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CENTRO BRASILEIRO DE PESQUISAS EDUCACIONAIS

Andrew Pearse

Report of UNESCO Collaborator
for period December 1955 - 1957

I have the honour to present a report of my activities during the last two years, working under the title of Sociologist in Education with the Centro. The period to which I am referring comes to an end on November 12th., when I go on leave until the end of the year. Reference is also made in this report to plans for the first six months of next year, during which time I shall continue to be attached to the Centro.

1. Preparation

December 1955 to March 1956 can be described as a period of initiation and preparation; initiation into a new culture and a new language, and the preparation of a research plan. In the later I had the able collaboration of Josildeth da Silva Gomes. We decided to study a primary school in relation to the community of the city of Rio de Janeiro, and especially the neighbourhood from which the children of the school came. After a general consideration of the system of primary education in the Federal District (which includes the larger part of the conurbation of Rio de Janeiro along with a small rural area of little importance) including visits to sixteen schools, we selected the one around which the study was to be made. The neighbourhood consisted of two rather separate ecological areas, one being a traditional middle-class residential "bairro" and the other a favela or rural squatter settlement, the majority of whose 25,000 inhabitants were recent in-migrants from the rural hinterland, who had improvised homes for themselves on the lands of a former race-course.

2. Fieldwork

In April 1956 we established our Headquarters in a small house in Vila Isabel, and began recruiting our field-workers, choosing our sample, elaborating our questionnaires and organising our methods for collecting data. The bulk of our material was assembled by the following means:

(a) 2-3 interviews the mothers - and one with the fathers of each of the 52 children of our sample of 11 year-old children who attended the morning session of the school selected.

(b) Intensives interviews, usually lasting two or three sessions, with each of the children of the sample.

(c) Interviews with a half of the teachers of the morning shift, based on a questionnaire which they filled in with the help of a fieldworker; and questionnaires submitted to a group of teachers-in-training at the Institute of Education and the Training College "Carmela Dutra" which together are responsible for all teacher-training in the Federal District.

(d) Interviews with informants selected for their experience in relation to religious, social and "cultural" association and institutions, scales of social prestige, commerce and industry, education systems and other aspects of the culture and structure of the neighbourhood and city community.

(e) Direct observations made of the neighbourhood, its institutions, group activities, associations, religious organisations etc., and especially of the school.

(f) Class-room observation.

(g) Semi-controlled observation of the children of our sample (and others) who regularly frequented our house in Vila Isabel, where they played, talked, drew, made models etc.

By the end November the bulk of the field work was completed, with the exception of certain interviews which had been difficult to obtain, as well as a further investigation of 99 cases (unpredicted) of children who had dropped out of the school during the period in which the study had been proceeding. We remained in the Vila Isabel house during January and February, analysing our material, and when the Centro moved into the new building in Botafogo we joined it, at the beginning of March.

3. Analysis

Using the data collected during the field work, I set about an analysis of the factors in the social life of the families which conditioned their attitudes to the school and their performance within it. As to this material, there are three points which need to be made about it: (a) it was detailed and thus had to be confined to a restricted number of families, so that the value of quantitative treatment is limited; (b) on the other hand it provided an excellent opportunity to seek an explanation of behaviour in regard to the school, and to "education", within the complicated system of relations within each individual family; (c) the descriptive data on family behaviour and attitudes has great intrinsic value, and as much of it as is reasonable should be presented, to provide material to counterbalance the rather theoretical and idealistic teaching of the training colleges.

4. The Favela

It is important to stress the fact that the anomic conditions prevailing in the Favela which we studied are not a pathological condition of a minority group in the society, but an essential element in the socio-economic structure of the urban agglomeration of Rio de Janeiro, which includes the municipalities of Niteroi, São Gonçalo, Duque de Caxias, São João de Meriti, Nilópolis and Nova Iguaçu. If we take the most recent estimate of the favela population, 650,000 in the Federal District, and add to this the favelas and quasi-favelas (i. e. residential sections consisting of improvised houses lacking water, sewers and proper means of access) of the peripheral municipalities, reaching a total of at least 550,000 of their population of 900,000, we are faced with the sum of 1,200,000 persons out of the total of the conurbation of 3,500,00, in the main persons who have come from the interior, living in favelas or favela-like conditions, i. e. the majority of the class of manual workers. Thus the favela is merely one aspect of a situation which is a function of the low level of wages, the high cost of houses and appartments within the area of effective urbanisation, absence of houses to let to the low income groups and the rapid movement of rural populations to the town, a syndrome which is not confined to the Federal District, but which may be observed in almost every other state and region of Brazil.

