies	Claimed to have attended his political rallies	-
Ricardo Waite <sup>81</sup>	1970	Sympathized with him	Sympathized with him	Carlos Lamarca, Mariguella

<sup>80</sup> Luiz Cláudio Garcia, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 16, 2015.

<sup>81</sup> Ricardo Waite said he “practically had to leave”, which suggests he was not expelled from the Air Force, but that after two years of service he decided to leave due to the treatment he was receiving from

Table 1 (cont.)

Laureano dos Santos	1969	Claimed his superiors pressured him into saying he sympathized with him	Claimed his superiors pressured him into saying he sympathized with him	Claimed to have also been pressured to say he sympathized with Goulart
Ataíde de Moura Lemos	1976	Admitted to his superiors he admired the politician	Admitted to his superiors he admired him	-
Sonilson Pereira da Silva	1976	Claimed he was targeted because he sympathized with him	Claimed he was targeted because he sympathized with him	-
Jório Gonçalves Dantas	1978	Claimed he mentioned his name to his superiors	-	-
José Bezerra da Silva	1979	Mentioned him as an important historical figure	Mentioned him as an important historical figure	João Goulart, Miguel Arraes, Rui Moreira Lima, and others

Talking about these public figures was often important to some expelled soldiers, as it provided an explanation to why superior officers started to label these soldiers as communists. A statement about Brizola or Goulart inside the barracks led some officers to consider that certain soldiers could be communist infiltrators inside the forces. According to many statements, mentioning these politicians contributed to their expulsions. However, at specific moments these politicians' names did not seem significant in these narratives, but former soldiers believed mentioning them strengthened their message. For example, Jório Gonçalves Dantas claimed he was accused of stealing a gun for a guerrilla movement, and that his superiors suspected he was

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his superiors. He was hospitalized due to the tortures he endured, and after being released he left the Air Force in 1970. Ricardo Waite, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, May 16, 2017.

involved in opposition movements without any proof. This statement alone was sufficient to demonstrate his expulsion was politically motivated. However, Dantas decided to tell me that on one occasion when he was still serving the Air Force he mentioned Brizola's name to one of his sergeants, asking him about the politician.

I said, "sergeant, Brizola was a congressman in the South, right?" And the sergeant used to say, "no, do not say this here, you cannot." He only said that, you know? Because Brizola was the military regime's enemy number one, Leonel de Moura Brizola.<sup>82</sup>

This was everything Dantas told me about Brizola. He voluntarily decided to make this statement, adding no context about what this episode meant for his expulsion from the Air Force. Right before mentioning Brizola he told me he was expelled in 1979, and right after that he remembered that inside the base, soldiers were only allowed to watch cartoons on television. These different parts of his narrative were important to him. Dantas believed that the cartoons were indicative of something important, possibly that officers did not want soldiers to have access to the news, which at this moment was reporting heavily on the amnesty movement. Similarly, mentioning the episode where he asked his superior officer about Brizola was also significant to him. In this case, as a symbol of resistance, Brizola's name brought Dantas' narrative closer to the larger history of what was commonly known or discussed about military rule in Brazil—or about what he assumed I knew about the dictatorship. Although he did not connect these events clearly in his narrative, he was likely trying to bring his expulsion closer to national politics as a means to convince the interlocutor that his expulsion was politically motivated.

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<sup>82</sup> Jório Gonçalves Dantas, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

José Bezerra da Silva was the expelled soldier of the Air Force who provided me with the longest interview. As I showed in the introduction of this chapter, he gave the most thought-out and well-constructed narrative among low-ranking soldiers.<sup>83</sup> For over one hour he provided an account about the history of military rule in Brazil, not revealing anything about his personal experience. Well into the interview he began describing the general experiences of soldiers in the Air Force, explaining that often soldiers never participated in any political movements. “However,” he explained, “if you said that you admired a political leader, Kubistchek, João Goulart, Darcy Ribeiro, Leonel de Moura Brizola, Miguel Arraes, if you said you revered one of those leaders that were fired in the past, you would be considered a subversive just like him and would be imprisoned, tortured...”<sup>84</sup> During the first hour of his interview he tied his and his fellow soldiers’ experiences to the broader context of the military dictatorship. He took a conscious decision to connect his personal history with what he thought were the most well-known narratives of military rule in order to show that these soldiers endured marginalization for *political* reasons.

