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## THE STORY OF EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

J. Roberto Moreira

It is possible to assert that the Brazilian system of education is no more than 60 or 70 years old, even tho Brazil began to be colonized by European people in 1530 - more than four centuries ago. This does not mean that before 1890 there were no schools in Brazil, but the few schools then existing were not assembled in a wide and general system of which the purpose was the general education of the people. We believe it is true that the few scattered schools which existed before 1890 were only for a few people - the richest, the aristocratic.

Our first settlers did not care about schools and education for all the people. When they went from Portugal to the eastern coast of South America their main purpose was to make money as soon as possible. Most of them did not succeed in that purpose and had to remain in Brazil forever. A few got rich but did not like to go back to Portugal because of the liberty and the power they enjoyed in the new wild lands, as lords like the feudal ones of the Middle Ages. Only a few of the first settlers, rich or poor, went back to Portugal.

Nevertheless, in spite of having to stay in Brazil, they did nothing about education. They had much to do in the new lands in order to survive. They could not bring from Portugal the tools and implements needed for the work of settlement and had to improvise almost everything they needed. Furthermore, they realized that by themselves it would be extremely difficult to cultivate the soil and to extract from the forests the richness they offered, so they tried to oblige the Indians to work for them. As it is easy to figure out, the primitive people of Brazil did not like to do that because they had always been free from organized and regular work. They resisted, and the result was a state of war between white and red people which lasted for more than a century.

Since the cruel wars to catch Indians were too much expensive and slaughterous, as soon as the economic conditions permitted it, the traffic of Negro slaves from Africa began to become intense. It was principally the result of the first successes of the sugar cane plantations and of the sugar mills in the northeastern area of Brazil which gave to the settlers sufficient money to buy slaves. This led also to a lack of understanding of the need for schools. All the work on the farms, plantations, and

mills was done by Negro slaves, without any well-developed technology. For the most part, they operated on an extensive trial and error system rather than on an intensive and experimentally improved system. There was plenty of land to take advantage of, and no care was needed to keep it productively worthwhile. To make more money, all that was needed was to take more land and to buy more slaves for the job. If it was necessary to get money in advance to do that, it was always possible to borrow funds from one of the financiers who had come to Brazil and established themselves at Recife and Bahia and made a fortune by lending money at a charge of eight to twelve percent a month.

The common people of colonial Brazil lived in towns and villages, making just enough to allow them to survive. They earned a meager living by working in small craft shops where to write and to read did not represent a necessity. Some of them could get a little money in seafishing, and in army and police services which did not require any intellectual instruction or learning.

During the seventeenth century and after, the Jesuit priests and other Catholic religious orders began to establish colleges for the study of arts and letters. The main purpose of those colleges, as in the Middle Ages, was to prepare clergymen for the new Portuguese colony. Soon, however, the rich families, who owned sugar cane plantations and sugar mills, began to imitate the way of life of the court in Lisbon. They realized that knowledge of letters and arts would be a noble gift to a young man, who, besides his richness, could aspire to a worthwhile position in politics, or in administration, or in a good living at Lisbon. Later, such knowledge became a distinction enjoyed by the landlords' families who constituted a sort of noble ruling class of the colony, with all the customs and behaviors of a sophisticated nobility.

Because of this, the Jesuit colleges became prosperous and multiplied themselves all over the country. They were practically the only schools Brazil had during almost three centuries of colonial life. But, by the second half of the eighteenth century, Pombal - prime minister and ruler of Portugal - resolved, for political reasons, to force the Jesuit order out of the kingdom and the Portuguese colonies. The consequences for Brazil were calamitous since the only educational system the country had was put down. Pombal tried to organize a colonial system of education, but he failed. It was not possible to avoid the shortage of teachers,

nor to recruit teachers with the low salaries that were offered.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century - 15 years before Brazil's independence - the King of Portugal had to move himself and his court to Brazil to escape becoming prisoners of Napoleon's army which invaded his kingdom. No Brazilian town was prepared to be the seat of a kingdom. For this reason, John the Sixth had to set up in Rio de Janeiro all that was needed for that purpose, including, of course, a system of education for the upper social classes of the colony and for the Portuguese noble families.