Finally a type of municipal government which is not only unable to raise revenue proportionate to the wealth of the municipality, but also incapable of spending it to bring about a tolerable condition for the collectivity.

On account of the obvious significance of the favela as a typical system of the great transformation taking place in modern Brasil, I gave special attention to it, using the interview data of our 21 favela families, direct observation and investigation, and the survey data kindly put at our disposal by Sister Helena, of the Vila Isabel Parish Church.

"The Role of the Favela in the City's Growth" is discussed in Document I, based largely on existing studies.

"Social Organisation in Esqueleto" is the title of Document II, and is based on the researches of our team.

As it became clear that the family (nuclear family and kin group) were absolutely dominant in determining behavior and attitude, the investigation was planned around the family. Using data collected by sister Helena of the parish church, an analysis was made of 278 families claiming to be Catholic, which provided rather a clear picture of the norms of family structure.

See Document III on the structure of the favela family as revealed in Sister Helena's sample.

In the light of the structural norms revealed above, Document IV gives an account of the process of formation and migration of these families.

The nature of the integration of the families in the urban community is treated in Document V.

Having shown the internal patterns of family life, and the way in which the family relates itself to economic, social and political systems of the city, special consideration is given to the parents' conceptions of "educação", "ensino" "estudo" in relation to the socialisation of the children, and in their attitudes to the school. These attitudes have much in common, but, in order to show the way in which they are influenced by the internal conformation of the family, a number of case histories are offered, in which the attitude to the school is shown in relation to the whole system of family life. See Document VI. (incomplete)

In addition to the material listed above, two other areas with application not only to the favela but to the sample as a whole have been written up.

A brief report on the promotion showing the performance of all the children of the First Shift at the school studied according to place of residence (favela or non-favela) colour, occupation of father, attendance at the Kindergarten, and place of birth (whether born within D.F. or not). See Document VII.

Finally an analysis of religious and magical practices, beliefs and institutions as they affect all our sample families is given, in view of the role they have in socialisation as well as the insight they give into the culture and its values system. See Document VIII (incomplete)

5. Completion

By the end of the present year, therefore, my colleague and I will have delivered the bulk of our material, written up either in Portuguese or in English. For me there remains the writing up of the socio cultural background of the non-favela families, the concluding section, selection and presentation of case histories and the editing and arranging of the material as a whole for publication. A plan of the work, divided conveniently and provisionally into sections, has already been submitted on our behalf by my colleague. It looks as if about one half will be written by each of us.

We are in agreement that the final date for delivery, properly edited, should be June 30th. 1958.

6. A comment on the present state of the Primary School in the D.F.

Having considered the whole system of relations and behavior which surrounds the school in terms of social process, of acculturation, and of its various social functions, we approach the question of recommendations with diffidence. What is disturbing is the confrontation of the actuality of the school as it exists to-day with the ideas plans and actual reforms which were being propagated, discussed and applied by such enlightened education philosophers as Afranio Peixoto, Fernando de Azevedo and Anisio Teixeira 25 years ago.

There are few modern educators who would not agree with the appropriateness and vision of the Brazilian national conception of a free, unitary, equalitarian, co-operative, active primary school for all, and there are few who would deny that these ideas were seldom more compellingly or clearly expressed in any country than by these great educators.

As will be seen from the resumé, we intend to evaluate the performance of the school first in terms of its own goals, then to proceed to show what are its social functions in the broader sense. This would lead us on to a normative evaluation, using as a yard-stick the principles of primary education according to the group of educators referred to above. From this we should be able to compile an "annotated agenda" for improvements in the system, which should be put into the hands of practical educators. Anticipating and approximating somewhat, the personal views of the writer at the moment can be expressed as follows:

(a) At the point of contact between the teacher and the pupil, that is to say, in the class-room, the intellectual content of the teaching-learning relationship is dominated by memorization, the moral content by the re-iteration of precept, the social content by the cult of great men, and psychological ~~nexus~~ by the teacher's refusal to recognise that the pupils have a right to views and attitudes of their own. Changes in method ^{taught in} the Training Colleges and through Refresher Courses can have little effect since the teachers are harrassed by the demands of the "minimum programme". Their efforts and those of their pupils are first and last measured by the automatic examination system, and improved education does not necessarily lead to more examination passes.

