

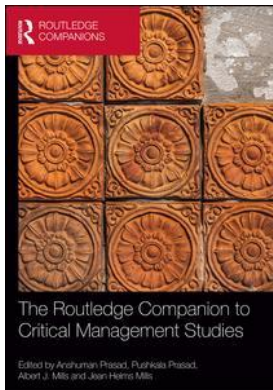
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Rafael Alcadipani

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American soft imperialism and management education in Brazil

A postcolonial critique

Rafael Alcadipani

I begin this chapter by highlighting a point made by Prasad (2003) that I fully agree with: “[t]he long history of Western colonialism, its global reach, and the uniqueness of many of its constitutive practices and structures imply that Western colonialism and non-Western resistance to such colonialism have played a significant role in shaping the contours of the world as we know it today” (p. 5). Scholars have long argued that (neo-)colonialism has affected management thought and education (Jack, Westwood, Srinivas & Sardar, 2011; Özakzaç-Pan, 2008; Prasad, 2003, 2012). These scholars’ concern with investigating the consequences of colonialism has opened up the discipline of management and organizations studies to the postcolonialist approach. The roots of this approach may be found in the 1950s and 1960s and even earlier. However, the presence of postcolonial theoretic ideas in the social sciences seems to have been increasing especially since the early 1980s. The key focus of postcolonialism is to critically examine various aspects of modern Western colonialism and neocolonialism (Prasad, 2012). For Jack, Westwood, Srinivas and Sardar (2011: 277), the approach “is a broad rubric for examining a range of social, cultural, political, ethical and philosophical questions that recognize the salience of the colonial experience and its persisting aftermath.”

One of the precursors of postcolonialism is Aimé Césaire (1955) who critiques the colonialist mind-set that seeks to impose Western logics over the people under Western rule. His work has played an important role in that of Fanon (1961), another important postcolonialist thinker, who highlights colonization as a violent process that suppresses the humanity of the colonized and imposes an inauthentic identity on them. Edward Said and Homi Bhabha are other key thinkers of the postcolonial tradition. Said (1978), for instance, discusses how over the years the West has constructed a distorted version of the Orient, portraying its inhabitants and their modes of living as barbaric and uncivilized. Such “Orientalist” discourses played an important role in legitimizing colonial activities and attitudes. Homi Bhabha (1994) defends “the third space” or “in between” as a way to highlight hybridism and to fight dualist (e.g., West/East) modes of representation that usually reinforce exclusion. Thinking of a third space is a way to avoid an essentialist mode of building meaning.

Whereas postcolonialist perspectives are varied, they generally tend to censure Western epistemology as a system for the exclusion of non-Western realities and forms of knowledge (Prasad & Prasad, 2001). Postcolonial approaches critique the notions of “progress” and “modernity” as

defined in the West. From such a perspective, there is a tendency in the West to emphasize economic conditions and to depict access to and the progress of science and technology as imperatives for the “development” of certain regions of the world while others remain undeveloped. “Development” within the parameters of the Western culture or wealthy nations concludes by categorizing people and cultures of non-Western nations as “undeveloped” or “primitive,” which leads to the exclusion of their knowledge, values and cultures (Prasad, 2012).

In short, postcolonial thinkers recognize a tendency in the West to regard economic well-being as the main goal that all nations should strive for and to see science and technology as the best pathway toward reaching it. Further, this discourse produces a hierarchy between ‘developed’ (mainly Western) and ‘underdeveloped’ or even ‘primitive’ (mainly non-Western) countries. The problem, however, with this kind of thinking, according to postcolonialism, is that an entire gamut of values and knowledge belonging to the so-called underdeveloped world is in danger of being disregarded and eventually lost.

Postcolonial critiques of such ethnocentric tendencies are many and varied and have joined with other detractors of imperialism such as Harvey (2003) who warn of a new imperial order produced through a regime of global government led by the West that is in pursuit of wealth accumulation through world domination. Writers like Harvey (2003) and Hardt and Negri (2001) trace this new imperialism to the actions taken by the U.S. and its Western allies after World War II to facilitate the spread of a Western-style capitalism and culture across the world.