According to Da Silva, the events that led to his expulsion started when, while he was working at the gates of the Galeão Air Base, he antagonized members of the secret service who wanted to come inside. When he asked individuals inside a van to provide identification they denied, saying he had to let them enter. Da Silva claimed the men were transporting one prisoner who arrived with a hood over his head. He also explained that he saw the members of the secret service and other officers, including Brigadier João Paulo Burnier, slapping the prisoner. One day after this episode, Da Silva claimed that his superior officers gathered he and other soldiers

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<sup>83</sup> José Bezerra da Silva, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

<sup>84</sup> José Bezerra da Silva, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 15, 2015.

who witnessed the arrival of the prisoner in a room and threatened them and their families. If they told anyone about what they had seen they would be imprisoned, and their families would “suffer the consequences.” A few days after that, he witnessed another political prisoner entering the Air Base, and because he was at the infirmary when officers brought the prisoner in and took off his hood, Da Silva was able to, once again, see the prisoner’s face. His lieutenant approached him, admonished him and hit him in the chest, head, ears, face. Da Silva did not make clear what the officer was accusing him of, but it seems that the soldier was in the wrong place at the wrong time and should not have seen that prisoner.<sup>85</sup>

It also seems that Da Silva was astonished with the treatment the prisoners were receiving. Perhaps officers in charge noticed he did not condone the bad treatment of political prisoners. But from his interview this was not clear either. From this moment the intelligence agencies started to investigate Da Silva, as he later learned he was put “under investigation” on this occasion.<sup>86</sup> This story alone and the events that followed, which were specific to Da Silva’s experience, were enough to demonstrate how the politics of military rule inside the Air Force impacted his life and career. However, he decided to provide context to his interview, and instead of just answering my questions, he gave testimony about how he came to understand the period to stress that his personal experience was part of the larger history of the Brazilian dictatorship.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, Da Silva and others used the names of Brizola, Ribeiro and others to

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<sup>85</sup> Da Silva claimed that these prisoners were, respectively, deputy Rubens Alves and Stuart Angel, both figures that “disappeared” after being apprehended by the police during the era.

<sup>86</sup> When Da Silva talked about the individuals and agencies who were investigating him, he called them “the secret service.” It was not clear what organ he was referring to. In all likelihood, CISA was the organ investigating him and other soldiers from the Air Force who were seen as potential “communist infiltrators.”

<sup>87</sup> Here I am not so interested in whether it is true or not that talking about these figures got these soldiers in trouble with their superiors, but that they decided to give so much emphasis these stories during their interviews.

emphasize that although they did not actively oppose military rule from 1964 to 1985, they identified with individuals who were actively and openly resisting.

No official records can prove that the Air Force expelled, imprisoned, tortured and harassed soldiers who admired leftist politicians, and the fact that I did not find documentation about this in the CISA archives means little since the National Archives only holds a part of the documentation the agency produced. Instead of asking if soldiers' memories were real, and if they really did discuss Brizola and Ribeiro inside the military bases and were imprisoned because of that, I asked why they believed it was important to include these memories in their narratives. This was a consequence of their desire to include their personal experiences in the national memory of the dictatorship in Brazil, in which those who the regime harassed *had to be* involved in politics. The particularities of each of these cases—the fact that each of these men were questioned for a different reason, faced harsh conditions which were often followed by torture sessions, were accused of subversive activity and then expelled through Law 1104, which was created in 1964 by Eduardo Gomes, a general who supported the coup—were enough to convince these soldiers were marginalized for political reasons. Nevertheless, these men's interviews tended to gravitate towards well-known symbols such as Brizola, Goulart and Ribeiro, as they felt the need to tie their narratives to a the more popular history of military rule that emphasized the actions of politicians who were marginalized and exiled from Brazil.