(b) At the administering and managing centre of the system we find the close interpenetration of burocracy and politics. Without making any further analysis here, we may say that its relevant features are: (1) the part of it which is responsible for education is dominated by ends which have significance in terms of the burocratic-

political system itself, and these ends are incongruous with the consistent pursuit of educational ends; (2) in spite of having numerous competent administrators, the nature of the system makes administration inefficient, inconsistent and sporadic; (3) it does not reward purely professional competence in a predictable manner.

(c) The content of education is deeply modified by the "stratocentrism"* of the teaching body, militantly middle-class and conscious of its mission as only a class of recent formation can be.

(1) This strengthens the tendency of the school to be organised primarily as a preparation for entry into Secondary schools of a vocational or academic type - a role which it does not succeed in filling since middle-class children usually leave before the completion of the course to enter cramming establishments or "cursos de admissão". (2) It prevents the school from acting as a general preparation for going out into the world to earn a living, as the majority of its children must do. (3) The patterns and norms of middle-class home-life are in conformity with the demands of the school, those of working-class life are not.

7. Linking Research and Educational Practice

One of the main issues which concerns the Centro is the nature of the link between social science research and practical steps for the improvement of educational systems. The combination of research and experiment, first in Guatemala School, and now on a more comprehensive basis in the "laboratory municipality" in Leopoldina, are very encouraging signs of the development of interdisciplinary action without which the Centro cannot fulfill its aims. But the problem of bringing into fruitful co-operation the work of the social scientist and that of the educator remains difficult. The social scientist is inclined to be naïf about education in a practical sense, and much more hesitant in his points of view than the ordinary layman. On the other hand the educator, with a clear idea of the desirable forms education should take, and usually with experience of putting plans into effect, is inclined to overlook both latent and overt social forces lying beyond the boundaries of education systems, but powerful enough to render his plans ineffective or overturn them altogether.

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* Anthropology uses the term "ethnocentrism" to denote the blindness of people of one culture to the values of another culture. "Stratocentrism" is used to denote the blindness of people of one class to the values of another.

find *and* If four leading educators have a clear of what the schools should be like, and what kind of demands industrial development, the progressive application of scientific methods and democratic institutions are going to make on the future citizens who are only now entering the primary school: the essential problem is - what pieces of the desired new education can be introduced at any given moment? By what means? In what place?

To solve this problem we have on the one hand a large resource in information, and persons who can handle it, about the society and its culture, about existing education systems, persons with practical political and administrative skills and experience, and experienced educators with a sound theoretical background.

What the Centro lacks, however, is a permanent organ in which these specialists confront one another in a continuing process of working out theoretically and practically, a sequence of problems. What we need is the direct face-to-face co-operation as a "combined operations group" of the varied personnel of the Centro with the co-option of experts outside the Centro where necessary. The work programme of this group should be planned on a dual basis: (a) it should respond to situations in which an approach is made to the Centro for assistance in planning and executing some new departure in education, such as a system of schools for Brasilia, texts for a rural education campaign, or a reform in teacher training in a particular state. The "combined operations group" should have a permanent nucleus, but should add to this nucleus those who could best contribute to the problem. The group should meet twice weekly for, say, a month, systematically collecting the data relevant to a particular problem, analysing it, and working out a plan which would incorporate the consensus of the group, and could be delivered to the organ soliciting the advice. (b) the group should also plan a series of practical face-to face discussions for research works in social science and education completed by Centro personnel or other scientists so as to be able to draw out systematically the implications which these works contain for education, and to reach conclusions of a practical kind which can be recommended to the appropriate organs, and also given the widest possibility. Thus, at its final meeting, the press should be invited to question freely the members of the work-group about their findings, and a means should be found to publish these findings in the language of the well informed citizen, if possible commercially. Such a treatment should be given to IPEME's recent study of the Favelas of Rio, ~~our material on School and Community relations~~, Hutchinson's work on Social mobility, Dona Aparecida's on the attitudes of parents and teachers to the schools in the Estado do Rio, and to our "School and Community" Study.