After independence, which took place by September 7, 1822, Brazil became a constitutional empire. Both the emperors - Peter the First and Peter the Second - tried to set up a free popular system of education, but they could not do it in a wide and satisfactory way because of many reasons such as shortage of financial resources; shortage of teachers; the common people's low interest in education; educational experts' nonexistence to plan and to put the system into action; and Negro slavery's continuation as the basis of the economic and labor life of the country. In most of the basic aspects of economy and administration, the empire was only a semicolonial organization - not a real constitutional and democratic nation as Peter the Second intended it to be.

Certainly the Imperial Court at the "Quinta da Boa Vista" - which today is one of the most appreciated public gardens of Rio de Janeiro, with playgrounds, a large zoo, and an anthropological museum - was a bright one. Also, the parliament, lawmaking body of the Empire, was free in its job. But the so-called representatives of the people were elected by a landlords' minority, and all of them could receive a good education in Europe or in the few academies (colleges) the empire supported. Brazil continued to be a semicolonial nation, with more than 80 percent of the free men sunk into the most complete illiteracy, and with almost as many Negro slaves as free men.

Notwithstanding all that situation, an important event occurred during the imperial times which opened to Brazil a new way of life. Paraguay, a small country deep in the backlands of South America, prepared and educated all its people - most of them Indians - to war, in order to become a great nation and to conquer a way to the sea. These were not free people - they were ruled by a dictator - but, nevertheless, they were a people who believed in their master and in the possibility of becoming a

great nation. When Solano Lopez, the dictator of Paraguay, thought he and his army were in favorable conditions, he attacked and invaded Argentina and Brazil. Both of these nations, plus Uruguay, declared war on Paraguay. But to destroy Solano Lopez' power was not so simple as it appeared to be at first. Brazil and Argentina lost many battles, and the Empire had to improvise army after army, train them in a short time, and send them to the South and to the West in order to detain the Paraguayan armies and, finally, to defeat them. Five years of cruel war were necessary to vanquish Solano Lopez who never surrendered but preferred to die with the sword in his hand, even when no hope was possible and his armies were completely destroyed.

Brazilian free men and slaves were engaged in our armies. The officers, generally from the rich families, were well-educated people but they had to fraternize during the battles with the common people and the slaves. Many of these poor men in the rank and file revealed qualities of command and courage and for this were promoted and became officers. A new feeling of equality was aroused among all of them. At the same time came a greater understanding of Brazil's needs as an undeveloped country. They felt they needed to do much more than simply win the war; it was necessary to put up a real free nation, where fraternity and equality had to stand for all people, regardless of race, religion, and social origin. At the end of the war, a strong feeling of liberalism spread all over Brazil. The army officers and the young men who were demobilized became the most valiant followers of the liberal ideas.

Perhaps it was under the influence of the results of the Civil War in the United States, which happened at the same time, that they first fought for the abolition of slavery. Little by little, new ideas began to penetrate and to dominate parliament where the liberals won many political battles. A young deputy, Ruy Barbosa, who was to become a notable statesman, politician, lawyer, and speaker, presented to parliament a complete plan to reform and to spread free public education. His speeches and writings on education had a great influence upon the organization of the educational administration after Brazil became a republic. And this event, as a result of the liberal campaign, happened in 1889, one year and a few months after slavery was abolished.

Then, according to the new constitution, the states had to organize the elementary education program and provide teacher

training for elementary education, while the federal government was in charge of secondary and higher education.

### Fight Against Illiteracy

São Paulo was the first state to take care of the problem of education seriously. The state was divided into teaching inspectories (inspetorias de ensino), each one managed by an inspector (a sort of superintendent of schools), who was responsible for children's attendance, for the statistical educational survey of the area, and for the good functioning of the schools. To him all the teachers and principals of the elementary schools had to give information and correct records concerning the schools and the class activities.

The elementary school curriculum in the city of São Paulo and in the municipal seat towns was organized into two sections: the primary course and the complementary one. The first had four grades, each of them corresponding to a complete school year (nine months), and the complementary had three grades. This means that the elementary schools in the municipal seat towns had to have seven grades, corresponding to seven school years of studies. A município in Brazil has an area larger than that of a town or a city. It is like a county in the United States but has only one town - the seat town; the other communities in the município are considered villages.

