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Memorial of the "Expurgos" of UFRGS is inaugurated



Located at Campus Centro, the new monument honors professors, technicians and students dismissed from the University during the military dictatorship in Brazil

During the years 1964 to 1969, the period of the civic-military dictatorship, several teachers, technical-administrative servers, and students were expelled and removed from their activities at UFRGS. The exclusion processes were arbitrary and aggressive. As a way of remembering this period, provoking reflection, and joining forces so that such a thing never happens again, on November 28, UFRGS' Memorial dos *Expurgos* (Memorial of the Excluded of UFRGS) was inaugurated. It's located at Campus Centro.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by authorities and members of the university community who experienced the process, and the academic community. Professor Cláudio Accurso, exonerated from the Department of Economic Sciences in 1964, represented the honorees. He recalled the institutional silence that occurred during the processes they went through: "partly for connivance and partly for fear". The professor also called for the message that the memorial brings "may it serve as nectar for the spirits that seek more freedom, more democracy, and less inequality".



UFRGS' President Rui Oppermann classified the symbolism of the event that integrates the celebrations of UFRGS' 85 years as "a rescue and confirmation of memory". And he continued making an emphatic speech: "The new generations must bear in mind that this University has resisted and will resist any tyranny and any dictatorship. We resist and we will keep on resisting! Dictatorships never again!" Oppermann also highlighted the Memorial's location in a space of great circulation of people, so that everyone can have access to what happened in the past.

The stone sculpture that occupies the main space of the Memorial refers to Latin America and has a plaque with the following message "To those who fought, resisted, and bequeathed solidarity and hope to us". The sculptor is Irineu Garcia. Next to the monument there is a garden designed by teachers Paulo Brack and Sérgio Tomasini.

The project

In addition to the Memorial, the tribute to the 50 years of the *Expurgos* is carried out in the format of a community outreach program, with a combination of other activities and events. The coordinator is Professor Cláudia Zanatta, from the Arts Department. According to her, the memory of the *expurgos* is little known even within the University itself and needs to be remembered. "It's a wound that will never heal. It's necessary to keep its memory alive so it doesn't happen again," she stated during the ceremony.

At the UFRGS Cultural Center, on the same day, an exhibition was launched with 18 watercolors that portray the aforementioned period the University went through. The watercolors were painted by José Carlos Freitas Lemos, higher education professor at the Department of Architecture, and were on display on the Center's second floor until the end of December. Admission was free.

Learn more: the book concerning the same subject, entitled 'Universidade e repressão: os expurgos na UFRGS', edited by L&PM and ADUFRGS, is available [online](#).

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