This chapter contends that in trying to understand these newer forms of imperialism, the notion of *soft power* is likely to be useful. The idea of soft power was developed by Joseph Nye (1990, 2004) to suggest one way in which U.S. influence in world affairs could be achieved without the direct use of force. Soft power is exercised through cooperation and the forces of cultural attraction rather than through military muscle. For Nye (1990), factors such as technology, education and economic growth become key elements of international soft power. As he observes, “While military force remains the ultimate form of power in a self-help system, the use of force has become more costly for modern great powers. Other instruments such as communications, organizational and institutional skills and manipulation of interdependence have become more important” (Nye, 1990: 158). Soft power refers to the capacity for effective communication, as well as the development and utilization of multilateral institutions to one’s own advantage. At the core of soft power is the deployment of ideologies that promote favorable images of a dominant nation.

This chapter sees soft power as occupying a crucial place in the new imperial order. While traditional imperialism relied primarily on hard power mechanisms such as military might, the new imperialism is much more dependent on soft power. I am therefore putting forward the notion of *soft imperialism* as a strategy for achieving global dominance. Soft imperialism draws attention to the presence of soft power in today’s imperial order. This chapter examines management education in Brazil as an important case of soft imperialism. The role of education as a powerful weapon in the service of U.S. and Western imperialism has already been noted by other scholars (Tikly, 2004). In this chapter, I will be drawing on these ideas as I look at the interventionist actions taken by the U.S. to shape Brazilian management education in such a way as to reflect American business values and practices. I will also be discussing how these efforts serve wider U.S. interests in Latin America.

U.S. soft imperialism in Brazil

The ‘discovery’ of Brazil was the outcome of European colonial expansion in the Americas, Africa and Asia in the 15th century. The name ‘Brazil’ was given to the South American country by the Portuguese colonial power due to the large amount of Brazilwood (*Pau-Brasil*) to be found

in the 'new' land. Brazilwood was the first product extracted from Brazilian soil by the colonizers to be sold in the European market. As such, Western exploitation of Brazil became ironically marked in the nation's very name (Calligaris, 1993). In the Americas, Mignolo (2008) points out that the Mayans, Incas and Aztecs were not even aware of the existence of other civilizations. They thought they were the world's only inhabitants. As such, 'America' was not expecting to 'be discovered', but it became an invention for the European colonial powers who were expanding their territories and disseminating 'modernization' all over the world. As a consequence, stories, practices and knowledge of the inhabitants of the Americas were pushed to one side and, on most occasions, contested. Thus, the region the Europeans called the Americas started being managed and transformed through the lens of metropolitan perspectives and for the benefit of the European metropolis (Mignolo, 2008).

The colonization process was legitimized under the banner of bringing 'civilization', religion and 'modernity' to the local people, who were seen as 'natives.' The civilizations in all of the 'Americas' became subject to European control. Such control was exercised over the local people's economy, politics, gender relations, epistemology and subjectivity (see Mignolo, 2008).

Not all 'America' was colonized in the same manner. Most of what we call today the U.S. followed a model of settler colonialism, which means that entire families moved from the metropolis to the new land to reproduce the metropolitan model (Belich, 2009). Unlike the U.S., Brazil faced a model of exploitative colonialism, which means that the country's economic production and local population were exploited to profit the European colonizer, to generate wealth only for the European nation.

As discussed by Fanon (1961), colonialism leaves deep roots within the colonized mind. Brazil's model of exploitative colonization and the constant friction between Brazil and the different colonial powers that attempted to exploit the country left in the Brazilian mind-set a wish to follow a superior foreign role model fostered by the feeling that whatever originates from the West is always superior to anything Brazilian (Caldas, 1997). In seeking to become modern, the Latin American elite reinforced the colonial logic in the region (Mignolo, 2008). This was the context within which U.S. imperialism at a later date flourished in Brazil.

The roots of U.S. imperialism in Latin America in general and in Brazil specifically can be traced back to the Monroe Doctrine. This doctrine was created during the term of President James Monroe in 1823 and stated that further European efforts to colonize or interfere in South or North America would be taken as an act of aggression against the U.S. and would require U.S. intervention (see Perkins, 1927). The principle of such a doctrine was 'America for the Americans.' For Chomsky (2004), the Monroe Doctrine was the first act of U.S. hegemonic will in the region, and it marks the start of a U.S. foreign policy that aimed to put the entire American continent decisively under U.S. influence. For Mignolo (2008), the imperial ambitions of the U.S. were already present in the early 19th century.

