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Antiracism and the uses of science in the post-World War II: An analysis of UNESCO's first statements on race (1950 and 1951)

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Abstract

As part of its antiracist agenda under the impact of the World War II, UNESCO tried to negate the scientific value of the race concept based on meetings and statements engaging natural and social scientists. It is our interpretation that, contrary to what UNESCO had expected, the Nazi Genocide had not led scientists to a meeting of the minds about a scientific corpus that radically questioned the concept of race. A range of positions could be heard in the discussions by the panel of experts (1949) who produced the First Statement on Race (1950). Our argument is that UNESCO was influenced by a perspective centered on the assumption that amassing scientific data would be the best way to sustain a political agenda that sought to negate the concept of race as well as to fight racism. Reactions to the First Statement were quick in coming and UNESCO called another meeting to debate race in 1951.

Keywords: race; racism; Unesco; anthropology; history of science; Statement on race.

Resumo

Como parte de sua agenda antirracista e sob o impacto da Segunda Guerra Mundial, a UNESCO buscou negar o valor científico do conceito de raça a partir de reuniões e declarações envolvendo cientistas sociais e naturais. Consideramos que, ao contrário da expectativa da UNESCO, o genocídio nazista não levou os cientistas a um consenso sobre um conhecimento científico que questionasse radicalmente o conceito de raça. Um leque de posições foi observado nas discussões do painel de especialistas (1949) produzindo a primeira Declaração sobre Raça (1950). Nosso argumento é que a UNESCO foi influenciada por uma perspectiva centrada no pressuposto de que a acumulação de dados científicos seria o melhor caminho para sustentar uma agenda política que procurasse negar o conceito de raça bem como combater o racismo. Reações à Primeira Declaração surgiram de imediato levando a UNESCO a convocar uma nova reunião para debater o conceito de raça em 1951.

Palavras-chaves: raça; racismo; Unesco; Antropologia; História da Ciência; Declaração sobre Raça.

Antiracism and the uses of science in the post-World War II: An analysis of UNESCO's first statements on race (1950 and 1951)

Marcos Chor Maio

Ricardo Ventura Santos

Introduction

In September 1949, the Fourth Session of the General Conference of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) approved an anti-racist agenda in response to a request by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), through its Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities. Organized by UNESCO's Department of Social Sciences, then headed by Brazilian anthropologist Arthur Ramos (1903-1949), the agenda called for convening an international meeting of scientists to debate the scientific status of the concept of race. In the invitation to the event, Ramos informed potential participants that their goal was to “form a committee of experts in physical anthropology, sociology, social psychology, and ethnology to draw up a preliminary definition of race from an interdisciplinary perspective. This [would be] the indispensable starting point for future action by UNESCO in 1950.”¹ Entitled “Meeting of experts on race problems,” the event took place in Paris in December 1949 and was attended by eight participants.

The document they produced was circulated among some experts and was the object of criticism during the first half of 1950. Released in July 1950,

¹ Letter of invitation from Arthur Ramos to Costa Pinto, Oct. 14, 1949, p. 1, in Reg File 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146). UNESCO Archives.

UNESCO's first Statement on Race included this incisive affirmation: "Race is less a biological fact than a social myth and as a myth it has in recent years taken a heavy toll in human lives and suffering."²

UNESCO's 1950 Statement on Race has been analyzed as a radically anti-racist manifesto, that is, as an expression of criticism toward the racial thought born in the post-World War II period, still under the impact of Nazism. When it was made public, the UNESCO document met with harsh criticism from biologists, geneticists, and physical anthropologists, who pointed out what they felt were a series of inconsistencies regarding the scientific construct of race. In light of these criticisms, UNESCO convened a second meeting of experts, this time comprising mostly geneticists and physical anthropologists, who were charged with revising the alleged conceptual weaknesses found in the First Statement.

In this analysis of UNESCO's First Statement on Race and its repercussions, based on meeting minutes, correspondence, and other records from UNESCO's archives, we aim to show that the substance of controversies that followed its publication had already been debated during the December 1949 forum on the scientific status of the concept of race.³ Even when participants had engaged in discussions at the 1949 meeting, there was no consensus regarding knowledge on issues like the relationship between race and behavior, miscegenation, or the principle of equality. This possibly happened because there was no common ground when it came to the concept of race nor was there any clear agreement about the role of race in either the biological or social realms. On a broader level, our interpretation is that UNESCO's perspective was to try to combat a political, ideological and moral issue grounded in science. The divergences that emerged during and after the meeting of experts challenged the optimistic belief that Nazi atrocities had led the scientific community to a consensus about the debatable heuristic value of the race concept.

2 "UNESCO Launches Major World Campaign Against Racial Discrimination." Paris, UNESCO, Jul. 19, 1950, p.1, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

3 Our arguments in this paper takes into consideration a set of historical documents that, with the exception of Maio (2007), has not been analyzed in previous works on the UNESCO race statements (Banton 1996; Barkan 1992; Brattain 2007; Gastaud, 2007; Gayon, 2004, Haraway 1988; Maio 2001; Malik 1996; Maurel, 2010; Reardon 2005; Santos 1996; Selcer 2012; Stepan 1982, among others). The documents analyzed include the minutes of the Expert meeting that resulted in the draft of the First Race Statement (December 12-14 1949) (SS/Conf. 1/ SR 1-6, UNESCO Archives, 29 Dec. 1949-24 Fev. 1950).

The dawn of UNESCO and the struggle against racism

The November 1945 founding of UNESCO transpired in a unique historical and political juncture, in the interval between the end of World War II and the emergence of the Cold War, before the new framework of international nations had been clearly defined. The new agency's constitution was seen as "the last great manifesto of eighteenth-century Enlightenment" (Lengyel 1986: 5) in the struggle against Nazi obscurantism. The statement of principles found in the preamble to the charter reflected the institution's liberal leanings: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." (UNESCO 1945: 93)

UNESCO's founders, which included scientists, intellectuals and governmental representatives, believed the organization should assure everyone "full and equal access to education, the free pursuit of objective truth, and the free exchange of ideas and knowledge" (*idem*). UNESCO was counting on education, culture, and science to overcome ignorance, prejudice, and xenophobic nationalism, with the ultimate goal of forging a consensus about the need for a more harmonious world (Maurel 2010). Driven by a rationalist spirit which saw science playing a demiurgic role in a new world to be rebuilt upon the ashes of Hitlerist genocide, right from its earliest years UNESCO fostered research projects and surveys and organized meetings of intellectuals and scientists (Angell 1950: 282-7).

Within UNESCO, issues dealing with racial prejudice and discrimination were at first linked indirectly to the project "Tensions Affecting International Understanding," approved during the Second Session of UNESCO's General Conference, held in Mexico City in 1947. Among the project's broad goals was the investigation of the multiple causes of war, national rivalry, and the creation of stereotypes.⁴ In the wake of the December 1948 release of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), through its Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, proposed that UNESCO establish a program to combat racial discrimination (Wirth 1949: 137).

⁴ "Resolutions Adopted by the General Conference During its Second Session." Mexico, Nov.-Dec. 1947. Paris, UNESCO, April 1948, p. 25, UNESCO Archives.

In response to ECOSOC's request, the Fourth Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, held in Paris in 1949, added a special chapter to its social sciences program, which it titled "Study and dissemination of scientific facts concerning questions of race." There were three key goals: 1) "To study and collect scientific materials concerning questions of race"; 2) "To give wide diffusion to the scientific information collected"; 3) "To prepare an educational campaign based on this information."⁵ UNESCO undertook three initiatives: first, it convoked a meeting of physical and cultural anthropologists and sociologists to draft a scientific declaration on the concept of race; second, it conducted a research project on race relations in Brazil;⁶ third, a series of brief studies in the fields of biology, genetics, anthropology, history, and social psychology was published in order to increase awareness of scientific knowledge of race and race relations (Unesco 1956).

Setting the stage of the 1949 meeting

The scientific status of the concept of race as a valid tool in classifying the human species and in measuring the intellectual capacity of different human groups had first been challenged in the early twentieth century. At the close of the 1910s, German anthropologist Franz Boas, who was then teaching at Columbia University released research findings that showed changes had occurred in the cranial measurements, height, and cephalic indexes of first-generation U.S. descendants of European ethnicity and nationality (Boas 1911: 99-103; Stocking 1982 [1968]:175-80). While arguing in broad terms that the environment was responsible for the observed changes, Boas also questioned a basic tenet of the anthropology of his day: the belief in the invariability of the physical characteristics of race (Boas 1912: 530-562).

This was during the early days of Mendelism, when it was also commonly believed that one or a few genes were responsible for physical or social traits like color, height, behavior, and so on. As the field of genetics developed during the first decades of the twentieth century, the complexity

5 "Records of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Fourth Session, Resolutions." Paris, UNESCO, 1949, p. 22, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

6 "The Programme of UNESCO Proposed by the Executive Board, Part II - Draft Resolutions For 1951." Paris, 1950, p. 40, UNESCO Archives. On the debate on UNESCO's First Statement on Race and the research project on race relations in Brazil, see Maio (2001; 2007).

of inheritance became apparent (Mayr 1982). With new analyses distinguishing between phenotype and genotype and suggesting that genes may have a broad gamut of consequences, findings far from confirmed the reductionist interpretations of Mendelian inspiration grounded on the notion of “racial types” (Barkan 1992: 7).

The research by Boas and his disciples shifted steadily away from the concept of race to the concept of culture, while biologists and geneticists gradually effected a conceptual change that replaced the category of race with the category of population (Barkan 1992; Santos 1996: 125). The latter shift was even more visible in the 1930s and 1940s, when a new generation of geneticists introduced the so-called evolutionary, or neo-Darwinian, synthesis. As Santos has pointed out (1996: 126), “this ‘synthesis’ made it possible to reconcile Mendelism (which explained the transmission of hereditary characters), biometry (which addressed gene behavior and the morphological characteristics of populations), and Darwinism (which dealt with the origin and evolution of species).” So there was a move away from the notion of race as something with an invariable nature to the notion of population, which underscored the diversity, dynamic nature, adaptability, and variability of the human species (Mayr 1982, chap. 12). This diversity of knowledge was reflected in the UNESCO event.

The Experts on Race meeting was originally proposed by social psychologist Otto Klineberg, coordinator of the Unesco’s “Tensions Affecting International Understanding” project in 1948-1949. Klineberg,⁷ who took his doctorate in anthropology in the 1920s under Franz Boas, was professor of social psychology at Columbia University, where he did research on intelligence testing and came to challenge the notion that blacks are inferior to whites. Thanks to his studies and their political implications, Klineberg became an important intellectual in the struggle against racism. He in fact took part in Gunnar Myrdal’s *An American Dilemma* (1944), a study on race relations in the United States that had a major impact on the civil rights movement from the 1940s through the 1960s (Jackson 1991).

Klineberg’s initial step towards drawing up the First Statement was to compile a series of manifestos against racism that had been published

⁷ The information on Otto Klineberg was taken from an interview granted by the social psychologist to the Columbia Oral History project, Columbia University, in 1984. See also Klineberg, 1974, 163-82.

before and during World War II.⁸ This material would be used by the group of experts “in the various social and biological sciences” (Klineberg 1949: 20). Brazilian anthropologist Arthur Ramos, a specialist in Afro-Brazilian studies, who succeeded Klineberg as head of UNESCO’s Department of Social Sciences, implemented his predecessor’s proposal. The expert meeting was held in Paris on December 12-14, 1949. Attendees included sociologists Franklin Frazier (U.S.), Morris Ginsberg (England), and Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto (Brazil); anthropologists Ernest Beaglehole (New Zealand), Juan Comas (Mexico), Ashley Montagu (U.S.), and Claude Lévi-Strauss (France); and philosopher, educator, and politician Humayan Kabir (India). These participants came from the major Western powers as well as those Third World members who were influential in defining UNESCO policy in such countries as India, Brazil, and Mexico. As detailed below, they exemplify diverse origins, intellectual trajectories, personal and institutional ties, and engagement in political issues in the field of ethnic and race relations.

Social anthropologist Ernest Beaglehole (1906-1965) conducted studies on ethnic relations in New Zealand as a participant in “Tensions Affecting International Understanding,” the main project run by UNESCO’s Department of Social Sciences (Ritchie 1967: 68-70).

Morris Ginsberg (1889-1970), a Lithuanian-born sociologist who was a naturalized British citizen, had done research exploring the boundaries of philosophy, political science, and social psychology. He was a professor at the London School of Economics and in 1949 became vice-president of the International Sociological Association, founded under the auspices of UNESCO (Bulmer 1985: 5-14; Fletcher 1974: 1-26).

At the time of the UNESCO meeting, French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009) had already earned great renown for his book *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté*, published in 1949. From 1935 to 1938, he was a member of the French mission that helped set up the Universidade de São Paulo’s School of Philosophy, Sciences, and Letters; while in Brazil, he undertook ethnographic fieldwork (Lévi-Strauss 1955; Massi 1991: 132-53). During World War II, he lectured at the New School for Social Research in

8 These manifestos included documents issued by the Royal Anthropological Institute, the American Anthropological Association, and the Brazilian Society of Anthropology and Ethnology (BSAE), among others (Ramos 1943).

New York. When peace came, he returned to Europe and joined France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. He was also a member of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris (Lévi-Strauss & Eribon 1990).

Sociologist Franklin Frazier (1894-1962), professor at Howard University, received his doctorate from the University of Chicago. He was in Brazil in the early 1940s to study race relations, principally in Bahia (Helwig 1991: 87-94). Frazier wrote on blacks in the United States and also contributed to the research project coordinated by Myrdal for *An American Dilemma*. In 1948, he became the first black president of the American Sociological Association (Edwards 1975: 85).

With a degree in philosophy from Oxford, Humayun Kabir (1906-1969) represented India at the Third Session of UNESCO's General Conference, held in Beirut in 1948, where he participated in a forum on democracy in the post-war world (Kabir 1951; Datta 1969).

Spanish anthropologist Juan Comas (1900-1979) went to Mexico after the Spanish Civil War, where he became a professor in physical and cultural anthropology. Comas was secretary-general of the Inter-American Indigenist Institute and editor of the journals *America Indígena* and *Boletín Indigenista* (Genovés et al. 1965).

Ashley Montagu (1905-1999) was a British-American anthropologist and former student of Franz Boas who had taken up residence in the United States. He had been active in the discussion of the race concept and in the struggle against racism since the 1920s. During World War II, he published his seminal book *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (1942), in which he questioned the concept of race. As yet another contributor to Gunnar Myrdal's project, Montagu analyzed the physical characteristics of blacks in the United States (Myrdal 1944: xiii; Barkan 1996: 96-105). He became a professor at Rutgers University in 1949.

Lastly, the Brazilian sociologist Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto (1920-2002) was a professor with the Department of Social Sciences at the National Faculty of Philosophy in Rio de Janeiro, and Arthur Ramos' former student.⁹

Based on the perspectives of this diverse group of scholars, UNESCO sought to produce more than a consensus document. It was also considered

⁹ Letter from Arthur Ramos to Jorge Kingston, Sep. 14, 1949, Coleção Arthur Ramos, I:35,16,215a, Seção de Manuscritos, Biblioteca Nacional.

imperative that this document be made public in order to influence social and political efforts related to race and racial relations on a global scale.

The 1949 meeting on race

The tasks set before the expert committee were threefold: 1) to define race; 2) to evaluate knowledge of the topic from a critical perspective; 3) to offer proposals for future research that might better substantiate the issue.

¹⁰ At Lévi-Strauss's suggestion, the meeting was chaired by Franklin Frazier while Ashley Montagu served as rapporteur.¹¹

Ginsberg was at first skeptical about arriving at a definition of the concept of race, both because existing formulations were inconsistent and because there was no consensus on the matter. In his opinion, the committee should nevertheless make a general compilation of definitions of race, including a genetic one, in order to avoid any ambiguities concerning use of the term. He also felt it would be important to identify its social effects, the scope of racial prejudice around the world, and the various ways in which the phenomenon manifested itself.

Ashley Montagu, on the other hand, argued that physical anthropology and genetics had been reshaping the concept of race in recent years.¹² In tune with Montagu, Lévi-Strauss thought the field of genetics was qualified to provide a foundation for a scientific definition of race. He believed that an in-depth examination of existing knowledge about race could only occur if there were a minimum consensual understanding of the issue.¹³ Lévi-Strauss's position found voice on several occasions during the UNESCO forum.

Edward Lawson, the United Nations Human Rights Commission observer assigned to sit in on the Paris meeting, emphasized the need of implementing practical initiatives. On this matter, he stated: "[The United Nations] had asked UNESCO not to concern itself with theoretical considerations, but to take practical measures to solve the problem of racial prejudices. After much consultation, the Division of Human Rights of

10 10. SS/Conf. 1/SR 1, Paris, Dec. 29, 1949, pp. 1-2. UNESCO Archives.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

the Department of Social Affairs [...] had come to the conclusion that the concept of a definition of race was scientifically illegitimate, and that there was no way of defining race in any generally acceptable sense.”¹⁴ Not far from Lawson, Costa Pinto thought the Committee should “be more concerned with social relations than with genetic factors.”¹⁵

Frazier called attention to the complexity of the race concept, citing as an example the system for classifying blacks, which “varied widely [by country]: it would be defined very differently in the U.S., Brazil, Puerto Rico, or Jamaica.”¹⁶

This brief sketch of the positions taken by Committee members illustrates the distinct views about the meeting’s goals. This diversity of opinions is apparent in Ginsberg’s statement that “it was essential, in any declaration on the equality of race, to distinguish clearly between universal moral law, the equality of men, and a declaration of equality based on objective facts.”¹⁷ That is, he felt the committee should limit itself to moral issues like the universal equality of men, without tying these to scientific data.

When Montagu seconded Ginsberg’s premise that men are equal, however, he held that the principle had scientific grounding. In his opinion, “according to the most recent research carried out in the United States, it was henceforth possible to state that neither mental characteristics nor behavior had any genetical significance.”¹⁸ Contrary to Ginsberg, who stated that individuals varied in mental levels, Montagu felt that “educational, social and economic conditions had a very definite bearing on the results of intelligence tests.”¹⁹ He also criticized the relationship drawn between physical and mental traits. In his words, “it had been proved that temperamental characteristics were determined by cultural factors.”²⁰ Furthermore, Montagu raised doubts about negative views on miscegenation and criticized “the theory that a marked lack of harmony resulted in a high percentage of cases from cross-breeding of individuals

14 Ibid., p. 7.

15 Ibid., p. 6; SS/Conf. 1/SR 3, Paris, Dec. 30, 1949, p. 8. UNESCO Archives.

16 SS/Conf. 1/SR 1, Paris, Dec. 29, 1949, pp. 9-11. UNESCO Archives.

17 SS/Conf. 1/SR 2, Paris, Feb. 24, 1950, p. 3. UNESCO Archives.

18 Ibid., p. 3.

19 Ibid., p. 4.

20 Ibid., p. 4.

with widely different ethnical characteristics.”²¹ Montagu’s understanding of the influence of the environment touched on controversial points like the mixing of different species and the existence of “mental differences” between human beings.

Concerned about the direction of the meeting, Lévi-Strauss enumerated the topics he felt should guide its final document: 1) a definition of race based on physical anthropology and biology; 2) the need for an analysis of racial prejudice.²²

Ginsberg reiterated his position that it was impossible to arrive at a consensus regarding a definition of race. He felt it would be more productive “to indicate the main groups in which men had been classed in accordance with widely differing criteria, adding that the classification was arbitrary and relative.”²³ For Montagu, the Committee could state what “race was not.”²⁴ He further proposed that the concept of race be replaced by that of “ethnic groups,”²⁵ in greater consonance with the cultural characteristics of the world’s existing human groups.²⁶

With a series of disagreements among the experts, Montagu, as rapporteur, presented a draft declaration on the second day.²⁷ The document had five points: 1) the biological differences between human groups derive from the action of evolutionary forces, and the human species is formed of “populations,” in the neo-Darwinian sense of the term; 2) “race” refers to a group or population characterized by a concentration of hereditary particles (genes) or physical traits, which may vary over time; 3) human groups do not differ in their mental characteristics, including intelligence and behavior; 4) miscegenation is a positive phenomenon that should not be confused with

21 Ibid., p. 5.

22 Ibid., pp. 7-8.

23 Ibid., p. 8.

24 Ibid., p. 9.

25 Ibid., p. 9.

26 SS/Conf. 1/SR 2, Paris, Feb. 24, 1950, pp. 8-9. UNESCO Archives.

27 Since each attendee was allowed to propose the text of a statement, Costa Pinto presented one entitled “Declaração sobre os aspectos sociológicos das relações de raças” (Statement on the sociological aspects of race relations). As the title itself tells us, Costa Pinto’s document diverged from the proposals put forward on the first day of the meeting. At the end of the reading of this proposal, New Zealand anthropologist Ernest Beaglehole suggested that the variety of sociological reflections on the topic would prevent a thoroughgoing evaluation within the allotted time. According to Costa Pinto, what thus prevailed was the meeting’s overriding precept, that is, “that the existing biological differences between the races do not justify any attempt to establish categories of superiority or inferiority between them” (Costa Pinto 1950: 6).

degeneration; 5) modern biology shows that man has an innate tendency toward “universal brotherhood.”²⁸

Ginsberg criticized two points in Montagu’s text. First, he objected to its incisive denial of any relation between physiological characteristics and temperament.²⁹ Whether or not “the working of glands had a genetic basis, [they] in any case affected temperament.” Second, he took issue with casting miscegenation in a positive light. For Ginsberg, “race-mixture, as such, produced neither good nor bad results: the results depended on the genetic constitution of the individuals who inter-married.”³⁰

Regarding the first point, Montagu countered that “the genes connected with secretions were not indissolubly united in inheritance with the genes affecting the potentialities of behavior.”³¹ As to his positive perspective on miscegenation, Montagu contended that “studies had been made of the mixing of varieties of men which had shown that the results were lasting: for example, crosses between Bushmen, Hottentots and Dutchmen had lasting effects, as had also crosses between Indians, Whites and Negroes in Brazil.”³² From a sociological angle, Montagu’s outlook was tied in with a research proposal by Frazier on “the position of [the] half-breed in various parts of the world.”³³ In his research into European and North American attitudes toward people of color in Brazil, Frazier noted that “the differences were due not only to psychological but also to political, economic, religious and even demographic factors.”³⁴

Sociologist Costa Pinto, on the other hand, believed that “it had been demonstrated by all disciplines that no pure races existed, but that there were nevertheless racial problems of a purely sociological nature. [...] Relations between groups were based on ideology and not on any scientifically definable differences and, therefore, UNESCO should begin by recognizing that race prejudice had its roots in social and political differences, not in physiological or mental aspects.”³⁵ Once again, Costa Pinto’s stance

28 SS/Conf. 1/SR 3, Paris, Dec. 30, 1949, pp. 2-5. UNESCO Archives.

29 Ibid., p. 5.

30 Ibid., p. 5.

31 Ibid., p. 5.

32 Ibid., p. 6.

33 SS/Conf. 1/SR 4, Paris, Feb. 24, 1950, p. 4. UNESCO Archives.

34 Ibid., p. 4.

35 SS/Conf. 1/SR 3, Dec. 30, 1949, p. 8. UNESCO Archives.

was indicative of the degree of disagreement among the experts on the UNESCO panel. If the scientific community was uncomfortable about the evils perpetrated by Nazism in the name of race, this did not redound in a common critical perspective of the race concept.

Montagu's noted anti-racist activism during World War II, represented in his book *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (1942), in conjunction with his biological expertise, had a decisive influence on the text's final version. Following further debate, which did not change the general lines of Montagu's proposal, the committee arrived at its own proposal on December 14, 1949, the third and final day of the meeting. The document showed support for an egalitarian outlook while refuting the existence of racial hierarchies. As outlined in Montagu's proposal, it thus underscored the fact that mental ability is similar in all races while it denied that miscegenation had any negative ramifications. Human beings, according to the text, have a vocation for solidarity; the concept of race was a merely ideological role.³⁶

Ginsberg suggested that the 1949 document should be submitted for criticism to a group of selected scientists.³⁷ Sociologist Robert Angell, acting Head of UNESCO's Department of Social Sciences, and Swiss-American anthropologist Alfred Métraux, director of the Division for the Study of Race Problems acted as mediators between the reviewing scientists and the document's final version, having Montagu as rapporteur.

The reactions to the draft from the 1949 Expert Meeting

The proposal drawn up by the expert panel was submitted for review to twelve scientists, most from the natural sciences.³⁸ As we argue below, it was remarkable how the comments elicited from these scientists actually foreshadowed some of the reactions to the final statement, released by UNESCO in July 1950. We will take a closer look at the criticisms lodged by

36 SS/Conf. 1/6, Dec. 28, 1949, pp. 1-5. UNESCO Archives.

37 SS/Conf. 1/SR 5, Dec. 30, p. 2. UNESCO Archives.

38 These scientists were Hadley Cantril (social psychologist), E.G. Conklin (biologist), Gunnar Dahlberg (geneticist), Theodosius Dobzhansky (geneticist), L.C. Dunn (geneticist), Donald Hager (anthropologist), Julian S. Huxley (biologist), Otto Klineberg (psychologist), Wilbert Moore (sociologist), H.J. Muller (geneticist), Gunnar Myrdal (economist and sociologist), and Joseph Needham (biochemist) (Montagu 1951: 7-10).

geneticists Leslie Dunn and Theodosius Dobzhansky, social psychologist Otto Klineberg of Columbia University, anthropologist Don J. Hager of Princeton University, and biologist Julian Huxley.

Although the reviewers were in general agreement with the content of the document, they felt certain postulates lacked any scientific proof. Huxley suggested the statement should include a detailed presentation of the different “racial groups,” in the hopes of steering clear of any statements that were not properly grounded, for example, an affirmation that no correlations existed between the genetic formation of different human groups and certain social behaviors. Huxley expressed his position drawing on some rather biologically deterministic examples: “it would be probable that there would be some degrees of genetic basis for the phenotypic differences in temperament between various groups, cf., the expansive and rhythm-loving Negro temperament and the shut-in temperament of many Amerindian groups.”³⁹ While Hager agreed with Montagu’s text for the most part, he argued that there was no scientific evidence of a biological inclination towards brotherhood and universal cooperation. He also asked whether “replacing ‘race’ with ‘ethnic group’ would add any measure of clarity” (Hager 1951: 54).

Leslie Dunn felt it inaccurate to claim there was no evidence of innate differences between human groups. He also believed that no consistent scientific knowledge supported the postulate that there are no connections between morphological and mental traits; further, he thought a distinction should be made between race as a biological phenomenon and race as a myth. According to Dunn, “the myth is the ascription to race of powers for which there is no biological foundation.”⁴⁰

Much like Dunn, Dobzhansky advised that the following phrase be omitted: “the biological facts may be totally disregarded from the standpoint of social behavior and social action.”⁴¹ Klineberg felt the declaration should be “less dogmatic.” He thought definitive pronouncements about

39 Letter from Julian Huxley to Robert Angell, Jan. 26, 1950, p. 4, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

40 Letter from Leslie Dunn to Robert Angell, Jan. 11, 1950, pp. 1-2, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

41 Letter from Theodosius Dobzhansky to Robert Angell, Jan. 17, 1950, p. 2, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

the absence of any correlations between biological data and psychological characteristics would be premature. He also felt it somewhat precipitous to wholly preclude links between different genetic heritages and “cultural achievements.”⁴²

Klineberg’s criticisms revealed a concern shared by Dobzhansky, who suggested changing some observations that he felt were “overstatements and hence might open the whole ‘statement’ to attack by racialists.”⁴³ When Klineberg, a Boasian, said correlations might exist between biology and culture, it might appear that he was in contradiction with his own scientific criticisms of intelligence tests. It is possible that Klineberg’s criticisms of Montagu had more to do with his political concern about how racialists might react to Montagu’s stances than about the existence of any substantive differences between the two of them.

Montagu stood firm against these criticisms and made only superficial changes to the 1949 document. He refused to eliminate the alleged tenet of universal brotherhood. In a letter to Alfred Métraux, Montagu wrote: “Sorry, this [tenet of universal brotherhood] is a scientific fact, now demonstrable beyond question.”⁴⁴

For apparently different reasons, UNESCO leaders like Torres Bodet, Robert Angell, and Alfred Métraux and prominent scientists like the biologist Julian Huxley had reservations about the content of the revised version. For UNESCO heads, there was a concern that the document might express the ideas of only one group of scientists rather than standing as a more overall statement endorsed by the international agency.⁴⁵

The biologist Julian Huxley, UNESCO’s first Director-General, proclaimed his disagreements with Montagu in no uncertain terms: “I fear that I would not like my name to appear on the document.”⁴⁶ He failed to make good on this threat. Apparently there was a consensus regarding

42 Letter from Otto Klineberg to Robert Angell, Jan. 25, 1950, p. 2, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

43 Letter from Theodosius Dobzhansky to Robert Angell, Jan. 17, 1950, p. 1, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

44 Letter from A. Montagu to R. Angell, May 1, 1950, Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box 146), UNESCO Archives.

45 Letter from Robert Angell to Ashley Montagu, Apr. 26, 1950, p. 1, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

46 Letter from Julian Huxley to Ashley Montagu, May 24, 1950, p. 1, in Reg file 323.12 A 102. Part I (Box Reg 146), UNESCO Archives.

Ashley Montagu's scientific authority and about the need to preserve the still-fledgling international institution and to recognize the political weight of this scientific manifesto (Barkan 1996: 100).

In July 1950, following the Fifth Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, and after six months of consultations and internal debates, the First Statement on Race was made public. The substance of the statement by the expert panel that met in Paris in 1949 went basically unchanged. As we will see, some of the same concerns exhibited by Huxley, Dunn, Dobzhansky, and Klineberg were also raised by other researchers after UNESCO officially released the document, known as the First Statement. That is, the criticisms first heard in tight circles were now echoed widely, prompting UNESCO to convoke a new meeting of experts.

Repercussions and reactions

The text of the First Statement is a peculiar blend of genetic postulates drawn from the neo-Darwinian synthesis and ideas derived from the Boasian tradition in anthropology. For Proctor (1988: 174), it in fact represented the triumph of the latter. This amalgamation resulted in a document where race is posed as secondary to the concept of population (“*Homo sapiens* is made up of a number of populations”), hard to apply (“human races can be and have been differently classified by different anthropologists”), biologically meaningless (“‘race’ is not so much a biological phenomenon as a social myth”), and having little influence over mental traits (“there is no definitive evidence that there exist inborn differences between human groups”) (UNESCO 1952: 98-103).

Bespeaking the influence of evolutionary theory, the First Statement contained an excerpt from Darwin's *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, where evolutionism merges with the cooperative spirit and social tolerance: “as man advances in civilization, and small tribes are united into larger communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathies to all the members of the same nation, though personally unknown to him” (UNESCO 1952: 101-102).

It may seem a bit surprising to attempt to reach an integrated position on the concept of race by conjoining the Boasian anthropological tradition, which criticized racial determinism, with neo-Darwinism, which proposed

“population” as a basic unit of analysis, although, as mentioned earlier, the Boasian line of thought had already cast doubt on the foundations of racial typologies in the early years of the twentieth century (Boas 1940; Stocking 1982 [1968]). Geneticists, or at least a good number in this field, were intimately involved with the eugenic movement (Stocking 1982 [1968]; Provine 1973; Stepan 1982; Bowler 1989). In other words, if some versions of Darwinism, along with other doctrines of evolutionary biology, had a direct influence on the production of an authoritarian, racist brand of science prior to World War II, after the war there emerged a type of biology—or at least a group of its researchers—that advocated a “universal man biologically certified for equality and rights to full citizenship” (Haraway 1989: 197-203). Authors like Haraway (1989) and Greene (1990) trace the “evolutionary humanism” pervading the First Statement not to a conceptual transformation in biology but to the ideas held by a group of biologists that included Theodosius Dobzhansky and Julian Huxley, who had also helped develop the so-called neo-Darwinian synthesis. For these evolutionists, it was possible to conjoin evolutionary biology and humanism, as we can deduce from the text of the First Statement (Greene 1990).

Reactions to the First Statement were quick in coming. Shortly after its release, ethnologist William Fagg, editor of *Man*, published the document in full and invited some physical anthropologists and geneticists to comment on it. The responses received by the British journal range in tone from conciliatory (Fleure 1951; Little 1951) to not so conciliatory (Hill 1951; Vallois 1951), with direct attacks aimed not just at ideas but at individuals as well. For the most part, the criticisms targeted three concerns: (1) the document did not make a proper distinction between race as a biological concept and a social concept, while it also invalidated the first dimension; (2) contrary to what the text suggested, it had not been scientifically proven that there were no racial differences in terms of mental abilities; (3) the assertion that biological studies showed that human beings are predestined to universal brotherhood was baseless (UNESCO 1952: 7).

Many physical anthropologists defended race as a biological category and clearly took a dim view of the First Statement. For some, it contained contradictions or “overly categorical” statements and “poorly justified denials” (Vallois 1951:16); for others, some of its statements were more akin to philosophical and ideological doctrine than “modern scientific” ideas

(Little 1951:17). There were also those who argued that the document's conclusions reflected nothing more than the opinions of a "particular school of anthropologists" whose affirmations seemed to be guided more by "wishful thinking" than by "established scientific facts" (Hill 1951:16). The author of this last comment, British primatologist W.C. Osman Hill, illustrates the latter; he not only made a scathing attack on the ideas and proponents of the First Statement but was also quite out-spoken in his comment on race and temperament, rife with stereotypes: that range of mental capabilities is "much the same" in all races is scarcely a scientifically accurate statement. It is at most a vague generalization. It is, however, scarcely true, for temperamental and other mental differences are well known to be correlated with physical differences. I need but mention the well known musical attributes of the Negroids and the mathematical abilities of some Indian races (Hill 1951: 16-17).

Lastly, it is interesting to note that critics of the First Statement also invoked Darwin's support by citing an excerpt from *The Descent of Man*, in this case to underscore the existence of differences between the races. C.D. Darlington wrote: "[human] races differ also in constitution, in [their capacity for] acclimatization, and in liability to certain diseases. Their mental characteristics are likewise very distinct; chiefly in their emotional, but [also] partly in their intellectual, faculties" (cited in UNESCO 1952: 27).

The year after this exchange of comments—and of insults—in the pages of *Man*, UNESCO called another meeting to debate race. Their rationale for doing so was:

"Race is a question of interest to many different kinds of people, not only to the public at large but to sociologists, anthropologists, and biologists, especially those dealing with problems of genetics. At the first discussion on the problem of race, it was chiefly sociologists who gave their opinions and framed the Statement on Race. That Statement had a good effect, but it did not carry the authority of just those groups within whose special province fall the biological problems of race, namely the physical anthropologist and geneticists. Secondly, the first Statement did not, in all its details, carry the conviction of these groups and, because of this, it was not supported by many authorities in these two fields" (Dunn 1951:155).

The second meeting of experts took place in 1951 and comprised only physical anthropologists and geneticists. It was carefully organized from a

political standpoint: French physical anthropologist H. Vallois, a critic of the First Statement, was appointed committee chair, while U.S. geneticist L.C. Dunn held the strategic role of rapporteur. Dunn, who had personal ties to Dobzhansky and theoretical ties to the neo-Darwinian synthesis, had helped revise the text of the First Statement. Although Montagu was not initially invited, he later joined the committee as representative of the writers of the first text.

What are the differences between the two documents? For Dunn, the second text preserved the main conclusions of the First Statement, “but with differences in emphasis and some important deletions” (Dunn 1951: 155). The Second Statement is actually more biological and factual in tone, with fewer observations of a philosophical tenor; it is also less emphatic about “cultural determinism” (see Barkan 1992: 342-3). Although race was reinstated as a biologically valid concept, this was only in light of genetics: “The concept of race is unanimously regarded by anthropologists as a classificatory device [...] by means of which studies of evolutionary processes can be facilitated” (UNESCO 1952: 11). As far as intellect, temperament, culture, and race, committee members preferred to take an inconclusive position, claiming that available data neither proved nor denied the existence of associations between these features. Paraphrasing Haraway (1989: 197-203), we can say that the human being portrayed in the Second Statement is, while universal, biologically less certified for equality and rights to full citizenship. Whether biologically limited or not, the human being outlined by geneticists and physical anthropologists in this document is not defined according to typological or racialized models but in the light of neo-Darwinism.

Closing remarks

This paper has explored the context of the debates surrounding UNESCO’s 1950 and 1951 statements on race.⁴⁷ It was a singular moment,

47 There is a growing literature on the repercussions of the UNESCO Statements. STS (Science, Technology and Society) scholars Donna Haraway (1988: 208-216) and Jenny Reardon (2005: 23-36) have argued that the UNESCO statements had major impacts upon research on human biological diversity in the second half of the 20th century. Maio (2001) has written on the cycle of studies on Brazilian race relations sponsored by UNESCO in the beginning of the 1950s (see also Maurel 2010: 226-232). More recently, Selcer (2011) has discussed an initiative of UNESCO in Africa, more specifically in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), to study race relations.

when the world was looking towards the past, and above all to the atrocities of war, in hopes of forging a new future for humanity. Contrary to UNESCO's expectations, the debate hardly proved an arena propitious to forming a consensus.

UNESCO's main reason for convoking the 1951 meeting to discuss the concept of race was based on the argument that a sociological vision would have trumped a biological vision in the First Statement, thus thwarting a more authoritative scientific assessment of the question. The debates that took place at the December 1949 meeting already indicated that the group of experts, which included mostly social scientists, was far from a consensus. Sociologists like Franklin Frazier and Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto were closer to Montagu than to the sociologist Morris Ginsberg. Together with Montagu, social anthropologist Lévi-Strauss insisted that the concept of race be grounded in the field of genetics. Ginsberg, on the other hand, thought it pointless to seek any consensus on the scientific definition of race given the degree of dissent on the matter. He felt it was an issue of a moral nature that fell within the realm of defending the legitimate principle of equality between men, regardless of any scientific underpinnings. In point of fact, Ginsberg foresaw how hard it would be to shape an agenda for addressing racism that was grounded on scientificism, that is, on scientific concepts guiding political actions or moral principles.

In this sense, the First Statement's alleged lack of scientific authority was possibly much less associated with the hegemony of any given field than with the ambivalence over the scientific status of the concept of race that persisted even after the war, in both the social and natural sciences. This was made patently clear in the process of writing the statement and during its subsequent reception.

On a broader perspective, contrary to what UNESCO had expected, the Holocaust had not led natural and social scientists to a consensus about a scientific corpus that radically questioned the concept of race. UNESCO was influenced by a perspective centered on the assumption that amassing scientific data would be the best way to sustain a political agenda that sought to negate the concept of race and therefore would be the best way to fight racism. Presenting itself as a "scientific agency of the United

Nations,”⁴⁸ UNESCO tried to combat a moral, political, and ideological issue by grounding itself in science. The divergences that became evident both during and after the meeting of experts challenged UNESCO’s optimistic belief that the Nazi atrocities had led the scientific community to join unanimously in questioning the dubious heuristic value of the race concept.

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Biosocial Activism, Identities and Citizenship: Making up ‘people living with HIV and AIDS’ in Brazil

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Abstract

This article discusses how Brazilian AIDS activism has emerged and been reconfigured over the last 25 years. I analyze how societal forms were created and particular problems emerged in a specific context affected by the AIDS epidemic. Based on ethnographic research in concrete contexts in Brazil, I follow the ways by which people have united around various ideas and practices related to life, health and illness, morality and politics. People affected by the epidemic were engaged in sociality, identity formation and the definition of a wide range of health, political and judicial demands, which take a particular biosocial activism as their main form of collective mobilization. My main aim is to reflect, therefore, on the formation of particular biosocial worlds, socialities, collectivities and identities related to specific modes of subjectification surrounding life and death, biomedicine and biotechnologies, politics and citizenship.

Keywords: AIDS, Biosocial Activism, Identity, Sociality, Biomedicine.

Resumo

Este artigo discute como o ativismo brasileiro de AIDS emergiu e foi sendo reconfigurado nos últimos 25 anos. Analiso como formas societárias têm sido criadas e problemas particulares emergiram em um contexto específico afetado pela epidemia da AIDS. Apoiado em pesquisa etnográfica em

contextos concretos do Brasil, investiguei os modos através dos quais pessoas se reuniram em termos de várias ideias e práticas relacionadas à vida, saúde e doença, moralidade e política. As pessoas afetadas pela epidemia engajaram-se em socialidade, formação identitária e na definição de amplas demandas judiciais, políticas e de saúde, que tiveram um ativismo biossocial particular como sua principal forma de mobilização coletiva. Meu principal objetivo é refletir, portanto, sobre a formação de mundos biossociais particulares, socialidades, coletividades e identidades relacionadas a modos de subjetivação específicos envolvendo vida e morte, biomedicina e biotecnologias, política e cidadania.

Palavras-chave: AIDS, Ativismo Biossocial, Identidade, Socialidade, Biomedicina.

Biosocial Activism, Identities and Citizenship: Making up ‘people living with HIV and AIDS’ in Brazil

Carlos Guilherme do Valle

Since the early 1980s, AIDS¹ has spread to every country in the world, becoming one of the most destructive global epidemics. Epidemiological estimates calculate that 35 million people were living with HIV and AIDS in 2013 (UNAIDS/WHO 2013). In the last three decades, massive economic investments have been channeled towards biomedical research and clinical practice to control HIV and AIDS. Governmental responses and humanitarian interventions have also been implemented in accordance with international guidelines established by the World Health Organization. Partially related to the difficulties of medical practice and research in responding effectively to AIDS, societal mistrust and apprehensions in relation to science have coexisted with high expectations and promises of new developments in biomedicine, biotechnology and genetic research. The latter became increasingly relevant in the 1980s and 1990s (Rabinow 1996a; Rose 2007; Lock and Nguyen 2010). This complex ambivalence towards biomedicine was reintensified in the face of by the huge escalation in AIDS-related deaths. At this time, the ‘new genetics’ also seemed to promise huge advances. A powerful cultural imagination concerning science coexisted with societal fears and moral panic as the AIDS epidemic began to spread widely. At the same time, biotechnology and biomedicine showed unexpected advances in many different areas, such as reproductive technologies. It is no coincidence that the rise of the new genetics and the scientific conundrums caused by AIDS were compared to one another by Paul Rabinow. He clearly emphasized that the logic of risk prevention can be found in relation to AIDS as well as genetic diseases (1996a, 1996b, 1999).

¹ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is caused by HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus).

Paul Rabinow termed biosociality as a heuristic category (1996a, 1999, 2008) that could uncover the social and cultural impacts caused by genetics, molecular biology and biotechnologies on the ‘practices of life’ related to biopolitics in the contemporary era, which evince novel modes of conceptualizing and destabilizing the ideological contrast between ‘nature’ and ‘culture’. Consequently, social forms and collectivities have been created in response to specific events and processes. These also produce specific socialities and identities marked by biological conditions and recreated by genetics and molecular biology, although they normally entangle with culturally and/or morally shared meanings and practices of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and so on. Patient groups and health advocacy organizations have been set up, therefore, to mobilize, engage and empower people with genetic diseases, their families, friends and their significant others to claim particular rights and social benefits, but also demanding investment in scientific research and accessible treatments. Their interactions with experts, scientists and health professionals have been crucial to understanding new mediation practices in the measures against illness. These actors have become committed to intervening in, managing and deciding on social practices associated with people’s lives, trajectories and futures, aiming to achieve new parameters for a ‘healthier’ and more predictable life, regulated by the constant presence of biomedical technologies and knowledge in everyday life. In sum, novel assemblages bring together a variety of people, networks, organizations, knowledge, policies and technologies which relate to each other in articulated and conflictive ways, depending on the contexts involved, to create biosociality and bioidentities around practices of life (Rabinow 1996a: 99-103; Rabinow & Rose 2006).²

Paul Rabinow’s theoretical concerns have influenced researchers who have taken up his ideas and developed them in new directions, applying his preliminary theoretical and methodological assumptions to different cases and contexts not confined to genetics (Gibbon & Novas 2008; Rabinow 2008). New categories have also been tested and used to interrogate other questions related to biosociality and the “politics of life itself,” in the words of Nikolas Rose (2007), including biogitimacy (Fassin 2009) and therapeutic

² According to Rabinow, biosociality cannot be defined as a ‘natural’ principle of relatedness. He stresses the heuristic function of this category, which is considered in relation to specific societal contexts (Rabinow 2008; Gibbon & Novas 2008).

citizenship (Nguyen 2010), all of them focusing on different aspects of new forms of biosocial configuration (Gibbon & Novas 2008).

Although AIDS is not caused by a genetic factor, many societal aspects can be cited here to explain why I identify some similarity between the questions approached by genomics and those concerning the biosocial impact of HIV/AIDS. One of these is the development of biomedical research on HIV and AIDS treatment which proved instrumental to the evolution of the epidemic from the mid-1980s. Nikolas Rose, for example, has called attention to the way in which the human body has been screened by biomedical knowledge and technologies at a molecular level (Rabinow & Rose 2006; Rose 2007). This molecular apprehension of the human body has been directed towards different biological conditions, such as those related to genetics and 'race' (Santos & Maio 2004; Fullwiley 2007), but also those concerned with the molecular dynamics of HIV/AIDS, so important to developments in immunology (Patton 1990; Martin 1994). PCR,³ a diagnostic test whose biotechnological creation was studied by Rabinow (1996b), has shown a real effectiveness in AIDS treatment since the early 1990s. In addition, biomedical knowledge and the technologies of life have also affected the ways in which identity formation is derived from a biological condition, both for genetic diseases (Rabinow 1999; Gibbon 2007) and HIV/AIDS as well. In fact, HIV testing convincingly demonstrates how biomedical technology can play a key role in identity formation, related to personal experiences of risk and illness, but also operating through the biopolitical effects of governmentality by which a population becomes focused on the regulation of 'life' (Foucault 1979).⁴

Another important question is the sociopolitical mobilization related to health and illness (e.g. Epstein 2007; Rabinow 1999; Rabeharisoa 2006; Gibbon 2007). These forms of mobilization show particular historical trajectories, which sometimes influence one another. AIDS activism needs to be considered in this context and, in fact, Paul Rabinow indeed recognized this aspect (1996a, 1996b). Forms of health activism have maintained

3 PCR stand for polymerase chain reaction.

4 Since the eighteenth century, 'life' has been understood by scientific and technical knowledge (biological, medical, etc.) as a universal reality defined by 'nature.' 'Life' became a crucial (bio)political theme to be prioritized by the Nation-States, justifying diverse forms of governmental regulation and political intervention through which biopolitics was constituted and promoted.

complex relations with governmental and global agencies. At the same time, we have seen a rich debate on the effects caused by these forms of biosocial mobilization and activism, including access to scientific production and the politics of treatment (Epstein 1996, 2007), though attention has been mostly directed towards the changes in judicial and political-administrative practices with a real impact on the meanings of citizenship. A biopolitical problematic arises, therefore, from the practices of contestation, conflict and negotiation conducted by a variety of agents, including biosocial activists, regarding questions and decisions surrounding life, health/illness and death.