Many scholars who have studied the dictatorship have chosen to focus on topics that emphasized human rights abuses, assuming that “the construction of a clearly categorized military institution better serves the purpose of condemning the military dictatorship than a fragmented and nuanced representation.”<sup>88</sup> Expelled low-ranking soldiers were able to recognize

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<sup>88</sup> Schneider, “The Forgotten Voices of the Militares Cassados,” 326.

that scholars were not interested a more nuanced image of the armed forces and decided to strengthen their narratives connecting it to symbols of the dictatorship they deemed important; largely, men who they believed fought honorably to “defend” and “protect” Brazil.

Although most of the officers and soldiers I interviewed wanted to establish a connection with the resistance movements against the dictatorship, many rejected any approximation with the guerrilla movement or the idea of communism. Most of the low-ranking soldiers of the Air Force repeated constantly that they had never been “subversives” and that they did not deserve to be expelled and harassed because they were never involved with politics—implying that many individuals who were part of the guerrilla movement were actual subversives. With a few exceptions of former low-ranking soldiers who had studied the period and had become more politicized after they were expelled from the forces, such as Da Silva or Dailton Soares, most of the soldiers I interviewed criticized the dictatorship for not being capable of identifying their “real” opponents. They reproduced the language used by the military superiors who imprisoned them, accepting that there were “subversive” individuals but that they were not part of those groups. Jorge de Souza, for example, instead of just saying he did not challenge the dictatorship or participate in political organizations, reproduced a term the dictatorship used and claimed he was not a “subversive.”<sup>89</sup> Since these men wanted to receive amnesty their goal was to highlight they were expelled and harassed without having committed any “political crimes.”

The expelled officers and sergeants I interviewed had a critical memory about Brizola, Goulart and other historically known political figures of the era because they knew them. The Air Force soldiers I interviewed, however, had never personally met them and remembered them only through stories, books and newspaper articles. While this last group saw Goulart and

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<sup>89</sup> Jorge de Souza, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 23, 2015.

Brizola as examples of resistance, officers who had interacted with them had a critical memory about their actions against the dictatorship. Another example that shows how these memories were constructed differently by low-ranking soldiers and officers is represented in the figure of Sérgio Ribeiro Miranda de Carvalho. Soldier Dailton Soares, expelled from the Air Force in 1982, saw Carvalho as an Air Force hero for having refused to take part in a military action that would have killed innocent civilians and blamed it on guerrilla members. Soares claims he discussed Carvalho's actions among colleagues in the Air Force and praised him as a patriot and a real "macho."<sup>90</sup> Nonetheless, officers from the Air Force and the Army who had met Carvalho, did not share the same opinions about him. Ivan Cavalcanti Proença claims that after he was expelled from the Air Force, Carvalho attended a few meetings of expelled officers who discussed amnesty and a peaceful way of resisting the dictatorship through legal avenues, or at least not resorting to armed conflict. After attending a few meetings, Carvalho told Proença he would no longer participate since all the expelled officers attending were subversives and leftists.<sup>91</sup> Proença knew that Carvalho had not opposed the regime broadly. He had opposed a specific order from a superior officer, and his decision led to his expulsion. Nevertheless, he did not oppose the rule of the military. Knowing the specificities of Carvalho's expulsion and the way he viewed other expelled officers labelled as subversive, officers such as Proença did not celebrate Carvalho as a hero.

In addition to inserting their histories into the national memory about the period providing interviews, expelled officers and soldiers also tried to influence national memory when they occupied public spaces and participated in public discussions about the military

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<sup>90</sup> Dailton Soares, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 16, 2015.

