

Intellectual references

International awards, such as the one granted to Fernando Henrique Cardoso, enhance the reputation of Brazil's scientific community

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On July 10, the U.S. Library of Congress awarded the John W. Kluge Prize to sociologist Fernando Henrique Cardoso, 81, former president of Brazil. The US\$ 1 million award recognizes the work of scholars in fields that are not included in the Nobel Prize categories, including history, philosophy, political science, psychology, anthropology, and philosophy. "I am deeply moved by how unexpected this honor was. I am the first Brazilian – and the first Latin American – to receive the Kluge Prize. This is a true privilege," Cardoso said in his acceptance speech. "There was a time, not so long ago, when such an honor would have been difficult to imagine. I spent a portion of my academic career studying the relationship between the wealthy core of countries in Western Europe and North America and what was then known as the 'periphery' – countries such as Brazil that were distant, economically and geographically. This division between rich and poor seemed immutable," he said.

Professor Emeritus of the University of São Paulo (USP), Fernando Henrique Cardoso was president of Brazil from 1995 to 2002. He was previously a senator (1983 to 1992), Minister of Foreign Relations (1992) and Minister of Finance (1993 to 1994). Historian James H. Billington, U.S. Librarian of Congress since 1987, highlighted the importance of the Brazilian sociologist's work. "Former President Cardoso is an example of the modern researcher who combines deep knowledge and empirical evidence," he said. "His basic aspiration is to seek the truth about society and to keep an open mind to re-



Fernando Henrique Cardoso is congratulated by historian James Billington on receiving the John Kluge Award in Washington, D.C. On the side and below, the U.S. Library of Congress, which grants the US\$ 1 million award



state his conclusions when new evidence arises.” The Library of Congress’ Kluge Center manages the Kluge Prize. An endowment from businessman John Kluge (1914-2010) established the center with the objective of “fostering an enriching relationship between the world of ideas and the world of action, between scholars and political leaders.”

According to an announcement made by the Library of Congress, Fernando Henrique Cardoso was nominated for the award for his contributions as a sociologist and an intellectual, which provided the foundation for his political leadership. “His academic analysis of the government’s social structures, the economy and racial relationships in Bra-

zile established the intellectual basis for his leadership as president. During his presidency, he transformed Brazil from a military dictatorship into a vibrant, more inclusive democracy with strong economic growth,” the announcement said. The Library of Congress emphasized the “enormous intellectual energy” of Brazil’s former president, who authored or co-authored more than 23 academic books and 116 scientific articles. “He became internationally renowned for the innovative analysis, developed together with Chile’s Enzo Faletto, of the best alternatives for development,” the Library’s announcement said. The book he wrote with Faletto, *Dependência e Desenvolvimento na América Latina* [Dependency and Development in Latin America], was published in 1969.

“HERETICAL AT THE TIME”

Cardoso and Faletto emphasized the role of domestic factors in explaining the structural processes of dependency. Their objective was to demonstrate how different forms of networking between national economies and the international system indicate distinct forms of integration with the hegemonic elements of capitalism. “Working with my colleague Enzo Faletto, we wrote a book that de-

Physicist José Goldemberg received the Blue Planet Prize, considered the Nobel Prize for environmental science

scribed a far more complex and dynamic world,” Cardoso said. “Starting with the economic analysis of Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch and other thinkers from the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), we realized that the periphery was far from being homogeneous and static. We focused on the historical formation of the social classes and the state as well as on the different relationships with the world market.” According to the former president, these differences paved the way for alternative forms of economic and social development. “In other words, the poor countries were not condemned to permanent backwardness but challenged to find suitable ways to overcome structural barriers. This seems evident today but was considered heretical at the time. We were among the first people to talk about the globalization of domestic markets,” he said in his speech.

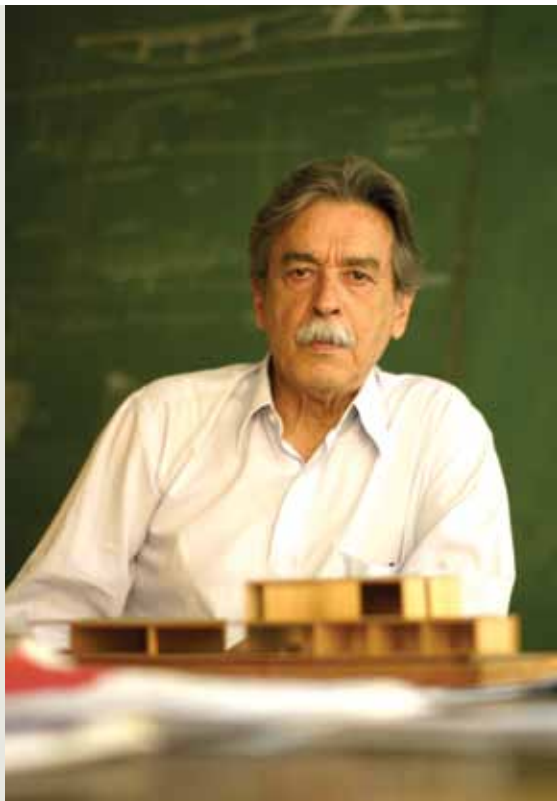
Since the Kluge Prize was first awarded in 2003, laureates have included U.S. historian Jaroslav Pelikan (1923-2006), French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) and Polish philosopher Kolakowski (1927-2009). Renowned scholars from Brazil’s academic and research communities have recently received other international awards in recognition of their achievements. For example, physicist Jo-