Although I engage here in a theoretical dialogue with recent studies of biosocial groups and identities, the article draws extensively from social research on AIDS and its examination of the emergence of new kinds of social activism and identity formation. AIDS has been the subject of a large scientific and academic literature that approached the same problems concerning the creation of societal forms, groups and identities based on biological and therapeutic conditions. Connected from the outset with 'cutting edge' scientific research, AIDS drugs and biomedical treatments were soon available to HIV infected people. In addition, different forms of AIDS activism were created and gained legitimacy through their cogent demands for the recognition of particular rights and benefits for people with HIV in specific national contexts (Pollak 1988; Patton 1990; Kayal 1993; Altman 1994; Epstein 1996; Weeks et al. 1996; Ariss 1997; Gatter 1999; Fillieule & Broqua 2000; Fassin 2007; Sívori 2007; Nguyen 2010; Gregoric 2013; Smith 2013), including Brazil (Vallinoto 1991; Parker 1990, 1994; Bastos 1999; Silva 1999; Galvão 1997, 2000; Valle 2000, 2002; Pelúcio Silva 2002; Ferreira 2006; Biehl 2007; Lima & Jeolás 2008; Cunha 2011)⁵. Law making and political struggles for citizenship have thus been a central issue in relation to the epidemic in Brazil.

Drawing from my earlier research on Brazilian HIV/AIDS activism (Valle 2000, 2002, 2008, 2013), this article discusses how societal forms were created and particular problems emerged in a specific context affected by the epidemic. Based on ethnographic research in concrete contexts, I enlarged the scope of this earlier research material with recent fieldwork that I carried out

5 The main goal of this article is not to review the large academic and scientific literature on Aids in Brazil.

during the 2000s and early 2010s⁶. Mainly I follow the ways through which people have come together around certain ideas and practices related to life, health and illness, morality and politics. Since the late 1980s, people affected by the epidemic were engaged in sociality, identity formation and the definition of a wide range of health, political and legal demands, which take a particular kind of biosocial activism as their main form of collective mobilization. Over the last three decades, we have seen the emergence of truths and the creation of modes of subjectification (Foucault 1982) informed by events, settings, groups, agencies, ideas and practices historically constituted around a particular health problem. In fact, many significant changes happened since the 1980s as a result of governmental and social “responses” to the AIDS epidemic in specific national contexts. They were associated to new HIV treatments, such as “combination therapy” (ART)⁷, community organization and the guarantee of specific rights to people with HIV and AIDS. However, I am convinced that many aspects show strong continuity with this early past, including questions of subjectification and identity formation. Therefore, I begin by describing some of the aspects that allowed the socio-genesis of Brazilian AIDS activism. However the main purpose of this article is to explore the formation of particular biosocial worlds, socialities, collectivities and identities related to specific modes of subjectification around life and death, biomedicine and biotechnologies, politics and citizenship.⁸

A Brazilian AIDS? Scapegoats, groups, numbers and identities

In the late 1970s, democracy began to return in Brazil after fifteen years of military dictatorship. During this period, social mobilization forced the

6 Since 1994, I have been researching the formation of biosocial worlds and forms of activism connected to HIV/AIDS in Brazil. In particular, I conducted fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro, where I visited organizations, groups and networks related to HIV/AIDS. This ethnography was carried out primarily with the *Grupo Pela Vidda*, a leading AIDS organization. I also attended public events, such as the World AIDS day, political demonstrations and Brazilian activist meetings, including the *National Meetings of People Living with HIV and AIDS* (Rio de Janeiro: 1994, 1997, 2012, 2014), the biennial *National Meeting of Brazilian AIDS NGOs* (Salvador, 1994) and the *I Northeast Brazil Meeting of People Living with HIV and AIDS* (Recife, 2012). Some health services and public hospitals were also researched in Rio de Janeiro: a public HIV testing Clinic and a Hospital Day Care Center. Multi-sited ethnography was carried out (*World Aids Conferences*: Vancouver, 1996, and Geneva, 1998) in order to understand the regional and transnational connections between Brazilian AIDS activism, government agencies and international agencies.

7 ART stand for “antiretroviral therapy”.

8 I would like to thank Peter Fry, the periodical’s editor, and two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments, which helped me to improve this article.

reinstatement of civil rights and 'traditional' political actors were joined by the emergence of new social movements, such as feminism and 'homosexual' politics. Improvements in the political climate were not matched by the same in the economy, however. This sharply affected the public health system, which occupied a crucial position in determining how Brazilians perceived their social, economic and moral plight. *Crisis* seems to be the defining category of the 1980s. The AIDS epidemic started to affect Brazil and would become inserted within a larger framework of other crises that erupted in the 1980s. Brazil had quickly become one of the four countries with the highest prevalence of AIDS cases in the world and the highest in Latin America. In 2014, there were 757,042 reported cases (1980-2014): 491,747 men (65%) and 265,251 women (35%) (Brazil 2014). One of the particularities of the Brazilian profile in the evolution of the AIDS epidemic is the social diversity of HIV infection in the country (Brazil 2014; Parker 1990, 1993), characterized mostly by homosexual and heterosexual HIV transmission. Cultural values and disputes related to sexuality, gender, class, race, ethnicity and life-style should be kept in mind when we consider AIDS in Brazil.⁹

AIDS first became a well-known health problem in Brazil following mass media coverage (Galvão 2000; Valle 2000). Since 1984, the Brazilian news media has reported on the epidemic with regularity. Normally the media plays a powerful pedagogic role in the incorporation of 'a cultural arbitrary' (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977), re-elaborated from other sources, such as scientific and epidemiological reports. Supported by a range of dominant cultural discourses, the Brazilian media outlets produce their own discursive practices popularizing ideas about AIDS. They constitute a comprehensive ideological framework through which Brazilians have created their understandings of the epidemic.

As in other countries (Sontag 1989; Patton 1990; Watney 1994; Weeks et al. 1996), AIDS was initially linked to male homosexuality by the Brazilian media and the general public. While gay men were considered responsible for the spread of the epidemic, they had been characterized as the most affected 'risk group' due to their sexual life. In the 1980s, this epidemiological conception became crucial to defining the gradual understanding of the

⁹ In 1984, the male/female ratio of HIV infection was 44.5/1, but had reduced to 1.8/1 by 2013: 18 men for every 10 women infected (Brazil 2014). On AIDS, gender and women in Brazil, see Guimarães (2001) and Knauth (1998).

AIDS epidemic in Brazil. The idea of a 'risk group' with causal associations to sexual promiscuity made gay men the social signifiers of AIDS (see also Pollak 1988; Patton 1990). The epidemic gave fresh impetus to the negative representations of homosexuality sustained by various bodies of knowledge, especially those linked to Christian religions, law and medicine. While the media highlighted AIDS as a 'gay disease,' this reporting had a conversely negative influence on many gay men, who refused to believe that they were at any risk of being infected. For many Brazilians, AIDS was a 'distant' health problem for most of the 1980s.

Until the early 1990s, the news media repeated the assertion that AIDS was a '100% fatal disease,' while the 'AIDS carrier' was represented as someone 'doomed to die.' Ideas such as 'general risk' also exposed a groundswell of fear and mistrust. Impelled by the discursive rhetoric of fear and panic surrounding a 'general risk,' the heterosexual mode of HIV infection began to be culturally depicted in the Brazilian media, which reported that AIDS was "becoming a worrying issue for the whole of society." These threats alluded to the expanding range of the epidemic. Metaphors strongly informed the cultural discourses propagated in the press, whether referring to the body of a particular individual, or broader phenomena, related to the social body as a whole (Sontag 1989; Patton 1990; Watney 1994).

Here it is worth stressing the important connection between these media reports and the epidemiological data produced by the Brazilian Ministry of Health. The number of HIV cases, AIDS deaths and cases among 'risk groups,' along with general statistical and epidemiological data, were used by the Brazilian press to describe the evolution of the epidemic in the country. It seemed that the drama of the epidemic was told through epidemiological data, numbers, rates and statistics, all of which had a significant cultural effect in terms of identifying AIDS with one or more "risk groups."

Various identity categories have been used to refer to people with HIV/AIDS. From 1983 to 1987, terms such as AIDS 'carrier,' 'victim' or 'patient' were the most widely used by the news media, such as happened in the United Kingdom (Watney 1994: 27). These categories emphasized the unavoidable physical deterioration experienced by HIV+ people. Soon a new term became the most frequent social category used by the media to identify someone living with HIV and AIDS: the *aidético*. Brazilian journals were one of the main sources for the discourses popularizing this new identity. This marked

a substantial shift in people's understandings both of the epidemic and of those individuals who could be infected. To be an *aidético* came to suggest a broader identity that categorized and united people with different social trajectories, no longer confined to a particular sexual identity or homosexuality. The cultural meanings of the *aidético* were crucial to defining the social identity of an HIV-positive person. It was essentially generic and could refer to anyone infected by HIV. *Aidético* thus became a mainstream Brazilian cultural category, implying ideas of illness and death, related to bodily wasting and an undesired finitude. Similar categories were also found in countries, such as *sidétique* in France (Pollak 1988) or *sidótico/sidoso* in Argentina and Spanish speaking countries (Sívori 2007). The question of stigma is central to any analysis of the *aidético* as a category (Goffman 1990; Seffner 1995). According to one informant: "I prefer to call someone *seropositive* or HIV+. Although I think they're all just the same thing. Just the same, but the word *aidético* sounds hideous to me [...]. I always read it in the newspapers."¹⁰

Cazuza, a famous Brazilian pop/rock singer, embodied the cultural representation of disease, bodily decay and death. From 1989 to 1990 when he died, the weekly magazines reported on his plight in highly stigmatizing ways. For example, cover story of one popular news magazine read: "Cazuza: an AIDS victim agonizes in public" (Veja 1989: see image below). Represented as the "face of AIDS," Cazuza became the best known embodied cultural image of an 'AIDS victim' and an *aidético*. We can compare Cazuza with Rock Hudson and Freddie Mercury, who became important figures in the cultural imagination of the AIDS epidemic in the United States and Great Britain.

Although illness and death were the basic conditions attributed to anyone infected by HIV, the *aidético* identity emerged just when AIDS began to be managed by more efficient forms of clinical intervention. Certainly, the news media was capable of generating a number of paradoxes: how would 'clinically healthy' HIV+ people live if they are "marked by a death sentence"? (Veja 1989). Seen from this viewpoint, I was surprised by the categories used in the first articles on the clinical efficacy of an AIDS drug, AZT. The category *assintomático* ('an asymptomatic carrier') was also present in the news media

10 Interview with Júlio; HIV+ gay man; 32 year old; middle class; higher education degree; North Rio; no link to AIDS/NGO (20/03/1998).

around 1987, enriching the terrain of identity categories mostly originating from medical contexts. *Seropositive* was another identity category, undoubtedly appropriated from the international news media as an intellectual and cultural source. Their meanings were primarily clinical in origin, therefore universalistic, and forged a medicalized identity (Heaphy 1996; Valle 2002), which partly explains their widespread acceptance in AIDS NGOs, health services and public clinics.



To what extent did these different forms of identity categorization by the Brazilian news media have any real impact on social process of identity formation? It is difficult to provide a straightforward answer. However, we may assume that this impact diverged in meaning and practice. Although categories like 'AIDS patient,' 'AIDS carrier' and *aidético* circulated through the news media, they did not originate from journalism. Some of these terms had clinical origins, while others had been popularized from AIDS research sources. Even their specific social uses might be differentiated, such as the category 'seropositive,' which became used largely among Brazilian AIDS activists. It should be emphasized, however, that the people who composed these new social worlds presented more complex and subtle understandings of the images and meanings of being 'seropositive' and *aidético* than those circulated in the mainstream press.

What I have also attempted to show thus far is that a cultural history of the formation of new 'objects of perception' (Bourdieu 1990) became configured over the course of 1980s and 1990s. 'Risk groups' need to be seen as cultural 'objects' that have been used to classify and differentiate social experiences. 'Risk groups' might therefore be perceived as part of a symbolic process of objectification linked to the concurrent formation of the *aidético* as a stigmatized identity. Statistical and epidemiological data provided the news media with objectified public health parameters, legitimizing these 'objects of perception.' As a new social identity, the *aidético* was created in association with 'risk groups' and sexual identities. Risk groups are not just 'objects,' however, since they relate to people who were 'made up' (Hacking 2002) around life and death, health and illness. Moral and political aspects must

be highlighted if we are to understand the historical and biosocial processes behind the AIDS epidemic in Brazil.

The emergence of Brazilian AIDS activism

Up to now, I have employed a particular textual strategy to contextualize the emergence of singular social worlds, organizations, groups and networks, as part of a biosocial mobilization and generation of new socialities around HIV/AIDS since the 1980s. The media was just one of the important agents in creating these new realities of life and death in Brazil. Following Didier Fassin, I agree that HIV/AIDS has to be seen from “diverse local vantage points, encompassing the tensions and contradictions of local experiences” (2007: xiv), including illness, gender and sexuality, among others. Hence we have to examine the formation of organizations, collectivities and identities within a historical context of promising biomedical advances, the main focus of this article.

Around 1983, the earliest civil mobilizations in response to the epidemic emerged among gay organizations in Brazil’s major cities, such as São Paulo. Although the Brazilian ‘homosexual movement’ was unorganized at the time, the few existing gay groups distributed HIV information materials to the local population and predated responses from the government, though their impact was limited by a lack of resources and volunteers. It was only in 1985 that the Ministry of Health held a meeting to discuss the epidemic, and the National Division of STD and AIDS was set up.¹¹ In fact, public health decisions were taken only after extreme delays and without any rigorous epidemiological control policy. As Fassin reported in relation to South Africa, political anesthesia was current in Brazil, “causing suffering and ignoring suffering” (2007: xii). As a result, the increase in the number of AIDS cases had a significant social impact.

To understand the emergence of Brazilian AIDS activism, especially NGOs, we first need to examine its links to so-called ‘homosexual militancy’ (MacRae 1990; Valle 2000; Simões & Facchini 2008). In fact, what we

¹¹ Established by the Brazilian Ministry of Health on May 2nd 1985, this Division was renamed several times over the years.

know today as ‘AIDS activism’ overlay and contrasted with the meanings of ‘homosexual militancy’. This militancy was framed by a historical context in which an anti-authoritarian ideology was prominent. However it suffered from a lack of political strength in the wider social field of struggles for citizenship in Brazil. With the rise of AIDS activism, different perspectives and practices were created. Although criticism of the Brazilian government endured after the new civilian regime came to power, activists were not fighting for ‘democracy’ but rather for citizenship and the guarantee of human rights. AIDS activism was related to a particular social field and specific health-defined issues, intersected by ideas of citizenship. Initially, the fear of ‘AIDS ghettoization’ was also a discernible factor. Many former ‘homosexual militants’ realized the need to divert attention around AIDS away from homosexuality (Terto 1996). For them, AIDS had to be considered a health problem affecting all Brazilians. A number of political ideas were highlighted to justify and reinforce this standpoint. Many gay men thus started or joined AIDS organizations informed by values of universal affiliation. They sought to establish activist groups that privileged collective demands and promoted citizenship in general. They pointed to the possibilities of collective action without being limited to sexual orientation or any other singularity. Therefore citizenship turned out to be the central political criteria to understand AIDS activism in a country such as Brazil. This shows a subtle contrast to the United Kingdom, for instance, where a similar shift for the “de-gayng of AIDS” was questioned in the early 1990s, especially by GMFA (*Gay Men Fighting AIDS*), a voluntary agency based on sexual identity (Weeks et al 1996). In France, “where AIDS organizations had avoided a gay image, the reverse trend took place” (Pollak et alli 1992: 45; Fillieule & Broqua 2000)¹².

In 1985, the first Brazilian and Latin American AIDS non-governmental organization (NGO) was created in São Paulo: the *Grupo de Apoio à Prevenção à AIDS (GAPA-SP)*. The first AIDS NGOs adopted a highly critical stance in relation to the state of structural decay, scarcity of resources, stigmatization and bigotry shown against HIV+ people, issuing political statements to the media, which began to characterize the public image

12 For a discussion on the “re-gayng” of AIDS, see Pollak et alli (1992), Watney (1994) and Weeks et al. (1996).

of the NGOs. Much of Brazilian AIDS activism was also influenced by long-established civil associations. They brought together people with a political trajectory who had questioned the military government. Closely linked to these earlier civil associations, the *Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS* (ABIA), created in 1986, and the *Grupo Pela Vidda* (GPV) were founded in Rio de Janeiro by people who also had high-profile political trajectories. They became leaders of national importance during the epidemic (Silva 1999; Valle 2000). This was the case of Herbert de Souza (*Betinho*), who was also HIV-positive and hemophiliac. To set up ABIA he assembled people with public credibility, such as Herbert Daniel, a writer who had been in political exile until 1981 and an independent sexual politics activist who discovered his HIV+ serologic status later on. Although other NGOs – such as the numerous GAPAs that sprang up all over the country after the founding of GAPA-SP – were also important, ABIA and GPV are ideally placed here to provide an insight into how certain left-wing trajectories influenced the emerging AIDS-related social worlds. However, ABIA and GPV should not be seen simply as the paradigmatic model for understanding the diversity of Brazilian “responses” to AIDS. Since the mid-1980s, many AIDS NGOs have been created throughout the country. NGOs quickly achieved public visibility and demonstrated their political capital by becoming the agencies responsible for mediating and representing civil society. They illustrated the manifold social demands left unaddressed by public health policies and authorities.

Although most Brazilian AIDS NGOs emphasized a universalistic discourse and were open to everyone who want to join, gay men, some of them HIV+, and lesbians made up the majority of the founding members of these civil organizations. In other contexts, this also happened (Epstein 1996; Weeks et al. 1996; Sívori 2007; Gould 2009). In fact, discourses on homosexuality and a rather ‘camp’ ethos were present in many NGOs in Brazil (Valle 2000, 2008). These aspects would influence some groups, becoming a crucial factor in either facilitating or hindering personal affiliation to NGOs. As soon as it became apparent that LGBT activism was not incompatible with AIDS politics, a new kind of activism began to bloom in the mid-1990s (La Dehesa 2010; Simões & Facchini 2008; Valle 2013).

Brazilian AIDS NGOs, such as ABIA, GPV and GAPA, were able to perform a central role by providing a particular source of meanings, cultural discourses and political ideas on the epidemic. These NGOs emphasized the need to generate solidarity (*solidariedade*), a central ideological “weapon” loaded with political and symbolic meanings that could counteract the disempowerment caused by bigotry and AIDS stigmatization. These ideas were further developed by some of the first NGO leaders, especially Betinho and Herbert Daniel, who synthesized the position defended by ABIA and GPV. Betinho rejected the “clandestine” life imposed on HIV-positive people (Souza 1994). Herbert Daniel took a political stance against “civil death”, the predicament faced by HIV-positive people assailed by prejudice, stigma and secrecy (Daniel 1994). They emphasized the need to approach AIDS as a human rights issue, which was particularly important for two reasons. First, *solidarity* was an idea with broad cultural significance that could mitigate the negative discourses circulated by Brazil’s mainstream media about AIDS. Secondly, this approach set out a strong ideological agenda to contest and criticize Brazilian health policy. The civil response to AIDS was thus much more immediate and direct compared to governmental practices (Galvão 2000).

Perhaps it was the high incidence of HIV transmission among hemophiliacs and the wider impact of the blood transfusion issue that led to the success of civil pressure in Brazil. By contrast, demands from gay activists were unable to elicit immediate systematic responses from health authorities. Blood became the key issue propelling social and political mobilization around AIDS at national level in the late 1980s. Many Brazilians began to fear HIV infection, either because they had received a blood transfusion or because they would perhaps need one in the future. HIV infection by blood transfusion became a social problem since it highlighted the poor conditions of blood donation, the limits to Brazilian health policy, and the hugely profitable blood market. When Herbert de Souza’s brother, Henfil, a famous cartoonist and also hemophiliac, died from AIDS in 1988, the plight of hemophiliacs triggered widespread public concern. Subsequently, Brazilian hemophiliacs sued the government over their HIV infection (Valle 2000), predating and anticipating the rise of the “judicialization of the right to health” (Biehl & Petryna 2011). In France, a similar

problem emerged after national concern in relation to high incidence of HIV infection among hemophiliacs in the mid 1980s (Carricaburu 1993), which helped to consolidate a discussion on bioethics, also linked to early public debate on genetics in the country (Rabinow 1999).

One of the factors that explains this growing social and political awareness concerning blood and HIV infection was the way it was described as a ‘national’ problem, rather than one related to a particular group morally condemned for their sexual practices and life-style. The dilemmas surrounding blood donation and transfusion emphasized universalistic values, while HIV infection through sexual intercourse was assumed to be a problem for gay men only. *Solidarity* was only given, therefore, to those for whom people felt the need to have genuine compassion. However the issues surrounding blood transfusion led to the recognition of Brazilian AIDS NGOs as important political agents in the areas of health and citizenship.

(Un)governing AIDS: prevention, treatment and the rise of partnerships

During the 1980s, Brazilian health authorities could be described by their failure to confront the epidemic (Parker 1990; Galvão 2000). Without rigorous epidemiological reporting, AIDS cases increased while treatment and clinical attention were limited by the critical conditions of Brazil’s public healthcare structure, which suffered from a lack of health professionals, limited funding and a derelict infrastructure (Valle 2000, 2013). It was only in 1986 that AIDS cases were obligatory registered. The Ministry of Health sponsored HIV prevention campaigns, which circulated technical information as part of public health policy. At this time, official HIV prevention campaigns reproduced prejudiced ideas, negative imagery and stigmatizing representations very similar to those published by the Brazilian media. In 1990-91, a prevention campaign centered around one particular sentence: “If you don’t take care of yourself, AIDS will get you.”¹³ This phrase had a significant cultural resonance for Brazilians over the years. For Herbert Daniel from ABIA and Grupo Pela Vidda, this prevention

13 “Se você não se cuidar, a AIDS vai te pegar.”

campaign was a political insult to “people with AIDS,” representing them publicly via an *aidético* who was nearly ‘dead’ (Daniel 1991). Brazilian activist discourses highlighted an emerging self-reflexivity and a process of identity formation, which would strongly engage “people living with HIV/AIDS” throughout the 1990s. Meanwhile, World Health Organization (WHO) recognized that AIDS was already a “pandemic” and argued for a Global Strategy (GSA). This was launched and sponsored by the Global Program on AIDS (GPA) in 1987 (Bastos 1999). The GSA was to be implemented locally in response to each country’s pattern of HIV infection. GPA/WHO expected most countries to commit to setting up their own National Aids programs and governmental health policies to respond to the epidemic. GPA strongly encouraged communitarian measures against AIDS, based on the direct participation of civil society, community-based organizations and NGOs in the implementation of the GSA program. “People with AIDS” (PWA) were considered important social actors in the local success of the GSA, an innovative approach for national health policies, which normally avoided partnerships with civil society (Altman 1994; Bastos 1999).

Moreover, *solidarity* became the ethical principle defining the defense of human rights against AIDS discrimination and stigmatization. Jonathan Mann, the head of GPA/WHO, was perhaps the leading proponent of *solidarity*. He emphasized the need for global collaboration in “responses” against AIDS and reiterated the importance of the involvement of community-based organizations around the world. This position resulted in the direct involvement and funding of AIDS NGOs and the voluntary sector. A close collaboration and socio-political affinity between GPA/WHO and some Brazilian NGO leaders became clearly apparent in 1988. As Galvão (2000) pointed out, Brazilian activists who attended the meeting *Opportunities for Solidarity*, held prior to the Sixth International AIDS Conference (1989), decided to organize the first National AIDS NGO meeting. Located at a strategic point between local and global levels, ABIA was one of the entities responsible for organizing the first two Brazilian NGO meetings. In 1990, the idea of *solidarity* was definitively incorporated into the ideological agenda of Brazilian NGOs. But this was also present in France (Fillieule & Broqua 2000) and other countries as well. A global culture of HIV and AIDS knowledge, language, principles, identity

categories and morality seemed to resonate widely through transnational relations and was re-appropriated in local contexts. However, the political implications of solidarity proved more problematic. At national level, *solidarity* as a principle was not ideologically contested by most AIDS NGOs, but their political practices operated according to a completely different dynamics, crucially linked to disputes for hegemony. Though strengthened through global relations and networks, the meanings attributed to *solidarity* were locally and historically elaborated through biosocial disputes.

Brazilian NGOs were the social agencies who eventually brought about an AIDS policy embedded within the Global AIDS Strategy developed by the GPA/WHO. AIDS activists openly denounced the lack of responsibility shown by the Ministry of Health, precisely when the *Sistema Único de Saúde* (Unified Health System) was launched in 1990. Under this system, federal responsibility was extended to all national public health policies, including HIV/AIDS, while state and municipal local authorities were charged with providing primary health care. However, Brazilian health structures have been dogged by serious problems in services, care and material resources. In a period marked by the lack of effective anti-viral drugs, public clinics and hospitals became overloaded by the rising demand for AIDS treatments. On several occasions, public demonstrations were organized by AIDS activists. This conflict helps explain the tense relationship that developed between the National AIDS Program and many of the leading Brazilian AIDS NGOs for several years (Galvão 2000).

In 1993, Brazil signed an agreement with the World Bank through its Ministry of Health, which allowed the gradual funding of Brazilian AIDS NGOs. In 1998, a second agreement was signed, which lasted until 2002 and focused on HIV prevention projects, implemented by the AIDS social movement (Bastos 1999; Galvão 2000). *Partnership* therefore became a central concept in legitimizing these institutional relationships between government and the NGOs, which began to compete for funding through project applications submitted to the Brazilian AIDS Program (Galvão 2000; Valle 2013). In short, the previously strong tension between the Ministry of Health and Brazilian AIDS activist groups decreased significantly after these global financial agreements as partnerships began to be promoted in the mid-1990s. João Biehl uses the term 'Activist State' to define the political shifts

implemented by the partnership between the Brazilian government and AIDS activism (2007: 68-72). HIV prevention was mainly carried out by AIDS NGOs, while HIV treatment was a public health policy aimed at Brazil's HIV+ population, registered and monitored through HIV testing and treatment protocols. This context evinces the idea of governmentality (Foucault 1979), related to the regulation of population, national statistics and epidemiological estimates, which has been an important step of “labeling from above, from a community of experts who create a ‘reality’ that some people make their own” (Hacking 2002: 111). This situation was coterminous with the positive effects generated by public health policy in the late 1990s, when the Brazilian AIDS Program was highlighted as a successful model of HIV prevention and treatment by UNAIDS/WHO.



Public Demonstration, 1988¹⁴

While conventional treatments were available via the public health system, importing drugs and distributing them freely was the result of a long struggle by AIDS NGOs, politicians and later on the negotiations between Brazil's Ministry of Health, the WHO and the World Bank. In 1991, AZT started to be distributed through the public health system. It was not until 1996, though, under President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, that a new law was passed guaranteeing free access to and distribution of AIDS drugs to people with HIV. According to Biehl (2007), the Brazilian Ministry of Health has prioritized a model of ‘pharmaceutical governance’ with an emphasis on the provision of antiretroviral drugs rather than HIV prevention. In 2014, nearly 400,000 Brazilians were taking antiretroviral drugs (Brasil 2014: 58),

14 “Give Solidarity a Hug.” Public AIDS demonstration organized by ABIA on the Corcovado, Rio de Janeiro, 02/12/1988 (source: ABIA).

drastically reducing the rate of deaths caused by AIDS. Along with diagnostic testing, antiretroviral therapy needs to be underlined here since it affects the ways in which identities and subjectivities are created around HIV and AIDS.

Creating Biosocial Worlds

From the late 1980s, we saw the formation of heterogeneous biosocial worlds related to HIV/AIDS across Brazil. These biosocial worlds included a large and diverse group of people connected to each other through interactions and networks of different sorts, mostly created through the historical configuration induced by the epidemic. Social suffering and the experience of illness formed an increasing part of private and public contexts, while more and more people tested for HIV and subsequently enrolled as patients in health services. Across Brazil, numerous AIDS biosocial worlds were formed by hospitals, HIV testing centers, health units, NGOs, societal networks, patient associations and groups, government institutions (offices and health departments), religious settings, and places for social recreation, such as bars, parties and nightclubs. Most of my informants interacted with each other due to the social experience motivated by HIV/AIDS. They lived in different areas of Rio de Janeiro, though many came from other neighboring towns. Some also lived in other Brazilian cities, regions and countries, but were able to meet in certain situations and events, especially activism-related contexts. These assemblies of people effectively formed a singular geography of places, locations and events at different social levels (local, national and global). New relations and socialities were motivated by a biological condition, therefore, which became visible through heterogeneous experiences of illness and social suffering:¹⁵ “In this hospital, where I’ve been treated for two months, I wouldn’t say that I’ve got friends there, but they are good colleagues. We chat and laugh. We tell each other jokes, talk about what’s going on in our lives. We talk and comment on this illness. We exchange experiences of what happened to me and what happened to him, but there” (Júlio; HIV+, 32; gay man; middle class; higher education degree; North Rio; no links to AIDS/NGO; hospital client.20/03/1998).

¹⁵ ‘Biosocial world’ is an analytical construct for apprehending the objective and symbolic relations historically materialized in concrete place and locations, here used in relation to the AIDS epidemic.

As part of my fieldwork in a Day Care unit, I noticed how relations were established and maintained among HIV+ clients treated for CMV (cytomegalovirus) and Kaposi's sarcoma. They would regularly meet at certain times and on certain days of the week. During their treatments, they would engage in casual, sometimes humorous conversation, which also involved the nurses working in the health unit. Relations formed in the Day Care unit would sometimes transcend this setting. Sociality among HIV+ patients in health clinics plays a considerable role in creating particular subjectivities. It also contributes to the emergence of specific views and practices concerning the body and the experience of illness, which are then socially shared. The conditions and limits of personal health care and biomedical treatment also inform the ways in which socialities are created and performed. Social background and cultural affinity have played an important role in the creation of social links between HIV+ clients or with health professionals. However, AIDS NGOs and patient groups have contributed more to the creation of socialities and relations.

The 1990s saw a dramatic expansion of AIDS NGOs and activist groups in Brazil. This was a period of intense social and political mobilization (Galvão 2000; Valle 2000, 2013). Some NGOs played a major role at local or regional levels, such as the different GAPA groups, inspired by the first Brazilian NGO in the area. Organizations were gradually set up in rural towns. An ideological agenda was typically used to differentiate between these Brazilian AIDS NGOs. While some were described as more politically oriented, many others were simply considered service-based organizations. In sum, a specific social movement came into being, a biosocial activism with many internal differences in terms of ideas, goals, practices and membership. This diverse social scenario clearly reflects the heterogeneous modes of HIV transmission in Brazil. The biosocial worlds present socialities and biosocial collectivities formed by people from a variety of trajectories and backgrounds, connected by the interplay between societal and cultural issues related to gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, class, and particular life-styles. Perhaps civil agencies like the AIDS NGO were 'factories' for making new relations and forms of biosociality that produced communalities, informed by social trust and shared experience, but also shaken by conflict and disputes. These complex biosocial worlds reveal the equally complex articulation of health/illness, biomedicine and new meanings and practices of life, affected by the strong social impact of

biomedical technologies surrounding HIV/AIDS, including diagnostic testing. Collectivities, groups and networks thus brought together Brazilians (and foreigners) with different serologic statuses who were able to create, dissolve and recreate these same societal forms and aggregates continuously. Many authors show this same complex articulation in different national contexts, although we must respect cultural singularities (Pollak 1988; Ariss 1997; Fillieule & Broqua 2000; Fassin 2007; Nguyen 2010; Gregoric 2013 etc.).

To gain a better understanding of the Brazilian biosocial worlds related to AIDS, I shall focus here on one important NGO, located in Rio de Janeiro, the *Grupo Pela Vidda* (GPV).¹⁶ As a highly professionalized NGO, sponsored by international funding agencies, GPV stands out as one of the preeminent Brazilian AIDS NGOs at national and global levels. Many Brazilian NGOs have been inspired by GPV activist ideas and practices. Founded in 1989 by Herbert Daniel, a leading member of another AIDS NGO (ABIA), GPV developed a unique trajectory as the first Brazilian mutual-help group based on health activism and volunteer work. One of the first Brazilians to make his HIV+ status public, Herbert Daniel emphasized the importance of a discursive sphere of “living with HIV and AIDS” (Daniel 1994). He rejected the label *aidético*, popularized in the news media, questioning its definition as a social identity, while also contesting ‘civil death’ – that is, social forms of AIDS discrimination and prejudice:

We all get sick. Everyone will die. Yet when a person has AIDS in Brazil, evil and powerful tongues say that we are *aidéticos* and, for all practical purposes, provisionally dead until the final hour of passing arrives. I, for one, discovered that I am not an *aidético*. I am still the same person; the only difference is that I have AIDS. An illness like other illnesses and, like a few of them, loaded with taboos and prejudices. As for dying, I haven’t died yet – I know that AIDS can kill, but I also know that prejudice and discrimination are much more deadly. May death be easy for me when it comes, but I won’t let myself be killed by prejudice. Prejudice kills during life, causing civil death, which is the worst kind. They want to kill people with AIDS, condemning us to a civil death. For that reason, disobediently, I am striving to reaffirm that I am very much alive (Daniel 1994: 39-40).

16 VIDDÁ is “a Portuguese acronym for Enhancement, Integration and Dignity of PWA, suggestive of ‘VIDA’ – life in Portuguese” (Grupo Pela Vidda, undated; cited in Valle 2000). See <http://www.pelavidda.org.br/site/index.php/quem-somos/>

Daniel asserted and defended ideas of citizenship, human rights and democracy, based on *solidarity* as a social and political premise that highlighted a robust defense of *life (vida)*. Considered from a political/activist point of view, these ideas could be found side-by-side with a reflexive understanding of illness, serologic status and life, considered within a broader existential dimension. Here we see how life resonates with the value given by biopolitics (Foucault 1998, Rose 2007; Fassin 2009). In 1989, chosen as the Green Party candidate for the first Presidential elections in 30 years, Daniel identified himself on Brazilian TV as homosexual and HIV-positive. The Grupo Pela Vida owed a great deal to his seminal activist ideas, which privileged a ‘political awareness’ of life, illness and the AIDS epidemic.

Since GPV was created, the NGO has highlighted political activism through public demonstrations and collective events imbued with strong emotional language, informed by ideas of a common global struggle against the epidemic and inspired by international AIDS activism, as advocated by ACT UP, for example (Epstein 1996, Gould 2009) and AIDES in France (Fillieule & Broqua 2000). In 1989, GPV organized the first known public protest of “people living with HIV and AIDS” in Brazil. AIDS NGOs such as GPV worked to construct a politics of solidarity embraced by emotional work through cultural discourses, sociality and embodiment, mostly presented through public expressions of anger, which appear very often in health and biosocial activism¹⁷.

In 1991, GPV organized the first “National Meeting of People living with HIV and AIDS” (also called *Vivendo*) in Rio de Janeiro – still today an important Brazilian activist event, where I have conducted fieldwork several times, even recently (2014). In the heyday of *Vivendo*, more than a thousand people used to attend at the event, including activists, volunteers, researchers and health authority workers, many of them coming from abroad. *Vivendo* has been an important context to learn about the latest scientific and biomedical developments and therapeutic strategies against AIDS. Brazilian activists perform a mediating role in these collective events. They also legitimize the authority of scientific knowledge and biomedical practices (Rabinow 1996a, 1999), circulated through transnational flows

¹⁷ Rabinow found the same in relation to people with muscular dystrophy in France (1999: 37). See also Epstein (2007).

of knowledge, which are crucial to HIV/AIDS, but also to genomics in the new political economy of vitality (Rabinow & Rose 2006). In fact, the transnational mediation of biomedical knowledge confirms the contemporary struggles of health activism to participate directly and be heard in scientific research and clinical trials. This echoes the situation of earlier mobilizations over AIDS drugs research, licensing and industrial production in the United States (Epstein 1996), but also intersects with global processes developed in Brazil in relation to AIDS vaccines and clinical trials (Bastos 1999). GPV and other Brazilian AIDS NGOs were keen to assimilate, mediate and recreate biomedical and scientific knowledge from an activist perspective. Activists could be defined as AIDS experts. Scientific and technical knowledge, considered as 'AIDS information,' has been socially circulated to HIV+ people through booklets, magazines, and newsletters, such as the *Boletim Pela Vidda*, the *Cadernos Pela Vidda*, the *Boletim ABIA*, the *Boletim Vacinas Anti-HIV* (published by GIV) and the *Revista Saber Viver*, which show real expertise on biomedical knowledge.

Needless to say, political activism constitutes just one aspect of these biosocial worlds. Sociality needs to be highlighted as well. In GPV, *solidarity* was to be invoked by "people living with HIV and AIDS", considered a broad social label by the AIDS NGO that included HIV + people and their "friends, relatives, lovers and anyone who feels that his or her everyday life has been affected by the epidemic." GPV has been open to everyone, therefore, regardless of HIV status. This organizational model was a resounding success and became a blueprint for other Brazilian NGOs. In fact, it is very difficult to define GPV. It is not simply a patient association, nor a peer group, and the idea of 'self-help' does not fit with the GPV proposal. It is not a drop-in center. It is not restricted to health advocacy or legal advice, although both are provided by the NGO. Basically its advocacy of "the defense of the rights of people with HIV and AIDS" was the main campaign issue in GPV's work and turned out to be a highly strategic political element in the NGO's attempts to generate social effects in society (Valle 2000). The NGO also maintained an AIDS hotline. GPV is quite unique, therefore, and combines activities with many different aims and organizational forms. It is also socially heterogeneous in terms of sexuality, gender, race, age and class, although some people are more underrepresented than others. Since the early 1990s, gay men and heterosexual women have made up the largest

proportion of the NGO's membership, which is quite uncommon in AIDS NGOs in North America and Western Europe. Very early on, a 'women's group' was created, composed by women with different HIV serologic statuses. Heterosexually identified men always comprised a small number of GPV's participants. From the mid-1990s, more people of lower income and poorer backgrounds volunteered at the NGO and took part in GPV activities. In conclusion, sociality in GPV very much reflects the complex and heterogeneous shape of the epidemic in Brazil. It also shows how a biosocial world has been evolving around HIV/AIDS in the country.

While political activism was central to GPV, activities centered around sociality and discursive practices of a reflexive ethos were privileged from the start. Regular meetings united people with different HIV serologic statuses to socialize or discuss a wide range of topics and themes with no formal 'therapeutic' aim. Activists used to say that their aim was not to provide 'counselling' as such, although some meetings were in fact coordinated by volunteers with a degree in psychology. Topics mirrored the interface between the sociopolitical and personal dimensions of AIDS. Themes related to citizenship and activism could be chosen along with others deemed more 'experiential,' such as prejudice, HIV disclosure and 'sexuality.' These internal meetings and activities stimulated the incorporation of the meaning of 'living with AIDS,' as understood by GPV, taken as a collective, non-individualized approach to the epidemic. The experience of 'living with AIDS' was addressed by an ethos of 'togetherness' or 'shared experience' (*convivência*), which united a heterogeneous collectivity of people with no pre-established identity and irrespective of HIV status. These contexts looked to generate a broad understanding of a particular ethics that minimized or questioned identity as a societal focal point. For participants in the NGO, therefore, no obligation or importance was attached to their identification as HIV+ or HIV- (or even specific sexual identities), although using the category *aidético* was strongly rejected and indeed corrected. Embedded by solidarity as a principle against AIDS, as far as GPV activists were concerned, *togetherness* needed to be stimulated through sociality.

Furthermore, these activities and meetings functioned as central spaces of 'confessional technology' (Foucault 1998; Nguyen 2010). Facts, accounts and narratives backed by personal experience were normally presented. These activities were crucial in terms of engendering discursive practices

of awareness and reflexivity among GPV members (see Altman 1994). Perhaps the most important aspect of these collective meetings and activities was the chance for volunteers and members to foreground personal narratives and discourses that, above all, revealed wider social and cultural understandings of AIDS. Sometimes mediated by an ideological framework absorbed in GPV or other NGOs, participants were able to express their perspectives, though these might diverge among themselves, according to their own heterogeneous trajectories and backgrounds. Subjectivity was created through sociality and practices of self-awareness and reflexivity related to the experience of 'living with AIDS.' Highlighting the importance given by GPV to a new conceptualization of life against 'civil death' and discrimination, activists used to repeat a sentence created by Herbert Daniel at the end of some activities, before he died in 1992: *Viva a Vida!* ('Long Live life!'). It was a powerful symbolic and moral statement of the societal responses against AIDS. Closely linked to these GPV activities, the sentence worked as a poetic coda, but also operated as a speech act that could be heard, for instance, recently in 2014 at activist events like the 17th *Vivendo* – the *National Meeting of People Living with HIV and AIDS*, organized by GPV -, which shows strong symbolical reference, a sense of communality and historical endurance.

With a unique trajectory as an AIDS NGO, the GPV example provides a valuable insight into the creation of biosocial worlds linked to the epidemic in Brazil. Although the GPV model is not necessarily generalizable across the country, it proves useful in an anthropological analysis of illness, sociality, activism and the politics of life. While the NGO's ideas of 'living with AIDS' were clearly politically and socially inspiring, embracing an ethos of 'togetherness,' they were also shaken by the controversies provoked by different understandings of this 'experience.' 'Life' was disputed through social and political struggles in these new social worlds in which people were defined by their biological condition. What identities, subjectivities and truths have come to the forefront in relation to 'living with AIDS' in Brazil?

Becoming HIV+: diagnostic testing and clinical identities

According to Susan Sontag, "with the most up-to-date biomedical testing, it is possible to create a new class of lifetime pariahs, the future

ill” (1989: 34). Notably, HIV testing¹⁸ can be seen as a turning point in the process of identity formation and personal change for infected people. Like earlier practices of serologic identification (Löwy 1993), HIV testing has to be considered from a social and cultural perspective. Some social science studies have already discussed this topic (Patton 1990; Waldby 1996; Ariss 1997). João Biehl’s ethnography (Biehl et al. 2001, 2007) and my own research (2000, 2002, 2013) have foregrounded HIV testing as a key event in terms of understanding sociality, identity formation and group-making processes in relation to HIV/AIDS, though we have focused on different social contexts in Brazil.

Since public policies can “shape the way individuals construct themselves as subjects” (Shore & Wright 1997:4), the technical categories used and circulated in governmental practices have also influenced how individuals identify themselves. This aspect of social identification through public policy pervades many levels of social life in contemporary societies, including health and illness. Medical practices and biomedical technologies do not limit themselves to defining illness, its etiology, diagnosis and treatment. Biomedical practices and technologies have simultaneously had evident social effects on the creation of identities in institutional settings, as well as in locations of intimacy and sociality. I agree with Gibbon and Novas that “novel biological, genetic or medical knowledge and technologies shape identity and forms of identification” (2008: 6). For these authors, following Rabinow (1996a) and Hacking (2006), genetics allowed space for the creation of new identities and group formations. This was equally true of AIDS, although defined as an infectious disease. For Rose (2007: 13), “the laboratory has become a kind of factory for the creation of new forms of molecular life.” All clinical practices and biomedical technologies related to HIV/AIDS (testing, antiretroviral drugs, PCR, CD4 cell counting, genotyping, etc.) can potentially contribute, therefore, to the processes of biosocial and identity formation. Their positivity is located in a continuous, reaffirming process of individual – and sometimes collective – insertion in institutional clinical practices through which their dominant strength and power in other locations and other areas of life is disseminated. Hospitals, clinics and testing

¹⁸ Three HIV antibody tests (Elisa, Western Blot and the Immunofluorescent antibody assay) have normally been used in Brazil.

centers provide institutional spaces that operate as foci for larger processes of medicalization and subjectification that are also reproduced in other contexts, including the home, the school and peer groups. Under the sign of rationalization as a wide-ranging, normative process (Foucault 1979), guided by the State and its public policies, groups and individuals have been defined and identified various times during their social and biographical trajectories. These forms of (bio)definition and (bio)identification have had significant impacts on the social and cultural processes related to the AIDS epidemic in Brazil, as they had with earlier diseases, including syphilis in the 1920s and 30s (Carrara 1996), but also in relation to genetic diseases in Brazil (Santos & Maio 2004; Santos et al. 2012).

Following Martin (1994: 163), I examine the practices of HIV testing as an important feature in a complex mediation between different forms of “cultural understandings in wider society” and particular forms of codified knowledge on HIV/AIDS, including scientific terminology and vocabulary, clinical ideas of the body and sexuality, and HIV prevention techniques. As Bourdieu (1990) asserts, codification may be just one of the ways in which technical and scientific knowledge, sustained by different power structures, spreads through society. A social practice like HIV testing and an institution like a testing center (hospitals, health care units, and AIDS NGOs, for example) can produce mediation of codified knowledge through “documents”, such as HIV test results. But mediation implies that a part of techno-scientific codified knowledge is apprehended by an empirical process of loss and gain: in other words, much knowledge is lost in the blurred process of incorporation and much gained in a different form by those agents involved in this same process. Hence the mediation of codified knowledge largely relies on its simplification and particular (biosocial) appropriations.

Although the first HIV tests arrived in Brazil around 1985, they were limited to a handful of private laboratories and a few public clinics and research institutions. As in other large Brazilian cities, HIV testing was slowly introduced in public diagnostic testing centers in Rio de Janeiro during the 1990s. At this time, Brazilian NGOs questioned governmental plans for large-scale compulsory HIV testing and, informed by North American activism (Patton 1990: 36), argued that HIV testing should be a free-choice decision. When the World Bank reached the financial agreement

with the Brazilian Ministry of Health, HIV diagnostic testing was definitively included in the country's public health policy for AIDS. During the 2000s and 2010s, diagnostic technology has played a central role in HIV prevention and has been widely championed in Brazil (Valle 2002, 2013; Biehl et al. 2001; Cardenas 2014), including public campaigns of oral HIV testing, sometimes conducted by Brazilian NGOs such as GPV.¹⁹

When I carried out fieldwork in a public testing center (CTA) in Rio de Janeiro, identity issues arose during one of the various stages of the testing process, the *aconselhamento* or 'counseling' phase, which emphasized a collective dimension. Usually a group of 10 to 15 individuals were involved in the activity. Most clients were men from a poor or lower middle-class background. According to the health professional leading the session, the client would find out whether he or she was a 'positive' person (*pessoa positiva*), an 'HIV-infected person,' an 'HIV virus carrier' or a 'negative' person (*pessoa negativa*), who "was not infected by the HIV virus." The counsellors explained how to 'read' an HIV test result, whether it was 'reactive' (*reativo*, *reator* or *reagente*) and therefore 'positive,' or 'non-reactive' (*não reativo* or *não reagente*) and therefore 'negative.' The symbols of positive (+) and negative (-) were normally written on the chalkboard to help clarify the differences in serologic status.