8. Getting to know Brazil

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I believe the conscientious foreign expert, if he is to do anything more than transmit and or apply a specific and limited technique, must frequently be appalled at his situation of innocence and ignorance in face of a novel culture with all its presuppositions, social rituals, and the complex inter-relation of persons. Yet if he can once get through to the point where he can establish easy relations of friendship, and have a fairly good idea of what people in various social sections are likely to do in any given set of circumstances, then his angle of view records many things which the national observer takes for granted, and he frequently interprets what he sees as "culture", with all its functional interdependencies, what the national observer lightly accepts as "nature". During my first year in Brazil the problem of learning the language and handling the personal and organisational problems of the field work left little opportunity of a wider and deeper contact, apart from trips to Bahia, Minas and Rio Grande do Sul, where encounters were bound to be superficial and touristic. During the last year, however, I have been able to get on close terms with a variety of persons, families, communities and enterprises within a radius of 300-400 kilometres of Rio. If contact with middle-class families and with the intelligentsia has been largely confined to acquaintances gained through the Centro personnel, the more extensive range of acquaintanceship has been with the lower middle class and to some extent the working class and peasantry, to whom the lower middle-class of my experience seem usually to have been related. These contacts led me deeply into families, with their festivals, pastimes, disputes and problems, religious practices and aspirations, and on several occasions, back into the roça from whence they or their parents had come. I list below some of the trips I have been able to make, usually during extended week-ends, and frequently accompanied by people of the area.

Nova Iguassú and São João de Meriti

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Lived there for three months in a small house with friends, in a rural area rapidly being urbanised by the sale of lots on installments, mainly to people from the interior, who build their own houses.

Campos

Spent five days with friends, at the time of the Festa of the city's patron saint, visiting the homes of their relations mainly small trades people, i.e. owner of hairdressing saloon, jeweller, owner of small shoe factory, sugar factory worker, etc.

Itaperuna

Visited the two "bairros" in which the first Cultural Mission had spent two years and established two social centres, to see what remained of the work.

Leopoldina and Cataguazes

Two visits in connection with the planning of the "Laboratory City" project.

Surui

Several visits to friends who have a small fazenda, and manufacture small cassava-grinding machines which are sent mainly to Amazonas and Território do Acre.

Monteverde

After discussions with the two researchers who worked there last year.

Santo Antonio de Pádua

To a rural wedding in the Valon da Suíça. Also visited several small holding of a very primitive kind, belonging to members of the wedding family.

Also Novo Friburgo, Cabo Frio, Santos Dumont, Juiz de Fora etc.

9. Proposal for a Future Study

A study of cultural change in the rural areas in relation educational agencies for inducing cultural change.

At the request of the Co-ordinator of the Social Sciences Division I have agreed to submit by the end of March/a detailed study plan the purpose of which would be to provide a sound theoretical and practical sociological basis for the planning of education in rural areas. My conviction that the Centro should give greater attention to the problems of rural education is based on the following propositions:

1. The national economy demands far-going and rapid changes in the rural sector in order to achieve balanced progress. Its three most important demands on the rural sector are: (a) efficient production and delivery of food crops, processed or otherwise, to the cities, to obviate the inflation of workers' food prices, (b) efficient production of export crops so that prices can compete in the ~~work~~ world market and make world

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possible adequate exchange for the payment of essential imports, and (c) a rapid increase in rural purchasing power, to extend, diversify and stabilise the industrial sector.

2. The response to these demands of the national economy is uneven: in some places there is progress towards these goals, in others there is retrogression and disorganisation, in others there is progress which can only be temporary, i.e., short term exploration of virgin soils. Both progress and retrogression are the simultaneous results of two factors: the decay of the archaic agricultural system based on the ambivalent fazenda, (externally capitalist and internally pseudo-feudal) and on the other hand the unplanned and incoherent intrusion of change-bearing forces from the urban-industrial centres.

3. In the cities the lines along which the populace adapts itself to urban-industrial conditions are already clearly established. In human terms, it is in the country that the great issues are being decided. The "roceiros" find their preconceptions challenged by the changes, the pattern of life for which they are equipped and to which they are accustomed is undermined, new goals appear, and new means of achieving these goals, provided they can adapt skills and family and community relations to them.

This critical state of confused change makes essential the co-ordinated use of education, community development, extension of mass-communication agencies to bring to the country communities the means of development and self-transformation.

It is attended by a crisis of values, and since the roceiro can no longer look to the archaic system to satisfy his needs, he is "ripe" for learning new ways, so that he can meet the increasing tempo of change which will overtake him during the next ten years.