<sup>91</sup> Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 25, 2015.

dictatorship. I met the first group of soldiers I interviewed in a public audience about the Araguaia Guerrilla movement.<sup>92</sup> These groups of former soldiers had never participated in guerrilla actions and had no connections with members of Araguaia. Nevertheless, they decided to participate in different hearings from the Truth Commission as a way to approximate their history and fight for amnesty to the fight of different militants who opposed military rule. Even if they did not agree with the tactics of resistance of Araguaia guerrilla members, they still condemned enforcers of military rule for violently killing the movement's members.

In addition to participating in CNV's public hearings, these former soldiers also conducted their own events in a public square to commemorate the era. From time to time this group of Air Force expelled soldiers gathered in front of a monument called "Monumento ao Nunca Mais," located in front of the Military Club at Cinelândia in Rio de Janeiro, to commemorate the end of the dictatorship, chant a few songs and honor individuals who had become symbols of resistance against military rule. While conducting research in Rio de Janeiro, I participated in a couple of these events. In the few times I attended the event, they were mostly attended by expelled soldiers who had not received financial reparations of the amnesty law. Their goal seemed to be to temporarily occupy a space where expelled soldiers could gather, but also where allies could show solidarity and where they could raise awareness about the issue to passersby. By holding the events at a public square, they could reach all of these objectives at once. The last invitation I received to participate in this commemoration was scheduled for November 5, 2018, which shows that these meetings are still happening in the present. The flyer invited people to gather in front of the monument "Ao Nunca Mais" to commemorate Law 6683.

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<sup>92</sup> Audiência da Comissão Estadual da Verdade sobre o Caso Araguaia, Rio de Janeiro, July 12, 2015. This day I met about four former soldiers, and among them were José Bezerra da Silva, Belmiro Demétrio and Jório Gonçalves Dantas.

## Conclusion

Expelled officers and soldiers' battle for memory, or their fight to include their experiences in the national memory about military rule, needs to be understood in the context of the amnesty law and transitional justice in Brazil. As different sectors of Brazilian society started to discuss the 1964-85 era after the end of the dictatorship, expelled servicemen also started to push for visibility. The fight of men who joined resistance movements was significantly different from the ones who did not join political organizations during the dictatorship. The first group attempted to influence national memory in very specific ways, writing books and authorized biographies on their experiences and on the history of the regime. José Wilson da Silva, Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, Darcy Rodrigues, Pedro Lobo, Avelino Iost, Antonio Duarte dos Santos and Avelino Capitani are a few examples of expelled officers and sailors who wrote or had their biographies written for them in the first decades of the twentieth-first century.<sup>93</sup> These books, which were published between 2005 and 2013, show how military men who opposed the dictatorship portrayed their resistance to the regime. With the advent of the CNV they gained a new platform to talk about their cases and gave a number of testimonies to the

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<sup>93</sup> José Wilson da Silva, *O Tenente Vermelho* (Porto Alegre: AGE, 2011); Ivan Cavalcanti Proença, *O Golpe Militar e Civil de 64: 40 anos depois* (Rio de Janeiro: Oficina do Livro, 2013); Almoré Zoch Cavalheiro, *A Legalidade, o Golpe Militar e a Rebelião Dos Sargentos* (Porto Alegre: AGE, 2011); Antonio Pedroso Junior, *Sargento Darcy, Lugar Tenente de Lamarca* (Bauru: Centro de Estudos Sociais, Políticos e de Preservação da História, 2003); João Roberto Laque, *Pedro e os Lobos: Os Anos de Chumbo na Trajetória de um Guerrilheiro Urbano* (São Paulo: Ava Editorial, 2010); Avelino Iost, *Perseguição e Resistência na Aeronáutica: Eu Vi e Vivi!*, Prefeitura de Canoas, "Secretaria da Educação recebe doação de livros para as bibliotecas da rede", Accessed on January 22, 2019, <http://oldsite.canoas.rs.gov.br/site/noticia/visualizar/idDep/15/id/107586>; Antonio Duarte dos Santos, *A Luta dos Marinheiros* (Rio de Janeiro: Inverta, 2005); Antonio Duarte dos Santos, *Almirante Aragão: Fragmentos de Uma Vida* (Rio de Janeiro: Consequência, 2012); Avelino Bioen Capitani, *A Rebelião dos Marinheiros* (São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2005).

commission.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, it is important to state that these men had been fighting to have their histories portrayed in the national memory about the period before 2012.