sé Goldemberg received the Blue Planet Prize from Japan’s Asahi Glass Foundation in 2008. Blue Planet Prize laureates receive 50 million yen (equivalent to R\$ 800,000) for “outstanding contributions to the formulation and implementation of diverse policies associated with improvements in the use and conservation of energy.” The award made special mention of a concept Goldemberg devised that eliminated the need for poor countries to follow the technological paradigms for development previously used by wealthy countries.

Created in 1992 and regarded as equivalent to the Nobel Prize in the field of environmental studies, the Blue Planet Prize has rewarded contributions by researchers such as Great Britain’s James Lovelock, whose Gaia hypothesis posits that the Earth is a huge living organism. The most recent recipients, including Thomas Lovejoy, the biologist who introduced the word “biodiversity” to the scientific community, were announced at the Rio+20 Summit.

In 2006, architect and urban planner Paulo Mendes da Rocha, 82, was the second Brazilian to receive the Pritzker Prize, the world’s foremost architecture award. “His signature architectural projects in concrete, as well as his intelligent and re-





In 2006, architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha received the Pritzker Prize, the most important prize for architecture

cists but also for physicists from all over the world who went there to conduct their research,” Motoyama added. “I think these awards mean a lot to Brazilian society, a nation with no scientific tradition. In a globalized, networking world, the search for an identity—whether an individual one or a national, community, religious, or any other identity—entails the creation of references, also referred to as myths, that leverage a nation’s culture,” Motoyama said.

José Goldemberg claimed that many prominent Brazilian scientists possessed the credentials to be Nobel Prize laureates, such as Carlos Chagas (1878-1934), who discovered the protozoa that causes Chagas disease, and Maurício da Rocha e Silva (1910-1983),

markably direct methods of construction have resulted in powerful buildings of international renown,” the Pritzker Prize’s panel of judges said. The architecture of Paulo Mendes da Rocha is an example of the thinking that characterizes the São Paulo state style of Brazilian architecture. The school’s primary proponent was João Batista Vilanova Artigas, and it is associated with the University of São Paulo’s Architecture and Urbanism College (FAU), where Mendes da Rocha taught. The São Paulo school of architecture focuses on fostering “raw, clean, clear and socially responsible” architecture.

In the opinion of sociologist Simon Schwartzman, a scholar who studies the Brazilian scientific community and works as a researcher at the Institute for Studies on Labor and Society (IETS), the international recognition granted to such prominent Brazilians as Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Goldemberg and Mendes da Rocha is significant for Brazilian science. “In addition to the prestige and national pride resulting from such awards, they help to enhance the reputation that Brazil has competent people who work or worked at high level institutions. This has enabled them to participate on an equal basis in the exchange of knowledge and to host international students

and scholars,” said Schwartzman, who emphasizes the academic background of the three researchers. “They were professors at the University of São Paulo, considered the best university in Latin America, and one of the few Latin American universities to be ranked in international rankings of academic excellence,” he said. “But we’re still missing a Nobel Prize laureate.”

NATIONAL PRIDE

There are examples of laureates who have inspired future generations after being granted scientific and academic awards, said science historian and USP Professor Shozo Motoyama. One of these was theoretical physicist Hideki Yukawa, Japan’s first Nobel Prize winner for physics in 1949. “The prize raised the self-esteem of a country that had been devastated by war and encouraged young Japanese students to dedicate themselves to a scientific career, which produced excellent results,” Motoyama said. Another example is Denmark’s Niels Bohr, the 1922 Nobel laureate in physics. “The prize was a source of pride for tiny Denmark. Niels Bohr founded the Institute for Theoretical Physics at the University of Copenhagen, a venue not only for talented young Danish physi-

who discovered bradykinin, a chemical used to treat high blood pressure. “The Nobel Prize selection is unfair in relation to contributions from the peripheral countries,” Goldemberg said. “Jorge Amado was a much more important writer than many laureates of the Nobel Prize for Literature.” Goldemberg noted that the Nobel Prize was created in the early twentieth century and was based on the structure of disciplines at that time, recognizing achievements in physics, chemistry, medicine and physiology. “In fact, the Nobel Peace Prize and the Nobel Prize for Economics were not contemplated in the will left by Alfred Nobel, who died in 1896; they were created after Nobel’s death,” he said.

The Blue Planet Prize that Goldemberg received is akin to a Nobel Prize for ecology, a field that scientists did not acknowledge in 1901. “This is a renowned award, and I was quite upset because not much was said in Brazil about the fact that I was granted it. The award granted to Fernando Henrique Cardoso, which he really deserved, restored my pride because many of us have made significant contributions. The former president is an example of an intellectual who contributed greatly towards solving the problems of society,” Goldemberg said. ■