Alcadiapani and Caldas (2012) argue that during Herbert Hoover's term in office (1929–1933), the idea of bringing the U.S. and Latin America closer together became more explicit. This was manifested in the idea of pan-Americanism that drove the continent's economic and political union, with the aim of defending and developing the region. It was the time of the Good Neighbor Policy. Latin America was perceived by the U.S. as a major consumer market, and it had very significant strategic importance in the period preceding World War II. The success of Hoover's policy toward Latin America, however, was unclear (for an overview of the influence of the U.S. in Latin America, see Accioly, 1945; Ianni, 1979).

During President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's terms (1933–1945), new attempts to establish stronger relations between the U.S. and Latin America were made. It was during this administration that it was decided to carry out an orchestrated Americanization of Brazil (Tota, 2000).

According to Tota (2000), in the period before WWII, it was clear to the U.S. that the country's security relied on good relationships with other nations in the Americas. In attempting to create such relations, a plan was devised that included political and economic exchanges, the aim being to increase the links between the U.S. and Latin America. The covert aim of such a plan was to prevent the influence of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy in the region, as well as to overcome the anti-Americanism that was prevalent, especially in left-wing groups.

According to Tota (2000), to implement such a project, the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA) was created. The strategy of the OCIAA was to systematically export U.S. cultural and economic values in order to make the U.S. an important role model for the southern part of the Americas. Brazil was chosen as the key target due to its size and relevance to Latin America. Specifically, the OCIAA aimed to foster the implementation of U.S. economic policies in Brazil and attempted to keep the region politically stable in the defense of the U.S.'s values in opposition to the Axis Powers. The OCIAA also aimed to enhance and protect U.S. investments on the South American continent (see Tota, 2000).

For Tota (2000), the OCIAA employed several strategies to achieve its aims. First, there was the dissemination of information that created a positive image of the U.S. in Brazil. Media campaigns were very important for achieving such an aim. Major companies, such as GE and Ford, were persuaded to advertise their products through positive associations with the American way of life. The idea that was underlined was that the American way of life promised a modern and happy future for all. Moreover, the culture industry was also used to achieve the aims of the OCIAA. Cartoon characters like *Los tres Caballeros* and *Ze Carioca* emerged as friends of Donald Duck in cartoons that were shown on Latin American TVs. American movies were filmed in Rio de Janeiro with Hollywood depicting Rio de Janeiro in line with U.S. propaganda (Freire-Medeiros, 2005). Carmen Miranda, the alluring woman in a hat covered with fruit, achieved remarkable success singing Brazilian songs in the U.S. Tota (2000) also argues that several technical and scientific programs were designed to stimulate cooperation between Brazil and the U.S. There were exchange programs for students and teachers, incentives for English language teaching and the dissemination of U.S. culture, technical qualifications and support missions, technological modernization programs and economic assistance and financing programs associated with industrial development. In addition, special funds were set up to reduce poverty and to foster the implementation of democratic institutions in Brazil. In brief, the OCIAA became a U.S. ideology factory for Brazil (Tota, 2000).

The U.S. ideology promotes the liberal state, democracy, the need for economic progress, utilitarianism, market economy and mass society. When WWII was about to end, Brazil's development was entirely dependent on U.S. resources (Tota, 2000). The end of WWII marked the rise of the U.S. as a global superpower and its growing tension with the other emerged superpower, the Soviet Union. In the aftermath of WWII, the U.S. took responsibility for the welfare of the world's capitalist system as a way of protecting capitalist superpowers' own interests. Members of the U.S. government attempted to actively remodel the world to fit the U.S.'s needs, since they considered the country's security and prosperity depended upon establishing a peaceful and stable world. U.S. government agents also aimed to have a strong international economy, thus allowing the country to have access to raw materials and markets.

During the Cold War, Brazil continued to receive attention from the U.S. government (Tota, 2000; Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012). For Haines (1989: ix), in Brazil "US policymakers worked to preserve and expand US influence. They strove to maintain the area as an important market for U.S. surplus industrial production and private investments. To exploit its vast reserves of raw materials, and to keep international communism out."