The cases of soldiers who did not participate in political movements are somehow distinct because for decades they had been afraid of talking about their what had happened to them inside military bases and outside after they were expelled. Since their superior military officers had threatened many of these men, they were afraid of speaking about what they had experienced. In the case of low-ranking soldiers such as Robson Ferreira and Antonio Rodrigues da Costa, the Truth Commission and the work of *Clínicas do Testemunho*, not only represented a new space where they could talk about what had happened to them, but it was the first opportunity they had to deal with the trauma they had experienced in the armed forces.<sup>95</sup>

As they attempted to influence national memory, including their cases in the larger narrative about of the era, other narratives also influenced expelled officers and soldiers. Since the 1960s, when they first started to endure state persecution, through the democratic period, these men have struggled to make their histories part of the national memory about the period, even when more conservative or more progressive groups rejected their narratives. Coup leaders and collaborators were not interested in society learning about dissenting military personnel and covered up persecution inside bases and barracks. On the other hand, the Left seemed to reject the history of persecution of expelled servicemen, not wanting to include them in the same category as other victims of the dictatorship. As I started to conduct research and look for individuals to interview, someone suggested I should contact one civilian who had been a member of the resistance movement and who was working closely with the CNV. When I called

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<sup>94</sup> Relatório: Textos Temáticos, Volume II, Texto 1 – Violações de Direitos Humanos no Meio Militar, (Brasília: CNV, 2014), 9-54.

<sup>95</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015; and Antonio Rodrigues da Costa, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, October 6, 2016.

her on the phone, she discouraged me from interviewing members of the military who claimed to have endured the regime's harassment, as their cases "lacked political motivation or political action." As a member of the Communist Party, PCdoB, when she criticized expelled servicemen's political engagement during the dictatorship she was referring to low-ranking soldiers who did not openly oppose the regime but also to the officers who, after being expelled, did not join guerrilla organizations.

After facing persecution from the armed forces, being expelled from the institution and having their stories erased from military archives and their own military records, these men also had to face rejection from the Left, as their experiences could not fit together with the history of opposition movements in Brazil. Many groups of soldiers and officers understood they were facing a backlash for not being considered "worthy" of being portrayed as victims or opponents of the dictatorship. This encouraged them to develop discourses that connected their life experiences to the broader context of human rights violations in Brazil, and to continue pushing to have their cases included in the national memory about the period. Although they continued fighting for the state's and society's recognition of the violence they were subjected to, as I explored on chapter five many expelled soldiers did not get closure and felt they continued facing persecution even decades after the return of democracy.

## CONCLUSION

“Even if they recant, this remained in my heart and in my head. I am still suffering through the pain today. The things that I feel here, and in my soul, cannot be repaired.”<sup>1</sup> Robson Ferreira’s final words in his interview expresses his lack of trust or belief in the process of transitional justice in Brazil. He claims that even if the state apologized, the Amnesty Commission ruled in favor of his amnesty, and the state gave low-ranking soldiers everything they asked for, he could never go back to the man he used to be. He argues that the shameful experiences he was subjected to inside the Air Force changed him and made him feel like he had been “*castrado*,” castrated or emasculated. The expulsion, tortures and marginalization he endured throughout the era of military rule affected his material life but also changed the ways he saw himself as a man.