The primary and complementary courses were the equivalent of the école élémentaire primaire and of the école élémentaire supérieure in France. But it is possible also to regard them as the same as the lower grades and the upper grades of the elementary school in the United States. The possibility for this assumption is based upon the fact that some American teachers who were in charge of a private missionary school in São Paulo helped to construct the curriculum for the early elementary schools of São Paulo. And to support this assumption it is interesting to observe that, according to the American educational philosophy of the end of the last century, that curriculum was constructed in the Herbartian way of thinking about teaching, rather than in the positivism that prevailed in France.

In addition to the organization of elementary education, the state of São Paulo took care also of a teacher-training program, which led to the reorganization of the normal school in the capital city, and to putting up new normal schools in the

interior of the state. Special rules for recruitment and selection of student teachers, and for appointment and hiring of new teachers were set up. The curriculum of the normal schools was organized into four grades, the first of which had to follow the third complementary (seventh elementary grade). In addition, before entering the normal school, it was necessary for the student to submit to an examination of his present knowledge and readiness.

What São Paulo did for elementary education from 1892 to 1920 had a sound repercussion all over Brazil, and by the beginning of this century almost every state was sending people to study the new educational organization or asking for some professor or educational expert from São Paulo to organize and improve education. By 1920 the "Paulista" system of elementary education and teacher training had become almost the general Brazilian system. For the first time, Brazil really had a system of education, organized only after the proclamation of the republic to the public.

The states had the responsibility for elementary education and elementary teacher-training programs. Most of them met this responsibility by imitating or copying São Paulo; but a few, like Minas Gerais, Bahia, Pernambuco, and the Federal District (city of Rio de Janeiro), tried their own way of solution. These states followed a more definite European way of philosophizing on education than São Paulo which adopted the American interpretation of Herbart's philosophy. They liked better Pestalozzi's and Montessori's theories, and later Decroly's and Binet's educational theorizing.

Nevertheless, we must admit that the system of education was more for the cities and towns than for the rural areas, where small schools of one room, with improvised teachers, were scarcely found. And Brazil, as a matter of fact, was essentially rural, because then more than 75 percent of the people lived in the rural areas and in the backlands.

It took 30 years to organize a system of elementary education for cities and towns. The organization was generally done in a good way and many people thought that the problem was being solved in the best way, and rapidly. But a surprise waited to shock the Brazilian faith in the goodness of the system.

#### A Census Is Taken

In 1920, just two years before the commemoration of the

one-hundredth anniversary of our independence from Portugal, the federal government resolved to take account of what Brazil was. For the first time, a census was planned - a census as complete as possible which would cover all the area and the population of the country, including classified cultural and economic statistics.

The results of that census were disappointing in the field of education. It revealed that only a little more than 35 percent of the children from 7 to 12 years of age were enrolled in the elementary schools of the country; almost 65 percent of the children of school age were not attending school. Besides this, it also revealed that 75 percent of the Brazilian adult population was completely illiterate. Our democracy was not really a democracy because only a small part of the people could vote and be represented in government.

Results comparable to these in the field of education were shown also in the economic level of living. Only 16 percent of our people were contributing to the national production and national income, and, for this reason, the "per capita" income was a miserable one - something like ten dollars per year!

Brazil of 1920 was deeply struck by such a knowledge of the true picture of the nation. Some pessimism developed which was easily associated with political issues that would trouble the nation during the following years.

In the field of education, the state governments changed the former position of an intensive and well-planned public education program which would develop gradually and according to the nation's resource possibilities, to new policies of simply overcoming illiteracy.

Nobody remembered that the efforts to organize an educational system and the resulting organization were no older than 30 years. Nobody remembered that, when the republic was proclaimed, less than 15 percent of the children seven to twelve years old were enrolled in the elementary schools, whereas, by 1920, the census pointed out that 35 percent were attending school. In 1890 perhaps more than 85 percent of the adult people (whites, Negroes, and mulattoes) did not read or write; by 1920 the rate was reduced to 75 percent. Nobody realized, either, that during the imperial times Brazil had done nothing more to change the primitive, undeveloped, and almost wild conditions of life than to provide political and administrative independence from Portugal.