In doing so, according to Haines (1989), the Cold War diplomacy of the U.S. continued to focus on the Americanization of Brazil from 1945 to 1954. During Truman's and Eisenhower's

terms in office, the U.S. maintained similar policies toward Brazil by opposing economic nationalism and state control of economic life by attempting to maintain a favorable environment for U.S. business and private investment in the country and to make Brazilian natural resources, especially oil and minerals, accessible to American companies. Specifically, the U.S. tried “to control, influence, and mold Brazil’s progress toward modernization” (Haines, 1989: xi). Washington paid particular attention to fostering private enterprise, exploiting strategic resources, promoting U.S. business practices and fighting communism (Haines, 1989).

For Haines (1989), the North Americans were channeling Brazilian development toward areas that were beneficial to the U.S. and to maintaining Washington’s power and influence in the region. In practical terms, U.S. policy-makers were nurturing a democratic political system and opposing communism by closely watching and bringing influence to bear against the Brazilian communist party in Brazil. Moreover, U.S. government officials cultivated the military as an ally for fighting communism by supporting military forces with training and supplying Brazil with American military equipment. Furthermore, the U.S. government continued to finance Brazilian development by offering special conditional loans to the country and making U.S. companies invest in Brazil.

In terms of development, the American model was positioned as a blueprint for Brazilian economic success. U.S. private capital was defended as the best way to exploit Brazilian natural resources, and North American technical aid and economic assistance were deployed to help in developing infrastructure in Brazil. In terms of industrial development, Washington aimed to protect U.S. company interests as much as it could. In cultural terms, U.S. officials promoted the culture and values of the U.S. and also tried to diminish the strong French influence in the Brazilian cultural scene (see Haines, 1989). This was done by

drawing on the World War II experience of the OCIAA. Policy makers instituted a massive cultural and information program designed to win over the Brazilian population. They used both traditional cultural exchange methods and, increasingly, the mass media to influence Brazilians. A steady flow of U.S. visitors, information, and educational materials flooded Brazil. All proclaimed the advantages of the free way of life, of the American way.

(Haines, 1989: 175)

In doing so, the tactics deployed by the OCIAA of selling U.S. ideology in order to keep the U.S. as a role model for Brazilians were still being used as a form of soft power (Nye, 2004). For Alcadipani and Caldas (2012), the culture of U.S. dependency of the 1950s and 1960s led to the intensive incorporation of U.S. technology and capital, as well as social, esthetic and consumption habits. Supported by a strong institutional system and efficient cultural mobilization machinery, the U.S. was able to foster this influence in subsequent years, encouraging the consumption, dissemination and social reproduction of references to the U.S. (Ianni, 1979). The U.S. role model was fundamental to the local elite, which considered the foreign way of life as “superior” and “modern” (Tota, 2000). Imitating U.S. models was a way for the elite to differentiate itself from the other local social groups and helped establish its control over Brazilian society (Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012).

As discussed here, the U.S. acted in a different manner from the traditional European colonial metropolis when dealing with Brazil. In Brazil, the U.S. mostly employed ideological and cultural dimensions in its attempt to shape points of view and to direct national policies to the benefit of the U.S. government’s aims. The U.S. as an empire did not want to establish full command and control of regions of the world. The key idea was to generate a dependency that would allow for the U.S. influence. The U.S. empire is different from the traditional European empires (Hardt &

Negri, 2001). From what I have presented in this section, the notion of soft power (Nye, 2004) seems a more appropriate way of describing the actions of the U.S. in Brazil. I prefer to use the notion of soft imperialism as it highlights the imperial dimensions of soft power. Brazil has been under soft U.S. imperialism for a long time. In the next section, I will discuss how management was interwoven with soft U.S. imperialism.