All these categories had clear medical or clinical meanings, which would be confirmed and reinforced in the continuation of HIV testing, but also in the future if the client proved 'positive.' Consequently, the counsellors discussed what it meant to be a 'carrier' (what to do next, where to go to, and so on). In this case, she advised on the need to prevent infections if the client was HIV+: "treatment is fundamental." In addition, the counsellors also stressed that treatment options were available to an HIV+ person, if done 'quickly' in order to 'keep healthy' (*preservar a saúde*). While explaining the impact of HIV on the immune system, therefore, the testing practitioners also presented the case of the 'healthy carriers' (*portadores saudáveis*) or the

19 It was not until a public clinic was set up – one specialized in diagnostic testing for HIV and DST (COAS: *Centro de Orientação e Apoio Sorológico*) – that HIV testing became more accessible to the Brazilian population. In 1997-98, there were three CTAs (Centers of Anonymous Testing) in the City of Rio de Janeiro. For a current study on public HIV testing centers in Rio de Janeiro, see Cardenas (2014). This author estimates 515 CTAs in Brazil (up to 2012, according to data from Brazilian Ministry of Health). In 2014, I was also able to observe a public campaign of oral HIV testing, called *Mix da Prevenção*, conducted by GPV professionals and volunteers in Central Rio – Cinelândia. Oral HIV testing uses oral fluid to check for HIV antibodies.

'asymptomatic HIV carriers' (*portadores assintomáticos*) who were HIV+ but had not 'developed AIDS.' Adopting a perspective that questioned the direct cultural association, between AIDS and death, the counsellors also stressed the possibilities of living well with the virus, stressing the fact, for instance, that immunological markers for HIV disease progression (such as the viral load count) could be monitored: "...the less virus there is in your body, the better. You live a better life." We can now see how clinical categories were used in an empirical setting, but were related to a range of facts and dilemmas facing CTA users. 'Living with HIV' was represented through the projection of a life that could be managed through enhancement technologies (Rose 2007: 18): AIDS drugs, clinical tests and immunological markers. As one counsellor told the clients: "... there are better chances to maintain a person at the stage which they currently present, the healthy carrier." Counsellors emphasized how clients could rationalize their lives in order to carefully preserve, manage and regulate their health condition through rigorous biomedical treatment and health care. Following Rose: "Technologies of life not only seek to reveal these invisible pathologies, but intervene upon them in order to optimize the life chances of the individual" (2007: 19).

HIV diagnostic testing can be seen as one of the primary stages in a progressive incorporation of codified-dominant knowledge, discourses, and materialities on HIV and AIDS – an institutional foundation to identity formation. The identities in question are different from the more popularly known terms, such as the *aidético*, which was culturally constructed in wider society. The practice of HIV testing relied on a difference produced by a serologic technology, which would provide substantial grounds for cultural discourses of classification and identification, presented by the contrastive, medically-defined categories of 'positive' and 'negative.' However, the categories used for HIV testing in Brazilian laboratory settings, both public and private, expressed a technical vocabulary that contrasts greatly with the terminology employed by HIV testing center users, especially those from low-income groups.

HIV testing categories given to health service clients, such as 'reactive' or 'non-reactive,' were codified terms indicative of their laboratory origin. While they expressed similar technical meanings, they were eclipsed by other categories: *soropositivo* ('seropositive') and *soronegativo* ('seronegative'). These biomedical categories would become pervasive in clinical and HIV

testing settings, but they would also be used and circulated widely in other settings, especially AIDS NGOs where agents preferred the clinical and biological meanings to culturally loaded categories like *aidético*. As constitutive parts of AIDS-related biosocial worlds, these clinical and laboratory settings proved to be highly relevant to the use and diffusion of categories, conceptions and materials based on technical-scientific frameworks and practices in a way that allowed the social conditions necessary for processes of identity formation.

In my ethnographic fieldwork, the large majority of my HIV+ informants rejected the popular category *aidético* as negative, pejorative and offensive, although some reported other, more subtle meanings. They did not use the term in everyday life, preferring others, especially *portador* (carrier) or *soropositivo*. Some of these informants did not have any form of contact with AIDS NGOs, but, on the contrary, were linked to public hospitals or other clinical settings. According to their accounts, *aidético* was symbolically informed by other identities. On one hand, some of these identities had an illness as their basic reference (Pollak 1988; Sontag 1989), such as cancer, tuberculosis and leprosy (*canceroso*, *tuberculoso* and *leproso*). In Brazil, these categories were culturally constituted by stigmatized identities, emphasizing a condition of disease, bodily decay and death. On the other hand, *aidético* was historically related with 'deviant' and promiscuous sexuality (Seffner 1995; Valle 2002). Cultural discourses on AIDS were simultaneously accompanied by the strong circulation of sexual identities (homosexual, bisexual and heterosexual), the social recognition of which had been until then highly specific and restricted, though widely disseminated through public health programs, the news media and AIDS activism. Popular sexual categories were also linked to the *aidético*, such as *bicha* (a popular term used to describe sexually passive men). I believe this explains how personal strategies of secrecy and a dynamics of silencing HIV/AIDS as a topic (Pollak 1988; Carricaburu & Pierret 1995; Small 1997) were maintained in order to 'pass' without the risk of being blamed for possessing a 'discredited identity' (Goffman 1990) like *aidético*. As a result, categories such as *soropositivo* were considered worthy insofar as they neutralized the negative moral meanings embedded in the imagery of the *aidético*:²⁰

20 The *aidético* emerged at the expense of previous cultural stereotypes, meanings and moral values related

I don't call anyone *aidético*. ... I think this is a pejorative term. Among ourselves, we have to treat each other with more affection. It's less offensive to call someone *seropositivo*! Less aggressive... But lay people don't know what *seropositivo* means. [...] *Aidético* is closer to disease. Pow! It's like a smack in the face! *Seropositivo* breaks away from this meaning. *Aidético* is a word that sounds like... It's like calling a guy a homosexual or a faggot (*bicha*)! [Laughs] This is an offensive, aggressive way of referring to a man. (Eduardo, HIV+ heterosexual defined man; low income; secondary school; AIDS NGO member; Rio suburbs; 14/01/1998).

Seropositivo and *soronegativo* soon became clinical identities by which people and individuals were labeled, classified and culturally represented. Since the early 2000s, other categories have been also used, such as *casal sorodiscordante*, (serodiscordant couple; Maksud 2007), *indetectável*²¹, *coinfectado* (coinfected; for instance, a person with HIV and hepatitis C), etc. Actually, these categories depend on the combination of different social and cultural dimensions. First, we should consider the ideas and practices of health professionals, which are grounded in biomedical criteria and who maintain hierarchical power relations with people with HIV and AIDS. These clinical categories have frequently been used to help in the construction of the self as well as the social experience of being HIV-positive. They have to be mutually considered if we wish to understand the emergence of these clinical identities (Valle 2000, 2002). Indeed, they could be called biosocial identities. Clinical identities refer to the particular uses of images, meanings, discourses, materialities, substances (HIV drugs) and, therefore, truths on and of *soropositividade* (HIV seropositivity). Basically they are central to the understanding of modes of subjectification related to HIV and AIDS, partially connected to clinical settings, but also influenced by sociality and participation in biosocial worlds in Brazil, which here include NGOs, societal networks and the like. In Brazil, these biomedical categories with universalistic meanings were socially appropriated and redefined by other interpretations and practices by HIV+ people, placed in particular settings, contexts and situations, especially in the biosocial worlds in which they were socially engaged. By their own means and practices, people press

to sexuality which served beforehand to position some people in hierarchically inferior socio-structural niches: that is, those connected to homosexuality, prostitution, poverty, and so on (Fry 1982).

21 A HIV+ person with undetectable viral load

“from below, creating a reality every expert must face” (Hacking 2002: 111) – including, of course, experts like health professionals. When Hacking refers to ‘making up people,’ he is also contemplating the personal agency historically entangled by power relations in particular social situations. So social formations and processes influence the making up of people while these same people disagree with or contest the regulation of life, experiences and their own social practices. We are dealing, therefore, with the ways through which people create their subjectivities in variable forms and particular contexts. In fieldwork, I noticed how some HIV+ people would use different means and strategies to challenge scientific knowledge, biomedical ideas and practices, or the enhancement technologies provided to them. Although the biological condition was socially recognized to understand life, some informants would reject biomedical treatment. They refused to take AIDS drugs, questioned the side effects provoked by antiretroviral drugs like lipodystrophy²², and appropriated biomedical treatment to make it their own. In fact, biology was not just accepted, it was also contested. Among the HIV+ people that I met and interviewed, some forms of local biological knowledge would emerge and coexist with the dominant biomedical knowledge. In sum, biological knowledge and biomedical practices and technologies were appropriated and sometimes resisted in the Brazilian biosocial worlds related to HIV/AIDS.

Conclusion - Making up “people living with HIV/AIDS” in Brazil

For an AIDS NGO such as Grupo Pela Vidda, the category “people living with AIDS” was not so similar to the label PWA normally found at global level. Firstly, “people living with AIDS” (PWA) was a political category used in Anglophonic countries (Altman 1994). When AIDS was associated with gay men, the idea of “people living with AIDS” was effective for political reasons since it contradicted assumptions that HIV infection and AIDS-related deaths were exclusive to gay men. Additionally, PWA implies a communitarian aim, the politics of which has resonated at a global level from international meetings to transnational arenas of funding, policy-making

22 Lipodystrophy characterizes different changes and gradations of body shape, specially related to fat distribution. See: <http://www.aidsmap.com/Lipodystrophy/cat/t616/>

and justice, such as UNAIDS/WHO. For Rabinow and Rose, “individualizing and collectivizing subjectifications are also mobile and transnational” (2006: 215), though they can be informed and indeed contested by particular models of patient activism. In Brazil, “living with AIDS” was a controversial political issue in AIDS biosocial worlds and referred to disputed identities and struggles around subjectification. This issue shows particular historical and cultural aspects in Brazil, when compared to other countries (Altman 1994; Fillieule & Broqua 2000; Fassin 2007; Nguyen 2010).

Located in São Paulo, a Brazilian AIDS NGO called *Grupo de Incentivo à Vida* (GIV) promotes ideas of HIV+ experience and identity similar to those found in a global PWA perspective. For reasons that had less to do with political antagonism than with ideological differences about the meanings of ‘living with AIDS,’ activists from GIV and GPV had distinct perspectives that caused mutual suspicion and criticism until late 1990s. For GPV, the idea of ‘living life positively’ implied a generic attitude towards life, which included the political sense of self-making as AIDS activists. GPV attached importance to the personal and political impact caused by AIDS, but was open to anyone, regardless of HIV status, informed by *solidarity* as a societal principle against the epidemic. GIV, on the other hand, emphasized HIV+ identity and the personal experience of “living with AIDS,” considered as a biological condition. It offered activities accessible only to HIV+ people. For both GPV and GIV, *solidarity* was incontestable and resonated global AIDS activism and also ethical and societal principles stressed by WHO. However the idea of “living with AIDS” has a different meaning for the two Brazilian AIDS NGOs and was open to conflict, which conveyed different societal experiences and practices.

One question that can be highlighted is the meaning given to *convivência*, a Portuguese word difficult to translate but that can be rendered as ‘living together,’ ‘familiarity,’ ‘conviviality,’ ‘togetherness’ or ‘shared experience’. From early on, GPV stressed the importance of *convivência*, aiming thereby to unite people with different HIV serologic statuses in the same activities, meetings and spaces of mutual support. Internal activities were aimed precisely at this sense of communitarian experience, which had a social focus not so different from previous historical homosexual organizations in Brazil or abroad (MacRae 1990; Pollak 1988). Sociality was mainly informed by this sense of togetherness, disregarding HIV status. However

convivência gained another meaning in the AIDS biosocial worlds during the mid-1990s and consolidated in the 2000s. Later on, it was progressively differentiated from “living with AIDS,” which was experienced by HIV+ people alone. We see how categories, ideas, identities and values can change their meanings historically. Certainly, representations and practices are not stable and undisputed, especially in highly heterogeneous complex social settings. Hence, biological condition, as defined by diagnostic testing, acquired a crucial importance in terms of understanding sociality and identity formation. One of my main interlocutors explained:

Even if a seronegative person wishes to live with AIDS, even if he wants to show solidarity; even if he gets on well with someone with AIDS, living with AIDS really means to live with the virus, to live with the problem of medicine, to live with this dilemma that involves medicines and quality of life. A seronegative person does not live with this. He doesn't need it for his survival. He doesn't need it. He can take part in the struggle. He can be an active person. He can be a very important person in this struggle, but [...] ...those people, who were there in the GPV, they think and say that they live with AIDS, but they can't live with it because they haven't got the virus, they're not seropositive. So the sensitivity of someone who lives with the virus is greater. Or the perception of the predicament of living with AIDS. It's different for some people from GPV who are seronegative and insist that they live with AIDS. They can even live together with people who live with AIDS. (Eduardo; HIV+ heterosexual man; married; 42 year old; lower middle class; secondary school; North Rio; 14/01/1998)

Notably, AIDS activists appropriated biomedical knowledge and depended on diagnostic testing and biomedical technologies to legitimize biosocial difference. In fact, biosocial identities were reinforced much more by the universalistic premise supplied by biology, though a degree of ambivalence can be found here, since the biological condition would erase the kind of particularism mostly produced by societal processes. In the mid-1990s, identity, experience and HIV empowerment became highly politicized issues in Brazilian activism and the AIDS biosocial worlds in general, but this was common in other national contexts as well (Epstein 1996; Fillieule & Broqua 2000; Gould 2009), although anthropological analysis must highlight the subtle differences in the meanings, practices

and “responses” to AIDS. In some Brazilian NGOs, ‘positive’ members accused ‘negative’ staff members of trying to control power and economic resources. This also reflected a wider criticism of the bureaucratization affecting AIDS NGOs. This happened as well with the French NGO AIDES (Fillieule & Broqua 2000) and the North-American GMHC (Kayal 1993). In fact, the conflicts between NGOs over identity can be linked to broader ideological disputes and the co-existence of different models of AIDS organization. While the discourse of “living with HIV and AIDS” was made public by GPV, it was only later that HIV+ people became widely visible as political agents. In 1995, the RNP+ (“National Network of People living with HIV and AIDS”) was set up at the time the 5th *Vivendo* was being organized by GPV in Rio de Janeiro. Basically “living with AIDS” became problematic and life was considered from different perspectives. This Brazilian HIV+ network produced a sharp internal division within AIDS activism and exposed a moral and sociological divergence between the experience of “living with HIV” and the ethics of togetherness (*convivência*). Life was described and differentiated by illness and biological condition. AIDS was voiced and experienced by HIV+ people in public contexts, defying “silence and invisibility by becoming emphatic embodiments of the disease” (Comaroff 2007: 203). They would present their biosocial singularity through diverse forms of sociality and discursivity, stimulating people to pursue their own practices of self-modeling and reflexivity. New identities and subjectivities have been forged through this focus on a biological condition unable to be shared.

RNP+ Brasil is composed of individual HIV+ members from all over the countries, in contrast to AIDS NGOs, such as GPV, but similar to HIV+ networks like the Global Network of People living with HIV (GNP+) and the International Community of Women living with HIV/AIDS (ICW). The RNP+ has prioritized HIV-positive identity politics and empowerment related to global PWA politics. These networks were widespread in Brazil, subdivided in regional and smaller coalitions, and have developed more recently into other forms, such as the *Movimento Nacional de Cidadãs Posithivas*, a network of Brazilian HIV-positive women created in 2004, which is now found in most of the country’s states. A National Network of Young HIV-positive people represents yet another level of social and political mobilization, focusing on a specific category of people, defined by serologic status and

age (Cunha 2011). These are some of the new developments over the past twelve years, which have produced social unity as well as political fragmentation.

Persistent tensions between the different models of identity construction have operated in Brazil since the early 1990s (Valle 2000, 2002), therefore, and have shown a particular way of dealing with sociality, agency and experience in relation to HIV/AIDS. The creation of RNP+ and its ideological dispute with AIDS NGOs like GPV showed the social effects of a wider process of identity formation in relation to the epidemic. In the 2000s, the conflicts caused by identity politics and the differences between models of “living with HIV and AIDS” have apparently weakened. As a matter of fact, these recent changes in identity politics correlate with strong articulation between global and local practices. Although some AIDS activists and Brazilian health authorities show mutual distrust, they also follow the same politically “appropriate language” supported by global WHO guidelines (UNAIDS 2015), which reveal a clear ambivalence between AIDS global policy, national public health, and local AIDS activism. As a “global” category, *People living with HIV* overshadowed local meanings and identities, such as those ones encouraged by GPV in the early 1990s.

To conclude, the experience of illness and the problematics of life have turned out to be a sensitive point of focus in the sociopolitical dispute generated by an epidemic with strong moral connotations. In Brazil, bio-social worlds were historically created around HIV/AIDS and united people from diverse trajectories and backgrounds who became active in NGOs, social networks, clinical settings, laboratories and elsewhere. Identities and subjectivities emerged and were shaped by the social circulation of biological knowledge and biomedical technologies. These were social processes through which people, groups and organizations positioned themselves, sometimes inspired by ideas of *solidarity*, but also confronted by disputes and conflicts concerning the biological condition as the ‘true’ experience of “living with HIV.” Furthermore, while “people living with HIV” have been defined as a biosocial collectivity here, they also constitute a political community that has struggled for rights and citizenship. Can we really believe, though, that a biosocial and political category like “people living with HIV and AIDS” encompasses all Brazilian HIV+ individuals? In fact, many ‘people’ remain separate from governmental policy and activist practices, as

Biehl (2007) has pointed out. Nonetheless this societal predicament cannot be used to downplay the political and social effects generated by biosocial activism in Brazil, which has struggled directly through the politics of life to oppose the stigma and 'civil death' so aptly described by Herbert Daniel.

Revised by David A. Rodgers

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Introduction

Dossier

ANTHROPOLOGY AND EDUCATION

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Researching the universe of education in contemporary Brazil is a great challenge. Over many decades, anthropology has let go of one of its central themes, the socialization of children and youth. As Howard Becker (1961) once said, anthropologists, in the end, were not good advisers. Becker is referring to his research with students of a Medical School. Indeed, our discipline describes how things are and not how they should be. We are thus not proposing a dossier about schools, but one which studies varied questions and social situations through thick descriptions “in” schools and “in” other institutions of education, paraphrasing Clifford Geertz when he says that anthropologists “don’t study villages (tribes, towns, neighbourhoods...); they study *in* villages” (Geertz 1973: 22).

The articles in this dossier, then, describe and analyse social situations within educational institutions; taken as a set, they offer a fairly complete panorama of the enormous difficulties and the complexity of the task of describing and understanding formal education in Brazil.

The themes are dealt with in three sections. The first is composed of five studies that describe and analyse social policies that substantially impacted

the educational system. It begins with a classic ethnography in a city in the hinterlands of the Brazilian Northeast, focusing on the repercussions, for the educational upbringing of children and adolescents, of a public policy aimed at combatting hunger (“Programa Fome Zero”). Next, we have research on a programme that distributes free textbooks to all Brazilian public schools and all students in basic education. It investigates images of the country and ideas of “Brazilianess” conveyed by these books in two moments of our recent history. The following article is also an ethnography of two schools for children. It describes the socially constructed forms of the children’s racial classification and ways of dealing with racism and discrimination. This first set of articles also contains a study of affirmative action in a public university in the south of the country, an article on the implementation of a programme aimed at widening access to higher education in private institutions, and, finally, a study of teacher training in the context of a new federal policy concerning Indigenous education.

The second section focuses on school ethos through the description and analysis of specific social situations. The four studies describe the social structure and organization of public schools in the Southeast and Northeast regions of Brazil.

In the last section, we present an essay on the first post-graduate programme in anthropology and education: a narrative of one of its founders, almost an auto-ethnography.

In the *Déjà lu* section, which typically reprints hard-to-come-by classics, we have decided to include two unpublished texts. The first concerns Indigenous schools after the changes effected by the Federal Government during the 1990’s. It is the document that subsidized the elaboration of the National Education Plan (*Plano Nacional de Educação*) in 1994. The second was written by one of the authors of the classic studies on race relations in Brazil. This article, based on the author’s personal experiences, contains an ethnographic description of race relations in one of the most prestigious universities in the country, the University of São Paulo (USP), during the 1980’s. The period analysed is hence prior to the struggles of the social movements for the adoption of affirmative action in higher education based on social and racial criteria at the start of the 21st century.

Unfortunately, other equally important themes are absent from this dossier. These include, for instance, the matter of compulsory religious

teaching in public schools; education in the “*comunidades quilombolas*”, legally defined by current legislation as descendants of former maroons. We were also unable to include research that investigates the impact of a federal law from 2003 that established the teaching of African history and Afro-Brazilian culture in public and private schools through Brazil; or to deal with the question of violence in and around Brazilian schools.

So that the reader may understand some of the issues addressed in this dossier, certain aspects of formal education in Brazil need to be elucidated.

The education system in Brazil, is formed by basic education – composed of infant, primary (*fundamental*) and secondary (*médio*: middle) education – youth and adult education, technical instruction and higher education. Infant education is not compulsory and is offered to children between three and five years old. Primary education is compulsory, comprising nine years of schooling for children between 6 and 14 years and is provided by municipalities and/or states. Secondary education, comprising three years of instruction, is not compulsory and is offered to young people between 15 and 17 years old, and is provided by the states. Youth and adult education is for young people over the age of 18 and is provided by the states too. Technical instruction, aimed at the work market, is for young people, non-compulsory and can be undertaken concomitantly with secondary education. Higher education is divided into teaching diplomas (*licenciatura*), bachelor degrees (*bacharelado*), postgraduate degrees and technological training.²

This educational system is also characterized by a duality between public and private institutions that traverses the period from pre-school to higher education. In pre-school, primary and secondary education, public schools are, in general, of low quality and account for around 75% of all enrolments; private institutions, which are fewer in number and considered to be better quality, basically cater for an elite benefitted by educational, and, consequently, social privilege. This correlation is inverted in higher education. Public institutions are, in general, organized like universities. They are free and deemed to be of better quality, both in what pertains to

1 “Maroon communities” are rural communities thus defined by the 1988 constitution. Their classification relies on a process that recognizes their claim to a historical origin in slavery. If this origin is recognized, the community is then granted a territory demarcated with the help of anthropologists, who authenticated their common belonging to an original culture. On this issue, see Vêran (2003).

2 www.brasil.gov.br/educacao/2014/05/saiba-como-e-a-divisao-do-sistema-de-educacao-brasileiro.

teaching and research. But they account for only 25% of enrolments in higher education. Most students, therefore, in higher education are enrolled in private institutions, which are not only of lower quality, but where they also have to pay fees – or, more recently, rely on federal scholarships or student funding. The world of private institutions of higher education has been studied by Sampaio (2015).

Alongside the public/private duality, the Brazilian system of higher education has other segmentations and its institutions also reveal an internal hierarchy. Human science degree courses, and those that train teachers, generally have less prestige, and hence tend to gather more students from lower income families and with worse academic records.

The organizational model

In some educational systems, such as, for instance, that of the United Kingdom, teaching is organized through *tracks* and choices. Students enter the system and follow their school career on the principle that to each grade there corresponds an age. There are opportunities to choose disciplines and paths. During the course, students are tested, and they can select those disciplines in which they obtain better results. At the conclusion of the school career, those who obtained better grades in specific exams in the disciplines they selected will move on to higher education or, perhaps, complement their education with formal training in polytechnic schools.

Unlike the British system, the Portuguese and French systems are based on an assimilationist principle. The basic premise is that all students learn together a number of canonical disciplines. Those who do not obtain the necessary passing grades in all subjects, repeat the year. Being held back a year is an old practice in France and it is a part of the history of their educational system, even if, from the 1980's, the practice has been subjected to a number of scathing critiques, which have resulted in greater control over it.

Although the Brazilian educational system is strongly influenced by the French model, we raise the hypothesis that education in this country also works through an organizational principle that is typical of the assimilationism, inherited from the Portuguese, and that has colonized Brazil for centuries.

Portuguese assimilationalism was based on the idea that indigenous, or colonized, people, could seek out Portuguese citizenship if they submitted

themselves to the arduous task of abandoning their language, their culture, “their mores and customs”. In practice, at the end of the process, after difficult exams, very few native people were considered assimilated enough to obtain Portuguese citizenship.³

As a counterpoint, it can be said that the British colonial enterprise always accounted for differences and that this produced a divided society in which the education of those under colonial administration was carried out under other terms. In British colonial schools, English and other subjects were taught, but so were local languages. Education was effectively bilingual.⁴

The ideas of Portuguese assimilationism can give us some clues towards an understanding of why Brazil, with an educational system that is so expensive and so complex, sees so few students graduate in its various educational tiers, and why school performance continues to be so poor.

In the Brazilian model, children and adolescents who do not obtain the necessary results are removed from their grade; accumulating repetitions, many give up and abandon school before they obtain a diploma. To deal with this difficulty, some policies have been implemented and have shown results. In 1980 grade repetition in what was then the first year of study, when students were around seven years old, was at about 60%, as Costa Ribeiro (1991) shows in his classic *A Pedagogia da Repetência* (The ‘Pedagogy of grade repetition’)⁵ and Klein (2006).

In the 1980’s a very small proportion of children between the ages of 7 and 14 were enrolled in the educational system. Consequently, in secondary education the enrolment of students from 15 to 17 years of age was much lower.

Currently, 98% of children between 7 and 14 are enrolled in primary education (*ensino fundamental*). According to data obtained by the Pesquisa Nacional de Amostra Domiciliar (PNAD) in 2013, those between 15 and 17 are distributed in diverse stages of the education system: 54.3% of them are in high school, 19.6% are still in primary education, and there are those who no longer study⁶.

3 The paradoxes of Portuguese assimilationism were studied by Macagno (1996), who considered the dilemmas faced by the indigenous people of Mozambique in their relations with their colonizers.

4 An analysis of the complexities of these two colonial paradigms can be found in Fry (2000).

5 We have decided to leave Costa Ribeiro’s expression in Portuguese throughout the text, since it loses some of its scope in a simple translation into English.

6 On the development of these indicators in the last 30 years, see Andrade and Dachs (2007) and the Observatório do Plano Nacional de Educação website (<http://www.observatoriodopne.org.br/>).

Much has changed in almost 35 years. According to Ruben Klein (personal communication), the rate of grade repetition in Brazil in the first years of education has fallen in 2013 to 4,1% in the first year; 5,1% in the second year; 12,5% in the third year; 8,6% in the fourth year; 8,3% in the fifth year; 14,5% in the sixth year; 11,9% in the seventh year; 8,3% in the eighth year; 8,8% in the ninth year; 18,5% in the first year of high school; 10,2% in the second year of high school and 6,6% in the last year of high school⁷.

There has been a growing group of people aiming to break with this “pedagogical methodology” and to render school careers less riddled with obstacles, so that students can exercise choice and follow different “tracks”. But there is also much resistance to this view, as we will see in the descriptions of researchers who have studied the school ethos in this dossier.

Since the start of this century, a set of policies geared towards widening access have been implemented. Concurrently, the fight against the culture of grade repetition has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of graduates from secondary education, which is a necessary step for access to higher education. As a further result of these measures, enrolment in higher education has more than tripled in the last decade, being currently at 7.8 million students, even though this number falls short of the aim of enrolling 30% of people between the ages of 18 and 24. Various factors contribute to this. The first concerns the “pedagogia da repetência” and drop-out rates in basic education, which remain high and ensure that less than half of students complete secondary education. A further factor is that enrolment in higher education included many older students who have benefitted from programmes and scholarships.

Despite efforts towards widening access and ensuring that children stay in school, there has not been a corresponding rise in student proficiency in large-scale proficiency exams, including international evaluations. Furthermore, the persistence of grade repetition guarantees that a significant number of young people are out of school and have no certificate of having completed any course.

7 Since the law 11.114/2005 was passed, enrolment in basic education became compulsory for six-year olds. The statistician Ruben Klein has analysed the basic education system and, in a communication at the seminar of the Associação Brasileira de Avaliação Educacional (Abave; ‘Brazilian Association of Educational Evaluation’) in November of 2015, presented this data from an analysis of the Educational Census carried out by the Ministry for Education in 2013.

Nonetheless, even considering all of the significant changes in the last twenty years, Sergio Costa Ribeiro's assessment from 1991 is still valid. He defined our educational system as being orchestrated by a "*pedagogia da repetência*":

It seems that the practice of failing students is contained in the pedagogy of the system as a whole. It is as if it were an integral part of pedagogy, *naturally* accepted by all agents in the process. The persistence of this practice and the rates of repetition leads us to consider a true pedagogical methodology that inheres in the system, despite all of the efforts at universalizing basic education in Brazil. (Costa Ribeiro, 1991: 18)

In effect, the description of the principle that organizes Brazilian educational system through an analogy with assimilationism characteristic of Portuguese colonial agency can help us to understand the persistence of the "*pedagogia da repetência*" which, for different reasons and with different effects, continues to permeate the educational system of Brazil.

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Developing subalternity: side effects of the expansion of formal education and mass media in Guaribas

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Abstract

This article investigates the social impact of the Zero-Hunger Program (Programa Fome Zero, henceforth PFZ) in its pilot-community, the village of Guaribas in Northeast Brazil, particularly with respect to the expansion of public education and mass media. I attempt to show how the PFZ development project went beyond the delivery of financial aid, basic infrastructure, and economic technology in Guaribas, and sought to reform its beneficiaries' conducts, capacities, aspirations, and psychological dispositions. To that end, PFZ's concerted effort included workshops, the extension of public schooling, as well as increased exposure to mass media artefacts and pedagogical soap-operas. This enterprise, however, generated adverse "side-effects" such as the devaluation of local knowledge, the decline of farming, the aggravation of intergenerational conflict, the substantial emigration of the younger generations, and Guaribanos' increasing internalization of subaltern status in relation to other national communities.

Keywords: Programa Fome Zero, development, public education, mass media, subalternity

Resumo

Este artigo analisa o impacto social do Programa Fome Zero em sua comunidade piloto, o vilarejo de Guaribas, no sertão sul do Piauí, especialmente no que tange a expansão da educação pública e da mídia de massa. Em Guaribas, o Programa Fome Zero foi muito além do provimento de recursos financeiros, infraestrutura básica e tecnologia econômica, e objetivou reformar as condutas, capacidades, aspirações e disposições psicológicas de seus beneficiários. Para atingir tal fim, as ações do programa incluíram oficinas (workshops), a extensão da educação formal e o aumento da exposição a artefatos da mídia de massa. Essas iniciativas, entretanto, geraram efeitos colaterais adversos, tais como a desvalorização dos saberes tradicionais locais, o declínio do trabalho agrícola, o agravamento do conflito intergeracional, a expressiva emigração das gerações mais jovens e a crescente internalização de status subalterno por parte dos guaribanos em relação a outras comunidades nacionais.

Palavras-chave: Programa Fome Zero, desenvolvimento, educação pública, mídia de massa, subalternidade

Developing subalternity: side effects of the expansion of formal education and mass media in Guaribas¹

Marcello Sorrentino

The village of Guaribas sits in the midst of the *Serra das Confusões* (lit. Mountains of Confusion), an ecological reserve of sandstone highlands in Northeast Brazil, on a plateau enveloped by deciduous vegetation. It is a rural village of about 1.000 people in a remote region of the semi-arid Backlands (*sertão*) of Piauí, where I conducted fieldwork from January 2006 to April 2008, of which 17 months were spent living in the village itself.² The people of Guaribas (*Guaribanos*) are primarily farmers and herders of goats, pigs, and cattle, who cannot be said to practice integral subsistence agriculture only because they sell a small surplus of beans and corn to outside merchants. Guaribanos descend mainly from three families, the Alves, the Rocha, and the Correia da Silva, the first of which settled in Guaribas sometime in the mid-eighteenth century. Since these *sertão* uplands have always been sparsely populated, a very low demographic density obtains for the municipality (1,41 inhabitants per km²), and accounts for the fact that almost all Guaribanos own a fair amount of land, passed on through generations, which they farm and show with pride. Even though the village's isolation should not be overplayed, until 1964, when a dirt trail trod only by animal caravans was slightly broadened, Guaribas was unconnected to the national road network, and no vehicles had ever reached the village. This precarious dirt road remains Guaribas' only connection to the national highway system, and the full trip from the closest town usually takes more

1 I have made use of pseudonyms to protect the identities of collaborators who have boldly disclosed information which might put either their jobs or their standing in the community at risk.

2 It is worthwhile to note that I have returned to Guaribas every year since completion of fieldwork, save for 2011 and 2015.

than four hours in the overcrowded backs of private trucks, for no public transport makes the complete journey to the village.

In 2003 the Brazilian government launched the Zero-Hunger Program (PFZ), a poverty reduction and social inclusion national development project, with Guaribas as one of its five pilot communities. Eventually, however, the village would become the flagship of PFZ and the government's social policy. PFZ articulated financial aid through conditional family grants called *Bolsa Família* (lit. Family Grant) on a massive scale: in 2006, 11.1 million families with a per capita monthly income below R\$120 received direct cash transfers totalling 8.2 billion Reais.³ In rural areas such as Guaribas, PFZ's main objective was to improve the livelihoods of poor farming families by introducing agricultural extension, drought-resistant crops, minor irrigation, micro-credit, livestock development, cooperatives, in sum, technologies to enhance productivity and income generation in general.⁴ Other typical PFZ interventions focused on infrastructure and its management; these included the building of model houses by COHAB (Popular Habitation Company), water supply capabilities by *Sede Zero* (lit. Zero-Thirst), hygiene and sanitation training, rural electrification, road improvement, land and population registration, and health and nutrition orientation (Programa Fome Zero 2002: 42; Programa Fome Zero 2003: 47).

Whilst the reason why Guaribas was specifically chosen by PFZ policy designers to be the project's main target community remains unclear, government statistics most probably influenced their decision. According to IBGE's (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) 2000 census figures, Guaribas was ranked third worst in Brazil in terms of the quality of life of its inhabitants, and even though monthly per capita income jumped from R\$44 in 2000 to R\$78 in 2005, Guaribas still retained the sixth position in FGV's (Fundação Getúlio Vargas) national poverty ranking (Murakawa 2005: 90). Information concerning the municipality's basic infrastructure supplemented the disquieting scenario conveyed by the above. Before 1997, when Guaribas and its surrounding settlements became a municipality, the village

3 Since then, Bolsa Família cash transfers have been separated from PFZ initiatives. Whereas Bolsa Família is still an active policy of the Brazilian government, most of PFZ's original interventions have been dismembered, and are now carried out by distinct government programs and institutions.

4 For more details, see "Fome Zero: O que pode ser feito" 2005; "Fome Zero: Como a sociedade pode participar" 2005; Betto 2004.

did not have a police station, a post-office, public schools, nor any local establishment for the administration of justice. Importantly, until 1998, the village did not have electricity, and there were no means of telecommunication with the outside world besides a few scattered and undependable public telephones (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 12, 16, 22).

Guaribas thus became PFZ's very own "laboratory of development"⁵, receiving more programs, project focus, and media attention than any other locality in Brazil. However, even given the actual set of circumstances that qualified the village as a beneficiary of the development project, with its campaign to establish Guaribas as an emergency area in dire need, the government contributed to fixing the village as a trope of misery and backwardness, thus stigmatizing it in the eyes of the nation. For the images of Guaribas that reached the rest of Brazil first through official government releases, such as the program's mission statements, and later through the media, by way of newspapers, tele-journalism, magazines, and internet articles were of poverty, hardship, and shocking lack of basic infrastructure. Thus, in the course of four years making the headlines in magazine, internet, and newspaper articles such as "Misery in all corners: Guaribas, synonymous with hunger"⁶, "Misery Museum"⁷, and "Guaribas, the city symbol of Zero-Hunger, still in misery"⁸, the village became analogous with the word through which it was continually evoked: misery. This sort of publicity, together with the immediacy with which the program was launched, and the portentous names of ministries especially created such as "The Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security and Fight Against Hunger" formed an atmosphere of drama and urgency around Guaribas and PFZ, on which the government capitalized in order to convert social policy into political propaganda.

The bleak picture one is led to imagine through the Brazilian government development campaign and the national media coverage, as well as through IBGE and HDI (Human Development Index) reports, however, is not what one encounters in the village. To begin with, the well-known claims concerning chronic famines in the village were, at best, incorrect. Excepting

5 "Rede de Educação Cidadã" 2009.

6 "Miséria em qualquer canto: Guaribas xarás da fome" 2005

7 Murakawa 2005: 90

8 "Guaribas, cidade símbolo do Fome Zero, ainda na miséria" 2007.

sporadic drought years, there has never been starvation in Guaribas, and its very proposition seemed odd to the several Guaribanos with whom I discussed it.⁹ Regarding the physical aspect of the village itself, there is nothing inherently unattractive in the architecture of houses and the geographical occupation of space, but modest and functional structural design which makes use of local geotic materials, such as adobe mud bricks and stockades, adapted to local environmental conditions. The projection of misery into those structures and materials is the responsibility of journalists, travellers, and PFZ teams that ventured into the area, carrying their own aesthetic notions about the built environment with them — i.e., which designs create comfort and the impression of the beautiful, which building materials display status and wealth, how social and private space should be ordered and experienced, and so on. Moreover, since they own their lands and properties, Guaribanos are able to escape the more exploitative work and living conditions that a great part of the peasantry in Northeast Brazil must endure as tenant farmers instead of small property owners. In effect, the types of crops typically cultivated, beans and corn, and the regime of labour in the fields allows for great latitude in choosing when and how much to work. There is plenty of spare time, which can be spent with family, friends, or in much-loved activities such as hunting, playing domino, climbing the mountains in groups (especially during the rainy season, when the rock pools are brimming with clear rainwater), meeting and talking at the square just after nightfall, or playing pool at the modest bars in the village. Finally, restricted local infrastructure, purchasing power, and ownership of consumer goods, some of the main criteria for HDI assessments, render local material living conditions difficult, but are not necessarily definitive in judging the quality of life of individuals.¹⁰ Yet, the focus on the negative aspects of local life so dominated the publicized image of Guaribas that little space was left for any notion of wellbeing in the village.

9 Guaribas has never experienced a food crisis except for a *sui generis* drought in 1954, and its yearly bean harvest has consistently surpassed, on average, 300 tons, according to local EMATER (Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Enterprise) officials. In fact, Guaribanos iterated to me that before the village became a municipality in 1997, when the keeping of livestock was not forbidden within its more populated perimeter, “Guaribas was rich with animals”, and “the mountains were white with goats and sheep”.

10 HDI measurements consider three crude indicators for its composite index: life-expectancy, educational attainment, and average income. These and other “objective” criteria selected as indicators of people’s quality of life have been widely questioned (c.f. Du Toit 2005; Hulme 2010: 61; Sacks 2005).

If the government constructed a particularly unsavoury image of the village by simply assembling and divulging depressing statistics, it went further by rendering an unfair depiction of Guaribanos and their social lives in PFZ Sustainable Development Plans. Preliminary PFZ studies from 2002 and 2003 describe Guaribanos as “passive”, “apathetic”, “isolated”, “unaware of any form of social control”, “lacking skills and information”, “with a weak power of organization”, and “deferring their destinies to external agents such as God and the government” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 19, 32-3, 35-6, 38-9; Programa Fome Zero 2002: 4). Concerning the local quality of life, PFZ reports state that “there are no structures or activities that valorise culture and promote leisure”, and that “the population has as its only form of recreation watching television” and “local football matches” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 19, 40). Thus, they affirm, “local culture is latent”, the youth “has no interest in local customs”, and “cultural activities are no longer practised and families are losing their cultural memories” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 19, 39).

In order to address this alarming state of affairs in Guaribas, a specific branch of PFZ was called into action. TALHER (Equipe de Capacitação para a Educação Cidadã - Team for Capacity Building and Education for Citizenship) was PFZ’s section responsible for coordinating and delivering social policies which aimed to transfer “social technology” and “eradicate social exclusion”.¹¹ Among its stated goals at the official PFZ website were: “universal access to the rights of citizenship”, the socioeconomic emancipation of disadvantaged families, “the expansion of public schooling”, and “the reduction of the social deficit”.¹² Its mission statement in the Brazilian government’s official PFZ website read:

For the Zero-Hunger Program, TALHER doesn’t only concern physical, but also mental and spiritual nourishment. (...) The Zero-Hunger Program does not only want to satiate the hunger for bread. It wants to satiate the hunger for beauty, promoting the citizenship education of its beneficiaries.¹³

11 Fome Zero: o que é” 2005.

12 Ibid.

13 “Matar a fome de pão e saciar a sede de Beleza” 2005.

Interestingly, the vagueness of this formulation, without any further definition of “citizenship education” and “beauty”, was repeated throughout official government websites.¹⁴ In the Federal Public Ministry website there could be found an assertion about what it means to “sate the hunger for beauty”. Yet, it is unclear and only multiplies variables, introducing new notions such as “self-esteem” and “the perception of life as a biographical process” that remain just as indefinite as “beauty”:

To sate the hunger for beauty is to propitiate to the undernourished not only the satisfaction of his stomach, but also of his *conscience* and his *spirit*. To emerge from the perception of life as a biological phenomenon to the perception of life as a biographical process. To form citizens, men, and women with regained *self-esteem*, enjoying existence as people who feel, and know themselves to be *happy* (Betto 2005: 1) (my italics)

Though more remains to be explained than is understood in these enunciations, PFZ notions of “social technology”, “self-esteem”, and “beauty” are significant because they were involved in the deployment of models for the construction of specific identities among local actors, potentially reproducing “hierarchies of knowledge and society” (Mosse 2004:4) whilst simultaneously depoliticizing such an enterprise (Ferguson 1990). Even though these essential concepts were not sufficiently defined in official PFZ policy descriptions, they were definitely at play in PFZ pedagogical discourses, in the social impact of the project’s policies, and in the everyday practices of program managers, consultants, technicians, and villagers.

At the outset, one may already perceive a common denominator among the enunciations above. They describe PFZ beneficiaries as individuals who “hunger” for beauty, happiness, and self-esteem, which implies that they both lack and yearn for them. In simple terms, they imply that in their present condition these individuals are, to some extent, unattractive, unhappy, and suffering from low self-esteem. An analysis of PFZ’s Sustainable Development Plans for Guaribas shows that the assertion above does not push the project’s propositions too far. These plans cite as

¹⁴ “Matar a fome de pão e saciar a sede de Beleza” 2005; “Fome Zero: Programas” 2005; “Presidência da República” 2005. See also Betto 2004, and Betto 2005.

obstacles to development the prevailing local “feeling of negativity, fear, and low self-esteem”, the “dependency on government programs”, and a common “fragmented outlook, that is, the population refer[ring] to the municipality not as a whole but as parts” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 6). According to these documents, local knowledge is marked by “the insufficiency of qualified human resources”, meaning that villagers “lack information”, “education”, “skills”, and “an adequate knowledge of technology” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 18-9, 38, 46).

Assertions of this kind are of particular significance not only because they authorize intervention, but also because they enshrine stereotypes and make explicit what PFZ and development planners think is wrong with the village and its people. Thus PFZ proposes first to “sensitize” the population to its needs and inadequacies, and then to “capacitate” them by means of a comprehensive reform of their attitudes and competences (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 7). Project activities seek to “rouse reflection, awakening in the community the need to leave the stance of RECEIVING to SEEKING [sic], introducing the notion of citizenship, and attempting to elevate self-esteem” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 7). PFZ programs, courses, seminars, and workshops aim to “structure and strengthen civil society”, and to “capacitate” and “socialize” Guaribanos by imparting technical expertise and “social technology” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 41-2; Programa Fome Zero 2002: 36). They are to “inform the population”, “restructure family institutions”, “restructure community association”, familiarize villagers with national “political institutions”, impart “adequate economic technology”, and, ultimately, “articulate a new vision of the future” (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 40-3, 45-6, 48-51).

Therefore, beyond the provision of infrastructure and financial aid to locals, PFZ aimed to effect nothing short of a major reconfiguration of the person in Guaribas — her skills, capacities, attitudes, aspirations, and self-esteem— in the psychological, social, economic, and political realms. In this sense, following Gledhill (1996), Hobart (1993), Escobar (1997), among others, it is plausible to characterize PFZ as the instrument of a bona fide “civilizing” program tied to a project of governance (c.f. Ferguson 1990: xiii; Nash 1994; Pigg 1992; Woost 1993, 1997).

PFZ workshops in Guaribas

One of the main instruments employed by PFZ in its campaign to reform local human capacities took the form of courses and workshops. Most PFZ workshops and meetings I attended as part of the audience in Guaribas consisted to a large extent in attempts to persuade villagers' of their own inadequacies. For in order to convince Guaribanos of the desirability of contemporary urban values, aspirations, and attitudes they must first dissuade them of the appropriateness of their former competences. Therefore, in seminars about the "World Scenario", for instance, Guaribanos were confronted with their own insularity regarding knowledge of other countries' peoples, cultures, and histories, reinforcing their sense of possessing very limited "knowledge of the world". In alternative income generation courses, development workers made constant reference to the local under-exploitation of available man-power and resources, often criticizing villagers for their lack of initiative, energy, and ambition to "prosper". From their experience in "Potentiality Fairs", where Guaribanos were encouraged to suggest local aptitudes and propose ways of increasing their income and wealth, development workers concluded: "people are indolent (*acomodado*), misinformed, and do not know how to act" (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 38). Likewise, in TALHER "Citizenship Education" meetings to boost mobilization and participation, government workers censured the villagers' "lack of agency" to demand benefits and improve the local "unsavoury living conditions" (Programa Fome Zero 2003: 32-3). In "Hygiene Workshops" numerous local habits were frequently singled out as unclean and unhealthy, and participants were lectured, for example, on how disgusting (*nojento*) was their common custom of eating "loose animals" — that is, the chicken, pigs, and goats allowed to roam free close to the village. And, finally, "Beauty Workshops" attempted to transform the physical appearance of Guaribanos by introducing "new" and "urban" techniques of beauty, from trendy haircuts and fashionable clothing to the regular use of cosmetics and perfumes.

For instance, a TALHER "Beauty Workshop" called *Cidadania Ativa* (Active Citizenship) took place in a public school during a weekend in June 2006. The classrooms had been prepared for TALHER contracted aestheticians, hairdressers, and manicurists to work on the appearance of Guaribanos. There, villagers went from sector to sector, having their

hair cut and styled in one room, their nails done in another, and make-up and cosmetics (in the case of women) applied in yet another.¹⁵ Guaribanos were manifestly amused by the experience: they smiled as they sat down to be groomed, and teased and complimented each other as they met in the corridors between sectors. All these services were offered gratuitously by TALHER.