The problems the Republic faced were problems accumulated without solution and even without any serious intent of solution during three centuries of colonial life and 67 years of empire. For all these reasons, by 1920 it would have been impossible to find in Brazil - after only 30 years of republican democracy - a prosperous and well-developed nation. A comparison between the situation in 1890 and that in 1920 would show a great improvement, but perhaps our people and our leaders were not satisfied with only a proportionate and relative progress; they aimed to be a fully developed democracy, at any price, as soon as possible!

### Educational System Suffers

The fight against illiteracy began - and the immediate result was the impoverishment of the elementary school curriculum and of the relatively well-planned system of education. The higher elementary education (the so-called complementary one) was enfeebled and almost abandoned. The small one-room school was multiplied, and in the cities and towns the schools were allowed to have two or even three sessions a day, each one with different groups of pupils. Practically, the elementary school was reduced to three years or three grades in the rural areas, and to four in the urban areas, with the main concern being to teach children to read, to write, and to figure.

After a few years, there were more rural schools of one room than there were of two or more rooms. This means that the states were paying most of their attention to solving the problems of illiteracy in the rural areas. Nevertheless, the shortage of teachers was serious and state administrations hired people without any preparation or training to fill the teaching positions in the rural areas. Most of these people had no more knowledge than that provided by the elementary courses of studies they took up during their childhood. Some of the states, such as Paraná and Santa Catarina, adopted a short normal course to prepare teachers for the rural areas. The course consisted of three years of primary normal school (escola normal primaria) which followed immediately the first four years of elementary school. And it was not uncommon that girls who were no more than 16 years old were appointed to teaching positions in rural elementary schools.

Between 1890 and 1920, a group of educators was trained in Brazil, became aware of the problems of education and interested in knowing world educational literature. When the changes came in 1920, this group realized very well that the new way Brazil was taking in education would be dangerous in its results.

Now, all the emphasis was being put upon the quantitative aspect of education, the qualitative one being neglected. Most of the states were announcing proudly that they had doubled the enrolment in the elementary schools after so short a period as four or five years. It seemed that the principal concern of the public elementary schools was to enrol more and more pupils, no matter what and how they were learning. Wellintentioned and trained educators tried to react against such policies.

In 1922, Lourenço Filho, a young man less than 25 years old, was appointed to reorganize the public system of education in the state of Ceará. He tried to base the reorganization upon the previous study of the economic, social, and cultural situation of the region. It was the first attempt in Brazil to see that research of the survey kind preceded the setting up of an educational plan.

In 1924, Anísio Teixeira, who was no more than 24 years old, was put in charge of managing public education in the state of Bahia. He also attempted to support the educational organization with sound studies of the needs and the potentialities of the people. Later he came to the United States where he was Dewey's pupil at Columbia University. Returning to Brazil he was appointed director of public education in Rio, the Federal district, where he proceeded to set up the basic studies for educational planning and to carry on a fight for qualitatively better schools and teachers.

Other educators were also fighting for qualitatively better schools. Among them was Fernando de Azevedo, who managed public education in São Paulo and Rio and gave to the problems of elementary education the best status they had ever had in Brazil because he made them an important branch of studies at the university level. We could mention, perhaps, more than a dozen other educators of the same caliber.

Nevertheless, these educators have not yet won the fight.

The principal reason is that it has not been possible for them to make use of the basic researches and studies they tried to motivate and to support in order to give to educational planning a real sociological and anthropological basis. They realized the need for such researches long before Brazil had sociologists and anthropologists to do the work. It is only recently that this type of research project has been undertaken in Brazil.