The leaders of the Brazilian military dictatorship marginalized thousands of officers, sergeants and soldiers from the Brazilian Army, Air Force and Navy. While cleansing the armed forces from communist infiltration, the military rulers hindered the ability of many individuals from circulating freely in Brazilian society and, in the process, inflicted upon them traumas that remained with them throughout their lives. While in the armed forces, servicemen knew what was expected of them and performed masculine rituals they were familiar and comfortable with, from dressing up in uniform, to performing specific tasks in barracks. Expulsion, imprisonment, torture, police harassment and surveillance, the inability to hold formal employment, the inability to build a family and/or support it financially, and

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<sup>1</sup> Robson Ferreira, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2015.

exclusion from the amnesty law, were all elements that contributed to the ways these men experienced a gendered trauma.

Expulsion from the armed forces often followed imprisonment and torture. Some individuals who endured the violence of the military regime showed that when military leaders questioned their merit in being called servicemen, these officers made them feel as their masculinity was being challenged. As military men, they conflated notions of manhood with military honor. For them, an honorable member of the military was an honorable man. Therefore, when the status of servicemen was stripped from the expelled servicemen, they caught themselves questioning their own notions of what it meant to be a man. The torture and shame they were subjected to also made them question their masculinity, as many of them believed “real, honorable, men” would not be exposed to such humiliation.

After expulsion these former officers, sergeants and soldiers were not able to quietly and peacefully transition to different careers, as the dictatorship imposed a series of constraints to preclude them from achieving success in Brazilian society. The regime’s constant harassment and surveillance of these individuals, which increased following the creation of National Security Law 314, and their ensuing inability to build a family and/or support it financially led many expelled servicemen to continue experiencing a gendered trauma even after they had been disconnected from the armed forces. Some expelled servicemen had more resources, which included social capital and material means, and were able to survive military rule by maintaining a semblance of stability in their lives. Former Brigadier Teixeira, Colonel Guedes and Captain Proença are some of the expelled servicemen who fit into this category. Some expelled servicemen, including former sailors Coutinho and Ribeiro, and former sergeants Rodrigues and Nóbrega, relied heavily on family and friends to

survive military rule. Even though many of them did not have property or many material resources, their social networks helped them to survive. Others, however, did not have many opportunities to succeed, as they had neither the material means nor the social capital to help them through the regime's surveillance and harassment. These men, which included Air Force soldiers Ferreira, Oliveira and Army soldier Da Costa, still seemed to be hurt and sad when I interviewed them between 2015 and 2016, over thirty years after they had been expelled from the military ranks.

The different cases of servicemen who were expelled shows that some of these trajectories helped them through overcoming this trauma. Men who actively opposed the regime, for example, were able to continue understanding their value and worth as honorable men even outside the armed forces. Those who challenged the regime, joining guerrilla movements, outlawed political parties and/or the amnesty movement, defied interventionist officers' notions of what it meant to be an honorable man. In the minds of officers, sergeants and soldiers who rebelled against the dictatorship, the military coup leaders and enforcers were usurping the true meaning of honorability inside the armed forces. Expelled servicemen who resisted the regime rejected the notion that they were dishonorable men as they struggled to show the public that their fight for social justice and for a fairer and more equal society, attested to their honorability. Holding to leftist or progressive ideals helped these men hold on to their masculinity. Furthermore, the guerrilla warfare or the amnesty movement, provided these men with a space to fight for a cause and advocate for their ideals. In these spaces they could feel as if they were doing something important to society. These "spaces" of social fight, therefore, also served as spaces they could perform masculinity.

Therefore, some actions these men engaged with, including the fight for amnesty, helped them regain their sense of worth. The amnesty process was one of the last events that helped these men overcome the trauma they were subjected to when being marginalized from the armed forces and from Brazilian society. Reincorporation into the military ranks returned to many of these men the sense of military honor they had lost when they were expelled. I have discussed how when deciding to serve the armed forces, these men's notions of masculinity became connected to an ideal of military honor. Because of this connection, expulsion from the military ranks affected the ways they saw themselves as honorable men. Receiving amnesty and being reincorporated into the military ranks, therefore, was such a healing experience for them because it reattached the link that had been broken, which connected their military identities with their masculinity. Even members of the guerrilla movement, who had their masculinities shaken due to the immense losses of the resistance movement, after being amnestied and reincorporated into the forces felt that society was recognizing them as honorable men. Not all expelled servicemen, however, and especially low-ranking soldiers, were given amnesty.