In addition to fashion and physical appearance, demure and comportment also indicate, and embody, cultural transformation (Elias 2012 [1939]). Hence, besides being coached in styles of dress, accessories, and grooming in beauty workshops, Guaribanos were also encouraged to assimilate etiquette and manners which reflect prevailing cosmopolitan standards of grace, *bon ton*, and propriety. For instance, villagers, and especially local girls, were constantly reminded not to spit in the streets, blow their noses directly onto the ground, sneeze and cough without covering their noses and mouths, sit with their legs uncrossed, walk barefooted, and look for lice in each other's hair in public. They were also urged to sport clean and untorn clothes, tend to wounds and scars in their legs, avoid skin aging due to exposure to the sun, and remove traces of dirt from their bodies, all of which are very common in rural contexts. These workshops, then, sought to clean up, as it were, the signs of rural life from Guaribanos, many of whom came to invest heavily in beauty products following the advice of TALHER instructors.

Hence, in these workshops, Guaribanos were lectured on the kinds of selves they should seek to be, and on what they must do to themselves — the practices and standards by which they should act upon themselves to reform or improve themselves — in order to become prosperous, free, and fulfilled. Typically, Guaribanos were encouraged to maximize work and production, reinvest profit, and accrue wealth; to acquire formal education and technological knowledge; to assimilate as much as possible cosmopolitan aesthetic, hygiene, and etiquette paradigms; to be ambitious in the sense of seeking new personal goals and career ideals; and to be more self-assertive, at least, in the interest of agency and political participation. Above all, in these workshops, strong messages

¹⁵ It is worthy of note that the hairstyles suggested to, and accepted by most Guaribanos were generally much shorter than the lengths typically worn by men, women, and children in Guaribas. Hairdressers conveyed these as having a “cleaner”, more modern look.

were sent associating diligence and entrepreneurship with wealth and worth. Underlying this discourse is the principle of meritocracy whereby opportunities for social mobility, career enhancement, prestige, and affluence may be seized by those who are proficient in the required moral and technical competencies. On the other hand, poverty, ignorance, and lack of success were connected to a chain of other negative signifiers, such as the apparent “laziness” or “sloppiness” of locals, which several development workers characterized as one of their most detrimental moral weaknesses. The means through which these directives were posited ranged from instructors’ explicit recommendations, cautioning tales, and derision, to the reification of these propositions in illustrated course packages and the calculated use of media artefacts, such as *Tecendo o Saber* (Weaving Knowledge), a government sponsored pedagogical soap opera which will be considered below.

The partnership between PFZ and the media

PFZ initiatives and state rhetoric were but one element in a complex assembly of forces and authorities that included, among others, mass media and popular culture artefacts — multiple circuits of influence that throw grids of perception and judgement over personal conduct and competencies. Thus soap operas, tele-journalism, daytime talk shows, pop music, magazines, and advertisements act as relays in the projection of aspirations and desirable lifestyles, presenting myriad normative models “no less powerful from being de-coupled from the authoritative prescriptions of the public powers” (Rose 1999 [1989]: 229). In these and other vehicles of persuasion, signs and images of the good life are inscribed: template lifestyles imbued with the ideals of autonomy, self-assuredness, self-realization, freedom, material prosperity, and success. Along the same line, the recent penetration of mass media in Guaribas intersected with PFZ’s policies and initiatives to transform the personal competencies, conducts, and social lives of villagers.

It has been widely observed that interactions between development and the media are mutually reinforcing, and that social development can be accelerated by the acquisition of information from the media (Beckett and Kyrke-Smith 2007: 12; Deane 2005: 177; Francis 2009: 62-4; Nassanga

2009: 57; Schramm 1964: 115; Sparks 2007: 3; Tufte 2005: 160; Wainsbord 2005: 77; Zeleza 2009: 21). As a vehicle for the transmission of ideas, images, normative behaviours, and information, the media can contribute to the development of beneficiaries' "social capital", so that mass education and behaviour change via the media grew as a concern and ambition since the 1930's, but accelerated in the 1970's (Tufte 2005: 162-3). This has led to the emergence of "development media" and "entertainment education", and their employment as a communication strategy in development projects has grown significantly over the past decade (Sabido 2004; Singhal and Rogers 2004; Tufte 2001, 2005). Their model of social transformation is premised on the assumption that "continuing contact with another culture leads to the borrowing of customs and beliefs" (Schramm 1964: 114), and thus based on "the dissemination through the mass media of the psychic attributes of the modern personality as defined in the developed Western countries" (Sparks 2007: 47).

Authors who advocate the use of the media in the service of development usually stress the positive effects of the sector in improving good governance, transparency, and accountability by building public awareness and exposing issues of public concern to open discussion. In this view, mass communication, mass transmission techniques, and educational radio and television primarily reinforce democratic institutions, ensure good governance, and empower citizens, becoming important tools for the development of beneficiaries and their sociopolitical contexts (Deane 2005; Ramírez 2005; Schramm 1964; Tufte 2005; Wainsbord 2005).

Other authors, however, argue that while the proliferation of media in many developing countries was initially marked by an upsurge of public debate, "evidence is growing that, as competition intensifies, content is increasingly being shaped by the demands of advertisers and sponsors who pay for the newly liberalized media" (Deane 2005: 184), and that "the result is more urban biased, consumer oriented media" (Nassanga 2009: 58). Nassanga reinforces this point by providing examples of how the media in Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, and Francophone West Africa target a middle-class audience with disposable income, and gives more attention to urban affairs, urban problems, and urban culture, thus greatly "alienating some African populations from their cultural norms, values, and customs" (2009: 55).

Besides development media, “entertainment and advertising, along with educational and public informational programming, play a critical role in changing or generating individual and collective perceptions and behaviour” (Aseka 2009: 87), defining “new forms of etiquette and social dispositions” (James 2000: 36). Through its focus on wealthy urban elite interests and the promotion of the ideas of more powerful social classes, the media produce new worlds of experience and imagination for poor rural populations as they “represent ways of living and provide models of how one might appropriately relate to others, as well as how recognition, status, honour, and prestige are given or withheld” (Kimani and Middleton 2009, xi-xii). Within these core-periphery relations in the flow of media content, less affluent rural populations are often “pressured to shape social institutions to correspond to the values and structures of the dominant representations”, and “collectively strive to acquire the media-produced images of ‘the good life’ [such as portrayed] in movies and soap-operas” (Aseka 2009: 90; c.f. Schiller 1976).

In effect, drama has been, and continues to be, an important means of communicating messages and marketing social behaviours. Tufte has studied entertainment-genres used for the promotion of individual behavioural change, particularly serialized TV narratives such as telenovelas and soap operas in Brazil. He believes that these can serve the agendas of social movements by making core problems (such health issues and social inequality) visible, “putting pressure on politicians, and empowering audiences comprised of marginalized groups to collective action” (2005: 160). Nevertheless, Tufte acknowledges that telenovelas also maintain “the hope and aspiration of the audience — some would say delusion of the audience — for social change and ascent” by inserting in the melodramatic narratives stories of social mobility and personal success that would seldom be realized by marginalized and low income social actors in real life (2005: 170). Thus, through a particular aesthetic that “avoids the ostensible exposure of social inequality”, telenovelas can contribute to an internalized acceptance of the status quo (Tufte 2005: 168):

the physical portraits of the lower classes in telenovelas tend not to be as physically explicit as in real life. Slums are seldom seen, and worker’s boroughs are always built almost beyond recognition, being cleaner, more beautiful, and always more bountiful and richer than in real life (2005: 169).

In the same vein, I argue below that the penetration of mass media in Guaribas not only acted as a relay in the transmission of certain values and attitudes advanced by PFZ, but also contributed to normalize the vision of a docile lower-class workforce through what Souza has called “the myth of meritocracy” (Tufté 2003: 169).

In the first place, the recent penetration of mass media in the village is complicit in the process of Guaribanos’ increasing “awareness” of subaltern status vis a vis other national and international communities. For its introduction in the village gave Guaribanos a new dimension of the disparity between village life and metropolitan social standards. Since 1998, when a few households were first connected to the electrical power system, the village experienced a gradual though steady expansion of access to mass media as more villagers bought appliances such as TV’s, radios, and satellite dishes. This expansion culminated in the construction of an 120-metre telecommunications antenna thrust in the middle of Guaribas, an initiative articulated by PFZ in 2004 which made satellite dishes in the village unnecessary for TV reception. Thenceforth, the diffusion of mass media inaugurated a traffic in significant symbols — representations and imageries of desirable (urban) lifestyles, standards of behaviour, models of success and self-realization, as well as paradigms of family orientation, career enhancement, and economic prosperity — imparted by the ethical scenarios of soap operas, daytime talk shows, radio chat programs, advertisements, cinema, sport, fashion, tele-journalism, tabloids and show-biz magazines, pop music and artefacts of popular culture, and so forth. Their impact on the social lives and psychological dispositions of Guaribanos should not be underestimated. For as Rose and authors from various disciplines point out, these “cultural forms may stabilize in a more profound manner than specific norms”, thus playing a vital role in remodelling behaviour and reshaping aspirations and capacities:

Life is to imitate the images of life, the simulacra of joy, warmth, and achievement presented in advertisements, television chat shows, soap operas and other public imaginings of personality, conviviality, and winning ways. These images provide the template against which the mundane dissatisfactions of our lives (...) are to be judged and found wanting. According to this meta-world of images and values, more luminous and real than any other world we

know, the self is to be remodelled so that it can succeed in emitting the signs of a skilled performance (1999 [1989]: 242).

The assimilation of these new cultural forms and values generates the accumulation of cultural capital, and was locally seen as key in the internalization of a modern, cosmopolitan identity (Bourdieu 1984 [1979]),¹⁶ By the same token, the unequal competence at, and familiarity with these cultural forms also led to new modes of social exclusion or demotion. The mastering of this novel cultural capital was so critical during my stay in the village that an example of its sensitivity can be grasped from the internal downclassing and upclassing in local teenage girls' groups, which occurred on grounds as subtle as a girl failing to understand or employ correctly a new slang introduced by the female protagonist of *Malhação*, an afternoon soap opera aired by the Globo Television Network where famous young actors portray teenagers in an upper-middle class school in Rio de Janeiro. Girls would assemble in the square at night exchanging views on the last show, pioneering, working out, and trading the cultural concepts gathered from that afternoon, from sociolect and fashion articles to their favourite characters' "stylish" attitudes and ideals. In these groups, such concepts became a sort of currency for "cultural jockeying", that is, for an internal competition for popularity and prestige based on cultural capital transmitted by mass media objects.

Most likely, it was a strategic decision by PFZ designers to integrate the expansion of mass media and telecommunications to other development initiatives. In fact, Rose (1999) maintains that these vehicles often act as relays in the promotion of certain types of career enhancement, lifestyle maximization, maxims of comportment, identity construction through consumption patterns, and desirable "ways of thinking, feeling, wanting, and doing" (Markus et al. 1997: 16). PFZ in Guaribas provides an example of this partnership between the mass media and the development enterprise. Almost every TALHER "Citizenship Education Workshop" I attended was conducted at the newly built Social Services for Commerce (SESC -Serviço Social do Comércio) complex's AV room, and consisted in the showing of an episode of *Tecendo o Saber*, followed by a group discussion. *Tecendo o Saber* is

16 Coleman uses the term "human capital" to describe the same set of personal resources: "human capital is created by changing persons so as to give them skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways" (1990: 304).

a pedagogical soap opera created by the Brazilian Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Roberto Marinho Foundation (the non-profit branch of the Globo Network) and the Vale do Rio Doce Foundation (the non-profit branch of the Brazilian multinational, the second largest mining conglomerate in the world). The soap opera comprises 65 episodes, divided into four modules, which were, and continue to be aired by four TV channels, Rede Globo, TV Cultura, TV Escola, and Canal Futura. In *Tecendo o Saber* figure famous actors of Globo soap operas, household names like Camila Pitanga, Bruno Garcia, Alexandre Borges, Giulia Gam, Letícia Sabatella, Benvindo Siqueira, among others, who are well known to the Brazilian public. Besides the presence of Globo telenovela stars, episodes are split into three eight minute blocks with two intervals, which makes for an easy viewing experience for audiences.

The plot orbits around the lives and struggles of six main characters who represent stereotypical individuals from lower-class backgrounds, most of whom were born in the Northeast of Brazil and moved to a public housing project in the periphery of a large, unspecified Southeastern metropolis where the action takes place.¹⁷ The main protagonist is Francisco, a middle-aged Northeastern migrant who decides to try his luck in the metropolis, and faces unemployment and hard living conditions as a result of his own underqualification in the city's competitive labour market. Besides lacking formal education, Francisco is illiterate, but chiefly thanks to his gradual acquisition of formal education and an entrepreneurial attitude, he is finally able to find stable work and adequate housing. Valdete is a black middle-aged street sweeper who dreams of being a famous singer, and recurrently tries (in vain) to help her husband, the "eternally unemployed" Januário, to stop moving between temporary jobs and find a permanent occupation. In effect, Januário, a white middle-aged man from Rio de Janeiro, often provides the storyline with comic relief: he is a passive, indolent character who has nearly conformed to his regular unemployment, and usually advances unfashionable conservative ideas that are always proved wrong at the end of episodes. For this reason, Januário is the only character to have his own "music theme" in the soap

¹⁷ The soap opera was filmed at Conjunto Habitacional Bandeirantes, a housing project in suburban Rio de Janeiro.

opera, a humorous tune of trumpets and trombones reminiscent of burlesque comedy. Celestino is a Northeastern migrant in his early sixties who arrived at the metropolis many years before the time of the action, and who was able to establish himself as a bar and bazaar owner in the community through a mixture of diligence, money saving, and honesty. His love interest in the plot is Socorro, also a migrant from the North of Brazil, and a middle-aged single mother who regularly sells baked goods and cleans middle-class households to generate income. Bruna, her daughter, is a black teenager who represents the first generation born of migrant workers in the metropolis. She is a dedicated student at the local public school, speaks in “correct” Portuguese with a Rio de Janeiro accent, and is knowledgeable in contemporary matters, such as environmental issues, energy conservation, sex education and contraceptives, and world events, so that she frequently instructs grown-ups on the importance of being attuned to, and pro-active in these topics. She is also actively engaged in community problems, often encouraging other residents to mobilize against unfavourable aspects of living conditions in the neighbourhood (the institution of a polluting factory nearby, the creation of a landfill in the district, the lack of a local sewage system) and to demand their rights through official means (petitions to the mayoralty, open letters to the press, community radio announcements, etc.).¹⁸

Hence, the cast of characters of *Tecendo o Saber* captures precisely the constituency at whom its stories are directed: lower-class Brazilians with little or no formal education, of Northeastern *sertanejo* and/or black racial background, speaking with their dialectal accents and expressions, and facing the common problems of migrating from a rural setting to a large city in the country’s more metropolitan Southeastern region. In effect, the very opening sequence of the soap opera suggests this transition: a Northeastern *farró* theme song plays as we see the images of *jangadas* (fishing boats with triangular sails typical of Northeast Brazil), a panorama of semi-arid vegetation also emblematic of the Northeast region, a scene from the *Bumba-meu-boi* Northeastern traditional feast, followed by large city scapes, such as a wide downtown avenue busy with the traffic of people and cars. In fact, the very first episode opens with Francisco leaving his

18 Tecendo o Saber, Module 2, DVD 2, Episode 12; Tecendo o Saber, Module 1, DVD 1, Episode 6.

small village in the Northeastern state of Maranhão for a large city in the Southeast, and as he watches through the bus window the images of his native land go by, we hear in off:

Since people have always left their places of birth in search of a better future, those who have moved from their native land know how difficult it is to miss family and friends left behind. And, at the same time, to adapt to completely different places, peoples, and ways of life. To face these changes means learning, discovering, winning challenges, and growing. (...) Most names have a meaning; our friend who now travels by bus, for example, is called Francisco, which in Latin means “free man”.¹⁹

It is hard to miss the laudatory notes with which this transition from the rural to the metropolitan is depicted. As Francisco’s story unfolds, he works hard at a construction site and in a string of badly paid temporary jobs from which he is regularly laid-off, until he is taken to an employment agency by Socorro. There, Francisco finds out that the clerk is the long lost love of his life, a young woman who had left his hometown some time before him, and with whom he had corresponded until she finally broke up their engagement in a letter. Francisco, ashamed of having to admit being illiterate, cannot work up the courage to address her, and runs away from the agency at the first opportunity. But illiteracy does not only harm Francisco in hindering his chances at finding a job. Later in the episode we learn that his ex-girlfriend never ended their relationship: being illiterate, Francisco delegated the reading of his letters to a girl in his village who was in love with him, and who wilfully deceived him into thinking that the relationship was over. Consequently, in this little scenario, shame, thwarted prosperity, and the irreparable loss of love are equated with illiteracy and the lack of formal studies.

Similar stories and ethical narratives are deployed in the course of the soap opera, associating the acquisition of formal education, the development of pro-active and “go-getter” attitudes, as well as diligent work and career-enhancement with happiness, success, and prosperity. Importantly, economic viability and distance from want are not the main or sole recompenses for these kinds of entrepreneurship. The scenes and the plot

19 *Tecendo o Saber, Module 1, DVD 1, Episode 1.*

are familiar from soap operas, as are the repertoire of moral lessons and rewards driven by simple, universal, wholesome needs: love, affection, attention, dependency, reassurance, intimacy, and social recognition. In this fashion, throughout *Tecendo o Saber* we follow Francisco working and studying hard to obtain a high-school diploma and qualify to ever better occupations, being finally able to rise from the position of builder to mason to electrician. Yet, apart from achieving economic stability, Francisco's career enhancement is also rewarded by the increased attentions of local young women, as well as by winning his mother's admiration.²⁰ We also watch Socorro, Bruna, and Valdete creatively envisaging and succeeding in alternative income generation enterprises, such as buying a stand at the local fair and wholesaling baked goods, selling an aunt's lacework production to a salesman for considerable profit, establishing a local baked goods cooperative, and helping a family in the community to overcome their economic difficulties by retailing recycled artefacts such as ashtrays, purses, and toys made from refuse. However, economic viability is not the sole end-result of entrepreneurship. As Bruna and Socorro make the baked goods to be sold at the fair, they are looking at each other and smiling cheerfully, thus strengthening the bonds of love and solidarity between mother and daughter.²¹ As Bruna's aunt embroiders the lacework to be commercialized, we are shown a convivial and optimistic work environment in the family living-room, where all admire with great satisfaction the beauty and quality of the products.²² As Bruna and Socorro labour at the local baked goods cooperative, we are presented with images of happiness at work, people joking with each other, merrily covering cakes with sugar and candy, smelling the bread with closed eyes and a contented smile.²³ And finally, as Bruna and Socorro join forces with their neighbours in the recycled artefacts enterprise, they are able to prevent Bruna's boyfriend's family from having to move away from the community due to its financial difficulties.²⁴ Therefore, the pursuit of love, friendship, familial tenderness, and even a satisfying sex life, as described momentarily, accompany

20 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 3, DVD 1, Episode 8.

21 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 3, DVD 1, Episode 5.

22 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 2, DVD 2, Episode 16.

23 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 3, DVD 1, Episode 7.

24 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 1, DVD 2, Episode 9.

increased prosperity as persuasive reasons for changes in behaviour, values, and ideals.

In one of the most compelling illustrations of the rewards of energetic entrepreneurship, gratifying in social and psychological ways far beyond the enhancement of income, Valdete urges Januário, her unemployed husband, to be innovative and resourceful in order to find a way to complement her street sweeper earnings. As she gets ready to leave for her job in the morning, Januário lazily watches TV; she turns to him, rather aggressively, and says:

Ideas [for making money] don't fall from the sky, Januário. You have to dig deep, to go for it! You won't achieve anything by remaining "planted" in this sofa. (...) I need to go because I'm the one who "makes it rain on my garden". And turn off that TV, it won't help you at all!²⁵

As a result of their conversation, Januário gets the idea of starting an organic vegetable garden in his backyard, an initiative that meets with instant success as he is able to place his produce at Celestino's bazaar, so that both men profit. Significantly, the episode closes with Valdete putting an end to the "sex strike" through which she had decided to punish Januário for his idleness, and in the last scene we see husband and wife embracing in bed as the light fades out.²⁶

Apart from the eulogy of entrepreneurship and the acquisition of formal education, *Tecendo o Saber* is replete with imageries of ideal registers of sociability, family and neighbour solidarity, and widespread community cooperation. Characters help each other find jobs and cope with financial difficulties, they collaborate in economic enterprises, lend and borrow from each other, exchange relevant information and knowledge, give and take advice, share food and resources, visit each other frequently and are received with great hospitality, in sum, they make up an active, solidary, economically progressive lower-class community. Yet, these images convey more than a contented underprivileged neighbourhood: they normalize the vision of a docile lower-class workforce which, no matter how low in the

25 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 1, DVD 2, Episode 10.

26 *Ibid.*

scale of occupational hierarchy, is optimistic, proud, and ultimately happy.²⁷ For example, as Francisco mixes cement and sand at a construction site, sweating profusely under the sun, he remarks to a fellow builder, “Damn hard work, isn’t it, Rivaldo?”, to which the latter replies, “Yeah, but don’t you complain. I was unemployed for two months. This city swallows us!”²⁸ In a similar scenario later in the episode, a panting, tearful man thanks Francisco for having recommended him for construction work at his site: “I’m sorry, but I needed to thank you. They hired me, I start tomorrow. I’ll have a salary again! Now I can find a place to live!”²⁹ Likewise, upon being asked by a local newspaper reporter about living at the housing project, Celestino declares: “It’s very good indeed, because we get to know our neighbours, we help one another. Look, I’ll tell you something: I wouldn’t trade my little place here for none of these fancy condos for rich people!”³⁰

However, the most forceful examples of contented conformity with low-grade jobs and modest living conditions come in the form of short documentaries inserted in every episode where real people are interviewed and tell their life stories. For instance, a black street sweeper in his forties offers an account of his job in Rio de Janeiro. (It is worthwhile to note that street sweepers in Rio are sometimes scornfully called “little oranges” [*laranjinhas*] in reference to their bright orange uniforms, hinting at the stigmatization of their low-grade profession.) He declares:

I believe that one cannot be picky about jobs nowadays, right? When a job comes up, one has to grab it with “teeth and nails”, and value what one does. I value what I do and I’m valued for what I do. And I like what I do. My job is important because I keep the city clean for its residents. Here, I make the difference. Here I beat racism, I beat prejudice.³¹

27 This idealized image of a fraternal, socially mobile, heterogeneous yet harmonious community resonates with a broad interpretation of Freyre’s portrayal of Brazilian society as a congenial hybrid of different races and classes since colonial times (Freyre 1986 [1933]). For a discussion of how “racial democracy”, a concept developed from Freyre’s classic *The Masters and the Slaves*, has become a pervasive “master narrative” for the construction of national identity, see Sheriff (2001: 4). For critiques of the “myth” of racial democracy, i.e., how it effectively camouflages and underplays racial inequalities and class divisions, perpetuating passivity and neutralizing political struggle in Brazikée Silva (1995: 54).

28 *Tecendo o Saber, Module 2, DVD 2, Episode 14.*

29 *Tecendo o Saber, Module 3, DVD 1, Episode 6.*

30 *Tecendo o Saber, Module 4, DVD 1, Episode 5.*

31 *Tecendo o Saber, Module 1, DVD 1, Episode 5.*

Although the street sweeper seems conscious of the low position his job takes in the local occupational hierarchy, he gives us such a dignified, idealized version of his work's worth as to border on overcompensation. This trend is picked up by the soap opera's narrative, which proceeds to show the street sweeper smiling, samba-ing around his broom, sending kisses in an emulation of carnival male dancers [*passistas*], as he is applauded by three smiling elderly ladies sat in a park bench behind him. Likewise, in the very first episode of *Tecendo o Saber*, which focuses on the experiences of work migrants, the interviewee is a skinny, wrinkled woman of mixed descent in her sixties, dressed in a French maid uniform, and sat on a plastic stool in the pantry of a middle-class household. Behind her, crammed in the pantry's small space, we notice a gas boiler above her, baskets of dirty clothes at her feet, and a noisy washing machine at work, so that she must talk loudly to be heard. This is what she has to say about migrating to Rio de Janeiro to work when she was only 15: "I've always had a strong will to learn, to win. I consider myself a winner. I adapted, learned. It was a new experience for me. I never let my head down, I always kept my head up, and won."³²

Though the deep irony of these portraits render them almost bizarre, the message is clear: at the same time that one must desire and strive for career and status enhancement, material comfort, and increased prosperity in general, one should be happy and proud with what one can have should her dreams not come true. The appeal of this proposition lies in that it appears to be a contradiction in terms, but it is not. It evokes instead a "win-win" narrative which caters for both success and failure in fulfilling aspirations, whilst advancing an entrepreneuristic attitude and an agentic stance that are crucial to the neoclassical ideal of social and individual evolution, whereby the continual desire to develop sanctioned competencies is stoked and maintained. This discourse, which several authors have associated with the "myth of meritocracy", is crucial to the shaping of governable subjects and the management of a docile workforce in contexts of marked social inequality, such as in Brazilian society (Sheriff 2001; Souza 2003). For, in practice, the gap between what citizens with lower-class and minority racial backgrounds, inferior educational capital, and low-grade occupations are encouraged to achieve and can pragmatically achieve would present, in the

32 *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 1, DVD 1, Episode 1.

absence of the “myth of meritocracy”, a potential source of widespread frustration and social unrest (Fontaine 1995: 2; Guimarães 2002; Hasenbalg 1995: 25; Mitchell-Kernan 1995: ix-x; Tôrres 1965).

Therefore, the intersections between the production of cooperative subjects in a national project of governance and mass media objects, such as *Tecendo o Saber*, are not insignificant. Whilst its calculated use by PFZ initiatives demonstrates by itself the extent of this relationship, *Tecendo o Saber* also reinforces the importance of energetic entrepreneurship, formal education, and ambitions of career enhancement which inhabit both official state rhetoric and PFZ programs. The pedagogic soap opera is also tied to the expansion of state capacity in that it stresses the importance of bureaucratic registration, personal documents, and participation in national censuses.³³ Finally, in line with PFZ directives to “modernize” the competencies and skills of beneficiaries, a whole episode of *Tecendo o Saber* is devoted to familiarizing viewers with information technology, showing them how to access internet websites, write e-mails, shop online, and consult bank statements via the internet.³⁴ The celebration of these particular competencies, attitudes and lifestyle aspirations in mass media artefacts was echoed by values and ideals imparted through the public education system, to which I now turn.

Adverse effects of the rapid expansion of formal education

Lieber (1981), Inkeles (1983), and James (2000) have focused on how public education inculcates “modern” values and promotes “modern” attitudes not only through its specific forms of knowledge, but also through “common principles of organization, procedures for assigning power and prestige, and modes for allocating rewards and punishment” (Inkeles 1983: 20). Lieber, in particular, has studied how, in Trinidad,

Euro-American ideas and ideals enter the society most pervasively and influentially through the educational system. Here they are instilled, often obliquely, as the standards of right and wrong. It is here that youthful hopes and ambitions are engendered and directed — but are too often left unfulfilled (Lieber 1981: 231)

³³ *Tecendo o Saber*, Module 3, DVD 2, Episode 9.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Similarly, the expansion of public schooling in Guaribas constituted a major platform for the transfer of “social technology”, and was one of TALHER’s main stated objectives. As a vital moralizing instrument for shaping the subjective capacities of future citizens, public education is to equip the individual with specific ideals and forms of knowledge which, in Guaribas, have come to be perceived as fundamental, both as a path to status enhancement and as valuable new cultural capital. From 1997, 17 public schools were constructed in village, and parents have since then enrolled their children en masse. Besides parents’ recognition of the importance of educational opportunities, more practical concerns such as eligibility to *Bolsa Família* cash transfers, which are conditional to a family’s offspring being enrolled in the public education system, and whose benefits increase with the number of children attending school, were probably involved in their decision.

Even so, by 2008, Guaribanos of all generations already associated formal education, scientific knowledge, and technological proficiency with the formation of a capable, modern individual, and contrasted the latter to typical villagers in the past, who, as “uneducated” farmers, were mostly illiterate, comparatively untrained in scientific knowledge and formal schooling, unversed in new technologies, insular regarding contact with mass media artefacts, and poor in relation to other communities concerning access to services, public infrastructure, purchasing power, and ownership of consumer goods. Adão Rocha, a farmer in his late fifties, conveyed in an interview how the lack of formal studies became associated with an inferior position in the balance of knowledge:

Guaribanos are a sort of humble people, hard-working farmers who don’t have education. (...) I’m a man of my own effort, and this same profession I taught my children. Because there was no study here. We didn’t know outsiders, no. (...) How can a place not have studies and know anything at all? We don’t know because there’s no-one to teach us, isn’t it? Now any kid anywhere already gives us a lesson. Because they have schooling and we didn’t have it.

Adão’s quote shows how Guaribanos’ greater isolation and lack of formal education in the past translates into an evaluation of deficiency in the balance of knowledge. It also reveals an admission of inferiority in relation to the (allegedly) better informed, educated, and more

cosmopolitan residents of the rest of the country. An illustration of the centrality of formal schooling and new forms of knowledge in the village is the malaise which the majority of Guaribanos revealed when asked about items of traditional knowledge and local folklore, associated as they now were with a past of ignorance and backwardness. One of my greatest difficulties during fieldwork was collecting detailed accounts of local knowledge from informants, such as legends, proverbs, songs, old customs, and so on. In semi-structured interviews and informal conversations, Guaribanos of all ages, but especially adults, showed a noticeable amount of hesitation and discomfort as I insisted on eliciting details about objects of local folklore, like the *Caboclo do Mato* (the “Indian of the Forest”, a mythical deity of the wilderness taking the shape of an Indian), the *Mãe d’Água* (the “Water Mother”, a deity who protects water sources and sings by the rock pools in the mountains), as well as children stories, lullabies, and old popular sayings. All of these were, more often than not, dismissed by adults with a smile and some nonchalant remark about the credulity of people in the past. The same obtained with older customs such as arranged marriages and bride-abductions, which were rebuffed by most villagers with the same suspicion of being “utter foolishness”. It is reasonable to speculate that a sense of embarrassment or shame underlay this reluctance to treat these articles of indigenous knowledge as significant, or even worthy of discussion.

Likewise, traditional healing knowledges and practices in Guaribas have been devalued and all but fallen into disuse. For instance, fat from giant anteaters (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), jaguars, and castrated black lambs without spots, formerly employed in massaging fractures, are now extremely rare in the village. Though many locals have iterated to me their effectiveness as anaesthetic and curative pomades, only one Guaribano I knew declared having some of those ingredients at home. A similar end befell the bark of the *camaçari* tree (*Terminalia fagifolia*), used in the treatment of indigestion and stomach aches, the rattle of the rattlesnake, and local chili pepper ground in *cachaça* (a Brazilian sugarcane spirit), used for myriad purposes and therapies. Yet, it is not simply a question of efficacy that causes Guaribanos to increasingly entrust their health to modern medicine and gradually disregard their traditional healing practices. For one, these cures have not almost fallen into disuse because villagers have

suddenly “realized” their inefficiency, since most Guaribanos I spoke to still believed in the potency of these traditional remedies. For another, pharmacological drugs and products, from sun-screen to cough medicine, are not always locally made use of according to their actual properties and functions, which does not help their efficacy. Thus adults and children who had burned themselves or who were suffering from mild sunburn regularly borrowed my sun-screen lotion for it to, as I was told, “suck the fire out”. My cough medicine was also popular for several unorthodox applications, such as leg bruises and the *potó* insect (*Paederus Irritans*) skin burns. Whatever the results of these alternative applications of pharmacological products, one is led to suspect that the issue of efficacy is not, at least, the main driving reason for this assimilation of modern medical products to the detriment of traditional treatments. It merely provides an instance of the valorisation of an extraneous, modern body of knowledge to the detriment of an “outdated” indigenous one. To be sure, the creativity of Guaribanos in the unconventional use of these products by itself suggests a notable level of syncretism rather than the straightforward superimposition of modern medical knowledge over former healing practices. The latter, however, would be the stated object of TALHER’s health and hygiene workshops, where traditional healing knowledges were both discouraged and dismissed as mere superstition.

As mentioned above, Guaribanos were all too easily identified by PFZ, the Brazilian government, and the national media with the incompetent and the impoverished within Brazilian society. By conveying Guaribanos as a deprived, isolated, and uneducated people “who can’t help themselves”, PFZ justified intervention and helped reproduce the relationships through which these people were seen as disadvantaged and inferior. From the perspective of development workers, imbued with the progressive cosmopolitanism by which mainstream Brazilian society judges the “rural provincialism” of a community such as Guaribas, Guaribanos were indeed “at the margins of society”. Therefore, perhaps unsurprisingly, there were signs of an internalization of subalternity in the village related to differential access to formal education and its extraneous body of knowledge. Whether Guaribanos were actually deficient in “self-esteem” before the arrival of PFZ, or interference from external knowledges and aesthetic paradigms that set their culture as poor, ignorant, and inferior have caused it, the fact is that a significant

number of adult Guaribanos seem to have internalised subaltern status in several domains, portraying themselves as uneducated, destitute, and backward in relation to other communities. Adão provided a definitive illustration of this in an interview. When I asked him about Guaribas in the past, he spontaneously embarked on a comparison between Guaribanos and “people like me”, that is, outsiders from larger cities, emphasizing how it would be very difficult for me to imagine how life in the village was in former times:

You were born in the light, we in the dark. Donkeys were our cars, hammocks, our beds (...) Before, people rose in life by wealth, but not today. The fellow today... it's by knowledge, by intelligence, by letters. In those times we could read letters [of the alphabet], write some, but it's not like today, when things are accepted, are changed, by proof of this and that. These are your things, since you have other, better knowledges, [that are] more refined, do you understand? And ours isn't like that: we read, write, tell [stories?]. You take in fast, grasp quickly... You have that “follow through” of other studies, another civilization [sic]. Not us, we are weaker.

Whilst the value of educational qualifications and accreditations is made obvious by their consequences for economic life in the metropolises to which villagers regularly migrate for temporary work — eligibility to more jobs, better paid occupations, and an increased prospect of prosperity in general — in the village, too, literacy, basic information technology skills, and secondary school diplomas are necessary requirements for the much coveted office jobs at the mayoralty made available since Guaribas' emancipation in 1997. Because these salaried desk jobs are better remunerated, lighter than manual work, and can only be taken by the more qualified local labour force — those who are better educated and somewhat computer savvy — they easily convert into social prestige and cultural capital, conferring a higher status on those who hold them. This can be demonstrated by the increasing desire of the younger generations of Guaribanos' for these municipal jobs and their concomitant lack of interest in farming, as well as by the increasing stigmatization of agricultural labour as the only option for “backward” (*carrancista*), “rustic” “peasants” without education.

Even though some village elders lamented rather categorically that “the young only study and don't want to work anymore”, others approved

of the local expansion of formal education, but believed it did not offset what they perceived as the prevalent lack of interest of young Guaribanos in farming: “Guaribanos are hard workers who don’t like wrong things”, Careca once told me, before proceeding to revise his statement, “I mean the older [generations]. Now, these novices [sic], they’re not too keen on [agricultural] work at all”. For instance, Tiago, Roxo, and Iracema were all villagers in their late teens who had graduated recently from high-school and had either municipal posts or salaried jobs in commerce. Whereas Tiago evocatively stated that he was “more pen than earth”, Roxo was unequivocal about his dislike for manual labour, playfully calling the hoe “his enemy”. Iracema worked at the small pharmaceutical drugstore in the village, and was so fascinated with the glamorous lives of national media celebrities that she could always be seen leafing through the pages of old glossy and tabloid magazines throughout the day. Returning from work in the fields, I often stopped by the drugstore in my soiled clothes to chat and rest for a few minutes before going home to wash. She would instantly leap up, throwing her arms in the air, and jokingly scream: “Protect me, Lord, from this man who’s dirty all over!”. When we finally sat together, she would beseech me to go home and only come back after having bathed, for she did not want to be seen next to a soiled man returning from the fields. Behind Iracema’s playfully exaggerated aversion to being spotted with a man grubby from farming lies the emerging local stigma of agricultural labour, the latter seen as an emblem of backwardness, lack of education, and poverty. Iracema, with her mind on the cosmopolitan world of soap opera stars and its sophisticated parties in the Southern metropolises of Brazil, wishfully declared several times not wanting to marry a farmer despite dating one. Similarly, Valda, Ceissa, and Luzia, unmarried young women in their late teens, often sat at the square after dark criticizing those young men who, even after washing, still looked like farmers. Their targets typically wore flip-flops and old-fashioned shirts sometimes slightly stained or torn, and these were accused of smelling, having rough skin, and not cleaning the dirt from their bodies (especially from under their fingernails) — all direct traces of agricultural activity.

In effect, the more I asked Guaribanos about their “aspiration models” and “life-careers”, their paradigms of “the good life”, the more I began to

notice a significant discrepancy between the ideals of teenagers and those of adult and elderly villagers.³⁵ Take, for instance, a few typical answers from middle-aged or senior Guaribanos to my standard question “what are/were your dreams in life?”. João Caititu, a villager in his late forties, replied as follows:

My dream was to be a well-liked person, a popular person. A person who didn't go about idly. My dream was to be peaceful, and not harm anybody else. (...) I never had difficult dreams, no. My dream, really, was just to work. And maybe be a motor biker too...

Likewise, Chefinho, a farmer in his late sixties, asserted that he “only thought of the fields for a career, and to buy, perhaps, a few head of cattle”. Sorriso, a villager in his seventies, told me in an interview that he didn't “even remember what [he] wanted to be, what [he] wanted in life”. Then, after a pause, he resumed: “Well, from the time I was old enough to remember, my dream was to make bird traps [*arapucas*], catch blue ground doves [*juritis*], and ‘gain’ a day's labour in the fields”.

Now compare these modest aspirations in the context of the village (to be a farmer, to be well-liked and popular, to hunt birds — rural, sociocentric, and even bucolic in nature — with answers to the same question by teenagers. Iracélia, who was 17 at the time, replied that she wanted to be a veterinarian, and suggestively added that this was *her* dream, not her parents'. Nequinho, then 18 years-old, straightforwardly stated that his dreams were “to have a car, a big house, and a lot of ‘dough’”. Tiago, 19, wanted to be a lawyer at first, but would settle for being a judge or a doctor: “I'm more pen than earth, anyway”, he would often say, alluding to his disinclination to be a farmer like his father.

These are but a few of the several accounts I collected in the course of fieldwork indicating that a gap had opened (or widened) between the dreams and career aspirations of the different generations of Guaribanos. This discrepancy in values and ideals led to new issues of intergenerational conflict. Though Guaribanos of all ages recognized the value and wide ranging applicability of formal education, adults openly associated the undermining of parental knowledge and authority with the expansion of public schooling.

35 These are Redfield's formulations (1960: 62).

For instance, Vermelho and Torinha, villagers in their late fifties, believed, respectively, that

the best thing about development is education. A great beauty, [to see] the son graduating. (...) But here, when it wasn't a town, children were obedient. You'd send them somewhere and they'd go. Today, they say that they won't. They go by their studies, by what's in the books.

Some of the things I thought didn't bring good development are due to education, because it's bringing much vanity... [sic] The children, who didn't know, are now knowing what I didn't know in the days of my youth. Disrespect. The son doesn't respect his father properly, the daughter doesn't respect the father, the child doesn't respect the adult.

Therefore, the significance of the expansion of formal education in the village is such that Guaribanos themselves not only assert that, as a set of novel and essential kinds of knowledge, it is at the root of their offspring's increasing independence, but that it also underlies new issues of intergenerational conflict. Parents complained that their children dodged agricultural work, slept in, and refused to submit to the temporal framework required for farming activities. Teenagers, on the other hand, complained that parents "live off the past and not the present, and don't make use of the knowledge already available". Accordingly, Tiago affirmed that teenage Guaribanos "learn more from their friends (...) technology, and television, than from their parents at home. (...) They see things on TV and think: 'if it's like that there, why can't it be [like that] here?'". A significant test of the balance of power between parents and their offspring is the latter's refusal to obey orders, fetch things for senior relatives, and ask for permission before leaving the house. "Not today", Tiago maintained, "the son only lets the parents know where he's going and when he's coming back. If they say 'no', well, it's the same, he goes anyway". As Tiago suggested, at the bottom of these new instances of intergenerational conflict is the dissemination of new lifestyle aspirations and prescribed forms of affluence, as well as the acquisition of new sets of knowledge and attitudes through mass media and formal education.

This brings us to a fifth, yet unmentioned, and perhaps more serious, side effect of the expansion of public schooling and mass media in

Guaribas: the emigration, particularly, of young Guaribanos. I was fortunate to befriend several young men and women who belonged to the first cohort to graduate from high school in Guaribas. Villagers then in their late teens, this generation was the first to grow up devoting significantly more time to formal education than to work in the fields. Of a close-knit group of nine seniors with which I associated during my time in Guaribas, only one remained in the village after my departure, and another returned recently after spending a brief period living in the São Paulo suburb of Jaguaré and working in metallurgy and construction. Moreover, in my last visit to Guaribas in February 2014, several Guaribanos complained that the younger generations now want to leave the village upon concluding their studies, and I learned that three out of the five young men my host family boasted as offspring had recently left for São Paulo.

Conclusion

This article addressed the social shaping of human subjects through pedagogies of personhood and images of deportment imparted by a variety of vehicles, from PFZ workshops in “beauty”, “hygiene”, and “citizenship education”, through mass media, to public education. Even if these vehicles are rarely formalized into a unified body of knowledge, and often contain elements from diverse discourses, they comprise a web of channels deploying values, ideals, patterned behaviours, and visual imageries, as well as common assumptions about selfhood and social life. More specifically, I attempted to show how PFZ went well beyond the delivery of financial aid, basic infrastructure, and economic technology in Guaribas, and sought to reform its beneficiaries’ conducts and capacities. Its unexpected “side-effects” ranged from the devaluation of artefacts of local knowledge, the decline of local farming, and the aggravation of intergenerational conflict, to the emigration of the younger generations, and Guaribanos’ increasing internalization of subaltern status (however partial or partially discursive it may be) in relation to other national communities.

Whilst some authors tend to regard development as a hegemonic framework that constructs social order and imposes appropriate ways of thinking and acting (Woost 1993; Hobart 1993; Escobar 2001; Mosse 2004), others emphasize the agency and decision-making strategies of social actors (Pigg

1992, Rossi 2004, Nash 1997; Grillo 1997). The fundamental problem, in my view, is not to decide which position is correct, but to account for the fact that both are. As Thompson proposes, even compliance is acceptable to clients if it achieves the desired results, and in strategically acquiescing to norms and procedures, clients demonstrate their agency (2005: 191). In Guaribas, in spite of the comprehensive reforms envisioned by PFZ, the limited success of project policies owes much to the reluctance of locals to assimilate the different values, ideals, and techniques that inform them (Sorrentino 2011). Guaribanos, therefore, are not simply passive subjects, but social actors actively crafting and making use of new opportunities. Hence, I have attempted, as much as possible, not to dichotomize the impact of PFZ in Guaribas by hypostasizing an extraneous system of knowledge and its “penetration” into an indigenous, traditional one. To that end, I have foregone the use of “systems of knowledge” altogether and gone straight to the description of the specific ideals, values, practices, customs, and attitudes that, in being (however partially) discrepant, underlie the development encounter in Guaribas.

Under PFZ, Guaribanos were primarily a target for economic and “social” technology, but hardly a population with the means for capitalizing on their use. Having acquired certain values and aspirations, and hence a demand for “developed” lifestyles which at least bear the outward semblance of urban modernity, it is questionable whether Guaribanos will come to possess the capacities to fulfil those aspirations. I particularly recall Fidélío, a villager in his late teens who had just graduated from secondary education, but who could read and write only to a very basic level, hopefully asking me if he would now “make it in São Paulo”. Neither his ambitions nor his limited qualifications to achieve them were surprising since in many fourth grade classes I attended in the village the teachers were still calling students to the blackboard to write their full names. This generation of Guaribanos will probably experience more directly the gap between imparted desires and the given means to achieve them. The probable outcome of this contradiction is that Guaribanos’ inability to indulge their preferences will tend to leave them with a sense of frustration and disappointment.

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Old and new visions of Brazilianness: the vagaries of equality, difference and 'race' in history textbooks

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Abstract

In this paper I discuss with the changes in Brazilian history textbooks brought about by the National Textbook Program (PNLD) during the 1980s, regard to put a greater emphasis on the value of democracy and questions of inequality, including those inequalities related to cultural differences, often in terms of "race". The analysis reveals a major paradigmatic shift from the notions of a nation built on "racial mixture" to one based on the tense and often conflictive relations between distinct racial and ethnic groups.

Keywords: National Textbook Program, racism

Resumo

Neste artigo irei me debruçar sobre as alterações observadas nos livros escolares brasileiros, em particular a partir do Programa Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD), consolidado nos anos 1980 e sobre sua ênfase na valorização dos princípios democráticos e sua focalização nas desigualdades incluindo aquelas relacionadas às diferenças culturais, não raro tomadas em termos de "raça". A análise revela a transição de um paradigma de nação construído sobre a ideia de mistura racial para outro centrado na ideia de tensão e das relações de conflito entre grupos étnicos distintos.

Palavras-chave: Programa Nacional do Livro Didático, racismo

Old and new visions of Brazilianness: the vagaries of equality, difference and 'race' in history textbooks

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Introduction

With the return to democracy in Brazil following the end of the military dictatorship (1964-1985) the new political freedoms allowed for a series of demands from burgeoning social movements previously suppressed or curbed by the authoritarian state. These social movements – which ranged from organizations campaigning for agrarian reform and for the right to adequate housing in large urban centres to the so-called 'diffuse' or collective rights of groups like women, black people and homosexuals – had an increasing impact in the media and on the agendas of political parties as these emerged over the 1980s and 90s. These campaigns widened the notion of citizenship in a society where historically the State had been the main distributor of rights; especially those conceded to workers in the formal sector and/or based on elitist and clientelist logics (Sorj 2000, Carvalho 2001). These processes were also accompanied by an endeavour to consolidate rights to basic services such as healthcare and education.

Since the latter topic is of particular interest here, it is worth noting that in the final decades of the twentieth century a national debate was still in progress concerning the limits posed to providing democratic access to quality education in the country. Some of the central points of this debate were the supposed decline in the quality of public education, the need for Brazil to train a skilled labour force capable of supporting economic growth and technological development (an argument still heavily inspired by the 'Economic Miracle' of the 1970s), the crusade against illiteracy and the

possibilities for the social inclusion of the poor through an improvement in educational opportunities.

As an offshoot to various of these issues, the suitability of the existing school books to the aims of a democratic education system also came under heated discussion during the post-dictatorship period in Brazil, and indeed persists into the present.

Although I have no intention here to survey (or reconstruct) a “history of textbooks in Brazil,” it should be emphasized that, as would be expected, the discourses built around them were permeated by political and ideological questions that varied over time.

In this article, I examine the changes to school books imposed by the National Textbook Program (*Programa Nacional do Livro Didático*: PNLD), introduced between the 1980s and 1990s, especially in terms of ensuring content and visual imagery that questioned inequalities, promoted particular discourses in favour of democracy and respect for cultural differences (not infrequently understood in ‘racial’ terms).