In addition to all this, it is necessary to understand that the changes in Brazilian economy and social structure have come so rapidly during the last 30 years that it is not easy to gain full knowledge of the culture of the country as a whole, or of what could be called the "universals" of Brazilian culture. Furthermore, in many areas of Brazil --in the South for instance-- the "specialties" of culture are increasing in number as a consequence of the division of labor brought about by the progressive industrialization and calling for technical knowledges and skills. Finally, we know that in these areas there are many new cultural alternatives about which the individuals can exercise choice. In this changing situation it is not easy to set up the curricula for schools. This is true, first, because our basic sociological and anthropological research is not adequate. It is hard to adjust the curricula to social standards and patterns which are difficult to isolate and to understand in an analytical as well as a synthetic way. Second, in such a situation the school must assume a leading position in order to be purposive. It must keep in view the best purposes and aims for the changing society. These aims and purposes can be indicated only by objective social knowledge and by a critical and experimental philosophical point of view. Brazil, too, is not yet ready for that kind of an enterprise in science technic and philosophy.

Of course, in recent years we have done a great amount of social, cultural, and economic research in our country, all contributing to sound analyses and interesting interpretations of many aspects and segments of present-day Brazil. But much more has to be done before we are ready to say what Brazil is and what it can become as a nation, as a changing society, and as a new culture in this century.

But education cannot wait until that work is accomplished and for this reason the group of educators who are fighting for quality in the public system of schools have to lose many battles. For the reasons we have pointed out, these educators by themselves did not know what kind of school program would fit the reality of Brazilian life. They could not know because nobody knows well what is this reality, what are its factors, the role of each

factor, how they interact upon each other, and the results of the many possible ways of interaction. Consequently, educators have had to try on Brazil a system of education for which neither the people nor the teachers nor the administrators of education were prepared. They have had to plan and set up educational policies more by guessing than by an experimental and scientific way of planning. The resulting educational system had no recognized support from reality, and had to be accepted as a matter of faith by the people and the public administration. It is not hard to understand that such imposition or acceptance by faith can happen only under certain circumstances and such circumstances did not exist in Brazil. There was, then, an understandable resistance to new and modern education, as it was proposed to the Brazilian people.

Because of this, the Instituto Nacional de Estudos Pedagógicos (Brazilian highest institution for the study of education) is stimulating by all means possible the basic researches and studies which can bring to boards of education and to all educators a clear understanding of the needs and the possibilities which reside in the true condition in Brazil. This is the main job of the newly created Brazilian Center of Educational Researches, a branch of Instituto Nacional de Estudos Pedagógicos (INEP).

#### STATUS OF THE OFFICIAL SYSTEM

To understand the urgent necessity of this job we have to see a general landscape of the present-day educational situation in Brazil.

Now, our elementary school has a curriculum of five grades which means that a child has to stay in the elementary school for at least five years. The generally accepted age for starting the elementary studies is between seven and eleven years. For illiterates beyond the upper age limit, special classes are provided-usually at night.

Without exception, the curriculum is based upon subject-matter teaching, with emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic. Geography, history, some manual arts, and citizenship, are also taught. In the rural areas, however, the elementary school cannot have the same curriculum because the teachers are not prepared to present it. Perhaps more than 60 percent of the schools in the rural areas offer a course of only three grades or three years, and 80 percent of these schools have teachers without studies in education and with only five or six years of school attendance of any kind.

Fifteen years ago, the total enrolment in the Brazilian

elementary schools was less than two million. Now it is about six million, an increase of perhaps 20 percent each year. If we take the population of seven to eleven years of age, it is possible to say that, statistically, this population is being cared for by the existent schools. But the numbers, taken alone without qualitative attributes, are misleading. A few more or less accurate surveys we did in 1954 and 1955 showed us that the simple figures concerning enrolment in the elementary school could lead to a misconception about the real facts of school attendance in our country.

First, we found out that, on the average, a child did not stay in the elementary school just five years in order to complete the course of studies in five grades. Actually, he stayed as long as seven years because of repeated failures. The failures were so large as to block the promotion of 51 percent of the pupils enrolled in the first grade; 46 percent of the pupils in the second grade; 35 percent of these in the third grade; 30 percent of these in the fourth grade; and 23 percent of these in the fifth grade. Actually, our elementary school was not limited to children of seven to eleven years of age; it was serving children up to fourteen years. In the rural areas the enrolment in the first grade embraced children from seven to more than twelve years of age; consequently, it is clear that our elementary school is a school not only for children but also for adolescents.