Several servicemen who were marginalized from the armed forces and from Brazilian society had some sort of small advantages throughout their life trajectories that helped them survive military rule and regain their sense of self-worth and become proud of the men they were. The low-ranking soldiers who endured the most violence and had the least amount of capital to successfully bear the challenges of the era of military rule had the most difficulties overcoming gendered trauma. For them expulsion from the military ranks started a process of marginalization that never ended. When military rule ended after twenty or thirty years they were expelled they continued not having the means to find employment and constructing a

successful material life for themselves. This generated a sensation of incessant persecution, which made them feel as if their masculinities were challenged continuously.

Altogether, the chapters in this dissertation show that the dictatorship from 1964 to 1985 changed expelled servicemen's lives materially, socially and culturally in ways that many of them never recovered from. This study examines events that took place between 1950 and 1985, extending its memory analysis until the advent of the National Truth Commission. The process of amnesty, which was an important process that marked the lives of thousands of officers and soldiers, was an important mark for the end of this dissertation. But many questions can be asked about the post-1985 contemporary history of the armed forces and its members. What happened inside the institution after the end of the dictatorship and the return of the military generals to the barracks? In 2019 president Jair Bolsonaro assigned practically one third of the Brazil's government ministries to members of the armed forces. Of twenty-two ministers, eight were military officers. The nation's vice-president, Hamilton Mourão, was also an Army general, and many military officers were elected as members of Congress in the 2018 elections.<sup>2</sup> What happened inside the armed forces since the end of the dictatorship in terms of ideological formation? Were anti-communist officers able to continue influence military training and suppress Left-wing critique inside the institution? What were the consequences of twenty-one years of dictatorship to the armed forces? Scholars have studied how Brazilian society emerged from the authoritarian era. However, it is also important to ask how the armed forces surfaced from this period, and what it means that thirty years after the end of the era of the dictatorship numerous social groups in Brazil

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<sup>2</sup> See EBC, "Mais de 70 candidatos com patente militar foram eleitos em todo o país," Accessed on April 10, 2019, <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/politica/noticia/2018-10/mais-de-70-candidatos-com-patente-militar-foram-eleitos-em-todo-o-pais>.

have decided to democratically elect members of the military as their representatives. This process also raises question about the motivations of these servicemen. What aspects of the partisan political life have drawn them and are they related to their notions of honorability?

Francisco Teixeira provides clues to more recent processes inside the armed forces when he states that his main fight after receiving amnesty was attempting to influence the institution in order to combat its political and ideological discrimination.<sup>3</sup> According to Teixeira, in order to reach a truly democratic regime, Brazil had to end discrimination in society and also within the armed forces, so the institution would remain divided and not able to intervene in national politics as a “force.” For him the ideological divisions within the armed forces have always been positive because officers from different factions or groups would prevent their opponents from intervening in politics. According to this logic, strong divisions inside the military would keep these debates and struggles confined to the military barracks. In 1984, at the time Teixeira gave his interview to CPDOC, he claimed the institution had become highly discriminatory of Left-wing ideologies. Therefore, his plan was to pressure for a reformulation of all military legislation, from the national constitution to the armed forces internal laws. It would be important to conduct research to understand whether this plan was fruitful, if the Constitution of 1988 incorporated any of these changes. In addition, it would also be important to study the academic training of military officers during the 1990s and 2000s, and to examine if critical thinking remained being suppressed in the institution.