Management education as an instrument of soft imperialism

Management education began in Europe at the end of the 19th century in commercial schools in France and Germany (Üsdiken, 2004). In these institutions, professionals used to share their experiences with people interested in learning the ‘tricks of the management trade.’ The French model was very influential in Italy, Spain and Turkey (Kipping, Üsdiken & Puig, 2004), at the same time that the Germans had a distinct influence on Nordic countries (Engwall, 2004). There was no reference to U.S. management education in Europe before World War II (Kieser, 2004). Management education was also present in places such as Latin America, where textbooks written by Spanish authors were prevalent in Argentina during the 1920s (Gantman & Rodrigues, 2008). However, this scenario changed profoundly after WWII and the beginning of the Cold War.

The U.S. fight against communism was a crucial element in the Cold War that had an impact on science within the U.S. when the country’s military apparatus started to play a decisive role in the research and development agendas of universities and corporations. This war had an important catalytic effect on the creation of a military–industrial–academic complex (Leslie, 1993). In particular, the Cold War affected management because it occurred between 1946 and 1989, a crucial period for the development and consolidation of management thinking and for the establishment of important theoretical sources in the U.S., among which are the Human Relations Theory, the Systems Theory and the Socio–Technical Theory (Kelly, Mills & Cooke, 2006). The Cold War offered a grand narrative, in which management was an integral element. In broad terms, the Cold War culture conceived the limits of what management could deal with and the form and type of management that it should preach (Cooke, Mills & Kelly, 2005; Kelly, Mills & Cooke, 2006; Landau, 2006). According to Cooke, Mills & Kelly (2005), the Cold War culture was characterized by a few central elements, among which were an idealization of the American way of life and a consequent demonization of everything un-American.

In the context of the Cold War, management education traveled from the U.S. to other parts of the world (Alcadipani & Rosa, 2011). The U.S. began to strongly influence management education worldwide due to some specific conditions after WWII when the country consolidated its presence as a global power and took action to fight against the spread of communism. According to Westwood & Jack (2008), the growth of U.S. transnational companies in particular and of U.S. business in general meant that multinationals needed to have U.S.–trained managers in foreign countries and to deal with different cultures and different economic and social conditions. Moreover, as noted in the previous section, development initiatives involving U.S. aid were important for containing the ‘communist threat.’ In addition, Westwood and Jack (2008) also argue that the recent independence of some African and Asian countries affected the emergence of management as a global phenomenon. This was so because the U.S. feared these countries could turn to communism in an attempt to organize and reconstruct their recently decolonized countries, especially as most of the newly independent states had been under European control and after decolonialization wanted to avoid the influence of their former rulers (see Westwood & Jack, 2008).

Europe was one of the first places to be affected by the Americanization of management education. The first step in that direction was through training within industries. This type

of education was provided as a package for the reconstruction of European industry at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s (Leavitt, 1957). Moreover, the Marshall Plan also had a catalytic effect by encouraging management higher education to adopt curricula based on U.S. educational institutions (Kieser, 2004). In addition, European companies were able to take loans from the U.S., providing they adopted U.S. management principles and methods (Kieser, 2004). Thus, the reconstruction of Europe after WWII had important consequences in terms of the dissemination of U.S. management ideas and practices on the continent (see Leavitt, 1957).

U.S. management education also spread outside Europe. One instrument used by the U.S. to Americanize Latin America was economic aid – providing that U.S. productivity models (e.g., Taylorism) were adopted by companies and public organizations in the region (see Tota, 2000). During the 1960s, management graduate courses were implemented in Latin America following U.S. management knowledge and practices, as happened in Argentina, for example (Gantman & Rodrigues, 2008). U.S. management education was sent to the East (see Neal & Finlay, 2008) via ‘American’ universities, such as the Lebanese American University. Such educational institutions were also present in Israel (Frenkel & Shenhav, 2003). A similar movement took place in India (Mir, Mir & Srinivas, 2004). Specifically, foundations like Ford and Rockefeller played a significant part in disseminating American values. Such foundations have been accused of exercising cultural imperialism (see Alcadipani & Cooke, 2012).