I therefore compare books written before these changes that I call Traditional Approach Books (**TABs**) with those published during them, which I term Revisionist Approach Books (**RABs**). While the former have come to be termed reactionary, the latter are in principle committed to discourses that, in Brazil, have tended to be labelled *progressive* by the lay public (campaigning for social justice, minority rights, human rights, awareness of environmental issues, and so on).

As Benedict Anderson suggests in his classic *Imagined Communities* (2005), the sense of nationality can be seen to result from the combination of physical and symbolic resources that produce the feeling of shared experience among fellow citizens. *Nation-ness*, which goes beyond nationalism, transcends the ideological projects of building a territorial, military, linguistic and administrative unity generally pursued by States.

In this sense, nationality is something that is both *empirical* and *fictional*, internalizable insofar as it can produce situations (*socioscapes*) and personas¹

1 I suggest the idea of *sócio-personagens* from what Benedict Anderson contributed with the term *sócio-paisagens*, considering them as figures able to incarnate certain aspects of what is supposed to be nation’s characteristics. In this sense, the “Malandro” of Roberto DaMatta, the mystic “baianas” of Jorge Amado and the tenacious “sertanejo” from Euclides da Cunha would be examples of brazilian “*sócio-personagens*” in the light of Anderson’s contribution.

(*socio-personagens*) identifiable with the citizens of a nation and thus enable the recognition of continuities and similarities between individuals otherwise different by definition.

The physical media favoured for the dissemination of the socioscapes and socio-personagens, Anderson argues, is the printed page, especially newspapers and novels with a social message. In this sense, the graphic medium has become the main channel through which nation-ness flows in western culture with increasing speed and scope, above all due to the technological advances experienced in the twentieth century.

Taking into account the expansion in the production/consumption of textbooks across practically the entire planet over the last century, I argue that they perform a very specific role in the diffusion of socioscapes and socio-personagens, serving to disseminate both nation-ness and nationalist doctrines (Choppin 2004). The epicentre of the on-going discussion is the construction of a new ideal of Brazilianness involving the promotion of discourses celebrating democracy and universal citizenship. I shall therefore focus particularly on history books (the History of Brazil and General History, and supplementary teaching materials), making only occasional use of books from Geography, Sociology and Social Studies, which figured in the research *a priori* as contrasting elements.

The article has three main aims: to contextualize the impact of Brazil's re-democratization process on education in the country and analyse the State's repositioning vis-à-vis the production of teaching materials; to reposition the discourses of Brazilianness inserted in this process and to examine their interface with fields of knowledge such as nineteenth-century criminal anthropology, cultural anthropology (1930s), social history and Brazilian sociology (post-1950); and finally to initiate a reflection on how the reformulation of the materials has impacted on everyday life of the classroom based on the perceptions of teachers and other professionals linked to the teaching-learning relationship.

Allied with the perceptions of specialists in education working in Brazil (Rosemberg et al. 2003; Luca & Miranda 2004) and theorists of studies of school materials (Choppin 2004), the article seeks to contribute to a debate that, though becoming more visible in scientific and administrative-public educational circles, is still far from gaining the attention it deserves given its importance in this field of knowledge.

A brief history of the research and data analysis

In a context shaped by Rio de Janeiro's low indicators for educational performance, the aim of my research as part of a wider project on educational problems in the city² is to explore in detail the production of textbooks in Brazil, particularly those used by public schools in the state and city of Rio de Janeiro.

With this research goal in mind, I examined forty-two books, mostly drawn from General History and the History of Brazil – including four supplementary teaching books, six teachers books, two geography books and a manual of sociology – published between the 1950s and 2012.

The criteria for selecting the books were based on their classroom use – in other words, all the books included in the study would have to have been effectively chosen and utilized – and those published after 1997 had to have been approved by the National Textbook Program (PNLD) based in the Ministry of Education.

It should be emphasized that the books published up to the 1980s were mostly obtained from the personal collection of the research project coordinator and the collaborating researchers. The remainder were found among the collections of teachers, directors and students from the public education system of Rio de Janeiro, with a predominance of books published after 2000.

As a first step it is important to delineate the profiles of the authors of the books defined here as traditional (TAB) with comparison to authors of more recent works. Many of the TAB authors clearly followed in the footsteps of iconic figures of twentieth-century Brazilian historiography like João Ribeiro and Capistrano de Abreu. Hence they combined their academic activities with other intellectual enterprises such as politics and the arts (João Ribeiro, for example, was a poet and philologist). As essayists, they developed or added to mostly generic interpretations of the origins and functioning of Brazilian society (Hansen 2000).

Generally speaking, the TABs (12 books were allocated in this category in the research) contain few illustrations – especially compared with

² The research project *School Ethos: Management and Production of Quality* is headed by anthropologist Yvonne Maggie at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) and funded by the Rio de Janeiro State Research Support Foundation (FAPERJ) from 2009 to 2013 and the National Scientific and Technological Development Council (CNPQ) since 2012.

present-day books – and few bibliographic references. Their arguments are presented without much in the way of theoretical or methodological concerns.

Many of their authors had studied or worked in important educational centres in Rio de Janeiro, capital of the Republic at the time, including the Institute of Education and Pedro II College. Subsequently they themselves became a reference point for other historians and teachers from their era.

The RAB authors, for their part, were nearly all trained in undergraduate and teaching training courses at universities (the majority public) from various regions of the country (predominantly the southeast). The 51 authors identified in the publications of revisionist books had the following qualifications:

Table 01

Highest level of qualification of RAB authors	
Postdoctorate	01
Doctorate	12
Master's	8
Bachelor/Teaching Diploma	26
Educational level not specified	4
Total	51

The majority of the authors with bachelor degrees, teaching degrees and/ or MA diplomas had careers in the primary and secondary school system, while those with doctoral and postdoctoral qualifications mostly worked at universities.

Hence we can observe that of the 51 authors identified, 25 worked in schools and 13 in universities (just two of the authors who worked in universities did not have a doctorate). The remainder did not declare their teaching activity.

While the careers of the TAB authors seem to have developed through their inclusion in the national intellectual elite (or at least state elites) with teaching experience at institutions like the Historical and Geographic Institute of São Paulo, the Federal Chamber of Deputies and Senate, and so on, the activity of the modern architects of Brazilian historiography is linked to work within a fairly specific professional-market niche, guided by

rules on publication, evaluation and distribution consolidated by the PNLD and other directives (Luca & Miranda 2004).

As well as analysing the authorship and content of the textbooks, semi-structured interviews and meetings were also held with primary and secondary school teachers from Rio's public school system. The secondary school teachers were chosen from the areas of History, Sociology, Geography and Philosophy, though staff from the first discipline predominated. The research also involved the participation of teachers from primary school, pedagogical coordinators and assistant directors.

The interviews and meetings were conducted with the following framework of questions: (1) the academic staff's views of how to approach the themes of Brazilianness, citizenship and otherness (the respect for differences) in the classroom; (2) the utilization (or not) of the school book as a tool in the teaching-learning relationship; and (3) the perception of teachers concerning the teaching of the History of Brazil today.

Researchers of the subject like Alain Choppin (2004) claim that when investigating the history of western science's interest in school materials, we invariably encounter two distinct methodological tendencies. The first of these, classified by the author as 'ideological,' focuses on the analysis of content where attention falls not on the book per se but on the treatment given to particular historical figures, events, polemics, political facts and so on. The central question is not "the book and its production" but "what the book discusses..." The second tendency, labelled epistemological or didactic, concerns the construction of the book as an object in the science of education. The central point is the book's capacity to foster critical reflection among its readers, adapt to specific pedagogical programs, promote knowledge building and so on. This approach focuses on the book as a 'tool.' As Choppin points out, these two dimensions are indissociable. However, it is worth emphasizing that the present research veers more towards the field defined by the first tendency.

My underlying impression is that school textbooks are the outcome of power relations that potentially express the conflict of interests between distinct social groups. They attempt to enforce the hegemony of a particular idea, or even constitute part of a State strategy to defend its legitimacy or the construction/consolidation of national sentiments (Choppin 2004). On the other hand, in symbiotic form, these materials also produce discourses,

ideas, hegemonies and thus engender new power relations (Choppin 2004; Althusser 1985).

In the present case, my interest lies in observing how political discourse after the military dictatorship and the endeavour to affirm democracy, citizenship and respect for cultural differences – and subsequently, as we shall see, racial differences – as values began a process that I qualify as a revision of the History (and historiography) of Brazilian society and, by extension, the contents of school books.

Nonetheless, I wish to problematize – albeit rapidly given the space available here – some points in the production, evaluation, circulation and use of textbooks in Brazil, in particular those in History.

An overview of textbooks in Brazil

Authors like Luca and Miranda (2004) help shed light not only on how social representations contained in textbooks express a specific political context, but also the extent to which the processes involved in the production and distribution of textbooks also comprise an epiphenomenon of wider configurations of power.

It was in the Vargas Era (the 1930s), for example, that the first attempts were made to standardize and influence school textbooks. Government measures such as the creation of the Ministry of Education and Public Health Affairs and the issuing of Law Decree 1006/1938, which created the National Textbook Commission (CNLD) are examples.

In a political context involving the centralization of power in the hands of the State and a cultural atmosphere of promoting national identity, textbooks fell under political-ideological control, losing their didactic or methodological function in the process (Witzel 2002).

It was only in the period after the military coup d'état that the national textbook policy would once again undergo significant changes, especially through the participation of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in setting up the Technical Book and Textbook Commission (COLTED) in 1970 (Freitag et al. 1997).

With a plan to distribute 51 million school books in its three years of operation, the military government's policy for textbooks involved a strong technicist bias (aimed towards rapid growth in Brazil's economy),

the dissemination of a jingoistic nationalism (exalting the fatherland and civicism) and, as Luca and Miranda (2004) argue, by an acritical and heroic interpretation of national historiography.

The next major shift in the treatment of textbooks in Brazil was during the period of re-democratization with the setting up of the Textbook Program in 1985. As a dual management program (the regulatory guidelines are established by the Ministry of Education while production and distribution was coordinated by the Student Assistance Foundation/FAE until 1997 and subsequently by the National Education Fund/FNDE), the first years of the PNLN's activities saw a huge disparity between the demand from schools and the production, evaluation and distribution of books by the Federal Government. According to the authors:

Research carried out in Brazil and sponsored by the MEC itself has indicated at distinct moments [the existence of] undeniable problems involving systematic delays in the publication and distribution of the guide for schools, all kinds of incongruences in relation to the choices made by teachers and the dispatch of works by the FNDE, delays in schools receiving the books, as well as weaknesses in terms of the use of the works sent, sometimes disdained or even ignored entirely by the teachers. (Luca & Miranda 2004: 126)

These questions, far from negligible, have to do with the logistics of production and distribution. At the same time, though, other questions of an ideological and pedagogical kind needed to have been addressed. As Mantovani (2009) points out, the *Textbook Seminar: Content and Assessment*, organized in 1995 by the MEC's Primary Education Department, began a process (even though the event focused on books from Years 1 to 4) of systemizing the evaluation of textbook contents with the stipulation that the Federal Government could only acquire materials approved by competent bodies.

Two key issues emerged as an outcome of the *Textbooks Seminar* and became eliminatory criteria for the acquisition of school materials: "(1) books [could not] express **prejudices relating to origin, race, sex, colour, age or any other form discrimination**; (2) and [could not] be outdated, or contain or lead to serious errors in relation to the area concerned, such as conceptual errors, for example" (Mantovani 2006: 43, my emphasis).

In exploring the ideological and pedagogical dimensions of school textbooks, the seminar on evaluation guidelines highlighted concerns echoed in the works of authors like Nosella (1981, cited in Mantovani 2006:37-8)

(a) the textbook maintains stereotyped views of the family (the family shown in the books adheres to the traditional model, formed by heterosexual parents, children and grandparents); (b) the books reproduce the ideology of the dominant classes in which class conflicts to a certain extent remain concealed or minimized; (c) in the books the school is presented as a 'second home' and not seen as a space for socialization and raising pupil awareness of rights and duties; (d) in the books obedience and conformism are seen as a virtue and a behavioural standard to be followed; (e) the books seldom explore scientific reflexivity, appealing instead to formulae that are given but never explained; and (f) the books reproduce stereotypes concerning particular sectors of the population, such as indigenous peoples, who are treated as a distant element outside the real world.

Consequently, the contribution of the authors cited above allows us to adduce that the school textbook policy developed in the period of re-democratization has the following the central points: (1) the defence of libertarian and egalitarian principles, geared towards the democratization of access to teaching materials; (2) the inclusion of teachers in the selection process, and (3) a focus on the quality of school books, conditioning private sector production on public sector approval.

Hence, the Textbook Program, since its shift towards technical evaluation,³ has been supported by the Textbook Guides which have become a kind of filter orienting the process of academic staff choosing their teaching materials using the criteria highlighted above. It should also be noted that other policy guidelines on the production and utilization of teaching books were also introduced from the mid-1990s, in particular in the area of History.

³ The PNLD classifies textbooks into four categories. Excluded books – which fail to meet the minimum requirements (conceptual errors or racist, homophobic and/or sexist content, etc.); non-recommended books – which present flaws in terms of contributing to a good education; books recommended with some reservations – which meet the minimum criteria in terms of quality but which require teachers to complement or adjust the content; and recommended books – which perform their desired pedagogical function, including meeting more specific criteria. In the PNLD's initial evaluation, 60.3% of the books were classified as non-recommended and around 17% were excluded. For more details, see Mantovani 2006.

A detailed evaluation of the official documents produced by the Brazilian State via the Ministry of Education would extend beyond the scope and aims of this paper. We can cite, though, the creation of the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Primary Education and Valorisation of Teaching (FUNDEF), which aims to improve the quality and recognition of the teaching profession; the Cash in the School Program, which seeks to encourage the independence of schools and the development of their own educational projects; policy evaluation (SAEB – Basic Education Evaluation, ENEM – National Secondary Education Exam) and the Provão (National Course Exam) which orients and supports the teaching systems towards improving quality; and TV Escola (School TV), which allows teachers from diverse parts of the country to access up-to-date information and proposals on educational practices.

Two core initiatives can be mentioned here that combine with the National Textbook Program (PNLD) to provide ‘lines of approach’ to questions like citizenship, democracy and respect for differences. The first is the National Curricular Parameters (*Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais*: PCNs) project, institutionally defined as follows:

[...] they [the parameters] constitute a benchmark for quality education at Primary Level across the country. Their function is to guide and guarantee the coherence of investments in the educational system, sharing discussions, research and recommendations, and supporting the participation of Brazilian technical officers and teachers, especially those working in more isolated environments with less contact with the contemporary pedagogical literature. (Brazil/MEC 2007)

Set up almost simultaneously with the creation of the National Textbook Program, the PCNs can be summarized as a reference material for approaching interdisciplinary themes with primary and secondary school students. These are: Ethics, Health, Environment, Cultural Plurality and Sexual Orientation. The basic idea behind these parameters was to harmonize the work of teachers from diverse regions of the country, working in very different sociocultural contexts, with a set of ideas aimed at valorising education committed to training citizens who would be open to subjects of collective interest, aware of contemporary issues (sustainable consumption, globalization, etc.) and more disposed to respect diversity.

The second initiative, set out in Law 10.639/03, makes teaching the History of Africa and Afro-Brazilian Culture compulsory in teaching institutions throughout the country (later amended by Law 11.645/08 to include the History of Indigenous Populations as a further compulsory element). This law emerged as a more clearly political initiative, responding to what is described as a historical demand made by movements campaigning for black rights in Brazil for revising materials that tend to produce or reproduce stigmas and preconceptions, simultaneously redefining the role of black people in national historiography through the recognition of not only the oppression experienced in the colonial context but also the struggle of black men and women in pursuit of citizenship and a dignified life, with the need to confront racial discrimination (Augusto dos Santos 2005; Sant’Anna 2001).

Specifically discussing the evaluation of History books, Luca & Miranda (2004) indicate a gradual rise in the approval rates of the materials, which, the authors argue, is explained by the successive adaptations made by authors and editors to the parameters cited above. Market concentration, where smaller companies (and their professional workers) tend to become incorporated into a few publishing groups, has facilitated this process of adjustment to the regulatory framework established by the State.

Despite this market dynamic and an evaluation process that has had a centralizing tendency since its origin, the authors do not observe complete homogenization of teaching materials, in particular History books. Mapping the evaluation guidelines set for PNLD 2005,⁴ Luca & Miranda (2004) note four central themes: “(1) how History is viewed; (2) the relation to the student’s knowledge building process; (3) how the curriculum is approached, and (4) the general relation to the development of Historiography.” In terms of types of orientation, the authors distinguish between those books with a *procedural* approach, guided by historiographic research, questioning sources, and paying special attention to the construction/legitimization of historiographic knowledge, and those with an *event-based* approach, adopting a more informative than critical approach, and finally those with a *global* approach, which

4 In this instance 28 History collections were analysed with 22 being approved and 6 excluded. For further details, see Luca & Miranda 2004.

continue to make use of historical information derived from socially accumulated logic, as well as the canonical areas of content, but also explores how historical knowledge is constructed, problematizes sources, and presents elements that ensure that both students and teachers are aware of the provisory dimension of historical explanation. (2004: 135)

Surveying the history books submitted to PNLD 2005, the authors indicate the predominance of event-based narratives (69% of the history collections presented), though this should not conceal the advances made by procedural or global approaches and their advocating of a critical and constructivist view of historiographical knowledge.

In sum, the contribution of the authors cited above converges in recognizing that analyses of school materials form a complex dimension of social research, taking into account an intricate web of actions undertaken by a wide network of agents, which include editors, authors, analysts, managers, teachers, directors and students. Hence fundamental dimensions like the economic interests of the actors involved, the power dynamics that delineate a particular textbook policy, ideological aspects promoted by the State as mainstays of its legitimacy – within a particular historical context – and the cognitive nuances of the teaching-learning relationship emphasized by any given editorial output are just some of the elements that permeate analyses of this kind of material.

The objectives of the present article are modest given the scale of the challenges involved. My aim is to examine how the notion of Brazilianness was presented in history textbooks during a period spanning from the second half of the twentieth century to the first decade of the new millennium. The intention is to analyse the impact of certain discourses consolidated during the re-democratization process, specifically ideas of nationality that had traditionally been transmitted to new generations not only through school books, but also through major rituals celebrating the nation and absorbed into popular culture. I set out, therefore, from the premise that the post-1980 re-democratization process, which included the founding of the National Textbook Program, was defined not only by the promotion of ideas like equality, citizenship and respect for the individual and collective rights of citizens at the level of politics *praxis*, but also by revisions to the actual

history of the nation and a reappraisal of certain values of the present through a rewriting (or reinterpretation) of the past.

Brazil and its origins: Traditional Approach Books (TAB)

In the TABs, the *Portuguese adventurer*, the *African slave* and the *autochthonous and wild Indian* compose a national mythology, while simultaneously projecting various *sociopersonas* as protagonists in the development of social relations during Brazil's Colonial and Imperial periods.

In the 1952 edition of his *História do Brasil*,⁵ the historian and politician Basílio de Magalhães,⁶ a native of Minas Gerais state, defined the formation of the Brazilian people as follows:

Brazilian ethnicity resulted from the fusion of three elements: the xanthodermic [yellow-skinned], owner of all the vast region and occupying it uninterruptedly from south to north and east to west; the leucodermic [white-skinned], represented by the Portuguese, discoverer and colonizer, as well as other Europeans coming in small numbers and for various reasons already pointed out previously, such as the Spanish, French and Dutch; and the melanodermic [black-skinned], introduced here in huge numbers from the beginning of regular occupation until 1855 in order to, in the state of slavery, provide indisputable services to domestic life, agriculture, mining and diverse other industries.

None of the three main factors involved in the emergence of the Brazilian from the colonial period was pure or homogenous: the Portuguese were a diversely formed ethnic group as I have already had occasion to point out; the Amerindian population was also heterogeneous, formed by the Ges and

5 Magalhães (1952).

6 The historian Basílio de Magalhães was born in Minas Gerais in 1874, and died in 1957. According to the archives of the Teaching and Textbook Laboratory of the History Department of FFLCH, University of São Paulo (USP), he was a history teacher at the Institute of Education in Rio de Janeiro, and was active in politics, representing Minas Gerais as a Senator and a Federal Deputy. He was also acting director of the National Archive and Teacher in the History of Civilization at Pedro II College in the 1930s. His publications included *História do Brasil - 3ª série*, issued in 1945, and *História do Brasil para a segunda série dos cursos clássico e científico*, dated 1955, both published by Livraria Francisco Alves; *História do Comercio, Industria e Agricultura*, published in 1934 by Companhia Editora Nacional; *Expansão Geográfica do Brasil Colonial* published in 1944 by Espasa publishing house. For more information, see: <http://leamad.fflch.usp.br/node/491>. It should be noted that the publication date contained in the research archives (1952: see previous note) and the date of the work held at the Teaching and Textbook Laboratory of the History Department of FFLCH, University of São Paulo (USP) [1955] do not coincide. I presume that the version analysed here had yet to be included in the Laboratory's database or collection.

the Tupis, encountered on the coast or near to it, the latter having been more inclined to accept mixing with the Whites; and the Africans brought here by their Portuguese enslavers, coming from diverse racial types from the black continent. (Magalhães 1952: 49).

Aimed at a young readership (equivalent today to the second year of secondary education), Magalhães' book emphasizes two features typical of the History textbooks defined here as traditional: the presence of the three 'founding elements' and the idea of mixture – or the 'loss of purity' – as a striking feature of the nation's birth.

The definition of Brazilians as a people capable of aggregating various cultural conditions but who are fundamentally Black, Indian and Portuguese reappears in *História do Brasil (Coleção Didática F.T.D.)*, aimed at the fourth grade of high school, equivalent today to the ninth year of schooling) in 1957. In Chapter III, entitled 'Ethnic Formation,' we encounter the following passage:

Three races contributed to the ethnic formation of the Brazilian people: the Whites, the Blacks and the indigenous people. [...] Brazil only knew European immigrants of nationalities other than the Portuguese after proclaiming its Independence [...]. Before this time we only encounter residues of Dutch and French elements resulting from these nations' attempts to seize control of part of our territory. These are simple residues unlikely to be a sizeable factor in our ethnic formation. (Coleção Didática, 1957:30)

The basic organizational structure of the TAB books analysed in the research covered four themes: (1) Discovery (historical background); (2) Ethnic Formation; (3) Administrative Regime of the Colony; and (4) Expansion and Defence of the Territory. *Ethnic Formation* can be taken as a guiding element in this approach: it is taken as the source of conditioning factors that help 'explain Brazil' from the colonial period to the proclamation of the Republic and the collapse of the slavery system. Although 'the encounter of the races' is its central element, the supposed levels of cultural and technological development of 'the three races' are taken to have delineated the later sequence of historical facts, such as they are perceived. In this view, then, the 'more advanced civilizational stage' of the Portuguese had enabled their overseas adventure, as well as the development of the country's legal, political and religious institutions, the energy for work of

black Africans had helped sustain the economic system based on sugar cane plantations, while the native knowledge of the untamed land had enabled the fight against invasions and separatist movements. This ethnic formation, though conditioned by different ‘civilizational stages,’ could be successful in a configuration where ‘each one has its role,’ with the Portuguese assuming the role of governing the nation.

In his text “Digression: the fable of the three races,” Roberto DaMatta, based on an analytic framework that highlights the contrast between the egalitarian-democratic and authoritarian-hierarchical principles evident in Brazilian society, develops a model of Brazilian social structure in which the white population occupies a privileged situation with black and indigenous people (and *mestiços* in general) in a subaltern position. According to DaMatta, Brazil’s social stratification appears in racial terms. This fragile social arrangement is based on the idea of a complementarity, in which the conviviality between ‘racial groups’ is celebrated, although the cultural (civilizational) ranking between them is also reaffirmed.

This view of Brazil’s social reality can be found recurrently in the TABs: the celebration of a singular mixture and the recognition of the nation’s viability as a civilization. A perception that follows in the footsteps of authors like A. Ramos, Manoel Bonfim and in particular Gilberto Freyre, who, abandoning earlier racist premises concerning the moral and intellectual inferiority of non-whites, observed the racial encounter from a perspective of the cultural whole. In another sense, though, we can also still detect the shadow of racial inequality given that the contribution of the Portuguese in the prevailing discourse of the TABs – with the predominance of their language, institutions and religion – is taken to be greater.

In a new publication of his *História do Brasil* in 1958, Basílio de Magalhães summarizes the role of the Portuguese for the future of the nation as follows:

Indisputably the most beautiful flowering of Portugal’s historical mission – to reveal the immensity of the human planet for civilization and culture – and its colonizing potential is Brazil. (Magalhães 1958: 41)

Citing authors like Silvio Romero, Roquette-Pinto and Oliveira Viana, Basílio Magalhães assesses the participation of Brazil’s formative elements in the colonial economic structure as follows:

[From the] economic viewpoint, the African played a more important role than the Indian, since it was they who essentially helped transform primitive bartering transforming into a commercial activity. In domestic life it was also the *mamães-pretas* [black mothers] who transmitted so many tales and so much affection to the nation's social formation. (1958: 51, my emphasis)

Returning to the *Coleção Didática* adopted by the Marista Brothers, we find a passage that exemplifies the arguments developed earlier:

The white man was represented by the Portuguese, who discovered and colonized the land [and who] came to constitute the most important part of the Brazilian population, transmitting his language, religion and customs [...]. The **indigenous element with its inferior civilization and semi-savage customs** was quickly dominated, despite the strong resistance opposing the plans of the *conquistadores*. **The black element, originating from Africa, was introduced into Brazil to labour in the fields, replacing the indigenous people who refused to submit to the work of a sedentary life.** (*Coleção Didática*, 1957: 62) (My emphasis)

Having coordinated the *Revista de Ensino do Rio Grande do Sul* for 21 years, a journal that attained a print run of 50,000 copies, circulated throughout Brazil, the primary school teacher Maria de Lourdes Gastal was the author of the book *Estudos Sociais e Naturais* [Social and Natural Studies], the 12th edition of which was published in 1961.

Targeted at Year 3 of primary school, the work is divided between the areas of History and Geography with an approach focused on the occupation and demographic formation of Brazil's southern states. Hence those contents that usually appear under rubrics like 'our folk' or 'the formation of the Brazilian people,' in this work are inserted in the topic 'Influence of German and Italian Colonization.' On the Brazilian types, or rather, those of the South, we read:

[The Indians were the inhabitants encountered by Cabral when he landed here.] They were men, women and children with skin burnt by the sun and straight black hair. They walk around naked and, on festival days, adorn themselves with bird feathers, necklaces, bracelets and body painting. [...] Most of Brazil's tribes have today been pacified and have a friendly relationship with civilized

folk, thanks to Marshal Rondon who devoted his entire life to defending the Indians. (Gastal 1961: 17-8)

Germans, Italians and their cultural contribution to the southern region are described thus:

To develop agriculture in Rio Grande do Sul, the government allowed German colonists to come. They populated the forests, built roads, developed agriculture, began and developed various industries. Orderly, good heads of family, Christian and hard-working, the Germans transmitted these qualities to their descendants who have, moreover, an exemplary family education.

As well as German colonization, Rio Grande do Sul also took in Italian colonists. These devoted themselves especially to viniculture and winemaking [...] Highly dedicated to work, fervent Christians and, for this very reason, good heads of family, a happy spirit, communicative, fine musicians and singers, the Italians transmitted these qualities to their descendants. (1961: 88)

On the supposed predominance of one culture over the others (or, read without the culturalist anachronism, the dominance of one 'race' over the others), the arguments of the lawyer, politician and historian Brasil Bandecchi (a member of the Historical and Geographic Institute of São Paulo) are among the most contradictory. At the same time as he recognizes the superiority of European civilization, he categorically asserts the equality of the contributions of Blacks, Indians and Portuguese. He writes:

When it came to the composition of the Brazilian people, whether due to their much higher numbers or more advanced civilization, European culture ended up prevailing. This culture would stand out more. Much more. Nonetheless, the Blacks left very clear traces, meaning that they really stood out. The Indian influence was much less. (...) **It cannot be said that one culture dominated the other, but that there was a sum of positive factors in the formation of our people.** (Bandecchi 1973: 89) (My italics)

This type of contradiction is found in other examples. While the superiority of one culture/'race' over another is affirmed – normally registered as technological development or 'moral eminence' – the texts recognize that all are equal and all have played a fundamental role in the nation's development.

In the *Enciclopédia Ilustrada para Educação Básica* ('Illustrated Encyclopaedia for Primary Education') by Jose Abila Filho, published in 1977, we encounter a description of how Brazilian culture was formed that is very similar to Brasil Bandecchi's version. The entry 'Ethnic Elements' states:

Blacks: **Their participation in the Brazilian economy was greater than that of the *silvícolas*** [‘forest dwellers’: indigenous peoples]. **They represent the main workforce in the national economy due to their knowledge of agricultural, mining and metallurgy, as well as the facility that they showed for learning.** From them we inherited religion and cuisine.

Whites: (...) [through the influx of migrants] **brought more advanced technical knowledge and more complex life habits, and represented a human capital that eventually consolidated** [Brazil's] **population.** (Abila Filho 1977: 142) (My emphasis)

The remarks on indigenous culture appear in a separate entry:

Possessing a very backward culture, Brazilian Indians live in various groups. They are differentiated among themselves by language, tradition and physiognomy. [...] Initially good friends to the Portuguese, providing valuable services through enslavement, they then revolted, constantly attacking the [mission] villages and plantations since they were unaccustomed to work. (1977: 156) (My emphasis)

A specific entry of the Encyclopaedia describes the 'interbreeding' between Indians and other 'races,' called 'Brasilíndios':

those who appear in the towns almost always bring with them two stigmas of our civilization, the vice of drunkenness and syphilis. Their favourite pastimes are festivals and dancing. (1977: 200)

Once again an initial reading suggests a dismissal of the cultural contribution made by Brazil's black and indigenous populations. However, José Abila Filho's work also contains a recognition of the 'cultural whole' achieved by miscegenation. Concerning the Portuguese, the author tells us:

[...] from them we received a priceless legacy: the language that we speak, the bases of western culture, Catholicism [...] **they taught us not to differentiate**

between the races, showing that all are equal, by interbreeding with the Indians and Blacks, producing large-scale miscegenation. (1977: 210)

But the idea of a whole is only possible thanks to the harmonization and reconciliation of Brazil's 'formative elements.' Consequently the conflicts inherent to slavery, catechism and acculturation are downplayed in traditional books in favour of promoting an ideal of conformity that over more recent decades has been denounced by black activists as a false sense of cordiality (Guimarães 2002, Hanchard 2001).

One of the most striking features of the TABs, then, is the apprehension of Brazilian society during the colonial and imperial periods as a harmonious composition in which each racial group made its own contribution, with the Portuguese responsible for guiding the nation along its civilizational path. In this view, sexual contact functions as a 'trimmer,' shaping the formative elements – self-contained in their cultural specificities – into a single whole: the Brazilian.

The idea of a racial-cultural amalgam transmutes into the idea of the nation and thus the notion of the fatherland. In his supplementary teaching book *Eles fizeram a história do Brasil* ('They made the history of Brazil'), published in 1963, the author Roberto Macedo provides a fictional account in which historical characters are interviewed by a boy, Rebedeco, a pupil who the night before a school exam begins to dream of these legendary figures who recount their deeds for the nation.

After meeting Cristopher Columbus and Pedro Álvares Cabral in his dreams, the boy encounters the chief Temininó Araribóia. He tells him about his heroic role, alongside the Portuguese, in expelling the French from Guanabara Bay. Presenting himself as a kind of guardian of indigenous lands, 'legitimately conquered' by participating in the attack on the French invaders, Araribóia recounts his epic tale to Rebedeco, reaffirming the role of Indians as allies in the defence of Portuguese sovereignty over Brazil.

As depicted by the TABs, black and indigenous people can form a vital part of the Portuguese civilizational framework through a shared sense of communion. Catechism is portrayed in the book by the image of a thankful and docile Indian (Paranaguaçu) at the feet of the Jesuit José de Anchieta, under the watchful eye of Rebedeco:

In the book the figure is accompanied by a caption that gives voice to the Indian Paranaguaçu. He says: "and now I know how good you are, I shall end

this war against the Tamoios – the kneeling Paranaguauçu confessed emotionally.” (Macedo 1963: 29). The wars against the European ‘invaders’ are treated as a question for all Brazilians, here equalling BLACKS + INDIANS + PORTUGUESE. The amalgam, which is both genetic and cultural, as defined by the TABs, is presented in Macedo’s book as a national issue.

Figure 1



Discussing the expulsion of the Dutch from Pernambuco, the author, through the voice of the governor of Pernambuco, Matias de Albuquerque, conjectures: “...there for the first time, Whites, Indians and Blacks fought side-by-side against an invader of Brazilian territory. There was already, therefore, the feeling of defending the Fatherland” (Macedo 1963: 76). This rhetorical pattern continues unaltered until we reach the material produced in the mid-1990s when a shift is perceptible in the discourse concerning the (con)forming of the Brazilian people. Now, the contradictions inherent to the relations of domination between colonizers, natives and slaves are emphasized and miscegenation loses its force as a social phenomenon capable of projecting the sociopersonas of the nation’s birth beyond conflicts.

Revisionist Approach Books (RABs) or reinterpreting Brazil

One of the key features of the books defined here as revisionist is their trenchant critique of the ideas of racial harmony evident in traditional approaches. In these textbooks, Brazil is depicted as a country that lives contradictorily with an ideal of integration and empirical evidence of inequality,

a theme that predominates in revisionist approaches. In the book *História e Consciência do Brasil* ('History and Awareness of Brazil,' Secondary Education) by Gilberto Cotrim, first published in 1994, Brazil's racial mixture is defined in the section 'The Myth of Racial Democracy: the imposition of the cultural patterns of the Europeans (Chapter V)':

Taking the implications of racial miscegenation much too far, some authors like Gilberto Freyre (...) concluded that Brazil was the setting for a true **racial democracy**. (...) **But in reality this harmonization never occurred, since the relations of domination between metropolis and colony were not limited to the economic sector, they also extended to the sociocultural dimension.** The European colonizers, enabled by their political-economic control, imposed European cultural patterns on Brazil. **They entirely scorned the cultural legacies of the Indians and the Blacks, considering them the contributions of inferior classes. However many cultural elements of the Indians and the Blacks were perpetuated in Brazilian life since they became incorporated into the customs of the people, without the consent of the dominant class, whose objective was solely to Europeanize the Colony.** (Cotrim 1994: 66) (My emphasis)

Citing the book *História do Brasil Colonial*, by Luiz Roberto Lopes, published in 1981, G. Cotrim gives us the following passage:

The Blacks and the Indians were forced to adopt these norms and values due to the state of submission in which they were held. Subject to physical and cultural violence, **blacks and Indians saw their patterns of behaviour and existence demeaned and even destroyed.** (Lopes 1981: 20 *apud* Cotrim 1994: 66) (My emphasis)

In this sense, the idea of a cultural amalgam is replaced by the denunciation of the domination imposed by the European colonizers. In the book *Geografia Geral e do Brasil* (Secondary Education), by João Moreira and Eustáquio Sene, published in 2004, in the chapter 'The Brazilian population,' we encounter another example of how the nation's 'year zero' was interpreted by the RABs:

From 1500, native ethnic groups began to suffer genocide (physical extermination) or ethnocide (the destruction of their own culture: they began

to speak another language, to profess a new religion, they changed their dress and their food, in other words, they became part of the colonizers' society).

(Moreira & Sene 2004: 448)

In Chapter II, 'The Europeans Arrive,' of *Trilhos e Trilhas* ('Tracks and Trails,' Fourth Grade History, Second Edition, Teacher's Manual), published in 2004, the authors Maria Salvadori and Jane Fernandes explore the theme through the idea of a 'meeting of differences' and, subsequently, of the difficulties of resolving these differences over time. In the section 'The Indians in today's Brazil,' they write:

Of the many indigenous groups who inhabited Brazil, few remain today. For the vast majority of these groups, contact with the 'whites' over these more than 500 years has been alarming. Many Indians have been dominated, others have been killed in the fight to ensure their freedom and their rights...

(Salvadori & Fernandes 2006: 34)

The reading exercise concludes with the presentation of the 'Case of the Indian Galdino,' quoting a report from the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, dated April 1997. The text reads:

Brasilia - The Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe Indian Galdino Jesus dos Santos was burnt alive yesterday by five middle class youths. He was sleeping at a bus stop when at around 5.30 am a Monza pulled up next to him. The youths threw a liquid over his body [...] and set fire to him. Rescued, Santos arrived conscious at the Asa Norte Regional Hospital (HRAN) but the doctors saw no chance for his survival. (2006: 34)

The treatment given to Brazilian Blacks is fairly similar. Images from the past show the harshness of plantation work. Emphasis is given (in Chapters III and IV) to the resistance strategies represented by *capoeira* (a balletic martial art of African origin), *quilombo* (maroon) communities and Afro-Brazilian religion. The conflicts of the past find themselves actualized in the present, not as a kind of echo that has gradually drained in strength but primarily as a practice that is reproduced through diverse forms of prejudice and racial discrimination. The arguments are illustrated with a report published in *Veja* magazine on 7 February 1996:

The routine humiliation of middle class black people exposes the [disguised] racism in Brazil. **In Brazilian racial democracy, an optimistic idea sustained by romantic anthropologists, the black person who rises socially is destined to discover a more subtle face of discrimination.**

As an example: many police officers regularly pull over black men driving luxury cars [...]. While in the case of the police, this racism is explicit, in other situations it is more subtle, though no less painful. The Bahian entrepreneur Luis Carlos Reina, owner of assets worth two million reais, proved that it is not enough to be rich to be free of such annoyances. At the end of 1994, he made a telephone purchase, from Salvador, of a Mustang Coupe car from a dealership in São Paulo. He was called 'doctor' [a recognition of social status] on the phone and made a R\$ 58,000 down payment. When he arrived to fetch the vehicle he was rudely treated by the receptionist who refused to call the car salesman. 'So fetch me the manager,' Reina said impatiently. 'It's impossible to find him,' the woman replied. The quarrel continued until the entrepreneur identified himself as the buyer of the Mustang. 'Within a few seconds everyone appeared,' he recalled. **'Black people are treated with intolerance in Brazil. When you have money, you get called doctor, but you're always seen as the exception,'** Reina laments. (1996: 66) (My emphasis)

The book *O Racismo na História do Brasil* [Racism in the History of Brazil], an extra-class book published in 1996, written by the historian Maria Luiza Tucci Carneiro, exemplifies this questioning the ideas of harmonization promoted by the TABs, along with the search to comprehend the inequalities of the present through the reproduction of the oppressions of the past. The forms of learning and teaching the History of Brazil are also thrown into question.

The Imagined Brazil

Brazil always sought to project the image of a cordial nation, inhabited by a peaceful people without preconceptions of race and religion. For years we nourished the idea that we live in a true racial democracy, despite the visible inequities and limited opportunities offered to black, mixed, indigenous and Roma people. It always suited the white population to maintain the myth that Brazil is a racial paradise, as a form of absorbing

social tensions and masking the mechanisms used to exploit or subordinate the other and the different.

But does this racial paradise really exist?

Look around you. How do people live, where do Brazil's white, black, mixed and indigenous peoples work? To which racial group do most street kids belong? How many doctors, university professors, priests, engineers, bank managers, military officers, industrial executives, politicians or TV presenters do you know who are black, mixed or indigenous? [...]

And the Jews? Have you ever heard anything about them? Do you have even a vague memory of having studied that, during the colonial period, the State and the Catholic Church persecuted all those descended from Jews? (Tucci Carneiro 1996: 5) (My emphasis)

To varying degrees, all the RABs exhibited a discourse in favour of difference that appears to replace or overlap – in contradictory fashion – the earlier discourse celebrating mixture. Especially, though not exclusively, in the books intended for the first grades, we can observe the valorisation of ‘cultural specificities.’ While in the TABs we find a celebration of fusion – creolization to use the term proposed by theorists of ethnicization like T.H. Eriksen (2007, apud Hofbauer 2009) – in the RABs we can note the authors’ enthusiasm for how different cultures can live together, not infrequently presented in terms of ‘race’/ethnic groups. In *História: Viver e Aprender* (‘History: Live and Learn,’ Year 2), published in 2004, Elian Lucci and Anselmo Branco argue:

Boy, girl, tall, fat, thin, white, black, yellow, Brazilian, African, Chinese, German... whatever their sex, religion or nationality, children are children all over the world! **Even so, no child is like any other. Everyone has his/her particularities and ways of being.** (Lucci & Branco 2008: 18) (My emphasis)

In *Histórias, Tantas Histórias* (‘Histories, So Many Histories’) from 2008, also a Year 2 book, Ana Luísa Lins teaches:

People may have some things in common: they may prefer the same kind of music, have the same opinion **about a subject, like the same games, but in other aspects they are different. Only there are some people who refuse**

to accept those with another skin colour, another religion, other tastes.

(Lins 2008: 17-8) (My emphasis)

In *História (Coleção Conviver)* ('History [Living Together Collection],’ Year 2), first published in 2009, Ricardo Dreguer and Cássia Marconi include various examples of diversity in the first sections of the book, associated with kinds of play, rules of socialization and family structure, forms of celebration and work organization. The authors’ intention is very clear: to tell students that beyond their own personal experiences, other forms of organizing reality exist that are just as legitimate. On ‘kinds of games,’ in the section ‘Indigenous play,’ the authors state:

From an early age, the young Indians learn about nature and, making use of it, make simple instruments with which they can play. They make bows and arrows, straw animals, clay or corn dolls, little wooden or assai palm straw canoes, spinning tops, shuttlecocks and various toys made from palm coconuts and straw. (Munduruku 2000 apud Dreguer & Marconi 2009: 13)

‘Indigenous childhood’ is presented through a relationship with nature and by the ‘simplicity’ and spontaneity of daily life. The way indigenous children relate to objects and to other children is presented in terms of the specificities of their culture. The message contained in recent textbooks is that ‘in their own way’ indigenous children also experience childhood as a life stage marked by the close ties with their parents, discoveries and the need for freedom. Childhood is presented as something universal but experienced differently according to the culture. In the book *História (Coleção Curumim)* ('History [Curumim Collection],’ Year 2) by Ernesta Zamboni and Sônia Castellar, first published in 2004, we encounter further examples. The first chapter, entitled ‘The history of children,’ opens with the following passage:

Did you know that, just as there is a history of different peoples, arts and sciences, so there is a history of children? Children are important in most cultures. Among each people and in various eras, there are differences in ways of living. To know how the children of various peoples lived in the past, like indigenous peoples, Europeans, Asians and Americans, among others, the historians have researched their history. So, they learnt how they were educated, what their relationship with adults was like, how they played, what they ate and how they dressed. (Zamboni & Castellar 2004: 8)

In this same chapter we find the section ‘Indigenous Children’ and the following passage:

Children occupy a privileged space in indigenous society. From the moment they are born, they are shown considerable affection [...]. Children still being breastfed are always close to their mothers. When they cry they are immediately hugged and soon put on the breast to feed. They are carried either in a basket or a kind of sling, which may also function as a crib. When they start walking, infants begin to play with other children living nearby them. They are never out of sight of their mother or leave the village. On the contrary, if the mother goes to the swidden, she takes her child with her; if she goes to bathe in the river, the baby will be there too. (ibid: 13-14)

Once again the universal and specific interweave within the same pedagogy teaching the value of differences. Family structure may also be explored in terms of its specificity. Going back to the book by Dreguer and Marconi (2009), the *quilombola* family is defined as one with a strong connection to traditions transmitted by the ancestors, in this case, originating from Africa. The figure presented by the book is the fisherman Seu Ilário from the Jaó community in São Paulo state.

Below is a fragment of the text of the section ‘The ancestors’:

Figure 2

9. Os antepassados

As pessoas da família que viveram antes de nós são os nossos antepassados.

O senhor Ilário, morador da comunidade de Jaó, localizada no estado de São Paulo, conta a história dos seus antepassados.

Comunidade de Jaó (história oral narrada por “seu” Ilário)

Meu avô, escravo Alfredo Martins [...] conheceu uma escrava que vinha do norte de Minas Gerais, de nome Florência Estevão de Lima. Dessa união nasceu Martins Romão, meu pai. Já meu avô por parte de mãe, esse sim, veio direto da África, de Guiné-Bissau, Joaquim Carneiro de Camargo [...]

[Ele] conhece a descendente de índios Josefa de Paula Lima, cozinheira da fazenda. Casa-se com ela, gerando a menina Laurinda de Paula Lima. Minha mãe!

Pescador da comunidade quilombola de Jaó.

Portal Afro. Disponível em: www.portalafro.com.br. Acesso em: set. 2008.

Source: www.portalafro.com.br

In tracing his ancestry, Ilário reconstructs a narrative involving miscegenation: his grandfather, coming directly from Guinea-Bissau, encounters a woman descended from Indians, Josefa, with whom he sires Laurinda, his mother. This passage, which could be included as an element typical to the traditional books, here takes a particular turn. While in the TABs miscegenation is presented as a core element of Brazilianness, Ilário is presented as a *quilombola*, an Afrodescendant citizen with ancestral connections that make him a bearer of specific customs and traditions. Next comes the passage: “Some *quilombola* families maintain certain traditions of their ancestors. One of these traditions is the *jongo* in which people sing and dance to the sounds of barrel drums, *cuíca* drums and rattles” (Dreguer and Marconi 2009:39)

As I have looked to argue previously, the separation of teaching materials (especially those used to teach the History of Brazil) – of the kind analysed here – into a traditional approach and a revisionist approach is a methodological resource that, at an empirical level, should not be taken as representing irreconcilable opposites. Even today many of the books taken to be revisionist tell the origin narrative of Brazilianness based on the union of the three formative elements with miscegenation as the backdrop to the nation’s social and cultural development. However, while in the TABs the narratives continually refer to the idea of fusion (genetic and cultural) that eventually results in the ‘Brazilian people,’ in the RABs there is a celebration of differences, as though each of the formative elements of our mythic narrative of Brazilianness had, in a certain sense, remained confined within particular traditions that connect each citizen to their ‘origins.’

One of the missions of education, therefore, would be precisely to teach younger people how to deal with this mosaic of differences that are often taken in cultural/ethnic-racial terms. The book *História (Coleção Buriti)* [‘History (Buriti Collection),’ Teacher’s Manual, Year 2, published in 2007]), which opens with the chapter ‘Everyone has their own way,’ provides as a reading suggestion the analysis of a poem by the children’s writer Tatiana Belinky called ‘Diversity.’ This synthesizes the precepts of child sociability encountered in the revisionist books. The verse reads:

Diversity
One is nimble
Another is slow
One is pale-skinned
Another is freckled

One is calm
Another is skittish
One is whiny
Another is charming

One is lazy
Another lively
One is talkative
Another is silent

Each to their own
And it does no harm
Di-ver-si-ty
It's cool!