Three different conclusions became clear: 1) what we thought could be taught in five years, should take, on the average, seven years; 2) the Brazilian people are showing a greater interest in education, as is made clear by the increasing enrolment and by the fact that even adolescents in the rural areas are seeking education in the elementary schools; 3) our system of elementary education is still far from being sufficient for the people's interests and needs. The five grades offered as a five-year program cannot be accomplished in five years, and a large proportion of people older than eleven years need and seek primary education.

In addition to that, we found that the elementary schools were not meeting the real needs and interest of the people. It seems to us something like when a lot of people go to the movies and come out before the end because the story is not so good or pleasant as they supposed it would be. Apparently this is the meaning of the fact that 18 percent of the enrolled children abandon school before finishing one year of study, 22 percent before finishing two years, and 25 percent before finishing three years. This means that 65 percent of our children who are enrolled in the elementary schools have less than

three years of schooling. And the most surprising fact is that almost 60 percent leave school - after one, two, or three years of study - without being promoted to the seconde grade.

We believe that the principal reason for that situation lies in the fact that our elementary school is a selective one rather than a real educational agency for all the people. It does not provide primary education for all, but a kind of elementary intellectual training and learning that only a few children can understand and succeed in.

If this kind of school maintains its prestige, the reason will be a consequence of one aspect of the Brazilian tradition. During colonial period, intellectual culture was a privilege of the dominant class. After independence it was possible for a common man to secure a worthwhile position in this class if he succeeded in literature, law, medicine, et cetera. To do this he had to have the protection of somebody rich and influential to afford him resources, and he had to have sufficient gifts of intelligence to be very successful in the necessary courses of studies. With the proclamation of the republic, education was declared free for all. Access to the ruling class thus became easier, depending only upon the individual's intellectual gifts and his ability to support himself during the period of studies. The steps in the intellectual career would be meeting the requirements first in the elementary school, next, in the secondary school, and finally, in the university. It seems to me that until now the entire official Brazilian system of education, from the elementary school thru the secondary and on to the university, is nothing more than a series of three sieves destined to select, after 17 or 18 years of study, a group of intellectually well-prepared people who will hold the best positions in Brazilian politics and administration, and in such professions as medicine, engineering, law and architecture. The young man who succeeds in this system is entitled to assume one of these positions, which led one writer to say that Brazil is an aristocracy of Doctors. Hence arises the prestige of the official system of education, in spite of its failures and its limitations.

To see how selective the system is, it is enough to consider that the Brazilian secondary schools have an enrolment which is only about 12 percent of that of the elementary schools, and the universities and the higher colleges an enrolment that corresponds to eight percent of that of the secondary schools. It is a perfect pyramid of progressive selection.

Our people believe that the system is democratic because it is based upon the assumption that the system really selects the

most gifted. But some of our most recent researches seem to conclude that this is not true. Many times the most gifted are discarded because they fail in examinations which are supposed to identify the potential students but which actually are not well designed for this purpose.

It is interesting to observe that the system is about to destroy itself. The increasing enrolment, the many failures in the examinations, the development of "examination techniques" by the students who, instead of being concerned with studying and learning are more and more concerned with preparation for examinations (often they use ingenious tricks to pass examinations) - all these things must, little by little, make the existing system useless.

Because of increasing enrolment, there is an increasing number of graduated persons to whom it is difficult, if not impossible, to afford the positions they are prepared for. As a consequence, little by little, a new system of selection is being set up to operate among the graduated—the expertness or demonstrated skillfulness after graduation, which means selection through work. Besides this fact, which represents a tendency to give outstanding value to practice and to work in addition to academic performance, other factors are helping to bring about a gradual change in the situation.

#### NEW TRENDS—NON-OFFICIAL SYSTEMS

In some areas of south Brazil today, many people are asking for better elementary schools—not in order to obtain success in the selective system we described but because they need better education for their jobs and duties in the common economy. We can observe very clearly a bitter criticism against useless subject matter, and a general claim for a more practical educational program.