According to Alcadipani and Rosa (2011), the prevalence of the U.S. in the field of management education is far from coincidental. It is rather the result of a long process in which U.S. government agencies and nongovernmental organizations had a major involvement (see also Vernon, 1994). It was during the Cold War that business schools were established and consolidated in the U.S., Europe and other countries. These institutions followed the model of the management schools that were becoming increasingly preeminent in North America. Different mechanisms were used to send U.S. management education abroad, such as U.S. academic delegations being sent to other countries, academics from other countries taking post-graduate courses in the U.S., the export of U.S. syllabi and the translation of textbooks (Kipping, Üsdiken & Puig, 2004; Leavitt, 1957; Srinivas, 2009; Üsdiken, 2004). It is significant that U.S. foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, played a crucial role in the process and in supporting Cold War culture (Parmar, 2002).

In doing so, management consolidated itself within a U.S. commercial-military-political agenda (Westwood & Jack, 2008) and was affected and constituted within the Cold War’s grand narrative (Cooke & Mills, 2008; Cooke, Mills & Kelly, 2005). It can be understood as a phenomenon sparked by the Cold War (Kelly, Mills & Cooke, 2006), which spread across the world (Alcadipani & Rosa, 2011) with the purpose of protecting the so-called free world from the communist threat; management education played a central role in that respect. As discussed in the previous section, the U.S. tried to influence societies by offering a new ideology, which was strongly associated with the discourse of modernization. Management ideas and initiatives were usually sold as a way of fostering development and creating modernization (see Westwood & Jack, 2008). Americanization is synonymous with modernization (Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012), a key theme challenged by postcolonial approaches (Prasad, 2012). However, on some occasions modernization meant that management served as a tool for supporting torture and murder. As such, management education can be seen as an “historical outcome of U.S. foreign and domestic policy and part of the grand narrative of the Cold War” (Westwood & Jack, 2008: 383). Management education is not only a U.S. institution (Khurana, 2007); it can also be perceived as an instrument of soft U.S. imperialism. In the next section, I will use the case of management education in Brazil to argue that it was an instrument of soft imperialism.

U.S. soft imperialism: Management education in Brazil

As discussed in the first section, the U.S. used soft imperialistic mechanisms in Brazil to foster its interests. Management education had been developed in Brazil since the late 1800s (Barros, 2011); however, it was only during the 1950s, when the Americanization of Brazil was under way, that it surfaced in dedicated courses and in dedicated schools and departments. Before the 1950s, there was no presence of U.S. ideas in management education in Brazil.

The first Brazilian school of management, Escola Superior de Negócios (ESAN), was started in the late 1940s by a Jesuit priest. He used the Harvard Business School as a model (Bertero, 2006), but there was no direct U.S. state involvement. The importance of ESAN was overshadowed by the creation of the São Paulo School of Management (FGV-EAESP) in 1954. The school was created by the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV), a foundation that had been set up in 1944 with the aim of modernizing public service in the country and that had created a public management school in Rio de Janeiro in the 1940s. The FGV-EAESP was designed to be a business school and was set up by an agreement between the Brazilian government, the U.S. government, the Getulio Vargas Foundation and Michigan State University, the last-named as the educational institution responsible for implementing the enterprise.

At the beginning, the FGV's aim of creating a business school was enthusiastically sponsored by a Brazilian tycoon, Earl Matarazzo. Matarazzo, who was born in Italy and had immigrated to Brazil, was the richest man in the country in the 1950s. He offered substantial financial support to the FGV to create a business school, and he wanted it to follow the Italian Bocconi management school as a role model, at the same time wanting to have little U.S. influence in the project. The U.S. government was simultaneously offering to provide the FGV with full support in creating a business school on the condition that a U.S. business education style was fully adopted. The FGV decided to accept the support offered by the U.S. government and rejected the influence of Matarazzo. The U.S. provided the Brazilians with a mission of U.S. academics who would set up the school, gave financial support and also had Brazilian academics trained in the U.S. (see Alcadipani & Bertero, 2012; Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012). The case indicates that the U.S. government used its influence for displacing European-inspired (i.e., Italian) management education in Brazil. Later, the Ford Foundation also helped in the school's development (see Alcadipani & Cooke, 2012).

FGV-EAESP offered active support for starting two other management schools in Brazil. One in the south (the management school of Rio Grande do Sul Federal University) and one in the northeast of Brazil (the management school of Bahia Federal University). The U.S. mission that created FGV-EAESP also inspired changes in the production engineering course at São Paulo University. The aim of the U.S. government was to spread U.S.-style management education to different parts of Brazil. The U.S. government considered FGV-EAESP as a successful case of international aid (Alcadipani & Bertero, 2012).