Beyond the demarcation of two distinct approaches on Brazilianness, citizenship and the treatment of otherness in the textbooks, we also need to focus attention on the potential reasons behind the transition from one kind of discursive construct to the other. Certainly, as Choppin, Reis, Luca and Miranda all indicate, it is no easy task to determine the factors that explain the predominance of a specific discourse in the school materials, since these are always conditioned by historical, political, social and cultural contextualizations that render any such enterprise extremely complex. I shall concentrate, therefore, on a specific field: the conjugation between the knowledge developed by the social sciences in Brazil and the narrative formulations of Brazilianness found in the textbooks. The premise is that, sometimes more directly, sometimes more subtly, the 'truths' espoused by Brazilian social thought are presented as a benchmark for school textbooks, in particular those describing the history of national representations of Brazilianness and the ideas of democracy, citizenship and equality.

Historiography and Brazilian social thought

An early landmark in Brazilian historiography was the work of the German botanist and essayist Karl von Martius, published in his monograph *Como se deve escrever a História do Brasil* ('How the History of Brazil should be written'), where the author founds the idea of a 'meeting between races' as a central element in the narrative of Brazilianness (Maggie 2005).

Von Martius's approach, which represented a rupture with the historiographic trend seen during the Empire period – as encapsulated in the documentary and heroic-elitist narratives contained in Varnhagen's work – was only taken up again in the first years of the twentieth century with the publication of works by João Ribeiro (*História do Brasil* [1900-1]) and Capistrano de Abreu (*Capítulos de História Colonial* [1907]) (Reis 2007). Followers of German *Kulturgeschichte*, Capistrano and João Ribeiro included popular everyday life in their narratives, replacing a documentary model with an ethnographic approach. In this sense, the description of the culture of 'our formative elements' (the indigenous elements, in particular, in Capistrano's work) becomes a core component of these authors' analyses and consequently the school materials for teaching History produced in Brazil.

The inclination to valorise 'popular types,' however, was not enough for the echoes of nineteenth century scientific racism to simply vanish from interpretations of the country's social relations in the post-abolition world of the Brazilian Republic. It was only when explanations of social phenomena shifted away from biological determinism to the sociological domain, utilizing the same principles still used today, that the relations between Brazil's 'formative groups' began to be understood in political terms (recognizing the oppression and violence of the past) and sociocultural terms (optimism concerning the idea of assimilation and fusion of customs and behaviours).

The premise that the conflicts and resentments of the past could be overcome through a 'flexibility of spirits' and the inexorability of mixture, making the Brazilian case a unique experience of nation-ness structured through a racial-cultural amalgam, is today denounced as a lie. Reconstructing the critique of racial democracy takes us back to the consolidation of Brazilian sociology in the 1950s when a research agenda was developed, under the sponsorship of UNESCO, to map the specific relations between 'colour groups' in Brazil. In a world still traumatized by Nazism,

Brazil after the Second World War was internationally perceived as a successful case of racial coexistence.

The absence of clear racial dividing lines – like those observed in the United States and South Africa – combined with the dissemination of a scientific discourse that highlighted the exceptionality of the Brazilian situation – *Casa Grande e Senzala* by Gilberto Freyre is typically recalled as the classical synthesis of this thought (Chor Maio 1999) – turned Brazil into an example worthy of study. Initially planned to cover the state of Bahia only, the UNESCO research ended up expanding to state capitals in the Southeast, Northeast and North. However, it was the findings of the studies in São Paulo – conducted by Florestan Fernandes and Roger Bastide – and in Rio de Janeiro – conducted by L. A. Costa Pinto – which revealed new aspects to ‘colour relations’ in Brazil. The limits imposed on the integration of the descendants of slaves in the capitalist-competitive system revealed a Brazil that, around the mid twentieth century, was still shackled by racial oppression. Poor living conditions, low income and schooling, exposure to infant mortality and limited access to the labour market are some of the questions that began to feature in the debates and studies of race relations during the period. While the studies directed by Florestan Fernandes and Bastide concluded that overcoming patrimonialist and personalist practices and mind-sets would almost automatically help eradicate colour discrimination, Costa Pinto’s work observes the reproduction of racism as a resource that could be exploited to intensify competition between black and white populations within the capitalist system. In the author’s view, therefore, Brazil’s development as an industrial and urban society not only failed to cool down racial tensions, it actually tended to make them worse.

The UNESCO project’s conclusions prompted a shift in Brazilian sociological discourse. Conflicts, tensions and inequality became central issues in the production of the social sciences, and the nation, once presented as ‘integrated’ by syncretism and miscegenation, was now able to be seen as fragmented by tensions and disputes between groups – including apprehended through the prism of racial identities – driven by divergent interests. The arguments presented in the book *Discriminação e Desigualdades Raciais no Brasil* (‘Racial Discrimination and Inequalities in Brazil’), published in 1979 and written by the sociologist Carlos Hasenbalg, presents a minute decomposition of the socioeconomic situation of Brazilians in

racial terms, operating with the opposition: the social situation of *brancos* (whites) versus the social situation of *não brancos*, i.e. all those who did not define themselves as white to the census takers.

The tensions revealed by the UNESCO Project researchers who conducted their studies in the large urban centres – in particular L. A. Costa Pinto – and subsequently dissected in statistical terms by C. Hasenbalg elicited a new configuration of the relationship between the formative elements of Brazilianness and the very idea of nation-ness. Firstly the notion of ‘integration’ gave way to the notion of conflict. The disputes and oppressions of the past were identified in the present, teaching Brazilians that they have not only failed to move beyond yesterday’s conflicts but, on the contrary, that they are living through tensions that are actualizations of the former conflicts in new social contexts.

As the historian C.G. Mota (1990) summarizes, the idea of ‘Brazilian culture’ forming the basis of the modernism and nationalism of the 1930s, imbued with a patrimonialist and hierarchical air, could not be fully incorporated into the principles advocated by a ‘Republican culture’ and its ideals of equality and the guarantee of individual citizen rights. For subaltern groups, in the Brazilian case, even after the Republic, citizenship had been limited to a prospect for the future.

To understand how Brazilian history was rewritten in light of the 1950s sociological literature is to understand how this discourse became the official narrative of race relations and the mainstay for a variety of human rights policies in Brazil – something which can be observed from the first government of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) (1995-2002) and continued during President Lula’s two terms of office (2003-2011).

Diverse government actions confirm the ‘victory’ of this sociological discourse contesting ‘racial accommodation.’ This period is marked by the Federal Government’s formal recognition of the existence and persistence of racism in Brazilian society, along with the creation of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (GTI) to valorise the black population and the Working Group for Eliminating Discrimination in Employment and Occupation (GTDEO).

At international level, we can highlight the participation of Brazil’s representatives at the *Third World Conference Against Racism*, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. At this event the Brazilian government committed to

implementing policies for combating racial discrimination and, above all, actions intended to reduce the social and economic inequalities between the white and black populations. In the words of Marcos Chor Maio and Simone Monteiro (2005: 439):

[The Durban Conference] helped shape an anti-racist agenda racialized by social movements, sectors of academia and the media, state and multilateral agencies, and US philanthropic foundations. It is a precise indicator of how national agendas are defined in international arenas. The 'Durban effect' soon made itself felt, whether through the adoption of racial quotas in higher education, or through the implementation of racial policies in the work area, healthcare and the farming sector, under the aegis of Human Rights and social justice.

These initiatives also reflect the openness shown by the FHC and Lula governments to social movements in the operational frameworks of the State. Continuing a process already observed at state and municipal level since the 1980s, therefore, the Federal Government – through the creation of agencies like the Special Office for Policies Promoting Racial Equality (SEPPPIR) and the Office of Continued Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD), run by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and forums like the National Conference of Policies for Promoting Racial Equality (CONAPIR), held in 2005 – has deepened the relation between more structured sectors of black social movements (and other ethnic sectors) and executive spheres of the State.

As Antônio Sérgio Guimarães (2002) observes, the discourse questioning Brazilian racial democracy became central to the black movements as early as the 1970s, propelled too by the internationalization of the 'US black question' and the pan-Africanist movement. Hence the post-1950 discourse of sociology primarily became a key line of argument for the activists, who with the increased political openness ended up migrating – asystematically and seasonally, it is true – to work for government bodies (Monteiro 2010). As well as reflecting the influence of new approaches coming from a specific scientific field, namely the sociology of the 1950s, therefore, the transition from the TABs to the RABs should also be comprehended as the instrumentalization of certain ideas through the strategic positioning of particular actors in the relationship between social

movements and the State. However, the present modest contribution can only be taken as complete if we turn to examine the everyday use of these teaching materials and the impact of these sociological ‘truths’ in the classroom.

Rewriting History and its impasses: the view of the teachers (Final Considerations)

The brief reconstruction provided here of the institutional trajectory of school books in Brazil, though referring to some aspects of Brazil’s political setting – like the ‘opening’ to social movements during the post-dictatorship era – and transiting through the ‘ideological’ dimensions of the materials (Choppin 2004), demands an examination of how they are used in everyday school life. Since the need to cover this aspect emerged during the research, I stress that the conclusions concerning the teachers’ ideas on the uses and possibilities of the textbooks are even more modest and provisional than the conclusions obtained from an analysis of the same.

The first important aspect to be highlighted is that despite the expansion of the textbook program observed from the 1990s onward, many teachers remained reticent concerning their use. In other words, it became apparent that many did not recognize the works approved by the State as ‘the best way’ of building the critical knowledge of their pupils through the study of History (and of the associated disciplines analysed here).

During my first informal interview for the research, conducted with a Sociology teacher from a state school in the municipality of Itaboraí, I noted that access to the library was restricted. The books were locked away most of the time and, at the time, I could not fail to recall how familiar this scene was for me from my primary education days in municipal schools in Rio de Janeiro. Access to books was still a problem today!

The contents themselves can always be adapted in a bricolage of authorized books, texts produced by the teachers in the classroom, texts from the internet, unauthorized contents and so on. As an example, I quote a Sociology teacher from a secondary school in Baixada Fluminense on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro:

For those who have the book, I work with the book. For example, there might be a particular point that I'm going to develop in class; 'such-and-such' chapter, page 10. Only I won't just work with the book, because not everyone has the book. That means I have to put the topics that I'm going to cover on the blackboard. In other words, **I'm going to write, I'm going to change the definition**, I write it up on the blackboard, so I'm adapting the text. Of course, you're limited because time is limited, since sociology for Year 1 and 2 is just a 40 or 50 minute period, depending on the school. So what happens? I have to write on the blackboard, put up the definition or point that I want to make, without being able to work with the book with everyone. When, for example, I want them to do an exercise that's contained in the book, what can I do? I have to make photocopies of the text that I want to cover, tell them to do the work at home and distribute the copies to those without the book. You lose a lot of time because of this. It increases your workload and even the costs because there aren't books for everyone. In Baixada, that's what I did: I didn't hand out the book because [there were just] eight books for sixty students, there was no way for me to do so.

A teacher from the first grades of a school from the Senador Camará district (West Zone) confirms this tendency:

I use the internet all the time. Because the internet is a television onto the world. You can find any topic there. Indeed the [pupils] are the ones that teach me. Because I don't know how to use it that well. And they're really interested because it's something that is happening at the same time. It's something that's developing at the same time as the class. I also like to use books. But alongside other media. Music, after-school activities, newspapers.

Just the book alone doesn't work. (My emphasis)

The teachers were emphatic when it came to describing the students' relation to the teaching materials. They observed that the students often pay more attention to information obtained via the internet or television. In line with modern pedagogical guidelines, the teachers tended to work with students on questions concerning their everyday life, trying to stimulate critical reflections on the reality about them. In this context, issues like a lack of enthusiasm for studying, the lack of perspective concerning

the future (in particular in relation to work opportunities), frustration over being unable to buy consumer goods, the fascination about improving their social standing through the arts and sports, the disdain for topics of collective interest (in particular in relation to political activity) and the focus on the issue of urban violence were all recurrent topics in the interviews and reflection groups organized over the course of the research.

Summarizing their perceptions of the relationship between teachers coming from peripheral districts with students socialized in similar realities, one primary school teacher from the Complexo da Maré district remarked:

Interviewee: Look... teachers with a working class background are... and aren't... Because it's different. When they become trained teachers, they don't enrol their own children in the public schools where they work. They already belong to a slightly higher class. And when we have a teacher in the community who lives in the favela, we can see that she really does have a different way of working. People also perceive the teacher differently. She is not usual. First the teachers cannot accept that someone can live in that place because it's 'horrible.' So they say: 'Ah, but students don't think about school!' But the school also doesn't think about students. We also don't live with the students, sharing the situation that they inhabit. There's no way we can. There's a lot of poverty there. A poverty such that anyone who achieves a minimum of dignity and a minimum of wealth, the first thing they do is leave.

The difficulties of an everyday world of few opportunities are highlighted by this teacher, who detects the desire and the need among her colleagues to produce or emphasize a few 'emblematic cases' of success. These cases basically involve the students adoption of a lifestyle or worldview that do not coincide with the reality of the poorest areas. Their success appears associated with the life of the middle classes, in contrast to the world of the favelas and the urban periphery.

In this sense, social inequality seems like a larger problem than the question of differences. The teachers identify most of their students as black (*preto*) and brown (*pardo*). As a rule, the pupils identify themselves as *mestiços* (mixed) or emphasize that there are no effectively 'pure' types

in Brazil, reaffirming the discourse of mixture.⁷ In their reasoning, racism and intolerance are indeed a problem, but not the only or even largest barrier to be overcome in their pursuit of education and social improvement – still taken as synonymous by my interlocutors during the research. Below I cite a short excerpt from an interview with a Sociology teacher from a secondary school in Copacabana (in the wealthier South Zone), also studying for a doctorate in Anthropology:

Interviewer: I think there has been [a] shift towards questions of diversity and culture. And effectively a kind of drifting away from the question of the worker. When I was young, all inequalities were explained as class inequalities, everything [was] a question of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It seems that one discussion is superseding the other, how do you see it?

Interviewee: Do you want to know how I cover this question at school, or how I myself see it?

Interviewer: How do you see it? And how do you cover it in class?

Interviewee: Look, I think that where Brazil is concerned, the issues are inseparable. You can't think about the racial question without thinking about the class question. I know that this is stoking the flames when it comes to discussing race relations. It's clear that if you take the base of the social pyramid, the questions aren't the same for men. So it's a gender issue too. A black male from the working class isn't going to be treated in the same way by society as a working class white male, and this applies to any question of gender. So it's difficult to think of inequality without thinking of these three elements.

7 Studies of race relations show a systematic difficulty in classifying Brazilians in polarized distinctions like 'Caucasian' versus 'Afrodescendant.' Racial classification is typically taken as taboo. Classifying people according to their colour (especially darker-skinned people) provokes some discomfort among Brazilians and, respecting this etiquette, I did not ask my interviewees to classify themselves racially. However, the course of the conversations tended towards this question. Of the twenty people interviewed individually, therefore, two classified themselves as black, four as white and the rest preferred to include themselves in intermediate categories or did not classify themselves. Although the research included the involvement of interlocutors with paler skin, phrases of the kind "I don't consider myself white" were commonplace. For a more detailed exploration of the question, see Oracy Nogueira in "Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem: sugestão de um quadro de referência para a interpretação do material sobre relações raciais no Brasil," *Revista Anhembi*. São Paulo, April 1955.

Interviewer: And what about the students, do they perceive this easily?

Interviewee: Yes. They observe that Brazilian society is heavily racist, because when I begin to cover race relations, I ask: does racism exist in Brazilian society? Almost everyone agrees. So before I get to the question of social relations, I cover the concepts of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes. **Before getting to the question, so they'll already... and so I cover different kinds of prejudices, issues of race relations, and gender relations. But yes! They understand that racism exists, but I think that this discussion about class isn't the same for them as it is for us. For them the difference is between rich and poor.** Translating it a little. (My emphasis)

A History teacher from a secondary school in São João do Meriti adds further to this line of reasoning:

The majority of students [are] mixed and black. So, when you were talking about the data, I thought: – ah, for them this doesn't pose a problem because in the world where they live, everyone ends up the same. They don't have this experience of leaving and to have this experience, they would need to find themselves in another place, another context. Suddenly leave where they live and visit somewhere like the South Zone, for example. Then they would feel different. They would see the difference as a factor of inequality. But this they are still unable to perceive. I see the question of their lack of knowledge or even their alienation in relation to reality. I think it's a very big problem, also because it's linked to religion. Some [students] live completely oblivious to reality or limit themselves to accepting certain kinds of knowledge only due to a religious [Evangelical] doctrine. Of course, other factors exist that are less critical but that we cannot ignore, such as social problems, for example: how to live in an extremely violent environment that is not conducive to education.

Differences and inequalities, though closely connected, are evaluated in distinct ways by the teachers when it comes to questions of democracy, citizenship and otherness. The vision of a racially harmonious Brazil, denounced in the revisionist approach books (RABs) also seems to be a thing of the past in the views of the teachers. On diverse occasions, Brazil's racial experience was compared to the situation found in the USA, recognizing that there, just like here, racism is a pronounced feature of

social interaction. A sociology teacher from a secondary school in Baixada Fluminense summarized his approach to the racial issue in the classroom:

I even talked a bit about Brazil in relation to this [racial divisions] and the question of miscegenation. It is clear from the figures – which actually contradict some thinkers – the figures show that we too are prejudiced, racism also exists in Brazilian society. This is something we have to combat, the figures show this. The figures that I'm talking about are social figures [...], whether on the issue of violence, on the quality of income, on the quality of jobs, show that this is our society. [...] When I get to Brazil today, I show that our reality is little different in social terms from American society.

While the revisionist approach books are emphatic about the need to respect differences, the teachers interviewed recognized that religious clashes have been the most recurrent issue in their classrooms, especially over recent years. Cases of personal abuse directed at followers of Afro-descendent religions by students linked to neo-Pentecostal (Evangelical) religions – which the RABs define as manifestations of intolerance – are on the increase in the perception of the teachers. A philosophy teacher from the Usina district (North Zone) made the following observation:

The theme of religion, when it surfaces – there's the issue of the pastor who is now head of the Human Rights commission, there are students who are deeply shocked because the discourse that he posts on Twitter, they think it must be a joke. **For me it's still a striking question, but I already knew about it through my students, there are some students who reproduce exactly the same thing there [in class]. Black students, for example, who believe that they belong to a clan that has been cursed, I haven't heard that one or two times, I've heard it various times.**

As some teachers told me, the 'passionate' way in which 'points of view' – either defending or denying the right to be different – end up being argued by students lead the teachers to avoid such clashes. Their common perception is that encouraging students to debate intolerance can often provoke clashes that culminate in more aggressive discussions. The teachers therefore need to be flexible enough to find more subtle forms of introducing the question. The history teacher from São João do Meriti sums up his strategy as follows:

[The topic generates] many discussions, most of which have a religious base. What I find most difficult [is] making students aware, because we always work to raise awareness, a respect for differences, avoiding the reproduction of some situations that lead to physical or verbal abuse. In sum, various situations that we end up relating to prejudice. What most generates problems in terms of acceptance is respect for the other's religion. This generates a lot of discussion in the classroom, a lot: why do you need to respect it? Umbanda and Candomblé? The very names Umbanda and Candomblé are practically prohibited, [they say:] 'no... that's Macumba [associated with witchcraft]!' So it's impossible. I mean, it's just impossible. It's a situation of huge conflict. How do we work with history [...] in Year 6, speak about the history of Judaism, speak about polytheist civilizations, for me it's a real problem... **There was one year when I said, I'm not going to talk about creationism and evolutionism, because I can't stand any more fights, I can't stand it any longer.** (My emphasis)

Although the school textbooks analysed here point to new forms of defining Brazilian society, in terms of its origin myth and the relation between its 'formative elements,' conferring new images (and directions?) to Brazilianness, concluding that this trend is hegemonic would be rash based on the uses made of these materials. While there is a search to 'standardize' the materials through the production of regulations and reference works (LDB, the Textbook Guide, PCN, Law 10.639, and so on) connected to specific discourses – such as the recognition of discrimination as an important factor in producing inequalities, and the recognition of differences as an important factor in defence of democracy – we can also perceive the possibility of an infinite number of approaches involving the partial use, adaptation, mixing or even avoidance of teaching materials approved by the State.

The participation in the *International Seminar on Application of the Law for Teaching the History of Africa*, held in October 2013, at the Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (IFCS/UFRJ) was especially important in terms of perceiving how teachers have come together to demand innovations in their training that can make them better prepared vis-à-vis the new discourses found in the textbooks.

Complementary materials, such as those produced by *The Colour of Culture* project, the result of a partnership between the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the Office for Policies Promoting Racial Equality, were

cited as ‘necessary but insufficient’ resources for training Human Science professionals (in particular History graduates) in “the new ways of thinking about Brazil,” as one of the interviewed teachers put it.

The research findings produced so far indicate the existence of contradictory stances concerning the production of a new sense of nation-ness through school textbooks. The Eurocentricism of traditional approaches, where the Portuguese cultural influence is seen to overshadow the contributions made by black and indigenous peoples, is criticised. Taking each culture in its own terms is seen as the secret for recognizing differences in defence of equality.

Inequalities are presented as the outcome of contradictions in the economic sphere, but also as an epiphenomenon of discrimination (including racial). Brazil is culturally and genetically *one* in the TABs, but *many* in the RABs: diverse ethnic groups, diverse regions, diverse social classes. The *unified* Brazil of the TABs is defined *over and above its conflicts*, while the *fragmented* Brazil of the RABs *needs to learn to recognize and deal with its conflicts*.

In the classroom, teachers work with both logics. They recognize that the conflicts of the past and the inequalities of the present are closely related. But, contradictorily, they see themselves as powerless to deal with today’s differences – not only those apprehended in racial/ethnic terms, but also and especially those of religion and class. They are taken aback by the *fragmentation* of a Brazil once presented as unified in the TABs, while recognizing the feebleness of celebrating an integration today denounced as fake. They seem unsure which path to follow: that of an ‘amalgamated Brazil’ or a ‘Brazil split asunder.’

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Socialization among peers: a study on racial relations among Brazilian children

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Abstract

The theme of racial relations presented in this article is based on the results of a sociological observation which occurred in two groups of children, from distinct socioeconomic backgrounds, studying at two public schools in the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. This study adopts the methodological perspective of the discovery of grounded theory formulated by Glaser & Strauss (1970). The analysis of the empirical data intended to sociologically reconstruct the constitution of a prejudiced reality that emerges from the inter-subjective relationships established by children. While experimenting with a set of values, attitudes, behavior, beliefs and racial notions learned in other settings in their relationships, children learn what it means to be of one racial category or another, creating and re-creating the meaning of race and of prejudice. This article makes some concluding remarks highlighting the implications of the findings for an anti-racist policy in Brazil.

Keywords: racial prejudice in childhood; racial classification; racial discourse; anti-racist policy.

Resumo

O tema das relações raciais apresentado nesse artigo baseia-se nos resultados de uma observação sociológica realizada em dois grupos socioeconômicos diferentes de crianças inseridas em duas escolas públicas de Belo Horizonte, Brasil. O estudo adota a perspectiva metodológica da descoberta da teoria fundamentada nos dados formulada por Glaser & Strauss (1970). A análise

dos dados empíricos pretendeu reconstruir sociologicamente a constituição de uma realidade preconceituosa que emerge das relações intersubjetivas estabelecidas pelas crianças. Enquanto experimentando um conjunto de valores, atitudes, comportamentos, crenças e noções raciais aprendidos em outros ambientes em seus relacionamentos entre si, crianças aprendem o que significa ser de uma categoria racial ou de outra, criando e recriando o significado de raça e do preconceito. Esse artigo conclui com algumas observações sobre as implicações dos achados para uma política anti-racista no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: preconceito racial na infância; classificação racial; discurso racial; política anti-racista.

Socialization among peers: a study on racial relations among Brazilian children

Rita de Cássia Fazzi

1 - Introduction

This article is a version of my doctoral thesis defended at the University Research Institute of Rio de Janeiro (IUPERJ), Brazil, in 2000. The central theme is racial prejudice in childhood predominantly among 8-9 year old Brazilian children. The article is divided into three parts: a discussion of the theoretical and methodological aspects that have grounded the collection and analysis of the data; the results of the research; and, finally, some concluding remarks highlighting the implications of the findings for anti-racist policies in Brazil.

2 - Theoretical and methodological aspects

The discussion on racial relations presented in this article is based on the results of a sociological observation of two groups of children, from distinct socioeconomic backgrounds, studying at two public schools in the city of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, in 1997 and 1998. The focus of the observations was the socialization among peers. This dimension presupposes that children should be regarded as active social actors who are competent in their diverse relationships and carry out an active role in their very own socialization process. While reflecting on the relationship between children and contexts, Lerner & Lerner (1986: 91-92) affirm that children are processors and producers of their own development. What this establishes, therefore, is a circular function between the child and his/her context. The socialization process, according to these authors, involves the acquisition of behavioral and cognitive competence on the part of the child, who then responds to the demands put forth by a

given environment. Hence, the child elaborates his/her own socialization experience, being that racial socialization is a part of this experience. As Cicourel (1974) points out, the child simultaneously develops a concept of social structure.

The social interactions that children establish among themselves are as important for their socialization as is their relationship with other socializing agents. This is also Thorne's (1995) stance in his study of children in two elementary schools in the United States. Thorne sought to show how children construct and experiment with gender identities in their relationships at school. Thorne's daily observations were concerned with "the workings of gender categories in social life" (Thorne 1995: 8) and with supporting "the view that gender is socially constructed" (Thorne 1995: 3). Thorne questions the concept of socialization used in great part of the literature regarding the social construction of gender in childhood due to the fact that these studies emphasize the passivity of those being socialized. According to Thorne it is important to take into consideration that children "act, resist, re-work and create; they influence adults as well as influenced by them." (Thorne 1995: 3).

This paper also argues that racial prejudice is a reality socially constructed by children and adults. The analysis of the empirical data intends to sociologically reconstruct the constitution of a prejudiced reality that emerges from the inter-subjective relationships established by children. The school environment is the privileged *locus* of children. In this social environment of relationships, children test a set of values, attitudes, behavior, beliefs and racial notions learned in other settings. While experimenting with these very notions in their relationships, children learn what it means to be of one racial category or another, and thus, create and re-create the meaning of race and of prejudice¹.

Researching children's points of view regarding their own racial relationships required a methodology that permitted direct observation of the children. In this case, the main concern was not to interpret the actions and speech of the children from an adult's mind frame, which would include the own researcher's thoughts. Mehan & Wood (1975), for

¹ In this study, race should not be considered as a given concept due to the fact that races are not genuinely natural categories. Race is created and discovered by individuals and are artifacts of human culture. For a discussion on the concept of race in this sense see Hirschfeld (1996).

example, showed that educational tests used to make critical judgments about children in American schools distorted the complexity of the reality by imposing an adult's point of view. This imposition, based on an adult's perspective, can result in dangerous decisions regarding the progress of these children in school, once the responses are analyzed according to the criteria of those who elaborated the tests. It is necessary for children to have the opportunity to explain their responses, because this process can reveal the reasoning involved in their decision-making.

This study adopts the methodological perspective of the discovery of grounded theory, as formulated by Glaser & Straus (1970)², based on systematic data that has been obtained and analyzed. In this sense, the observations focused on the manner in which the children elaborated their own racial experiences through their language and behavior.

The first phase of field work was conducted in a school located in a *favela*. From March through to June 1997, I carried out non-structured interviews with the children from this school. A total of 80 children were interviewed, in addition to others who participated in the taped conversations but who I was unable to identify by their names. In the second half of 1998, I began the observation of children in a school located in a middle class neighborhood. After one month of contact and based on the experience with the children living in the *favela*, I felt the need to elaborate a type of interview which would provide me with greater control of the situation. This is mainly due to the fact that during recess or even during Physical Education classes it was difficult to sustain a deeper conversation with the children, which could be attributed to the children's lack of time or to dispersed interaction occurring during these social situations. From November through to December 1997, I interviewed 27 children from the school in the *favela* and 22 children from the school in the middle class neighborhood. All of these children were 8 or 9 years old and in the third grade. The interviews were all recorded. The comparison of these two groups of children had the intention of grasping whether or not there were differences in the children's elaboration of racial categories and the meanings attached to them.

2 Glaser & Strauss (1970: 3) affirm that: "By 'fit' we mean that the categories must be readily (not forcibly) applicable to and indicated by the data under study; by 'work' we mean that they must be meaningfully relevant to and be able to explain the behavior under study."

Before reconstituting the social process involved in the construction of a racially prejudiced reality in the two “multiracial” groups of children being analyzed, it is worth briefly presenting the procedures adopted regarding racial classification. This problem has been the object of controversial debate particularly in the Brazilian Social Sciences.

This study starts from the premise that systems of racial thought vary among cultures. As Hirschfeld (1996) has argued, for example, the question of racial hybridity (the result of miscegenation) is treated differently by various systems of racial thought: “any system of racial thinking must provide some strategy for resolving ambiguity” (Hirschfeld 1996: 56). The strategy used to eliminate the intermediate racial categories in the United States was the “one drop rule,” according to which children of a mixed racial background were treated as black within a bipolar system of classification. Nonetheless, many systems of classification do not utilize this rule, recognizing the existence of racial hybridity. In this case, the system of classification is multiple. It should also be noted that the author himself cites Brazil as an example.

Despite the recognition of the multiplicity of racial terms and the existence of a complex “calculation of racial identity”, according to the expression utilized by Valle Silva (1994: 71), many researchers in Brazil have opted to use the bipolar system, differentiating between two categories: “black” and “white” or “white” and “non-white”³. The studies on racial inequality in Brazil conducted primarily from statistical analysis of data produced by the National Census and by National Household Sample Surveys (PNADS – *Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios*) aggregated the two census categories, black and *pardo* (brown),⁴ into the category black. Valle Silva (1985) justifies the adoption of a binary system of classification, having observed the lack of significant socio-economic and educational differences between “mulattoes” and “blacks”. Both, he argued, suffer similar discrimination.

Qualitative research, which seeks to understand the racial dynamics in childhood, could not follow such a course, given that a significant number

3 The racial categories used throughout this text are the racial self classification chosen by the children and the racial categories used by cited researchers. In the last case the categories will appear in quotes. The racial self classification chosen by the children will appear after the child’s name and age.

4 In Brazil, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics has been using this category in its census since 1950. *Pardo* refers to an intermediate racial category. The word in Portuguese is close to the meaning of the word “brown.” Taken from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pardo_on_14/04/2008.

of racial terms are employed in everyday circumstances in a highly complex manner. In a way, this may be considered a game, albeit a very serious one. This game of the classification self and others, is one of the social processes that are representative of the daily reality of children. This study, then, makes no attempt to aggregate terms into possible analytical concepts. Rather, it aims to understand the meaning of the racial categories adopted by the children themselves. In this manner, through the game of classification and of self-classification, in which the researcher asked the children to classify themselves and their classmates, it was possible to see that a certain consensus is socially constructed regarding racial identification.

The wide variety of terms used by the students to classify themselves and their peers creates a serious problem of translation, since the meanings involved do not always have correspondent terms in English. For that reason, I have opted to retain the terms in the original Portuguese and in italics. For example, the Brazilian term *negro* that is used by many people and activists to refer to any one with visible African descent can successfully be translated as “black” in English. However, the term *preto* also means “black” but without the identity connotations of the word *negro*. The term *pardo* utilized by the Brazilian census to refer to people of mixed descent may conveniently be translated as “brown.” The most difficult of all to translate is *moreno* for its meaning is almost entirely context-dependent. It can be used to refer to women who used to be called brunettes in English, but it may also be used to refer to a very dark skinned person. Terms of racial abuse are even more difficult to translate⁵.

How, then, do children construct and experience racial prejudice in their relationships at school? The answer to this question will consider prejudice in its attitudinal (stereotypes, sentiments and preferences) and behavioral (verbal aggression, rejection, the barrier to participating in a certain activity, etc.) manifestations. According to Hirschfeld (1996: 53), racial prejudice comprises “the notion that corporal differences in appearance signal differences in potential and value, that, in turn, legitimize invidious distinctions between races”. Thus, expressions of racial prejudice would then include either attributing negative characteristics to a certain

5 The terms of racial abuse are produced by augmentative, diminutive or altered forms of the Brazilian words negro and preto. Some examples: *negão*, *nego preto*, *pretão*.

racial category or acting, even if not consciously, in a manner that makes a specific group seem inferior.

In the next section, I present and discuss not only the categories of racial realities that emerged in the inter-subjective relations observed, but also the discourses elaborated by the children from the two groups involved in this social process.

3. Results

3.1. Racial Classification and Racial Stereotypes

The main characteristics of the system of classification used by the children in the two groups throughout this study include: (1) the multiplicity of categories and the gradation of colors existing among them; (2) the possibility of manipulation and of exchange among the categories, creating a contextual and circumstantial classification; (3) the identification of the Brazilian categories *negro* and *preto* that are interchangeable and not clearly distinct from one another by children; and (4) the hierarchy that locates the category *negro/preto* in an inferior position through the social process of stigmatization and the formation of stereotypes. In a child's world, being considered *moreno* or *negro/preto* is significantly important and can represent differentiated social treatment. A child classified as *preto/negro* has difficulty escaping the negative evaluations and depreciative commentaries associated with this category, potentially influencing one's self esteem much more so than those who consider the child as such or even those who are considered to be *moreno*. One of the problems with the type of classification based on appearance is the greater degree of uncertainty with regard to the *moreno* racial identity and the guarantee of non-discriminatory treatment in other social contexts, in other groups or in the individual's other life stages. The non depreciation of the *moreno* category makes the racial identification process during childhood more competitive and complex and therefore, more dynamic.

The children's speech that was observed in the two groups revealed the existence of negative attitudes in relation to the category *preto/negro* through three stereotypes: "*pretos* are ugly," "*pretos* look like the devil" and "*pretos* are thieves."

The accounts below are from the group of lower class children:

Rute⁶, 9 years old, defined as *clara* that means literally fair, said that being *branca* (white) is better than being *preto/negro*, justifying herself in this way: “Well, *pretos*, I don’t like *pretos*. *Pretos* are ugly, I don’t like the color...the color is ugly” and “I don’t even like black (*preto*) for coloring”.

Aloísio, 10 years old, who described himself as *branco* (white) in one situation and *Moreno* in other, stated that he would not like to be *preto* “because I don’t like *pretos*...because their skin is different”.

Geraldo, 10 years old, who described himself as *moreno*, does not think a classmate is pretty “because she is too *preta*.” In addition, he said that all *pretos* are ugly.

In the group of the lower class children, when answering the following question - “would you like (or would you choose) to be *preta*?” - 26 of the 40 children directly responded with these affirmations: “I would not want to be *preto* because *pretos* are ugly” and “because it is an ugly color.”

In light of such affirmations, what is truly considered ugly by these lower class children? Two answers were given by the children and referred to skin color and hair type. With respect to skin color, they emphasized “the entire face is *preto*,” claiming for example that “there are some *pretos* that are *preto*, really *preto*, the only thing you can see is the white of their eyes. That’s too ugly...”. When this child was asked when she learned that being *preto* is ugly, as she had affirmed, she responded that she learned it by herself. When asked how she learned it, she said “When we see them, we stare at them and see they are *pretos*,” revealing that the association between *preto* and ugliness is for this child self-evident, without the need for any explanation or consideration.

The children’s emphasis on the aesthetic aspect, distinguishing between what is ugly and what is beautiful, suggests the development of visual racial prejudice, probably through verbal cues based on stereotypical patterns of beauty. From an early age, children learn, for example, that straight hair is what is considered beautiful hair. This pattern is reinforced given that compliments regarding frizzy hair are rare and even non-existent during childhood. Fernanda, 9 years old, *morena*, answered the question

6 The names used throughout this text are fictitious. The text will also use the racial self classification chosen by the children and will appear in italics.

“Has anybody told you that your hair is pretty?” in the following manner: “No, nobody says that. Nenem [a classmate from another class who has straight hair] says our hair is hard (*duro*).” When I commented that I liked her hair she said: “I don’t believe you.” The intention of straightening hair is still very strong among the children who were observed. Even those that said that they liked their color affirmed that they did not like their hair. The expression “*negra* with hard hair” (“*nega do cabelo duro*”) is still used by many as a form of abuse, as revealed by Sofia, *morena*, who was interviewed with Fernanda: “the boys from the street, when they see Fernanda, they always say something about her hair and when they see me they say the same thing. Like one day a boy said her hair was hard.”

In the group of children from the school in the middle-class neighborhood, of the 35 children directly questioned, 19 said that *pretos* are ugly. A girl admitted that she did not think *pretos* were ugly, but if she were to choose, she would prefer being *branca* (white) “because people make fun of *pretos*, they keep saying that *pretos* are ugly.” It should be noted that she excluded herself from the type of person who makes these negative evaluations.

The association of the category *preto* with the devil appeared primarily among the lower class children. For example, one of the children explained the fact that she did not want to be *preto* by affirming the following: “then we would look like the devil because we would be so *preto*.” Or in other words, being *preto* is not good because the devil is *preto*. Afterwards, this same child explained that the devil “must be *preto*” because “he’s ugly, right?” Another girl affirmed that “he’s [the devil] too *preto*” and that “everything that is *preto* belongs to the devil,” generalizing the representation that the devil is *preto* and expressing the stereotype that *pretos* are the devil. The symbolic representation of the devil as being *preto/negro* which emerged primarily among the lower class children, constitutes yet another foundation for the development of prejudice even if it is not considered a direct expression of racial prejudice. This is due to the fact that it is another negative cultural association, especially given the opposite representation of God being *branco*. Carolina, who described herself as *morena escura* (dark *morena*), had to create an explanation for the fact that angels are *brancos* during an Evangelical service, by saying that the souls of *pretos* “become

white” when they die. Sara, who described herself as *morena clara* (light-skinned *morena*), affirmed that “*pretos* angels are bad.”

The study of the representation that thieves are *pretos* began with a drawing made by Lúcia, 9 years old, *branca*, from the group of lower class children. The teacher asked for a drawing about a real city and an ideal city. In the drawing of the real city there was a thief colored in black, who was mugging another person colored in yellow (the child wrote the word “mugging” on the drawing and drew an arrow indicating this action). In the drawing of the ideal city, despite the fact that the child wrote that in this place “there were no thieves,” there was also a thief colored in black. During the interview with this girl, I took the drawing and she explained it to me in the following manner: “This drawing is of the city. Here is a man mugging an old man. Here there is another man begging for money. Here is the place to throw away garbage. Here is a house with a family.” I asked why she colored the man all in black. She replied: “Because...I colored him all in black because this is a mask, so you can only see his eyes, not his mouth, only his eyes. He is dressed in black so you can’t see the clothes that he is wearing.” Although the girl did not explicitly say that she colored the thief in black because thieves are *pretos*, she revealed the association between thief and being *preto* in her drawing.

Based on this conversation, I decided to include an experiment in the interviews, which I called the “*mugging game*.” In this game, there were two dolls, a “white doll” and a “non-white doll”, one of which would be mugged while going home. I would show the two dolls, the white doll and the non-white doll both of the same size, with the same clothes, shoes, and hat. I would then ask the child to choose which one would represent the thief in the game.

In the group of the lower class children, 20 out of the 24 children chose the non-white doll to be the thief. The experiment was done after a dialogue about the colors of the classmates, of the dolls, of their favorite activities and games, etc. This was done to ensure that the children recognized the different colors of the dolls. I also asked for explanations regarding their choice. Rosa, 9 years old, *morena escura*, justified her choice of the *marron* (brown) doll as the thief saying that it was “*because the doll was just like... the shoes...the cap.*” Inês, 10 years old, *loira* (blond), chose the brown doll as

the thief saying that “*the face and clothes were strange.*” Geraldo, 10 years old, *moreno*, justified his choice by saying: “Because that one has lighter clothes and this one here has darker clothes, so this one looks like the thief and that one looks like the police officer.” Eduardo, 9 years old, *branco*, chose the non-white doll as the thief and explained: “This one here has a mugger’s hat.” When asked if the hat of the other doll was not the same as the one he chose, he replied: “Yeah, but that one looks like it was trained to take money.”

All of these justifications called attention to aspects that were not consistent with the reality, such as the cap, shoes and clothes. This can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it could mean the child did not want to explicitly say that the thief was *preto*, which in this case would illustrate a self imposed censorship regarding one’s racial considerations. On the other, it could mean the association thief-*preto*, occurring at a non-discursive level, was projected in this game and, thus created a certain difficulty for the child to explain his/her choice. The second and last accounts given above were made in reference to the *face* of the doll. Since the dolls were the same, the accounts may have wanted to refer to the color of the *face*. A 9 year old girl, *morena*, justified her choice of which doll would be the thief by saying: “No, not this one. This other is *preto*.”

In the group of the middle class children, the association thief-*preto* was also studied by using the “mugging game” with the dolls. The children were asked to choose which would be the mugger in an enactment of this crime. Of the 22 children that participated in the game, 14 chose the non-white doll as the thief. The answers to justify the choice include: “The *neguim* (little black guy) because he’s cooler”, “this one, he’s showing off more... and because his cap and clothes are really cool”, “I think it is this one, not because of the color but because of the clothes, the way he is dressed, his style, his face, because of the way he is.” None of these answers explains the reason for choosing the clothes, given that the two dolls had the same style of clothes, with only a variation in the color of the outfits. The last child stated “it is not because of the color” attempting to show that she was not prejudiced, but the reasons given for the justification of the choice of

7 “Little black guy” (“*neguim*”) is the diminutive of the Brazilian category “*negro*” but without the last letters of that word.

the doll - “the darker one”-, according to this same child did not seem to even convince him/her. This child repeated this justification three times: “it’s just the doll’s style.” Two other children stated: “Yeah, I don’t know, he has the face of a thief” and “because he’s wearing a thief’s hat. He’s *negro* (black).” This directly expresses the social perception that a thief is *preto*. In the interview carried out with both Juarez, *branco* (white), and Tadeu, *moreno*, there was a dispute over which doll would be the thief. Tadeu chose the white doll and Juarez chose the non-white doll. When I informed both that there would also be a police officer, Tadeu agreed to represent the police officer. After playing, I asked Juarez about the color of the thief and he answered: “He was *preto*.” Juarez justified his choice by saying: “Well, because this one here has more of a face of a thief!”

3.2. Daily prejudiced behavior

Prejudiced behavior manifests itself through daily practices of making fun of and swearing at others. In an interview conducted with Lúcia, 9 years old, *branca*, from the group of the lower class children, I asked if she would like to be *preta* and she answered “No.” I asked her what was the reason for her answer and she said: “I would like to, but being *preto* does not match being *branco* (white). Because it would be like this. The *branca* (white) person always does this: You monkey, hey monkey, monkey, little monkey!” In another interview, Fernanda, 8 years old, *morena*, answered the same question in the following manner: “Oh God no! Not me!” emphatically denying this possibility. When I asked why Fernanda said that, she replied: “It’s annoying because when we walk down the street ... when we walk down the street other people shout: hey monkey! hey monkey!”. Two weeks after this conversation, Fernanda asked me to play dolls with her and we went to the art room. During the activity, Fernanda said she would like to be of the *raça branca* (white race) and said that “being of the *raça preta* (black race) is really bad.” I asked her: “Bad in what sense?” And she answered: “People yell rude words at us.” I then asked if she had already been sworn at. Fernanda said yes but would not reveal what exactly was said. Shortly afterwards, she admitted that being *preto* is ugly. In this dialogue, despite the fact that Fernanda classified herself as *morena*, she is probably identifying herself with the “*raça preta*” (black race) by admitting she was sworn at: “They yell

at us with curse words.⁸” Eduardo, 9 years old, *branco* (white), also said that he would not like to be of the *raça preta* because people say that *preto*, that there are people who make a lot of fun of *preto* person”. I asked if he had already seen people making fun of *pretos*. He responded: “Yeah, they say things like this: Wow, you are so ugly. They say: You are so ugly you could only be *preto*.” It was through this commentary that I noticed the force of the naturalization going on: if you are ugly you could only be *preto*, indicating an inevitable and necessary relation. Further on in the conversation, I asked Eduardo if he thought that a *preto*, while being called *preto*, would get angry. He then asked: “Yell at him that he’s *preto*?” I asked: “Do you think this is a way of being yelled at?” He stated: “I think it is, saying it in one way.” Neide, 10 years old, *preta*, while responding to the question “Is it better to *branca* than to be *preta*?” also revealed that *brancos* yell at *preto* person:

“Oh no! I prefer to be *preta*, but there are also other people that like, think that they are *brancos* and yell at us because we are *pretas*. But...but I like my color. Not me, it’s not like I don’t like *branco* (white) people. I also like *branco* (white) people, but it’s just that....*branco* (white) people have been yelling at us, I don’t care.”

Neide said she had been yelled at by adults and children at school. When I asked her if the child that yelled at her at school was *branca* or *preta* he said: “She is *preta*, also, but she is lighter than me a little bit. She calls me annoying *nega preta* (black black girl)”.⁹ Despite the fact Neide affirmed that “white people have been yelling at us,” the classmate she referred to was not white, but was in fact “*preta* but lighter.” Luzia, 8 years old, *morena*, affirmed that she would like to be white. One year after this conversation, I asked her if she remembered what we had talked about and she said: “I said I wanted to be *branca* and my sister wanted to be *morena*,” which showed that this was a significant question for her. I then asked why she wanted to be white to which she answered: “I wanted [to be white] because the boys in class keep yelling at me...*nega preta*.” Afonso, 9 years old, *preto*, also wanted to be *branco* saying that: “I think it’s very bad to be *preto*” because “they keep calling us charcoal.” I asked him to tell me who called him that and

8 Fernanda, as previously registered, did not believe that I considered her hair beautiful. She reacted to the question of whether she would like to be black in the following manner: “Oh God no! Not me.”