4. When we consider that the country children who are ^{now} not entering the improvised primary schools throughout Brasil will be the responsible heads of families in thirty years time, i.e. in 1987, when the population will be double what it is to-day, and the demand for food and other agricultural products will be several times higher necessitating a mechanised and scientific agriculture, it is possible to see contemporary needs in primary education in a realistic manner. Its main stress must be quite different from urban education*. Above all the younger generation must realise that they will grow up into a

* Under modern industrial conditions the majority of the people earn their living in routine work which is easy to learn, and which leads to the promotion only of the exceptional few, an essential universal basic 7-year course, in addition to the fundamentals, should (a) prepare all for social and political participation in the varied of an enriched family life, exercise of rights, fulfillment of duties, and use of leisure, and (b) select and pass on the more gifted of all classes to vocational, technical, scientific and academic further secondary education.

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world in which science and industry are rapidly transforming agriculture, and have made (potentially) available to them a variety of technical means which are all comparatively difficult to obtain, organise and use, (in comparison with "o trabalho rotineiro da enxada"), but which can, if mastered, make small scale agricultural enterprises economically rewarding, and offer to the countryman the opportunity to raise his family in pride and decency. The adolescent should be taught to look towards to a future where the level of livelihood is in direct relationship to his mastery of a variety of technical and organising skill. Clearly, however, a programme of rural education thus orientated presupposes the growth of those other educative agencies and services referred to above.

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Such pseudo-empiric propositions are no basis for modifying and developing rural education systems. What is needed is a characterisation and evaluation of changes at present proceeding, in social structure, economic structure, technology, belief and attitude, on the one hand, and on the other of changes brought about by the "educative" agencies referred to above, including, of course, the form content and dynamics of the agencies themselves.

The study should be carried on at two levels:

(1) Taking the problem as a national one, there is a large volume of reliable material already published, including community studies, statistics, agricultural and land tenure studies, economic surveys and reports etc. However, this material could not be expected to provide either the "anatomical" details, nor the educational focus, for both of which we should need to use a sampling process.

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(2) To study the problem at the local level, it should be sufficient to select three municipios (counties) internally varied and contrasted with one another, each having examples of the work of some of the educative agencies, State and Municipal Primary School, "Rural" School, some agricultural technical service, agricultural credit and extension service (ACAR), Public Health, (SESP) Adult Education (CNEA), Cultural Mission (CNER) etc. The first such study should be carried out in Leopoldina, following on from the general survey at present being made there. The second should be done in the Northeast, and should be co-ordinated with the Regional Centro, and the sample study of a valley which is being planned by the Grupo de trabalho of the Banco de Desenvolvimento and its United Nations collaborators. Whilst the second might be expected to present many features of the archaic system, the third should be selected in the South, if possible in an

area of recent settlement, largely small-holding in character. This might also be done in collaboration with the Regional Centro, whose participation might provide an opportunity for members of their staff to gain field experience.

The above constitutes "first thoughts" on this subject, and would benefit greatly from the ideas, criticisms and suggestions of those who have been thinking about these problems.

I append as Document IX some suggestions on the Rural Primary School.

Writing up the School and Community Research

| | <u>Pages</u> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| "The Role of Favelas in Rio's Growth" I (to be published in next Boletim) | 8 |
| "Social Organisation in Esqueleto" I | 21 |
| "Structure and organisation of Favela Families" (parts remain to be translated) | 40 |
| "Provenance of In-migrant Families" (translated) | 11 |
| "Repetencia" (translated) | 5 |
| "Digest of family particulars" | |
| "Social integration of Favela Families" (translated) parts not included in other articles10 (being published in present Boletim (25) | 10 |
| "A Escola e seu Bairro no Rio" (publ. in former Boletim) (a discussion of the research methods) | 16 |
| "The working class family in Relation to the School" (so far only three case-histories are ready | 35 |
| "Religion, Magic and Family Life" (in draft and not complete | 70 |
| <hr/> | |
| "A Suggestion for Rural Primary Schools" (To be published in INEP Revista) | 15 |

To be done in the coming year

"Structure and Organisation of the
Middle Class Family"

"Middle Class Families and the School"
(with case histories)

"Folk Culture, Urban Popular Culture,
Literary Culture and the School"

"Social function of the Primary School"
(with Josildeth)

"Broadcasting and the gap between Populace
and Superstructure"