After the role played by FGV-EAESP, the U.S. model of management education became prevalent in Brazil after 1960. The effect of this was to spread notions of scientific management, human relations, systems theory, strategy, marketing and finance (see Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012), all content that reinforces elements of 'Americanist' ideology (Tota, 2000). If management theory is an ideology (Tragtenberg, 1971), it is an 'Americanist' ideology. There were studies of the influence of the U.S. on management education in Brazil in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g., Alcadipani & Bertero, 2012; Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012; Alcadipani & Cooke, 2012; Barros, 2011). However, there has been very little discussion about the influence of the U.S. on current management education in Brazil.

Management education in Brazil is impressive in its scope. It is the undergraduate course with the largest number of students (about 1 million students enroll in such courses every year),

and there are about 60 research degree programs in the country. Brazil has almost 70 journals in the academic field of management, and the number of executive MBA courses has not been calculated, but there are quite probably more than 3000 such programs in the country. It is also important to note that Brazil is one of the countries with a high level of inequality.

The setting up of management education under U.S. auspices in the 1950s left profound legacies for the evolution of subsequent education in the country. Today, most of the textbooks used in management courses in Brazil are either direct translations of U.S. textbooks or are produced by Brazilian authors who draw heavily on U.S. material. Academic production in management in Brazil is, to some extent, an ill equipped copy of U.S. theories and perspectives. Some degree of originality is present in only a few areas, such as organization theory.

In an unequal country such as Brazil, management education institutions are divided by the social classes of the students they attract. In Brazil, the bachelor's degree is considered the most important academic degree, and the reputation of academic institutions is usually based on the quality of their management education at the undergraduate level. The best management schools are usually regarded as being the ones attached to state universities, such as UFRGS, UFBA and USP. Academics in these institutions are full-time and are meant to carry out research, even though a considerable number of the professors also earn money from consultancy work and executive education. Such schools are still heavily influenced by U.S. teaching and academic materials.

The presence of U.S. influence is even stronger in the 'top market' non-state business schools, which can be perceived from the glamour attached to AACSB accreditation. FGV-EAESP is regarded as the top management school in the country, and the U.S. presence is noted in the requirements the school has to follow in order to keep its AACSB accreditation. FGV-EAESP, however, has a long tradition of fostering Brazilian critical thinking, which is to a large extent critical of the U.S. (Alcadipani & Bertero, 2012). Other 'top market' academic business institutions, such as Insper, a private institution owned by a Brazilian banker, follow a harder U.S. line in terms of management education and research. A considerable number of Insper's academics obtained their PhDs in the U.S. and tend to advocate a neo-liberal agenda in Brazil (Lazzarini, 2011). By following a more hard-line, U.S. view of management education and research, Insper has much less local embeddedness. It resembles INSEAD in France, a kind of Euro-Disney that is associated with the French intellectual scene and French local practices and concerns.

Executive education is also heavily influenced by ideas originating in the U.S. Both the FGV and Insper have a strong presence in executive education, in which U.S. influence is felt in all sorts of teaching materials. The first course at FGV-EAESP back in the 1950s was an executive education course ironically called CIA, which is the Portuguese acronym for Intensive Course in Management. There is also the Dom Cabral Foundation, which is one of the leading providers of management education for top executives in Brazil and which also follows the lead of the U.S. in terms of teaching material and academic research. Dom Cabral is listed as one of the top eight providers of executive education in Brazil in the *Financial Times* ranking. They all seek to have exchange programs with U.S.-type business schools as a positive asset.

The influence of the U.S. is also felt in academic production in the management field. Brazil has a large academia in management, with academic journals published in Portuguese, PhD programs and book publishers. Different analyses of academic production in Brazil have shown the prevalence of Anglo-Saxon references among the work of Brazilian academics. Moreover, the studies conducted in Brazil in the field of management, in general terms, tend to be a poor copy of Western thinking. It is quite common to have papers published in Portuguese with most

of the references coming from the U.S. (see Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012). To have a PhD from the U.S. or an Anglo-Saxon country is perceived as a signal of prestige and status. Ibarra-Colado (2006) explores how scholars who obtain PhDs from the U.S. return to Latin American countries preaching an Americanist ideology.