About 1910, the federal government tried to provide a system of technical teaching at primary and secondary level. The escolas de artes e ofícios (schools of arts and professions) remained outside of the general system of education, and only a few poor people asked for enrolment in them during the first 25 years of their existence. In recent years, however, such schools have been better organized as a branch of secondary education and also better equipped. They have become escolas técnicas (technical schools) and escolas industriais (industrial schools) seeking mainly to prepare experts and technicians to meet the needs of industry. Like the other secondary schools, they have a curriculum of seven grades divided into two sections: the junior with four

grades, and the senior with three grades. But the curriculum in both sections is very different from that of the academic secondary schools because most of the emphasis in the technical and industrial schools is put upon vocational education.

A system of commercial schools was organized in the same way. At first, the industrial schools gave access only to the higher schools of engineering, and the commercial schools to the higher schools of finance and economy. But recently (1953) they were rated as equivalent to the academic secondary schools, and graduates are now accepted in all the higher schools of the Brazilian universities. Many Brazilian young people now prefer the industrial and commercial schools because these can assure them a middle job or profession if they fail in the entrance examination of the higher schools. In Brazil there is a great shortage of trained people to assume positions in the middle professions.

Because of this shortage of people for the middle professions, something that is outside of the official system of education is happening. We believe that it is perhaps the best sign of good reaction against the centralized formalism of the official system. Industry and commerce are progressively taking care of the training of the personnel they need. SENAI and SENAC (national service of industrial learning and national service of commercial learning) are two non-official organizations, supported by contributions of industry and commerce, to afford free specialized training to young people who want to take up a middle job in one of these fields. The courses of training are not formal, do not provide any degree, do not give right to follow a higher course in a university. They are just professional courses with the major emphasis upon practical and effective training for the job. However, they also do try to improve the pupils' abilities in the fundamental skills of reading, writing and reckoning.

In addition to SENAI and SENAC, many big industries and business offices are organizing their own services for the recruitment, selection, and training of employees.

In São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba, Pôrto Alegre, and other important cities, we find a multitude of private, non-official practical schools which provide specialized training at moderate tuition and also find employment for their trained pupils. Generally, they prepare typists, stenotypists, clerks, shoppers, salesmen, salesladies, technical designers, artisans, drivers, automobile mechanics, electricians, and file clerks.

#### SOME CONCLUSIONS

This report should show, we believe, that the official system of education in Brazil is being outflanked by new issues,



new necessities, new solutions--all of them contributing to the rise of a non-official, non-controlled, non-organized system of vocational education. This report should demonstrate, too, that the official system, to survive, has to allow, little by little, more specialization and more vocationalization. This means that education is adjusting itself to the needs of a new society and a new culture which are arising from progressive industrialization.

It is possible, of course, to find many conflicting situations in the new fields which are being opened to education, and it is possible to point out much chaos and confusion. Both of them, conflict and confusion, are clamoring for studies and researches for the purpose of finding solutions and plans.

Furthermore, most of the specialized training that is being afforded to Brazilian youth cannot give the general background of culture that is needed to guarantee some "universals" which are necessary in order to preserve unity in Brazilian society in spite of the specialities and alternatives that are coming out of the new and changing economy.

Finally, the facts of today point out that the new plans and solutions cannot be formal, centralized in administration, and systematically unique. Flexibility, opportunity for frequent readjustment, local setting up and control, variation of opportunities--all of these must be the main features of a system of education for our new Brazil.

#### FINAL REMARK

This article was published in 1955 by "The National Elementary Principal", with the following statement:

"J. Roberto Moreira is one of the directors of the Brazilian Center of Educational Research, Department of Elementary Education and Teacher Education, Rio de Janeiro. His article describing the Brazilian educational system was written at our request and delivered in person while he was in the United States last year. (Mr. Moreira spent several months here visiting schools of education to observe our methods of training teachers,) When Mr. Moreira brought us his article he remarked that he had difficulty with the English language and asked us to edit with that in mind. We agreed, but after reading the article we felt that we would be doing our readers a disservice if we sacrificed his expressive prose to our more orthodox use of the English language. Mr. Moreira was willing to leave the matter to our judgment and we have made only limited changes in his original manuscript."