9 The term “*nega preta*” means very “black”. In some situations and/or regions it has a more pejorative meaning.

he said: “the boys from the class...Geraldo and Aloísio call me *preto*, I mean charcoal.” In their second interview, Aloísio, 10 years old, *branco*, admitted he would not choose to be *preto*, if it were a matter of choosing, because as he said “I don’t like *pretos* very much.” Later on he mentioned two *pretos* classmates (Diana and Luciano) and said that “when they arrived” they were called “*preto, negão* (big black guy), burnt charcoal, stupid *pretos*.” It is important to highlight that he excluded himself from this act. Geraldo, 10 years old, *moreno*, commented in his second interview that it was not good to be “too *preto* because others keep calling us *preto* as charcoal”. He said he was never called that because he is not *preto*. He mentioned two *pretos* classmates. In addition, he said he did not consider Diana to be pretty because she was too “*preta*.” Further on in the conversation, he also added that he would not want to be *preto* “because [being] too *preto* looks like charcoal... and then people get even uglier.” This once again signals the assumption that “*preto* is ugly” and that “*preto* look like charcoal”, independent of the fact that he has two *pretos* brothers, according to what he had said. He also said that boys from the school shout “the boys that were *pretos*” from charcoal. In this revelation, Geraldo included himself among the boys that do this. When I asked him the reason for this kind of behavior, he answered: “it’s because he looks like charcoal.” Diana, 10 years old, *preta*, revealed that a classmate called her a monkey and *nega preta* (black black girl). Marília, 9 years old, *preta*, claimed that she heard a boy call a *pretinho* (little black boy) a monkey and considered this attitude “very ugly because they keep calling us monkey because they are also.” This last phrase “because they are also” probably refers to those who are considered *morenos*, who by not considering themselves *pretos* make use of this kind of prejudiced verbal repertoire with ease. Marília also stated that “white people” are not called monkey, but are called *macarrão sem corante* (colorless pasta). Fernanda, 8 years old, *morena*, after saying that *pretos* are called monkeys added: “but there are also white people who are called: hey, sour milk! How are you?” Ester, 12 years old, *morena escura* (dark *morena*), while explaining the attitude of a classmate that classified her as *preto* said: “he just keeps saying this because he is *branco*, hospital food¹⁰...he wanted to be *branco*, yeah yeah yeah, *moreno* also,

10 In the original account of the child, the expression ‘*macarrão da Santa Casa*’ refers to the pasta served at a philanthropic hospital known for its bad and colorless pasta.

he became *branco*, he's jealous." Geraldo, 9 years old, *moreno*, identified a classmate as white in the following manner: "it's who is *branco*. Sebastião is *branco*, he looks like sour milk." Aloísio complemented Geraldo's statement by saying "whitey." Marta, 9 years old, *morena*, agreed with the statement made by Celina, 9 years old, *morena* when she said: "I prefer to be *morena* than *branca*". During the interview, Marta added: "That's right, because there are people who are *Moreno* [who] say to us like this: hey sour milk! They call us sour milk just because we are *branco*." It is worth mentioning that there are contradictions in these statements. Marta classified herself as *morena* yet in her speech she considered herself white, thus revealing she had already been called sour milk by a neighbor with "blond with frizzy hair". In addition, she later admitted to being called "*nega preta*": "because there are blonds who yelled at me, calling me *nega preta* (which made her conclude that being *preto* was not good because "when we see ourselves in the mirror, we feel ridiculous"). These contradictions suggest that the racial category *morena* was not a demeaning category as could be the case of the categories *branco* and *negro/preto*.

The previous interpretation produced by the group of the lower class children regarding the position of *negros/pretos* in racial relations can be summarized in the following sentences: "They yell at us with swear words", "there are people who make fun of *negros*", "they yell at us because we are *pretos*", and "white people keep yelling at us." Being made fun of and told off are components of the significant context of those relations. This hostile environment directed at *negros/pretos* was also revealed by Sara, 9 years old, *morena clara* (light *morena*). Stemming from my suggestion of words such as fighting, *branco* boy, *preto* boy and monkey, she created the following story:

"Once upon a time there was a white boy who had a monkey and that monkey was black. Then one day the boy decided to paint the monkey white, however the monkey started to fight...then the boy's father was *preto* and his mother was *branca*. Then the woman was having a baby. And the boy went to see her. So at the time, he saw the baby boy was *preto*. So he took paint and started to paint the baby's face, but that baby almost died. It was a little girl. Somebody came running and took the boy from there and threw him aside. Then the boy decided to paint himself *preto*. He kept painting; he painted the face, painted his eyes. Then everybody started running after him, yelling at him, kicking

him, hitting him....then his mother hit him and decided to put the *branco* boy in the orphanage. The *branco* boy started to pick on all the *preto* boys there and to fight and everyone got hurt. Then at the end of the story, the two became happy and he said to the little girl that being *preto* was good and the little girl said that being *branco* was also good”.

In this story, the *white* boy gets hit when he paints himself *black*. When he is *white* he tries to change the monkey’s color and his sister’s color, as well as ends up fighting with the *preto* boys at the orphanage. At the end of the story, the white boy concludes that “being *preto* is good” and the black girl comes to the understanding that “being *branco* is also good.” The story reveals the child’s view of the conflict between *pretos* and *brancos* and the aggressiveness directed at the former. It can be interpreted as an analogy to the daily reality lived by *pretos* girls and boys: the concrete possibility of being made fun of and yelled at. Furthermore, it reveals a conflict of racial identity that is resolved at the end of the story with the conclusion that “being *preto* is good” and “being *branco* is also good.”

Some children did not verbally recognize the “*suffering*” felt by those considered to be *negros/pretos*. For example, a 10 year old *branca* girl admitted that a person of the *raça negra* (according to her classification) likes to be of the *raça negra* “because they don’t feel anything.” Sebastião, 9 years old, *moreno*, but considered whitey by two classmates, responded “no” when asked if calling a person *preto* could be considered as either telling someone off or being an offense. He said: “Depends on the color...because if it is a black person, then you can. Now if you are white, then it’s just a nickname to me.” This boy also claimed that he never heard a *preto/negro* person being yelled at or being made fun of.

Hence, the prejudiced language used by the group of the lower class children includes demeaning racial categories derived from the classifying categories such as *nega preta* (black black girl), *nequim* (little black guy), *negão* (big black man or guy), *negona* (big black girl), *nequinho* (little black girl), *preto*, *negro*, *branquelo*, in addition to other offensive categories such as charcoal, black as charcoal, monkey, devil, burnt charcoal, black donkey¹¹, sour milk, colorless food, hospital food. As one can observe, the classifying category *preta* or *negra* can become transformed into a term of abuse. This

11 “Black donkey” refers to someone who is not considered intelligent.

partially explains the rejection of this classification among the children. A 6 year old boy, for example, freely used the *preta* category, probably trying to aggressively provoke his classmate, whom he considered to be in a “privileged” position. This was because attention was being drawn to the classmate who was standing next to the teacher and was trying to have a closer look at the pictures in the book while the teacher was reading. When this classmate was called *preta* in the middle of the reading, the child left the side of the teacher, walked to the board, turned around and stood again beside the teacher without saying anything. Catarina, 11 years old, answered the teacher’s question in the following manner (“So you never thought: Wow! Being black is ugly”): “Not me, others call me black but I don’t mind.” This reveals how the category black is also a category of being yelled at, a form of aggression. This would be the hidden meaning behind her statement “but I don’t mind”.

The category *nego preto* (black black boy) was used or cited various times by the children. One day during recess, two girls were flipping through the magazine *Race* (*Raça*, issue 1). While the girls were looking at the magazine, a *preto boy* came across a picture of a Jamaican on page 108 and shouted: “Wow, what a *nego preto*! Nobody likes *nego preto*!” This opinion was confirmed by one of the children who responded: “Me neither.” Shortly afterwards, I asked a group if they thought it was better to be *Moreno* than *preto* and the boy mentioned above answered the following: “I think it is better to be *moreno*. Being *preto* makes us look like monkeys. I already look like I’m a monkey.” The spontaneity with which this child commented on his own negatively privileged position indicated a naturalization process of feelings and social ideas regarding boy referred to as *nego preto*. In addition, it signals a process of assimilation of the image produced by the stereotype.

In another conversation during recess, I asked a group of children to tell me about their color. When one of them answered *morena*, somebody contested saying “that’s a lie, you *pretinha* (little black girl), which provoked laughter from the other children. Another classmate repeated: “She’s *preta*. We call her ‘little black bean’ (*feijãozinho preto*).” On another occasion, also during recess, this same group of 7 year old children, sat next to me. I asked them the name of one of the children and as soon as Vera told me her name, another child said: “We call her little black bean.” I asked why they did that

and laughingly the classmate said: “Because she is a *pretinha* (little black girl).” I then addressed Vera and asked her: “Do you like this nickname?” However, before Vera could answer, the classmate said: “No, she doesn’t like it.” I then asked Vera: “What do you do when the girls call you that? What do you answer back?” Vera responded: “I hit them.” Her classmate confirmed this by saying: “She runs after us, she kicks us.” Even though the children are aware of Vera’s dislike of this treatment, the children continue to call her in this manner.

The hostility towards the *pretos/negros*, especially those considered “*preto* as charcoal”, explicitly used as a category to yell at others, was spontaneously expressed by a group of 8-9 year old children during recess when they came across the drawing on both the cover and page of the children’s book “Little Black Boy from Pastoreio¹².” It was also at this moment that one could observe the association of *negro/preto* with dirtiness. According to the interpretation of these children, “the *branco* (white) man was yelling at the *preto* boy because he did not like *preto*. It’s because he is *negão* (a big black guy), burnt charcoal, dirty. That’s why he doesn’t like him, he doesn’t take a shower.” At this moment, another child attacked the white man who was also drawn on the cover of the book saying: “And he’s sour milk. This one here is sour milk.” Another child added: “He doesn’t accept *preto*.” Even after these comments the conversation did not change: “He doesn’t take a shower;” “Wait a minute he doesn’t clean his butt;” “This *neguim* (little black guy) here, this guy”. In relation to the other picture, the statements were as follows: “These three are laughing at him because he is black, because he pees in his pants”; “that’s it, because he pees in his bed.” At this moment I asked: “Why do you think he pees in his bed?” The children answered: “Because he is *preto*.”

Upon entering a class of advanced 10 to 14 year old children, I heard a boy call Júlia *negão* (big black guy) to which she responded “*go screw yourself*.” Three months after this conflict, in a conversation with another student from this class, she told me that Júlia’s nickname was *negão* and *Julião* “because she is *preta*, *morena escura* (dark *morena*), but really dark.” This comment omitted the masculine connotation in this nicknames and offenses. In another moment during recess break, I heard Júlia aggressively

12 This is a folk story in Brazil.

being called *nequinha da macumba* (“little black *macumba*¹³ girl) by a boy. In addition, she was pushed from the sink from where she was washing her hands.

On a school trip to the zoo, which was organized by the teachers, I accompanied a group of 8-9 year old children. It was interesting to see that all of the children were very excited to arrive at the monkey and chimpanzee section, which happened to be the section that attracted the children. While the children were in front of the chimpanzees, Sebastião, 9 years old, *moreno*, but considered *branco* among his classmates, laughed at Diana, 10 years old, *preta*, saying: “These three could be your brothers.” He left Diana’s side as soon as another classmate answered back: “They could be yours too.” The teacher asked what was happening and Renata, *branca*, said: “He said that those three chimpanzees could be Diana’s brothers.” The teacher reacted in the same manner as the child saying “They could be his also, right?” The teacher’s comment provoked a timid laugh from Diana.

The *preta/negra* child is therefore the target of demeaning commentaries, even within a familial context. This makes us believe that the intimate acquaintance among people of various colors is not enough to prevent the use of racial stereotypes and offenses. In moments of conflict or tension, racial aggression can manifest itself against *pretos/negros*. What we see is that racial contact, in itself, does not contribute to the process of overcoming prejudice.

Sour milk, whitey, hospital food, colorless food all refer to people considered white. Even though there is the possibility of racial aggression against *brancos*, when there is a choice between *being branco* (white) or *being preto/negro*, children choose or consider being *branco* (white) the better option. This shows us that the categories *negro* and *preto* occupy a more uncomfortable and vulnerable position, once this category can be easily considered as a constant target of hostility and inferiority rituals. A 9 year old girl, *morena clara* (light *morena*), but considered by many of her classmates to be *branca*, expressed the more comfortable position of *brancos* when she said: “if we are *branco*, nobody can give us a nickname because we are *brancos* and God made us.”

13 *Macumba* is a popular form of referring to the rituals of *Umbanda* and *Candomblé*, which are Afro-Brazilian religions in Brazil. Sometimes the term *macumba* has a pejorative meaning.

Fights and physical aggression are all forms of reacting to offenses and racial jokes¹⁴. Geraldo, *moreno*, claimed that he does not like to play with Luciano because “he keeps hitting others.” I tried many times to talk to Luciano but he never wanted to talk, maybe because he realized what the conversation was about and therefore, was attempting to avoid it. Vera also reacted to the offense of being called *feijãozinho preto* (little black bean) by hitting whoever called her that. Vera admitted that she did not like anyone in the class, “except the teacher.” Carolina, 10 years old, *morena escura* (dark *morena*), denied that her nickname was *nega* (black girl), as a classmate had suggested in a conversation, by saying: “don’t listen to him, but when I get him he is going to regret the day he was born”, threatening to hit her classmate.

Many children rejected the classification *preto/negro*, as another way of reacting. In many times, the reaction was accompanied by an exchange of offenses. This was the case of Ester, *morena escura* (dark *morena*), who answered a classmate back: “I’m not *preta*, ok João! And you are sour milk”. Another case was that of Ronaldo who also disagreed with a classmate saying: “It’s a lie, I am not a *preto escuro* (dark black), alright you dog?...I’m not, I’m not *preto!*” Gerson, 10 years old, *marron* (brown), despite affirming that “color has nothing to do with it,” said he would not choose being *preto* and stated the following: “I don’t like that color very much.” Later on, he remembered Michael Jackson and interpreted Jackson’s actions as “wanting to become white.” He stated: “Well, because he thought they, the people, would not like him.”

A more radical consequence of the rejection of the category *preto/negro* is the desire to change color, which was expressed by various children. Paula, 9 years old, *negra/morena*, said she did not like being *preta* because the “color is ugly”. Paula went on to further claim she would like to be *white*. Vanderlei, 8 years old, *Moreno*, also said he would like to be *white*. Luzia, 8 years old, *morena*, also admitted that she would like to be *white* claiming that she is

14 On a macro level of discussion, Blalock (1982: 105-106) provides four alternatives that are open to a racial or ethnic minority (groups in a subordinated position and therefore in weaker positions of power) and individual members: 1) the attempt of the minority to disappear as a distinct group, “assuming its members can ‘pass’ on as members of the majority or that their minority status can lose its conspicuousness or relevance to members of the dominant group”; 2) the attempt of the minorities to isolate themselves from the majority of those from the majority group or the attempt of individual members who “may attempt to ‘escape’ from important encounters with the majority;” 3) the attempt of the minority to find partners to form a coalition, “pooling resources in order to gain power in relation to the majority;” and 4) the attempt of the minority “to engage in a power struggle with the dominant group, without benefit of coalition partners.”

often offended and called *nega preta*. When asked if she also thought she was a *nega preta* she said “yes because that’s what they call me”. This statement reveals her acceptance of this identity as real.

The expression “color has nothing to do with it” is equivalent to the expression “color doesn’t matter.” Ester, *morena escura* (dark *morena*), three months after refusing the classification as *preta*, said that she did not get upset if someone called her *preta* because “color doesn’t matter.” According to the claims made by the children, we can infer that the expressions “color has nothing to do with it” and “color doesn’t matter” are in fact expressing more a desire than a reality. It is as if the children wanted to say that color should not matter and should not have anything to do [with things], given that what they see and experience in their interactions are the contrary of these statements.

Among the children of the middle class, the demeaning racial categories and offenses are also recognized and used. This is a group composed of a minority of *pretos/negros*, according to the children’s classification. The many accounts presented and discussed here refer to racial relations in which the interviewed children do not directly experience, but should be considered as a verbalization of their perception of the experience of being *preto/negro*. Mércia, 9 years old, *morena*, (“I was born white, white, I looked transparent; but it’s like I would always go to the beach”) claimed that she saw “a man on a motorcycle yell at a dark person, saying...racist right? Then the other man got quiet because he must have thought that if he tried to fight it would not lead to anything and then I could see the other man was really sad.” Eliane, 9 years old, *morena*, also heard someone on the streets saying to a man “hey you ugly *neguinho* (little black guy), just because he was black.” I asked Nestor, 9 years old, *meio moreno e meio branco* (half *moreno* and half white), after he told a joke in which a black person desired to be white, if in real life blacks would also like to be white. Nestor gave his opinion in this manner: “Some don’t like their color because it’s that...but, I don’t make fun of them, but there are some people that say: hey big monkey, hey Creole! Then...then you are going to want to be white, right?” He revealed that he laughed when a “*moço branco*” (white man) yelled at a “*pretão*” (very black man) in the middle of the streets because “it was funny.”

The fact that there are categories for offenses derived from the *branco* category and *negro/preto* category does not mean that they carry the same

negative weight and offense. Nor does it mean that they influence the self-esteem of children in the same manner. Sandra, 10 years old, *morena*, spontaneously started a conversation with me at the school while she was waiting for her father to pick her up. She talked about a *preta* classmate that “many people discriminated”. She said that in the beginning of the school year this girl was offended and yelled at by some girls and boys who called her *negado cabelo duro* (black girl with hard hair) and would sing to her “black girl with hard hair, what comb can comb your hair?” After we talked about the meaning of the words discrimination, racism and about racial classification, I asked her if *negros* and *pretos* would get upset if called *pretas*. Sandra responded: “I think they do. Some people don’t because they are already used to it. Because they don’t like this, because people keep saying this and they can get very upset.” I then asked her if a white person would get upset upon being called white. Sandra then answered by saying: “no.”

In various dialogues, the possibility of a *preto/negro* being made fun of “just because he/she is *preto/negro*” was emphasized. Making fun of others is a recurrent social practice and characteristic of socialization among peers. This practice is considered a child’s thing by adults and is often not taken seriously; however, it becomes an efficient social mechanism of acquisition, consolidation and objectification of a prejudiced and psychologically violent social order. When a child is asked why he/she yells at, offends or makes fun of a colleague, the child claims that such actions are only a game.¹⁵

Aparecida, 11 years old, *negra*, stated that she did not like Glauber, a classmate because “he is very annoying...he keeps calling me whale, *negona* (big black girl)”. Aparecida reacts to these remarks in this manner: “I pretend I don’t hear them.” Further in the conversation she also said she did not like Fabrício for the same reason. According to Aparecida, the two classmates are *brancos*. Even though she has been racially offended and made fun of, when I asked her to explain the meanings of the words prejudice and racism, she said she did not know. Our conversation continued about a variety of topics. When I asked her if there were other *negro* classmates she

¹⁵ Thorne (1995: 79) analyzes the meaning of the definition of a situation such as “play” stating that it is a very fragile definition: “participants have to continually signal the boundary that distinguishes play from not play, and play and humor easily slide in and out of other, more ‘serious’ meanings. This ambiguity creates tension, since one is never sure in what direction it will swing; [...] the ambiguity lessens potential risks and leaves room for denial”.

said: “there is one more.” Aparecida claimed that the reason this other classmate was not made fun of is: “because he is...he is a little bit whiter.” Her answer reveals that she interprets her position to be a disadvantageous one in social relations due to the darker color of her skin. Her evaluation here is interesting, particularly since she did not have the necessary conceptual resources to defend herself, such as knowing the definition of racism.

Knowing that these games and fights are phenomena that are particularly important for the socialization of children, it should be noted that the possibility for being made fun of and for being the targets of racial offenses/slurs make the time-space of socialization among peers a promising and basic field for the development and formation of racial prejudices. There are various reasons why a fight might take place among children. A fight on a given day does not imply in permanently breaking friendship ties, as one girl stated: “we get mad one day and tomorrow we are already ok.” What is significant about these moments is the mobilization of offenses and racial aggressions, even if the fight is about something else and not a racial question. Therefore, through this common and frequent practice among children, who fight among themselves and consider some classmates annoying, racial prejudice begins to entrench itself, thus becoming a reality in itself.

The offensive practices, as well as the racial jokes make the moments of integration that could be relatively harmonious into fragile and unstable ones. Hence, such moments always become a threat to those who are vulnerable, particularly those given the label of being *negro/preto*. However, this does not mean that after unleashing racial aggression it is not possible to restore the previous situation. American studies with younger children have identified more than a paradox between attitude and behavior (prejudiced attitude and non-prejudiced behavior). It seems that in the world of children, as observed here, there is a permanent oscillation between an integrating situation and a prejudiced one. In the moments when there is a rupture of the relationships, social and aggressive resources are available and are used, creating the fulfillment of a demarcation ritual of racial *status*.

In Thorne’s (1995) analysis of the meaning of gender in the relations among boys and girls, she uses the concept of *borderwork*. As the author informs us, this term comes from Barth’s (1969) analysis “of the social relations that are maintained across ethnic boundaries without diminishing the participants’

sense of dichotomized ethnic status” (Thorne 1995: 64). For Thorne (1995), the active meaning of difference can be reduced through contact, but the interaction of groups can also occur and strengthen these frontiers.

When gender boundaries are evoked through various types of *borderwork* (the author describes and analyzes “contests,” “chasing,” “cooties and pollution rituals,” and “invasions”), Thorne (1995: 66) states that:

“...they are accompanied by stylized forms of action, a sense of performance, mixed and ambiguous meanings (the situations often teeter between play and aggression, and heterosexual meanings lurk within other definitions), and by an array of intense emotions – excitement, playful elation, anger, desire, shame, and fear”.

In the same manner that gender boundaries are evoked through various types of *borderwork*, racial frontiers are also evoked through daily practices of offenses and games.

Another relevant aspect from the children’s statements in the two groups observed was the presence of a relativized discourse on racial prejudice. In this discourse, religious arguments (“everyone is still a child of God”), as well as secular arguments (“we are all human”) were given by the children. In addition, the dichotomy *internal* and *external* was present (“the blood is the same”, “inside everyone is the same”). Despite the fact that some studies interpret this discourse of equality as a form of hiding racial prejudice and not contributing to forms of overcoming prejudice, this study finds this type of discourse important among the children. In this study, such discourse is seen as having the objective of emphasizing the creation of a critical sense in the socialization process that would then be capable of transforming racial prejudice into a condemned and unacceptable social practice. In this sense, the relativized discourse and racial prejudice are components of the process of socialization among children, and both are in a process of being crystallized and stabilized during childhood. The ambiguous character of the Brazilian racial relations ideology is clearly illustrated in the discussions by Nogueira (1955: 514) when the author affirmed that this ideology was made up of “...on the one hand, by prejudice, and on the other hand by the ideals of racial equality and of miscegenation”.

4. Final Considerations

As this study shows, the socialization among peers constitutes both a privileged space and time, where beliefs and racial ideas already learned are experimented and tested out by children. In addition, it is among these interactions that children begin to learn what it means to be of one racial category in comparison to another, creating and recreating the social significance of race. Therefore, the study showed how a type of game of classification and racial self-classification in which a process of negotiation, manipulation, and dispute over not being identified as from the *preto/negro* category was established. This game becomes more intense given the recognition of a system of multiple racial categories in Brazil. The drama behind this game is the negativity associated with the category *preto/negro*, which exposes the children classified in this category to a ritual of inferiority, particularly expressed through mockery and name calling.

The racial reality established by the daily relations among the children expresses the ambiguity of the racial discourse acquired through a cultural definition of the concept of race in Brazil. Hence, at the same time the children carry out and express prejudiced attitudes, a discourse of equality circulates among them.

The attempts towards creating a society without racial prejudices demand policies that are capable of establishing a change in the elaboration of the discourses on the *preto/negro* category, as well as, of problematizing the very notion of race, which is at the base of racism.

Nogueira (1955: 518) considered that the type of ideology on Brazilian racial relations would facilitate the operation of “rational processes of modifying attitudes and conceptions that pertain to the sphere of racial relations”, since contrary to other societies, prejudice still had not created a profound antagonism among *whites* and *non-whites* in Brazil. This ambiguity is also being constructed by the children and also points to potential forms of overcoming prejudice. This is because it makes room for anti-discriminatory arguments that have not been racialized. Fry (2005: 164) also recognizes the presence of a tension in Brazil “between the ideals of a mixed race and of non-racism [...] and the historic racial hierarchies dating back to the 19th century” and concludes that

“the ideals of non-racism and the liberation from any ‘racial’ determination, which in Brazil have become the official ideology for many years and

have established the world vision of many Brazilians today, are values that are becoming increasingly rare in the contemporary world so much so that these ideals are worth being taken seriously". (Fry 2005: 165).

Another aspect to consider when formulating non-racist policies is the process of establishing racial categories. Hirschfeld's (1996) research with North American and European children disagrees with the studies on the acquisition of racial and ethnic conscience that assume a visual experience (appearance) as one of fundamental importance in the construction of racial categories by children. The author claims that "rather than being overly dependent on appearances, young children's racial concepts involve encoding and retrieval processes that are in many ways, independent of perceptual factors" (Hirschfeld 1996: 136). For Hirschfeld (1996), the integration between perceptual and conceptual knowledge can be less than what is usually imagined. He suggests that this integration develops during preschool and early school years, which is contrary to other researchers who affirm that during this period, there is considerable conceptual development with regard to racial thought. Therefore, "what happens during the late preschool years may be less a restructuring of the conceptual system than an accumulation of factual knowledge about the culturally relevant perceptual correlates of the concept in question" (Hirschfeld 1996: 137) or as "an alignment of initially relatively distinct verbal and visual categories" (Hirschfeld 1996: 154). For the author, younger children initially worry about the elaboration of a conceptual understanding of race and only later worry about the ways in which individuals can be respectively distinguished. Their attention is more focused on verbal or discursive clues than visual ones. The initial understanding of race for the child is not derived from observed differences, but instead on discursive information. The racial categories of younger children contain less perceptual knowledge and more conceptual knowledge. According to Hirschfeld (1996), younger children have a theory about society or "expectations about the entities of society and their nature" (Hirschfeld 1996: 119). For the author, race is one of the central components of children's naive theory about society. The acquisition of racial categories is embedded in the acquisition of a folk sociology. One of the characteristics of folk theory on race is the belief that "racial differences [...] are thought to encompass non obvious or inner qualities (including moral and mental ones) as well as outward physical ones" (Hirschfeld 1996: 42). This belief, as

the author claims, is “one of the most malign aspects of folk theory, because it is so closely bound to (and enabling of) racial prejudice” (Hirschfeld 1996: 53). Racial prejudice is learned through a discursive elaboration of the concept of race given that the racial categories promote conceptual and evaluative inferences, such as “members of some groups are intellectually dull, aggressive, or dirty” (Hirschfeld 1996: 189).

When one brings this discussion to the field of policies that combat racial prejudice in Brazil, some questions are sketched out: how is it possible to create non-prejudiced racial relations given that prejudice is a component of a folk theory of race, and is discursively learned, conceptually elaborated, and tested in established social interactions starting with 5 year old children? The use of racial discourse by children, in their collective activities, and the attempt of the juxtaposition of verbal and visual categories enable children to learn and understand the meaning of social life, particularly of racial categories. It is in this constructed sense that the category *preto-negro* finds itself at the lowest level of consideration, being therefore interpreted as inferior.

Will racial policies that seek to strengthen one’s identity and racial pride, as the kind being implemented in Brazil, be able to identify the genesis of the processes of prejudice? Wouldn’t this lead to the risk of strengthening the belief in differentiated races according to a discourse that questions, for example, the “myth of racial democracy” as one which conceals the reality of racism?

There is yet another aspect to be considered. Katz (1982) concluded that according to her research on stereotyping, perceptive mechanisms could be attributed to the development and maintenance of prejudice. Therefore, for the author, the more one emphasizes the differences among racial groups and ignores the individual differences among members of a minority group, the more one reinforces the perceptive base for the maintenance of prejudice. Considering this conclusion to be plausible, one can assume that the emphasis on the need for an ethnic-racial affirmation can have an effect of strengthening prejudice instead of overcoming it. Would the struggle for equality, based on a politics of racial identity officially established, be a contradiction to the objective of an anti-racist struggle? Would the attack upon the multiple, racial and ambiguous system of classification in Brazil and its substitution with an almost forced bipolar system black-white lead

to the strengthening of the belief in natural and real identities and racial categories? Could there be another alternative to facing racism? This study does not have any definitive answers to all of these questions. What this study hopes to have demonstrated is the complexity of the problem of the genesis of racial prejudice and the daily drama lived by children identified as *preto/negro*. In the Brazilian case, I believe the attempt for anti-racist policies, which seek to deepen the debate regarding the ambiguity of the prejudice/egalitarian discourse, should try to deconstruct the belief/idea of differentiated human races and consequently, should try to deconstruct the concept of race, a basis of racism.

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The institutional life of rules and regulations: ten years of affirmative action policies at the Federal University of Paraná, Brazil

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the ten-year experience of the Plano de Metas de Inclusão Racial e Social (Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion), an affirmative action policy through which places were reserved for black students and for students coming from public schools in the Federal University of Paraná's annual selection processes. The ethnographic description highlights three significant moments in a continuous process of producing rules and the means to put them in practice, which retroactively transform the initial formulations. These are: a) the reconfiguration of the Action Plan in the period immediately following its coming into force; b) the confluence between the university's own selection process and the Unified Selection System established by the Ministry of Education in 2010; and c) the local enforcement of Law 12.711/2012, which determined the reservation of places for students coming from public schools in all federal higher education institutions. More than presenting results accomplished by the Action Plan, the analysis envisages the Plan itself as an outcome of, on one hand, practices performed by an array of institutional actors, and, on the other, the intersection of different policies, rules and regulations. Among other aspects, the paper aims to understand how a mutually generative interplay between politics and bureaucracy (or between what situationally counts as one or the

other), local and supra-local processes, has had negative effects on black students' access to the University despite the intended goals of its policies.

Keywords: university, affirmative actions, public policies, rules and regulations.

Resumo

O propósito deste artigo é refletir sobre os dez anos de vigência do Plano de Metas de Inclusão Racial e Social na Universidade Federal do Paraná, que estabeleceu a reserva de vagas para estudantes negros e para egressos de escolas públicas nos processos seletivos da instituição. A descrição destaca três marcos de um movimento contínuo de produção de normas e, simultaneamente, de modos de colocá-las em operação que incidem retroativamente sobre os enunciados iniciais: (a) a reconfiguração da política de cotas no período imediatamente posterior a sua aprovação; (b) a confluência entre o processo seletivo próprio e o Sistema de Seleção Unificada (Sisu) criado pelo Ministério da Educação em 2010; e (c) o processo de efetivação local das disposições da Lei nº 12.711/12 sobre a reserva de vagas nas instituições federais de educação superior. Mais que apresentar resultados do Plano de Metas, trata-se de compreendê-lo como um resultado das práticas de diferentes atores institucionais e da interseção entre políticas públicas e dinâmicas de produção normativa diversas. Desde seus primeiros passos, esse movimento mutuamente generativo entre aquilo que, em situações determinadas, conta como político ou como burocrático, instituinte ou operacional, tem afetado negativamente as condições de acesso de estudantes negros à universidade.

Palavras-chave: universidade, cotas, políticas públicas, produção normativa.

The institutional life of rules and regulations: ten years of affirmative action policies at the Federal University of Paraná, Brazil

Ciméa Barbato Bevilaqua

On May the 10th 2004, the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR)¹ approved an *Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion*, at the centre of which was the creation of two categories of quotas as an integral part of its selection process.² From 2005, and for a period of ten years thereafter, 20% of the places available were allocated to people of ‘African descent (*Afrodescendentes*),’ while another 20% were set aside for candidates who had completed all their previous education at public schools. Also planned was the gradual creation of extra places for indigenous students to be filled via a specific selection process. Having participated in the three sessions of the University Council³

1 Higher education in Brazil encompasses a complex and diverse system of public and private institutions. Sixty-four of these are federal universities. The regulation of the system is based on the Federal Constitution (1988) and Law 9.394/96 (Law of Directives and Bases of National Education), as well as a broad set of supplementary regulations. Public universities concentrate the best quality teaching, as well as a substantial proportion of the country’s research and postgraduate activities. However, despite the strong expansion in public sector higher education over the last decade, it has been the private sector that has registered the strongest growth in university places. The private institutions offer approximately 70% of the places available on undergraduate courses, while the public system as a whole accounts for 30% (cf. Soares 2002; Gomes & Moraes 2012).

2 Since the end of the 1960s, entry onto undergraduate courses in Brazil has involved a selection process based on exams that test the applicant’s knowledge of the secondary school curricula: the *vestibular*, organized by each institution following its own particular set of rules (Soares 2002: 41). From 2010, the National Secondary Education Exam (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio*: ENEM), created by the Ministry of Education the previous decade as an instrument for evaluating secondary school teaching, began to function too as a selection process for entry to public universities that participated in this mode via SISU/MEC (*Sistema Unificado de Seleção*).

3 Generally speaking, Brazilian federal universities are run by collegiate bodies composed of academic staff, technical-administrative staff and students elected by their peers. The highest decision-making body is the University Council (COUN), chaired by the institution’s rector. The Teaching, Research and Extension Council (CEPE), also chaired by the rector, is the senior body responsible for supervising and coordinating teaching and research activities. The same collegiate model of decision-making and administrative bodies extends to the institutes and faculties (denominated ‘sectors’ at UFPR) and to academic departments.

that culminated in the approval of the quota system – formally instituted by Resolution 37/04-COUN – it seemed to me at the time that an ethnographic account of this process could contribute not only to the debate then under way on affirmative action policies in higher education, but also enable a clearer understanding of the institutional dynamics involved in elaborating the directives and regulations that, inscribed in official documents, configure a public policy (Bevilaqua 2005a).

Reflecting on the results of UFPR's quota policy ten years later is no easy task, not least because of the difficulty of accessing information on the admission of students through the quota system, or on the conditions and consequences of their careers at the university.⁴ Another kind of difficulty concerns the very constitution of the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion – and its impacts – as an ethnographic object.

Two successive moments in the trajectory of a public policy are typically distinguished from the outset: (a) the definition by the legitimate decision-making bodies, through the appropriate formal procedures, of a particular set of objectives and procedures for putting a given policy into effect – in the case discussed here, approval of Resolution 37/04 by the University Council of UFPR; and (b) the implementation of these provisions by different institutional actors, without detriment to all the other regulations that govern their actions and define the limits of their powers – especially, as far as the UFPR quota system is concerned, the Entrance Exams Centre (*Núcleo de Concursos*: NC), an entity linked to the Pro-Rector of Undergraduate Studies (*Pró-Reitoria de Graduação*: PROGRAD) responsible for the selection processes for student admission into the university.

This sequence of actions is frequently associated with an implicit distribution of differentiating qualities: first, the initial impetus of the political debate that gives rise to the regulation; subsequently, the technical-bureaucratic execution of the prescribed procedures. Diverging from this schema, the starting point for this article is the thesis that implementing a regulation – especially when its aim is to engender actions that break

4 A sizeable number of reflections on the affirmative actions at UFPR have already been produced, though, in particular in reference to the racial quotas. I pick out three collected volumes that unite the contributions of researchers from the institution itself who, at different moments, took part in this process: Duarte et al. (2008), Costa et al. (2012) and Ferrarini & Ruppel (2013).

with an institution's established routines, as applies to the introduction of quotas at UFPR – involves more than simply an 'application': it always and necessarily involves creative forms of agency analogous to those involved in its initial formulation.

Resolution 37/04-COUN has just three articles. These set out in general terms the conditions for admission of 'students of African descent,' 'candidates coming from public schools' and 'indigenous students resident in Brazil.'⁵ It also set out measures to ensure that those who entered would be able to complete their courses. Clearly, implementing these directives requires more than just the reconfiguration of experiential elements in line with the regulation's design – beginning with the practical definition of its intended beneficiaries. It also demands multiple developments of the regulation itself in order to bring into being a selection process involving thousands of candidates, not to mention the innumerable dimensions involved in guaranteeing the permanence of the new students in the university.

Applying a regulatory framework – or implementing a policy – inevitably implies, therefore, the continuous remaking of the policy itself through the processes through which it is put into effect. In other words, what the regulation enunciates is also an effect of the very movements that it sets off. Moreover, if the actions unleashed by the regulation contribute to its own production, then the distinction between formulation and implementation cannot figure as a premise inscribed in the notion of public policy per se or in the analysis of its results: on the contrary it becomes the very object of description and analysis.⁶ In the specific case of the UFPR quotas system, the question is understanding precisely how its developments – including, among other things, the introduction of regulations and procedures with a decisive impact on the admission conditions for quota students (*cotistas*) – were able to determine that the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion contained, from the outset, what the interventions of different institutional actors caused it to enunciate at later moments. In this sense, rather than simply presenting the results of the

5 In the following discussion I leave aside the entry of indigenous students, which has very different implications to those involved in the implementation of the quota system for black students and students from public schools. Reflections on the indigenous component of the UFPR Action Plan can be found in Bevilaqua (2004), Gil (2011) and Freitas (2014).

6 This reflection is inspired by Thomas (2002), who problematizes the distinction between fact and law in the practical work of producing legal rulings.

Action Plan – as a stable object or origin point to be taken as an analytic reference – my proposal is to comprehend the quota system itself as a *result* of the actions that were able to be made *with* it and that, likewise, made (and make) the system exist in a specific way.

My own analysis is also an effect of these operations. Approval of the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion meant that the new policy had to be adapted to the general regulations for UFPR's 2005 entrance exam. The alterations to the selection process, due to be held in two phases for the first time, were defined by the Teaching, Research and Extension Council (CEPE) less than a month after the University Council's decision. However, the apparently mechanical task of standardizing the regulatory framework relating to the entrance exam had profound consequences because of the stipulation that the names and classification of the accepted quota students could not be made public (Resolution 56/04-CEPE, dated 04/06/2004, Article 26). This ruling would become even stricter over the following years, so that even the institutional actors responsible for monitoring the quota policy within UFPR found – and indeed still find – it difficult to access this information.⁷

Rather than treating the precariousness of the available data as a mere hindrance or gap to be circumvented, part of my endeavour has been to treat it as an object of analysis. This in turn leads me to turn the very movement of the regulations constituting the quotas policy into the central thread of a reflection that, in this sense, is also part of the very phenomenon that it describes.⁸ With this aim in mind, I have opted to highlight some of the significant moments within a continuous and simultaneous process of making regulations (within the context of the university and beyond) and fabricating ways of bringing them into being through the practices of situated institutional actors. As I seek to argue, all these moments have had a negative impact on the conditions of admission for

7 In 2005, reasserting the confidentiality of the data on admission via the quota system established the previous year, the Teaching, Research and Extension Council stipulated that the corresponding reports would be solely “for the internal use of the Entrance Exams Centre” (Resolution 27/05-CEPE, Article 30). A while later, this wording would be altered to “the institutional purposes of interest to the NC [Entrance Exams Centre]” (Resolution 53/06-CEPE, Article 30). Only eight years later the formulation was changed to allude generically to “institutional purposes” (Resolution 22-A/14-CEPE, Article 30).

8 I thus leave aside any examination of the concrete experiences of the students who entered through the quotas system: references to these experiences can be found in Silveira (2012) and Silva (2013).

black students, as well as the possibilities for them to fill places and, finally, the very number of places allocated to them.⁹ These moments are:

(1) The regulatory movement that led to the reconfiguration of the UFPR quotas system immediately after its approval;

(2) The confluence of public policies emerging from different state levels and bodies: the affirmative actions of UFPR itself and the Unified Selection System (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada: SISU*) for the admission of students to federal institutions, created by the Ministry of Education in 2010 (SISU-MEC); and

(3) Promulgation of Law 12.711/12, the so-called Quota Law, and its intersection with local regulatory dynamics.

The description of these turning points reveals that propositions and arguments defeated in the higher councils – especially in the University Council, the institution’s highest body – could resurface later during the making of regulations by bodies lower down the university hierarchy. From this relatively subaltern position, such propositions gradually climbed back up to the higher bodies where they had originally failed to prosper. Now imbued with the routine complexion of technical-bureaucratic operations, these measures tended to be formalized by the policy decision-making bodies without controversy. Assuming that this spiraling movement does not happen solely by chance, though neither is it merely the result of strategies implemented by specific actors, perhaps we can recognize within it a more general dynamic of reciprocal and mutually generative encompassment between what, in determined situations, is determined as political or bureaucratic, inaugural or operational, in the day-to-day experience of institutions.

An initial example of this dynamic can be found in the aforementioned confidentiality applied to the data on students entering through the quota system. In the University Council meetings that approved the Action Plan, this topic was central to the arguments in favour of the institution erasing

9 An anonymous reviewer, whom I thank, emphasized the importance of “pointing out that there are no consensual and intersubjectively shared criteria in Brazil for defining who is black, which generates problems for the notion of quotas as an expression of a percentage of the wider population.” In describing the political-regulatory shifts in the process of putting the UFPR quota system into effect, I use expressions like ‘black students’ and ‘black candidates’ without intending them to be situated outside this politically contested field.

the differences between quota and non-quota students after the selection process in order to ‘prevent discrimination’. One immediate outcome was the rejection of specific support policies for quota students. Initially, confidentiality of the data was not discussed directly nor made into a rule. Nonetheless, support for this argument did not just vanish. In fact, it was formally established a short while later by another decision-making body.

Among other implications, this decision to introduce confidentiality obscures the cumulative effects of later decisions, which tend, therefore, to assume a merely operational guise. At the same time, the figures referring to the affirmative action policy, accessible only in intermittent and fragmentary form, become highly unstable, even when obtained from official sources. This instability, in turn, enables the figures themselves to function as nodal points in the creative and productive movement of bureaucratic practices.¹⁰

More generally, the privilege institutionally conferred to certain issues concerning the quotas policy as a focus of the production of regulations, involving the engagement of diverse actors and bodies, seems to express the continuity over time of a certain ambivalence first observed in the early discussions of the Action Plan. As I have argued elsewhere, the very commitment of the university administration to the institution of affirmative action policies also contained an impulse to limit its reach (Bevilaqua 2005a: 200) – something that indeed became manifest in subsequent years, notably in relation to the admission of black students.

Rules and regulations in movement: the reconfiguration of the quota system

All the institutional procedures relating to the quota system created with the approval of the Action Plan are put forward as implementations of Resolution 37/04 of the University Council (COUN), which is regularly invoked in the preface to the documents produced subsequently by various bodies: the resolutions of the Teaching, Research and Extension Council (CEPE); the public notices for the selection processes elaborated

¹⁰ Obviously, creativity and productivity should not be automatically associated with positive effects, as tends to occur in everyday language.

by the Entrance Exams Centre (always co-signed by the rector and the pro-rector of undergraduate studies); and the candidate guides, also produced by the Entrance Exams Centre (*Núcleo de Concursos*: NC).¹¹ The explicit continuity between these documents does not preclude them from diverging from the wording of Resolution 37/04-COUN. Describing such differences as distortions of the original meaning of the Action Plan, however, would imply losing track of their essential meaning: these new regulatory provisions came into existence precisely because they could be created and recognized *retroactively* as specifications of precepts that Resolution 37/04-COUN was supposed to have contained.¹²

As I observed earlier, about a month after approval of the Action Plan, confidentially was introduced in relation to the data on quota students, with consequences that persist even today. However it was Public Notice 01/2004 issued by the Entrance Exams Centre, which, in setting forth the regulations for the 2005 entrance exam,¹³ imprinted the deepest marks on the way in which the quota policy came into existence.

The public notice literally reproduced the provisions approved by the University Council in terms of the places to be offered and the registration

11 The analysis presented here is based on the examination of these documents for all years between 2004 and 2014. From 2010, this also includes the annual Terms of Acceptance and public notices relating to the Ministry of Education's Unified Selection System (SISU), and, from 2012, Law 12.711/12 (the Quotas Law) and its regulatory framework. My description of the years 2004 and 2005 draws from earlier studies by myself (Bevilaqua 2005a and 2005b). For the subsequent period, until 2010, the works of Porto (2011) and Cervi (2011 and 2013) have afforded essential contributions. I have also benefitted from personal communications with colleagues involved at different moments of the implantation of the institution's quota system. I especially thank Liliana Porto and Marcos Silva da Silveira who provided me with access to other documents. The current director of the Human Sciences Sector, Eduardo Barra, offered valuable support towards obtaining copies of the proceedings and minutes of UFPR's higher councils. I also thank Laura Ceretta Moreira, Laura Pérez Gil and Miguel Carid Naveira for their information on the admission of indigenous students, though I later opted not to discuss this dimension of UFPR's affirmative action policies in the present article. Paulo Guerios saved me from my many arithmetical lapses, which of course does not implicate him in relation to any remaining errors.

12 This idea is partially inspired by Yngvesson and Coutin's (2008) discussion of the relations between legal and ethnographic procedures. In support of my argument, it should be emphasized that, at least during the early years, the different statements concerning the quotas policy at UFPR were often produced by the same actors. The members of CEPE are also statutory members of COUN, with both councils chaired by the rector. The pro-rector of undergraduate studies at the time of the deliberation on the Action Plan – whose participation was a decisive factor in shaping the policy – was also director of the Entrance Exams Centre between 2004 and 2006. Even in later years there is a clear continuity among the occupants of key positions of the administration, albeit in different posts.

13 The entrance exam is usually held between November and December with the selected candidates beginning their courses the following year. References to the entrance exam in this text always concern the year of admission of the students, not the year when the exams were taken.

conditions for candidates opting to apply via the quota system,¹⁴ as well as the criteria defined by CEPE for classifying candidates in the two phases of the entrance exam. On the other hand, the articles referring to the matriculation of approved candidates do not simply reproduce the earlier provisions. As well as the documents required as standard for the academic registration of the successful exam candidates, the students selected for the places reserved for Afrodescendants were required to present “a declaration in their own writing [...] that the candidate belongs to the black [*preto*] or brown [*pardo*] group, as used in the IBGE’s Official Census, and that he or she is so recognized by society and possesses phenotypical traits that identify him or her with the black type [*tipo negro*]¹⁵” (Public Notice 01/2004-NC, Article 69, item ‘e’ – my emphasis).

Thus, the Public Notice introduced criteria that are supplementary to – but also distinct from – those defined by Resolution 37/04-COUN, which stipulated that self-declaration would be the sole criterion used for the registration of candidates for the reserved places. Another shift is the substitution of the term ‘*Afrodescendente*,’ utilized in the regulation of the University Council and defined in this document with reference to the classificatory categories employed by the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), with the expression ‘*tipo negro*,’ identified with its own specific phenotypical traits. In the next article, the Public Notice refers to a committee, to be appointed by the rector, responsible for analysing the documents of the candidates approved by the quota system, including the ‘self-declaration’ of those competing for places reserved for “racial inclusion”. (Public Notice 01/2004-NC, Article 70).

The 2005 Candidate’s Guide replicates word-for-word the aforementioned terms concerning the declaration to be signed by the racial quota

14 Specifically: 20% of the places available would be reserved for “Afrodescendent students, considering as such those who identify themselves as black [*preto*] or brown [*pardo*] in accordance with the classification adopted the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)”; another 20% would be allocated to “students who have completed their primary and secondary education entirely at public schools” (Public Notice 01/2004-NC, Article 3, Paragraphs 1 and 2). To register, the candidate for ‘racial inclusion’ places had to indicate his or her choice and fill in the “self-declaration of racial group” in the space provided on the electronic form. The candidate for the ‘social inclusion’ places simply had to indicate the choice of this modality since the school history is only requested on matriculation.

15 The term “*negro*” is not used by the census bureau. Rather it is an identity employed in the political arena that includes those who might declare themselves as either “*preto*” or “*pardo*” to the census gatherers.

applicants. However, it only indirectly mentions the existence of the evaluation committee, suggesting that it involves a routine procedure of checking the documentation for all candidates approved in the selection process.¹⁶ This ambiguity persisted over the ensuing years, along with a certain oscillation in the use of the terms *Afrodescendente* and *tipo negro*. The committee's powers would only be made explicit after the revision of Resolution 37/04 by the University Council itself in 2007, which ratified the changes first introduced by the Public Notice for the entrance exam. I return later to the intersection between regulations elaborated at different levels of the institutional hierarchy. Now, though, I wish to describe some of the effects of this dynamic during the first year of the quota system's operation,¹⁷ which also help shed light on events in the following years.