U.S. management is also taught in Brazil today via companies that promote global gurus and content from U.S. 'pop' management books and articles. For example, H.S.M. promotes seminars around Brazil with U.S. management gurus, such as Michael Porter and Tom Peters. Such seminars are commonly presented in huge theaters, usually packed with executives eager to assimilate the latest U.S. management fashion. H.S.M. also has a magazine and a publishing house that produces books and articles from popular U.S. management thinkers. The management fashion industry is quite expansive in Brazil (see Paula & Wood, 2009). U.S. professional bodies, such as the Project Management Institute (PMI), are very much in evidence in Brazil, doling out professional course qualification certificates to Brazilians regardless of whether or not the content of such courses is appropriate to the Brazilian environment. In general terms, management knowledge and teaching materials that originate in the U.S. are perceived as 'modern' and 'top knowledge' that tend to be followed blindly in Brazil. Since management teaching is heavily based on U.S. ideas, which preach an 'Americanist' ideology, it will still act as an instrument of soft U.S. imperialism in Brazil as long as it continues to be accepted without question in most academic institutions in the country. The U.S. created the foundations in the 1950s, and until today their influence has been felt in management education practice. Colonial practices leave strong ties in the minds of those who have been colonized (Fanon, 1961).

During the 1960s, the U.S. was involved in an attempt to dismantle the critical content of secondary education in Brazil. Chauí (1985) argues that public schools had to start producing individuals to serve as cheap labor for the country's industries. The aim was to create low-cost, value-added, poorly qualified labor, intended to serve as manpower for the multinational organizations that were setting up in Brazil (Alcadipani & Caldas, 2012). The provision of poor-quality management education can be perceived as another façade of the U.S. influence on management education in Brazil. This is particularly relevant for universities that have management graduates aiming to enter the low end of the market. Since the 1990s, a whole host of new, low-cost universities have been set up in Brazil. Such institutions are highly profit-oriented and care little about the rigor and content of their courses. This movement has been called the 'McDonaldization' of higher education in Brazil (see Alcadipani & Bresler, 1999).

Ritzer (2008) contends that the world has faced a process of McDonaldization, which means the tendency of society to accept and sponsor organizations that resemble McDonalds. It is a new version of Weber's iron cage. In terms of higher education in Brazil, McDonaldization means the creation and development of educational institutions that are concerned solely with maximizing profits with the minimum input and a lack of interest in producing students that are able to think. Anhanguera Educacional is the archetypical "McDonald's university." It has almost 500,000 students with branches all over Brazil. Teachers have no right to choose what to teach and have to follow a very standardized teaching content, which even includes the PowerPoint presentations that should be used in each lecture. The institution is traded on the Brazilian stock market, and education is measured in terms of profits for its shareholders. The management degree attracts the most students, and it is an inexpensive course to set up and run. The McDonaldization process is associated with Americanization (Ritzer, 2008) and is arguably a façade of U.S. soft imperialism. Here, the influence of the U.S. on Brazilian management education is again evident in terms of providing the particular logic of imparting knowledge and producing desired subjects.

Discussion

This chapter has engaged in a fine-grained examination of specific manifestations of American soft imperialism in Brazil in the management education sector. At one level, the extraordinary influence of U.S. business education models in Latin America in general can be understood as yet another case of institutional isomorphism. However, as this chapter shows, there is more to this than mindless organizational mimicry. The postcolonial lens adopted here helps us see some of these imitative tendencies in a different light – as also emerging out of conscious strategic moves on the part of the United States that are intended to take care of its geopolitical interests in the region.

The notion of soft imperialism is particularly useful here as it draws our attention to the power of American cultural imperialism as a driving force behind the widespread adoption of U.S. business education models in Brazil. The chapter also stresses the effects of its isomorphism in producing large numbers of ‘educated’ managers who have internalized ideas about the superiority of American business practices, and who are consequently less likely to be critical of the U.S. corporatization of Brazil. While this chapter focuses exclusively on the Brazilian case, it suggests that similar inquiries into soft imperial practices by the U.S. in other countries might yield insights of interest to critical management researchers.

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