Returning to the 1964-1985 period in Brazil, further research is also warranted about gender and race relations during the era. The men I interviewed became especially sad when

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<sup>3</sup> Teixeira, *Francisco Teixeira, depoimento*, 315.

discussing their families and state violence they were subjected to. Expelled officers and soldiers were marginalized from society, imprisoned and tortured, but their families endured very similar consequences. A study that focuses on these officers and soldiers' family relations would be important to understand aspects of this history this dissertation was not able to examine. For the men who were married, what characterized the relationships between husband and wife before and after expulsion from the armed forces? How did their husbands' expulsions affect their family life? How did persecution affect their children socially and culturally? The São Paulo Truth Commission published, *Infância Roubada: crianças atingidas pela Ditadura no Brasil*, which suggests many possibilities for this research.<sup>4</sup> Tatiana Merlino and others show the cases of children who were tortured physically and psychologically, who were sent into exile with their parents, who lost their parents to the state violence, and who were marked by this era in different ways due to the accusations and violence their parents endured. Further research on this topic would shed light into the dictatorship' deeper consequences to individuals who were its indirect targets.

Lastly, another aspect of this history that also warrants further study are its transnational elements. Throughout military rule, leftist members of the armed forces in Brazil and in other nations in the Latin American Southern Cone, particularly Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, established networks of solidarity that connected their fight against United States imperialism. It is important to understand how these connections took place and what they looked like. How did leftist servicemen across nation borders and even oceans established networks of solidarity with one another and frame their fight in a continental, and

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<sup>4</sup> Tatiana Merlino (ed.), *Infância Roubada: Crianças Atingidas Pela Ditadura Militar No Brasil* (São Paulo: Assembleia Legislativa do Estado de São Paulo, 2014).

even global, context? How did the individuals who were banished from their birth countries form relationships elsewhere? What were the ideological, social, cultural and environmental elements that led certain groups to unite? These and other questions can help scholars to understand different aspects about the formation and operation of global networks that attempted to remain independent from the influence of the Soviets and the United States during the Cold War. In this dissertation, although I discussed a few aspects expelled servicemen's life in exile, there is much more to study about the cultural and social aspects of the relationships they formed. Many expelled officers such as José Araújo Nóbrega and Darcy Rodrigues, whom I have examined in this dissertation, were forced into exile and were sent to places they did not want to be at. Nóbrega, for example, claims that it was not easy to be exiled in Algeria, "an unknown country, with weird people."<sup>5</sup> Future research must examine the relationships between Brazilians and the communities they were forced to join, as although in certain cases some of these individuals might have considered themselves immigrants, many did not. It would be important to examine this temporary and forced living arrangement more critically to understand what life in exile meant for activists.

In this dissertation, I have shown that studying the cases of expelled servicemen is necessary to understand the coup and military rule in Brazil between 1964 and 1985. I have argued that the era of military rule had overarching effects into people's lives that transcended the era of the dictatorship itself. The military officers who took power in 1964 and who controlled the armed forces during the era engaged in a continuous effort to eliminate opposition within the military ranks. In the process the military regime marginalized expelled officers and soldiers from Brazilian society, subjecting them to a gendered trauma that made

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<sup>5</sup> José Araújo Nóbrega, interview with author, Indaiatuba, October 30, 2016.

them question their own notions of what it meant to be a man. Military rule stripped these men from their military identities and also limited their movements in society, preventing businesses from hiring individuals accused of subversion in Brazil and requiring them to report to the political police periodically. This process theoretically ended in 1985, as the dictatorship ended, the Amnesty Law of 1979 allowed political exiles to return to Brazil, reincorporated some officers and soldiers into their military ranks, and the state even indemnified certain individuals and their families for violating their human rights. These reparations allowed their recipients to feel as if they had gotten justice. In their minds, the fact that the state recognized it had targeted them for political reasons and compensated them made them feel accepted by society again as honorable men. Because these men's idea of masculinity was so intertwined with their military identities, for many of them being reincorporated into the forces also helped them reclaim their sense of masculine honor. However, even though this process of marginalization ended for many officers and soldiers who received amnesty, for many who were excluded from the amnesty law, the persecution never ended. Lower-ranking soldiers who were not able to prove they were expelled from the forces, imprisoned and tortured, were never reincorporated into the military and thirty years after the end of the dictatorship still felt marginalized.

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