For the 2005 entrance exam 43,907 candidates competed for 4,144 places in 69 courses. In compliance with the percentages established by the Action Plan, 20% of places were allocated to each of the quota modalities, corresponding to 831 places for each category. Of the candidates registered, 2,370 competed for the places reserved for *Afrodescendientes* and 13,795 for places allocated to students from public schools. Among those approved, 573 had applied for places allocated to *Afrodescendientes*. A total of 258 reserved places were unfilled, therefore. In the case of the public school students, the opposite occurred: 930 candidates registered for this quota modality were approved, with 831 entering via the quota system and another 99 achieving a sufficiently good exam performance to be approved in the general competition (Bevilaqua 2005b: 14).¹⁸

The regulations concerning academic registration accentuated the difference between the results of the two quota modalities. From the 831

16 "The academic registration process will involve the analysis of the documents submitted by the candidates and subsequently the list of candidates from each course whose documentation has been accepted by the NAA will be published on the NC [Entrance Exams Centre] website [...]" (Candidate's Guide 2005: 18).

17 For an in-depth discussion of the results of the first UFPR entrance exams held under the quota policy, see Bevilaqua (2005b). The presentation that follows here draws from the data and observations presented in this earlier text.

18 Nonetheless, the fact that not all the places allocated to *Afrodescendientes* were filled is far from representing a failure of the quotas policy. This becomes clear when we compare the data from previous years. In the 2003 entrance exam, none of those approved for the Medicine course had identified themselves as black in the socio-educational questionnaire completed by candidates at the time of registration, and just four of those approved (2.27% of the total of 176) had identified themselves as brown. The same year, the Civil Engineering course also failed to register the entry of a single student self-identifying as black, with just nine of the students approved identifying as brown (5.11% of the total of 176) (Bevilaqua 2005b: 15).

candidates classified for the places reserved for public school students, 65 (7.8% of the total) had their academic registration rejected, although ten applicants successfully contested this decision. The evaluation of the *Afrodescendente* candidates generated widespread coverage in the local press. According to information published at the time, the committee responsible for analysing the ‘self-declaration of racial group’ rejected the academic registration of 127 of the 573 classified candidates, representing 22.16% of the total. I did not have access to the composition of the committee for this first year, nor the criteria and procedures adopted.¹⁹ At the end of the process, 33 candidates were unable to complete their matriculation, allegedly for failing to present ‘a black racial phenotype’ (*Notícias da UFPR* n. 29, Oct/2005), thus reducing the number of racial quotas to 540.

The regulatory movement observed in the first year of the quotas policy, with each step involved in implementing the new system also leading to its reconfiguration, gained momentum in the following year, but this time in the opposite direction, i.e. from the lower to higher bodies within the institutional hierarchy. The provisions produced by the Entrance Exam Centre, which had substantially transformed the policy introduced by the University Council (COUN), in turn affected the decisions made by the Teaching, Research and Extension Council (CEPE). It would take a while longer, however, for this movement to reach the highest body in the university’s administrative hierarchy.

During this interval, approval of Resolution 27/05-CEPE in May 2005 led to the coexistence of very different versions of UFPR’s policy on quotas, depending on the document consulted, or more precisely, depending on the specific points cited in the various documents in force. The references to the quotas for public school students were unchanged. However in relation to quotas for black students, perhaps only the 20% target remained as a point in common between the original regulatory framework approved by the University Council and the regulations issued by other bodies – even though these continued to invoke Resolution 37/04-COUN as their

¹⁹ On the experience of the verification committee at a later date, see Silveira (2014).

basis. To a certain extent, the contrast between the instability of some regulations and the stability of others is unsurprising: since the initial discussion of the Action Plan, the racial inclusion quotas had been at the centre of controversies (cf. Bevilaqua 2005a) with their persistence evident in the dissonance between regulations approved subsequently at different institutional levels.

Resolution 27/05-CEPE does not focus on the quotas policy per se, but on regulations for the selection process for undergraduate courses. However, it had two fundamental impacts on the admission of quota students over the following years. The first was precisely the consolidation of changes introduced by the Public Notice for the previous entrance exam – namely, the redefinition of the beneficiaries of the racial inclusion places, switched from IBGE’s classificatory categories to the candidate’s physical attributes. The second was the effective removal of the self-declaration principle by the designation of a committee with the authority to decide whether the candidates’ attributes matched the requirements set by the (new) regulation, which also involved, obviously, the practical work of producing these requirements.

By redefining the scope of the racial quotas and how they were put into operation, the Resolution provides clear official recognition of the model set out in oblique terms in the Public Notice for the previous entrance exam. While the existence of a committee tasked with checking the ‘documentation’ of candidates had already appeared in the entrance exam’s public notice, its powers become transparent in the documents produced after CEPE’s decision. However, imprecision persists in relation to the interview with the candidates: the fact that it is compulsory is not made explicit²⁰ – perhaps an implicit recognition of its polemical nature both within and outside the university – but so too the possibility of questioning its legality given by the higher-level regulation, Resolution 37/04-COUN.

I examine this point in detail because the belief in the need for some kind of formal control over the access to quota places for black students (given the impossibility of the public control that publication of its results

20 Along the same lines, Lilianna Porto writes in her report on the quotas policy at UFPR: “...it is interesting to observe that the compulsory nature of the Committee interview is not emphasized – merely registered as a possibility, rather than as a requirement for matriculation. Furthermore there is no mention of how this Committee will be made up, or how it will function in practice” (Porto 2011: 93).

could provide) and the ambiguity over how this control was to be exercised are a theme that accompanied the discussion and development of UFPR's quotas policy over many years. Despite CEPE officially instituting the committee for checking the phenotype of candidates in 2005, the Guide for Candidates only referred to the procedure explicitly in the 2008 entrance exam – that is, after Resolution 37/04-COUN itself was revised. Even so, it was only at the 2012 entrance exam that the committee was included as an item in the timetable for the selection process published in the Guide for Candidates. Meanwhile, in 2013, the first year of operation of the Quotas Law (Law 12.711/2012), which (re)introduced the principle of self-declaration for racial quotas, the Guide for Candidates makes no mention of the fact that candidates for these places *would not* have to be interviewed by the verification committee, even though this information appears in the public notice for that year's entrance exam.²¹

The most negative impact on the admission of black students at UFPR, however, stemmed from one aspect of Resolution 27/05-CEPE that, at first sight, would seem to have no direct relation to the quotas policy.²² To understand its significance requires going back to another decision made by the same council. In 2003, it established that the UFPR entrance exam would be held in two phases (Resolution 85/03-CEPE). The first experience with this new model for the selection process took place concomitantly with the implantation of the quotas policy.²³

The first, eliminatory phase of the selection process involves objective questions relating to the contents of Brazil's secondary education

21 As a contrasting example we can observe the institutional trajectory of another verification committee. In 2008, the reservation of one place per course for people with disabilities was approved at UFPR (Resolution 70/08-COUN). From the outset it was stipulated that committee would be appointed to validate the medical certificates presented by the successful candidates (Public Notice 04/2008-NC, Article 12, Paragraph 5). The call to the interview is made publicly by name on the Entrance Exams Centre's website. The result of the evaluations is also published, including a specification of the reasons for any rejection.

22 These effects, which would have escaped my attention due to the impossibility of accessing the relevant data, were identified by Liliana Porto. As the representative of the Human Sciences Sector and president of the Committee for Evaluating and Monitoring the Action Plan, she was able to analyse reports by the Entrance Exams Centre on the admission of quota students (Porto 2011). Though included in Resolution 37/04-COUN (Article 12), the committee was only officially appointed in 2006, i.e. after the changes made during the first year of operation of the quotas system.

23 Approval of the quotas policy required adaptation of the general entrance exam regulations defined by Resolution 85/03-CEPE, which was achieved through Resolution 56/04-CEPE. This remained in force, with alterations, until approval of Resolution 53/06-CEPE, which would also be successively changed in 2007, 2009, 2010 and 2014.

curricula. The best-performing candidates pass to the second phase, which involves a comprehension exam and essays, the same for all candidates, followed by one or two specific tests set by the directors of the respective courses. After completing both stages, the candidates are classified according to the marks obtained and invited to matriculate until all the places on each course are filled.

One of the polemical issues during the University Council's discussions of the Action Plan was precisely deciding the entrance exam phase to which the quotas would apply. Implementing the quotas during the first phase was summarily rejected with the invocation of the 'meritocratic principle.' Next the council rejected the proposal that the places reserved to black and public school students would be filled in the second phase only after the general competition places had been filled, based on the global classification of the candidates. Clearly, the defeated proposal was more inclusive in nature, since it would allow candidates registered for the quotas to be approved in the general competition places, increasing the chances for approval of a higher number of quota students (see Bevilaqua 2005a: 193-205).

The change in the criteria for calling up the candidates for the second phase of the entrance exam, introduced in 2005, again affected the admission chances of candidates competing for quota places. According to the earlier rule, the number of places for the course would be multiplied by a factor dependent on the candidate/place ratio established for the course in various bands.²⁴ In 2005, at the suggestion of the Entrance Exams Centre, the bands and multiplication factors were redefined so as to reduce the number of candidates – and, allegedly, also the costs – in the second phase of the selection process.²⁵ This proposal was based on the argument that the candidates with the worst performance in the first phase had proved unsuccessful when called for the second (cf. Porto 2011: 95, note 18).

However, as Liliana Porto points out, the data on the admission of racial quota students indicates that “for this category (and for it only) this

24 The multiplication factors 'N' originally defined by Resolution 85/03-CEPE were: N=3 for a candidate/place ratio equal to or lower than 10; N=4 for a candidate/place ratio higher than 10 and lower than 15; N=5 for a candidate/place ratio higher than 15 and lower than 20; and, finally, N=6 for a candidate/place ratio equal to or higher than 20.

25 The number of places available on the course was multiplied by N=2 when the candidate/place ratio was lower than 5; N=3 when the ratio was equal to or higher than 5 and lower than 15; N=4 when the ratio was equal to or higher than 15 and lower than 20; and N=5 when the ratio was equal to or higher than 20 (Resolution 27/05-CEPE, Article 21).

argument is not applicable” (Porto 2011: 94-95). In fact, the admission of students via racial quotas fell dramatically between 2005 and 2006 (from 492 to 306, or from 11.9% to 7.1% of total places in the entrance exam), and consistently remained below 7% over the following years (Cervi 2013: 247).²⁶ This reduction becomes even more significant when we observe that the marks obtained by students approved in the UFPR entrance exams fell in all competition modalities between 2005 and 2010, but that, within this “general decline in the marks, the racial quota students are the ones who presented the *least* decline in performance” (Cervi 2011: 124, my emphasis). Combined with another change introduced by Resolution 27/05-CEPE – namely, the transfer of unfilled places in one quota category to the other, before being passed on to the general competition (Article 10, II) – the new system for calling up candidates for the second phase of the selection process led to the number of candidates admitted through the quota system for public school students recording a sharp upward rise in the following years, reaching around 30% of new students in 2011 (cf. ACS/UFPR, 15/01/2011). This was a result, however, produced “at the expense’ of racial inclusion” (Porto 2011: 107).

A retrospective analysis provides us with no means of determining whether these effects were foreseeable at that time – and to whom.²⁷ However, it is worth stressing once again that the implementation of the quota policy – which is also, as I have been arguing, an intrinsic dimension of the policy’s very production – enabled the revival of arguments previously lost in the debates from which the policy first originated.

In an ethnographic study of the University Council sessions that led to the approval of the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion, I observed that opposition to the introduction of quotas for black students was indirectly manifested in the form of a defence of “affirmative actions aimed at the public school” (Bevilaqua 2005a: 181). In this sense, the concrete

26 Readers will note that the number of racial quota students admitted in 2005 presented here (492) fails to coincide with the figure cited earlier (540). Both figures were in fact issued by the Entrance Exams Centre (NC) but at different moments. The higher figure was published by UFPR’s official news release in October 2005 (*Notícias da UFPR* n. 29, p.7). The other apparently became sedimented at a later date and can be found in the NC reports that served as a base for Cervi’s analyses (2011 and 2013). As I have already indicated, the instability in the figures is one of the recurrent themes in the life of the quotas policy.

27 It seems reasonable to assume that this future prospect was not imagined by the majority of council members who participated in the approval of Resolution 27/05-CEPE, whether because of the lack of data that – perhaps – might have enabled some prediction to be made, or because of the apparent dissociation between the regulations that were being voted on and the quotas policy.

trajectory of the quotas policy at UFPR – over which the quotas for public school students gradually absorbed the racial quotas until swallowing them completely – can perhaps be described as a gradual victory of previously defeated viewpoints. This effect derives both from the cumulativeness of the practices of many different institutional actors, and the intersection – from the 2011 entrance exam onwards – of locally implemented conducts and regulations derived from the federal level.

Even so, the very initiative of revising the University Council's original resolution, undertaken just three years after its approval in mid-2007, is to some extent a predictable outcome of the movement described above: after the inaugural moment of introducing the quota policy, the axis of regulatory practices shifts to bodies lower down the university's structural hierarchy. From there an inverse movement begins, moving upwards to the higher decision-making bodies where the transformations produced earlier gradually become consolidated. As the cycle closes, there is a temporary elimination of the practical difficulties generated by the coexistence of dissonant regulations, the legitimacy and legality of which remains contestable. But this also enables a new cycle to begin, analogous to the previous one.

The evaluation of the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion was first discussed at the University Council on 26 April 2007, after various meetings called by the rector and including those involved in activities relating to affirmative action policies at the institution.²⁸ In this session the analyses of the Pro-Rector of Undergraduate Studies were presented. These indicated that although candidates in the general competition presented better performance in the entrance exam compared to the candidates from the two quota modalities, after admission, the social

28 This process is described in detail by Porto (2011: 96-107), who records as antecedents the submission of the first report by the Standing Committee for Evaluating and Monitoring the Action Plan at the end of 2006, and the conclusion of a study commissioned by the Ministry of Education on the inclusion of black students at UFPR (Souza 2007). Without overlooking the importance of these analyses in terms of grounding the revision of the quotas policy at UFPR, I believe that the very perception of the need for a formal review of the Action Plan would not have emerged at this time had the shifts in regulation identified in the previous section not been produced. The outcome of the revision process described below corroborates this interpretation.

quota students (i.e. those coming from public schools) showed a higher academic performance for almost all assessed parameters. At the same time, the performance of the racial quota students was below the level recorded for the other two categories, both before and after admission to the university (COUN minutes, 26/04/2007, lines 103-107). In relation to the regulations of the selection process, the Pro-Rectorry recommended that the University Council formalize the validation committee for the racial quota candidates, “to legitimize the decision and the process”²⁹ (COUN minutes 26/04/2007, lines 116-118).

The session minutes also record in detail the presentation by the president of the Standing Committee for Evaluating and Monitoring the Action Plan, from which I select three points to emphasize. Firstly, the committee’s analyses pointed to “a significant increase in the racial diversity of the approved candidates” in the entrance exam after the adoption of the quotas policy, though still below the percentages recorded by IBGE for the population of Paraná. The second aspect highlighted was the decisive contribution of racial quotas to this outcome, since the “exclusive adoption of quotas for students coming from public school does not guarantee racial diversity” (COUN minutes 26/04/2007, lines 153-158). Finally, in underlining the decline in the number of candidates approved for the second phase of the entrance exam as one of the potential causes for the reduction in racial inclusion after 2005, the Committee’s president highlighted the need to evaluate the impact of changes in the rules of the selection process on affirmative actions (COUN minutes 26/04/2007, lines 172-175).

A second session of COUN was held on 16 May 2007 in order to vote on amendments to the resolution that had introduced the Action Plan for Racial and Social Inclusion. Selectively incorporating the analyses presented in the previous session, Resolution 17/07-COUN, through which the alterations were made, has just three articles. These are limited to formalizing the practices that had been instituted in previous years, namely: (a) the redefinition of the intended beneficiaries of the racial quotas as “black [*preto*] or brown [*pardo*] candidates, who possess phenotypical traits that characterize them as belonging to the black racial group [*grupo*

29 In the debates that followed, just a single council member expressed reservations about the verification committee; namely, the representative of the Human Sciences Sector on the CEPE (cf. COUN minutes 26/04/2007, lines 198-201).

racial negro]” (Article 1, Paragraph 1); (b) the appointment of a committee responsible for verifying that the approved candidates match this definition, called the ‘Self-Declaration Validation and Orientation Committee’ (Article 1, Paragraph 3); and (c) the transfer of the places remaining from one quota category to another before its occupation by candidates from the general competition (Article 2, Sole Paragraph). The only novelty was the establishment of a supplementary condition for admission through the quota system: applicants already possessing higher education degrees were barred from competing (Article 11).³⁰

None of the considerations of the Committee for Evaluating and Monitoring the Action Plan seem to have been taken into account, either then or later, in particular its identification of the limiting effects of the changes to the entrance exam rules for racial inclusion. On the contrary, the new version of Resolution 37/04-COUN gave formal expression to viewpoints that seem to have been in the majority both in the higher councils and in the other administrative bodies from the outset of the discussions on affirmative action policies at UFPR, but which, for diverse contextual reasons, failed to feature in the document approved in 2004 (Bevilaqua 2005a).

The (non)encounter of public policies

The next significant moment in the trajectory of the quota policy at UFPR surfaced in the 2011 entrance exam through the intersection between local dynamics and the Ministry of Education’s introduction of the Unified Selection System (SISU). The latter allowed for the admission of students to federal institutions, based on the results obtained in the National Secondary Education Exam (ENEM: Regulatory Directive 02/2010-MEC, dated 26/01/2010).³¹ This encounter between public policies

30 The articles cited in this paragraph refer to Resolution 37/04-COUN which, reformed, remains in effect.

31 The National Secondary Education Exam (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio*: ENEM) was established in 1998 by the Ministry of Education in order to evaluate the school performance of students at the end of secondary education. Since 2009 its results can be used as partial or exclusive selection criteria for admission to higher education institutions (enem.inep.gov.br). The Unified Selection System (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada*: SISU), created in 2010, is a computerized system, run by the Ministry of Education, in which public higher education institutions offer places to candidates participating in the National Secondary Education Exam (ENEM). At the end of the registration phase, the system automatically selects the best classified candidates for each course, based on their marks in the ENEM and the competition criteria defined by the respective institution, including its own affirmative action policies (sisu.mec.gov.br).

run at different levels also coincided with the arrival of a new administration at UFPR.³²

UFPR decided to participate in the system run by the Ministry of Education (MEC), a non-compulsory program, allocating 10% of its places to be filled by SISU and 90% by its own entrance exam.³³ The Term of Participation was signed by the rector in October 2010 when the Public Notice and candidate's guide for the 2011 entrance exam had already been released. The discrepancy between the information contained in these documents is significant. The table presented in item 3 of the term formalizing the agreement between UFPR and MEC lists 54 courses, the number of places available via SISU for each of them, and the distribution of places among the different competition categories. This table shows that 429 places were offered in 54 courses, 293 through the general competition, 68 for black [*negro*] candidates (black [*preto*] or brown [*pardo*])³⁴ and 68 for candidates coming from public schools. However, the distribution of the offered places on each course, due to the rounding off in the calculations (always rounded down in the case of quotas), results in percentages that differ substantially from those defined by the Action Plan.³⁵ Globally, the distribution is approximately two-thirds of the places (68.29%) for general competition and one third of places for quota students (15.85% for each modality).

In this same document, a descriptive table with the overall summary of courses and places offered by SISU (item 5) presents different figures

32 The new rector, who took over the post in December 2009, had participated in the first administration of his predecessor (2002-2006) as Pro-Rector of Planning, before leaving the post after being elected director of the Applied Social Sciences Sector. The vice-rector had been director of the Health Sciences Sector for two successive mandates (2002-2009). Both had participated in the deliberations on affirmative action policies at UFPR, though only the vice-rector had sat on COUN both when the Action Plan was approved and when it was revised.

33 Internally, the decision was formalized through an amendment to Resolution 53/06-CEPE, which regulates the institution's selection processes. Although the resolution does not mention the adoption of quotas in the selection via SISU, the other documents relating to the selection process indicate that the same model of racial and social quotas adopted in the UFPR entrance exams was extended to the selection system run by MEC.

34 TN: Here the racial-ethnic category *negro* (black) is subdivided into the colour categories *preto* (black) or *pardo* (brown).

35 To list some examples: on the Medicine course, from a total of 180 places, 18 are allocated to SISU. Of these, 12 (66.66%) for the general competition, 3 (16.66%) for blacks and 3 (16.66%) for students from public schools. The difference in relation to the percentages stipulated in the Action Plan (20% for each inclusion category) is even more pronounced on the Mechanical Engineering course (an evening course), which made 9 places available to SISU, distributed as follows: 7 for the general competition (77.77%), 1 for blacks (11.11%) and 1 for public school students (11.11%) - that is, practically half the amount stipulated by the Action Plan (Term of Participation 2010-2011, item 3, Table 'Affirmative Action Policies: offer of courses/places').

and percentages from the previous set, even more distant from those stipulated by the Action Plan. According to this table, 524 places were offered in 85 courses, 388 of which for general competition (74.04%) and 136 (25.95%) for affirmative action. The total number of places presented in this table is the same as appears in the 2011 Guide for Candidates. However, the distribution between the competition modalities presented in the Guide for Candidates is different, corresponding to the percentages set in the Action Plan: of the 524 places offered on 85 courses, 108 were for racial quotas (20.61%), 108 for public school quotas (20.61%) and 308 for general competition (58.8%) (2011 Guide for Candidates: 9-10).

Although the Guide for Candidates was published on the website of the Entrance Exam Centre (according to records available online) on August 19th 2010 – that is, prior to the signing and release of the Term of Participation of UFPR in SISU (13/12/2010) and Public Notice 01/2011-NC referring to the admission via SISU that year (05/01/2011) – it seems likely that the places were distributed in the selection process as recorded in the Guide, the figures of which coincide with those presented at the time of publication of the entrance exam results (ACS/UFPR, 15/01/2011). Here it is worth noting the actual *calculation* contained in the agreement signed with MEC – i.e. it had been carried out as described and endorsed by the university's senior administrative bodies, at least until a certain moment, without any attention being paid to its impact. As I suggested earlier, the instability of the figures, as well as the regulations, is a recurrent theme in the institutional life of the policy on quotas.

In concrete terms, the number of students admitted through the racial quotas in the 2011 Entrance Exam (i.e. in UFPR's own process, since I lack the data referring to SISU) fell sharply compared to the previous year. In 2010, with 1,069 places available for black students, 363 students were admitted via the racial quotas (33.95% of places offered). In 2011, with 999 places for black students, the number of students admitted fell to 298 (29.82% of places offered).³⁶

³⁶ The numbers presented should be taken as an indication only, since they come from diverse sources and distinct moments, though they share a common origin in the Entrance Exams Centre. The figures referring to 2010 were consulted in Cervi (2011: 122, table 5), whose analysis covers the period 2004-2010. The figures for 2011 are those that were made available by the UFPR Social Communication Office at the time of publishing the entrance exam results and are still, therefore, subject to variations in the matriculation process – though not upward, which supports the argument for a reduction in the number of entrants (ACS/UFPR, 15/01/2011).

As places were left unfilled in the two years under consideration, the lower admission of racial quota students cannot simply be attributed to the lower number of places on offer in the entrance exam. One possible reason for this can again be found in the model for calculating the candidates to be called for the second phase of the selection process. In 2011 this number was based on the number of places available in the entrance exam, not the total number of places offered by each course (i.e. the places offered through SISU were discounted).³⁷ Consequently, as the figures in the previous paragraph indicate, this enhanced the negative effects of the decline in the number of candidates called for the second phase of the selection process when it came to filling the places reserved to black students, as observed by Porto (2011: 94-95).³⁸ Concomitantly, the number of students admitted via the public school modality rose,³⁹ in compliance with the rule of transferring leftover places from one quota category to another.

In 2012 the distribution between the entrance exam (90% of places) and SISU (10% of places) remained the same. The downward trend in the number of students admitted via the racial inclusion places also persisted.⁴⁰ What changed was the way in which the selection process was divulged: the Guide for Candidates ceased to record the distribution of SISU's places by competition category, eliminating the possibility of any

37 This calculation is surmised from the comparison of two types of documents available on the Entrance Exams Centre website (nc.ufpr.br): the candidate/place ratio for each course and the list of students called for the second phase of the entrance exam in 2010 and 2011.

38 However, Porto (2011) omits to point out a crucial aspect of the change in the rules for calling students for the second phase of the entrance exam, introduced by Resolution 27/05-CEPE, which altered the multiplication factors taken as a reference for calculating their numbers. As well as the reduction in the multiplication factors themselves, there was a substantial increase in the interval covered by the factor $N=3$ (and only this factor), applied to the courses where the candidate/place ratio was between 5 and 15. This factor came to apply to practically all of UFPR's courses with effects that became more apparent with the advent of SISU. Due to the breadth of this band, the multiplication factor tends to remain the same after the subtraction of the places offered by SISU ($N=3$), but the number of candidates called for the second phase falls sharply, intensifying the competition.

39 As I pointed out earlier, the figures are imprecise and strictly speaking incomparable, serving only to outline a general movement. In 2010, 1,350 students were admitted via the entrance exam in the public school modality (cf. Cervi 2011: 122, table 5). In 2011 there were 1,631, despite the allocation of 10% of the places available to SISU (ACS/UFPR, 15/01/2011).

40 Here I refer to the entrance exam only since the data relating to quota admissions via SISU are inaccessible even indirectly. While a total of 298 students were admitted through the racial quota in 2011, corresponding to 5.94% of the places offered in the entrance exam and to 5.37% of the total available places (ACS/UFPR, 15/01/2011), in 2012 the number fell to 277, corresponding to 5.44% of the places available in the entrance exam and 4.93% of the total places on offer (ACS/UFPR, 04/01/2012).

discrepancy between different documents.⁴¹ Another aspect to note is that for the first time the compulsory nature of the interview with the committee for racial quota students was clearly announced in all documents relating to the 2012 selection process, including the UFPR-SISU Term of Participation, as well as the timetable of the stages and procedures for the selection process in the UFPR entrance exam Candidate's Guide. The number of potential interviewees, however, continued to shrink.

The local production of the Quotas Law

The final moment to be highlighted in the historical trajectory of UFPR's quotas policy also stemmed from the intersection between local and supralocal dynamics. In this case, though, the institution's regulatory practices became inscribed within the limits of a compulsory regulatory framework: the Quotas Law (Law 12.711/12), promulgated on August 29th 2012 after at least thirteen years spent passing through the National Congress. Despite the interest of comparing the controversies that emerged during the discussion of the federal law and those that accompanied the deliberation and the successive implementations of the quotas policy at UFPR (and other institutions), the sheer size of this task prevents me from even outlining it here. I would observe, however, that Law Bill 180/2008 of the Chamber of Deputies, approved by the Senate on 07/08/2012, initially focused (as proposed in Bill 73/1999) on the access to universities by public school students. As far as I know, the inclusion of ethnic-racial quotas in the project was always encompassed by this principle, having originally been proposed in Bill 3.627/2004 submitted by the Executive. The proposal generated resistance that lasted until the final vote.⁴² Consequently, some parallels could be drawn with the debates that occurred at UFPR in 2004 and with the later trajectory of the Action Plan itself.

41 The distribution of places presented in the SISU Participation Agreement, published on the website of the Entrance Exams Centre, corresponded for all courses to the percentages defined by the Action Plan (cf. UFPR-SISU Participation Agreement, 14/12/2011).

42 On the debates in the Chamber of Deputies, see, for example, the *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados* of 21/11/2008 (p. 52.925-52.946). In the *Diário do Senado Federal* of 08/08/2012, which records the session in which the Quotas Law was approved (pp. 40.027-40.035), it is also possible to read the lengthy declaration against the project, in particular against the ethnic-racial quotas, made by Senator Aloysio Nunes Ferreira from the PSDB block (p. 40029).

Law 12.711/12 has just nine articles. In general terms, these set aside at least 50% of places at federal higher education institutions for students who have completed their entire secondary education at public schools. Of the total number of places reserved, 50% must be allocated to students from families with a gross income equal to or lower than 1.5 minimum wages *per capita*.⁴³ In each band (i.e. above and below this income limit) places are allocated to self-declared black, brown and indigenous candidates, in a proportion at least equal to the percentages registered in the last IBGE census for the population in the state where the institution is based. The law also rules that institutions must implement at least 25% of the quota places each year, giving them a maximum of four years to comply with these requirements in full.

The use of these percentages to calculate the quota places was regulated by Decree 7.824, dated 11/10/2012, which stipulates, among other aspects, that whenever the calculation “involves results to one or more decimal places, the immediately higher whole number will be adopted” (Article 5, Paragraph 1). On the same day, Regulatory Directive 18/12 was published by the Ministry of Education, detailing the procedure to be adopted to calculate the quota places (Article 10 and 11). Not by chance, the Directive also gave particular attention to this point: given the stipulation to round up figures contained in Decree 7.824/12, the order in which the operations are undertaken is decisive in terms of the final result. The same concern appears in the rules for filling places after completion of the selection process (Article 14). It also establishes a strict sequence for transferring any leftover quota places from one category to another (Article 15). Finally, the Directive earmarks August 30th 2016 as the final date for complying with the law in full, obliging institutions to implement at least 25% of the quota places each year until then (Article 17).

The first point to note is that the UFPR quotas policy henceforth was inserted within an obligatory and hierarchized domain configured by the law, the decree and the ministerial directive – documents to which each federal higher education institution must adapt within a given time period and at a minimum pace. However, at the same time that it is impossible

43 The national minimum wage in 2012 was R\$ 622, corresponding to approximately US\$ 305 at the time when the law was issued. Today the value is R\$ 788, or around US\$ 300 (January 2015).

to take *any* decision, the generic nature of the regulations prevents their wording from *wholly* containing their own application. In other words, it is not just possible but actually indispensable to *produce* the regulations contained in these documents in the practical and everyday running of the institution, a movement that can engender very diverse experiences, even within the set legal limits. This is where the analytic (and political) interest of analysing these concrete trajectories resides.

The Quotas Law was passed after the release of the Public Notice for the 2013 UFPR entrance exam. When the decree and the ministerial directive regulating the law were published in the *Diário Oficial da União* (Official Federal Gazette) on 15/10/2012, the registration period and other actions relating to the entrance exam had already concluded. A new Public Notice was quickly prepared and released on the 7th of November, a Wednesday. The exams for the first phase would take place on the following Sunday. This process involved a series of decisions of various kinds and potential effects, taken in an extremely short time span. Some of them can be retraced in the new versions of the public notice and the Guide for Candidates (the latter released on 21 November, already after the first phase of the entrance exam had been completed),⁴⁴ although it is impossible to tell how they were produced or the outcomes intended by their authors.

The first of these decisions was to take as a norm the gradual compliance with the quota places set as a *minimum* by the law. Given that UFPR had already reserved 40% of its places for affirmative action policies, leaving just 10% for compliance with the legal quota target of 50% of available places, this was not an automatic decision. Following this step, it was also decided to transfer 12.5% of the places from the pre-existing quota system in order to comply with the law, maintaining the two policies in parallel, each with its own rules.⁴⁵ Two immediate consequences can be

44 The alternative to complying with the law was to establish, in the new version of the public notice, that all the candidates called for the second phase would have to access the Entrance Exams Centre website within a specified period of just three days, and opt either to stay in the current competition category or migrate to the quota system introduced by Law 12.711/12 (Public Notice 13/2012-NC, Articles 3 and 4). According to information released by the UFPR Communication Office, just around 400 of the 14,237 called for the second phase of the entrance exam opted to migrate to the new system (ACS/UFPR, 14/01/2013).

45 Consequently, in the 2013 entrance exam, 12.5% of the places would be allocated to meet the quota places stipulated by the Quotas Law and 27.5% of the places would be offered under the terms of the Action Plan; in 2014, the ratio would be 25% of the quota places stipulated in the law and 15% for the Action Plan; in 2015, 37.5% and 2.5%, respectively; finally, in 2016, the percentage of 50% quota places would be attained, all filled under the terms of the law.

identified: on one hand, the increase in the admission opportunities for students from public schools, something already seen before promulgation of the new law; on the other hand, the reserving of places for black students not conditional on other requirements for another few years. The importance of this possibility had been observed since 2007 by the report of the Committee for Evaluating and Monitoring of the Action Plan.

A second aspect was the interpretation, present from the outset, that the black candidates opting for the places reserved under the terms of the law would not have to face the 'Self-Declaration Verification Committee' (Public Notice 13/2012-NC, Article 3, IV). As the very name of the committee implies, the idea that the self-declaration of colour by candidates in the quota system itself needed to be checked, while the self-declaration of colour by candidates for places reserved under the Quota Law dispensed with this requirement, is certainly far from obvious.⁴⁶ One effect of the discrepancy produced by the implementation of the law was the end of the verification committee for all the candidates from 2014 onward. It is somewhat curious that the committee – established in the 2005 entrance exam through the Public Notice issued by the Entrance Exams Centre, without any formal decision being made on the matter – had been abolished in the same way ten years later.

Before then, though, what vanished from the reworked versions of the public notice and the candidate's guide, still with reference to the 2013 entrance exam, was the self-declaration of the candidates for UFPR's racial inclusion places – probably as a result of the interpretation given to the self-declaration contained in the Quotas Law. But if the document (the model of which appeared in previous versions of the candidate's guide) ceased to exist,⁴⁷ the evaluation of the students classified for the racial inclusion places from UFPR's own system by the 'Self-Declaration Verification Committee' remained obligatory (2013 Candidate's Guide, p. 5).

46 I tried to locate some kind of documentation on the interpretation or form of implementation recommended by the Ministry of Education for this self-declaration. The only reference I could find was in the 'Frequent questions' on the quota system published on the Ministry's website, where it states: "The racial criterion will be self-declaration, as used in the demographic census and in all affirmative action policies in Brazil" (portal.mec.gov.br/cotas/perguntas-frequentes.htm, consulted 04/01/2015). Whether the criterion of self-declaration is used in 'every' affirmative action policy in Brazil is difficult to know for sure. But the fact that the implementation of this criterion assumes very distinct contextual forms is a familiar topic for anyone who has accompanied affirmative action policies in Brazil's public universities.

47 The self-declaration model returned in the 2015 Candidate's Guide, but now intended exclusively for those opting for the places offered under the Quotas Law criteria and not conditional on a verification committee.

Another decision⁴⁸ concerns the calculation system adopted for the places reserved under each of the quota policies. Undoubtedly with the aim of complying with the legal stipulations in full, the calculation of the distribution of quota places under the terms of Law 12.711/12 produced a global result above the 12.5% initially anticipated. Based on the 5,087 places available in the entrance exam, 12.5% would have corresponded to 636 places. Since the calculation had to be made course-by-course, in most cases the result was not a whole number. Whenever this occurred, the result was rounded up, as specified under the law's regulations. This resulted in an additional 38 places, making 674 places, corresponding to 13.24% of the total. However it was the sequence of calculations that produced the interesting results, which is why I go into some detail here.

After calculating the total number of quota places, the next step, following Regulatory Directive 18/12-MEC (Article 10, III), is to allocate half of these places to candidates coming from public schools with a gross family *per capita* income equal to or lower than 1.5 minimum wages. In this case too, the rounding up of the figures resulted in an increase: from 337 to 370 places (or from 50% to 54.89% of 674).

Also in accordance with the Directive, the next operation is to reserve places from this total to black, brown and indigenous candidates, in percentages matching the total for these categories found in the most recent IBGE census for the respective federal state. UFPR's understanding was to round up each of the percentages before combining them,⁴⁹ which raised the total from 28.51% to 31%. However, since this percentage applied to a very small baseline (54.89% of 13.24% of the total places on each course, which in most cases resulted in a figure below 10), the rounding up of the calculations raised the percentage of this category from 31% to 41.35% of the 370 places allocated to candidates with a family *per capita* income below 1.5 minimum wages: i.e. a total of 153 places. Consequently, the remaining candidates in this band were allocated 217 places, corresponding to 58.64% of the 370 places linked to proof of income. In other words, the distribution initially planned for this group, 31% and 69% respectively, resulted in 41.35% and 58.64%.

48 This decision was formalized through Resolution 44/12-CEPE, dated 26/10/2012.

49 The percentages registered by the 2010 Census in Paraná are as follows: black 3.17% ; brown 25.09%; indigenous 0.25%. The percentages 4%, 26% and 1% were used respectively, which combined total 31%.

The 304 remaining places (from the 674 allocated to the application of the quotas law) were distributed in the two competition categories independent of income, using the same criteria described above. With the rounding up of the calculations per course, setting out from an even smaller base, the number rose from 31% (94.24 places) to 45.06% (137 places) allocated to black, brown and indigenous candidates. The 167 remaining places were allocated to the other candidates for income-independent places (corresponding to 45.06% of the 304 initial places, a percentage considerably lower than the 69% initially planned).

After distributing the places relating to the application of the Quota Law, the 4,413 remaining places were distributed in accordance with UFPR's own regulations. In this case, however, and contrary to what had happened ever since the approval of the quotas policy, the decision was made to allocate 60% of the places to the general competition first and only afterwards calculate the places allocated for racial and social inclusion, in that order. Using this arithmetic, the global result ended up fairly close to the model instituted by the Action Plan: 3,059 places for the general competition (60.13% of the total), 1,014 places for black candidates (19.93% of the total) and 1,304 places for students from public schools (who, discounting the places for black and indigenous students from public schools, totalled exactly the same number calculated above: 1,014, or 19.93% of total places in the entrance exam). However, while the previous global distribution was maintained, almost a third of the places allocated to black students (290 from the 1,014) were now dependent on supplementary conditions (public school students, combined or not with low income).

As in previous years, 10% of the places were allocated to SISU, 40% of which continued to be reserved to inclusion policies. However, the measures formulated under the Action Plan ceased to apply to these places, which began to be distributed entirely under the terms of the Quota Law. I lack the data here to affirm whether this was a decision internal to the university or a ruling of the Ministry of Education (MEC). Whatever the case, though, the change primarily impacted the places available for black students, which became conditional on the completion of secondary education in public schools and on set income parameters. On the other hand,

the calculation system, as identified in relation to the entrance exam, produces a bias favourable to quotas.⁵⁰

Another effect of the specific way in which the quotas law came to be implemented at UFPR was the increasing opacity of the practical results of any changes in the offer of places on student admission. This was due both to the coexistence of different entry regulations and conditions, and to the release of global figures only on the quota places filled under the terms of the new law, with no distinction made between the four categories of competition. In a sense, the available figures tell us more about institutional dynamics than about inclusion mechanisms.

Despite this fact, some pointers emerge when we juxtapose the data available for 2012 and 2013, the year when the quotas law came into force. There was no alteration to the global number of places offered by UFPR from one year to the next, nor to the distribution of the places between the entrance exam (90%) and SISU (10%). Considering just the figures relating to the entrance exam, 1,015 places were reserved for black students in 2012 under the terms of the Action Plan, and an equal number for students from public schools. A total of 277 black students were admitted (27.29% of the places reserved for this category) along with 1,550 public school students (a higher number than the initial reserved amount due to the transfer of places not filled by the racial quota). Even so, 203 quota places were left unfilled, or 19.70%.⁵¹

In 2013, 208 (28.72%) of the 724 places reserved for black students by the Action Plan were filled. Another 630 places were reserved for students from public schools, with the admission of 1,334 candidates through this modality. Although some quota places for black students had been left unfilled, the total number of candidates admitted through quotas (1,542) was higher than the number of places initially

50 277 of the 529 SISU places were for general competition and 252 for public school students, in compliance with the Quotas Law. Of these, 88 (34.92% of the reserved places and 16.63% of the total SISU places) were allocated to black, brown and indigenous students with an income below the limit set by the law and 53 (21.03% and 10.01%, respectively) to the other students within this band. Another 79 places (31.35% of the reserved places and 14.93% of the total SISU places) were allocated to black, brown and indigenous students irrespective of income. Finally, 32 places (16.69% and 6.04%, respectively) were taken by other public school students irrespective of income (see the UFPR-SISU Term of Acceptance, 23/11/2013, item 4).

51 The data on the offer of places has been extracted from the 2012 Candidate's Guide. The admissions data was presented when the entrance exam results were released (ACS/UFPR, 04/01/2012).

offered through the Action Plan (1,354), perhaps due to the redistribution of places leftover from those allocated under the Quotas Law. In this modality 674 places were reserved, just 340 of which filled. If this inference is correct, 146 places were left from the total number reserved (7.19%, a significantly lower percentage than that seen the previous year).⁵²

In sum, with the offer of quota places remaining constant (2,030 in 2012 and 2,028 in 2013), the number of students admitted through affirmative action policies after the Quotas Law rose (1,827 and 1,882, respectively) while the number of leftover places noticeably fell (from 203 to 146 places). The filling of the places reserved for black students, however, remains stable and at percentages much lower than the total places available under the Action Plan. Since the admission of black students had already proven fairly difficult during the period of unconditional quotas, it seems reasonable to infer that even more obstacles have emerged as a result of the conditions by set the Quotas Law on the type of schooling and income levels. However, specific information on the different competition categories (as well as the data per course) is unavailable. There is more, though: with the advent of the Quotas Law, the actual *quantity* of places reserved for black students has tended to decline at UFPR.

The fall in the number of places available for black student might be seen as less relevant today given that these places were never completely filled. But this certainly is not the case when we turn to future projections. In a hypothetical calculation, ignoring the rounding up of figures which the concrete distribution of places through the different competition categories inevitably entails, the full implantation of the Quotas Law implies a reduction from the 20% initially established by the Action Plan for racial quotas to just 14.25% of places reserved for ethnic-racial inclusion, all dependent on studying

⁵² The data on the offer of places is taken from Public Notice 13/2012-NC. Data on admissions was made available when the entrance exam results were released (ACS/UFPR, 14/01/2013).

in public schools, and half of them conditional on the income limit determined by the legislation. This percentage corresponds to precisely half of the percentage of black, brown and indigenous people in the population of Paraná state, 28.51% according to the 2010 census.⁵³

The potential reduction in the number of places for ethnic-racial inclusion results from the successive application of percentages on percentages. Considering the places as a whole, 50% are reserved to students from public schools and 50% for general competition. Of the reserved places, 50% (i.e. 25% of the total) are allocated to students with an income below the limit established by the law. The percentage calculated by the IBGE census (28.51%) is then applied to this figure, which results in an allocation of 7.12% of the total places to black, brown and indigenous students below the income limit set by the legislation. The other reserved places (also 25% of the total), distributed according to the same census criteria (i.e. 7.12% of the total), are allocated to black, brown and indigenous students with an income above the limit set by the legislation. Combining the two categories associated with the self-declaration of colour/ethnicity, we arrive at the figure of 14.25% indicated above.

However, while the downward trend in racial quotas derives from application of the law, the law itself also allows for the adoption of supplementary affirmative action policies by universities, meaning that this result is not produced either necessarily or unidirectionally. Although it is impossible to determine how UFPR reached the decision to maintain the affirmative action policies at the legal minimum limit – the eventual outcome of which, as indicated above, is to limit the possibilities for racial inclusion – it can still be observed that another set of actions led to the acceleration of this tendency from the 2014 selection process onward, where it was decided to double (from 10% to 20%) the percentage of places offered through SISU (see Resolution 50-A/13-CEPE, dated 16/08/2013).

53 In the Action Plan, the admission of indigenous students is governed by separate rules. Under the new law, the three categories are considered together, though this does not prevent institutions from maintaining their own supplementary and distinctive affirmative action policies, as seen at UFPR. Since the indigenous population registered by IBGE in Paraná is very small (0.25%), the impact is residual in terms of the analysis proposed here.

According to the progressive implementation delineated the previous year, 15% of the places offered in 2014 had to be reserved for the policy run by UFPR itself and 25% for compliance of the Quotas Law, totalling the 40% adopted ten years earlier. The UFPR-SISU Term of Acceptance that year introduced two important changes to this course of action. Firstly, the places under this system were distributed through the different competition categories by applying just the 25% of places set aside to comply with the Quotas Law. In 2013, when the law was already in force, the usual quota of 40% of places was maintained, although these places were distributed solely in accordance with the parameters of the federal legislation. The second alteration, which accentuated the effects of the first, was to offer places on new courses entirely via SISU (see UFPR-SISU Term of Acceptance, 11/12/2013). In sum, a fall was seen in the places allocated to affirmative action policies in 2014 – from 2,280 to 2,267, despite the increase in the global number of places on offer from 5,616 to 6,176 – effected through UFPR's participation in the system run by the Ministry of Education (MEC).

In the broader and more transparent process of the entrance exam, 40% of places were reserved from the outset involving a combination of the Action Plan and the Quotas Law. A total of 4,500 places were offered, 1,136 reserved in accordance with the Quotas Law, 1,378 under the terms of the Action Plan and 2,680 open for general competition. According to the published results of the selection process, 1,103 students were admitted via the quota places allocated under the law, though no information is available on the distribution between the different competition categories. Following the rules of the Action Plan, 342 places were reserved for black students and 204 filled, a slightly lower number than the 208 entering in 2013. Also following these same rules, 398 students from public schools were admitted: in other words, the 342 reserved places were all filled, plus another 56 transferred (probably) from those reserved for black students. Adding this figure to the number approved under the Quotas Law model, a total of 1,501 students were approved from public schools in 2014, accounting for a third of total students admitted in the entrance exam that year.

However, it is impossible to know how many black students were included in this combined total.⁵⁴

The 2015 selection process, the results of which had yet to be released when this text was concluded, marks the end of the Action Plan at UFPR.⁵⁵ According to the schedule planned for implementing the Quotas Law, 37.5% of the places would be earmarked for compliance with the law and another 2.5% would remain under the conditions of the Action Plan, setting aside 40% of places in total for affirmative action policies.

This schedule was changed at the initiative of the Pro-Rector of Undergraduate Studies, which proposed to CEPE that three alterations should be made to the regulations governing the 2015 selection process: an increase in the percentage of places offered via SISU from 20% to 30%; the full offer of the places reserved to affirmative action policies in accordance with the parameters of the Quotas Law; and the removal of the students' marks in the National Secondary Education Exam (ENEM) from the final calculation of their performance (see *Ofício Prograd 143/2014, 18/07/2014*).⁵⁶

The proposal was examined at a session of CEPE held just one week later and, according to the minutes attached to the process, approved unanimously, giving rise to Resolution 22/14-CEPE. While it might be argued – to cite the words of the rapporteur – that the 2.5% remaining from the UFPR model “[was] very small and not worth the

54 These figures also omit the differences stemming from each policy's specific rules (students who completed all their previous schooling or just secondary education at public schools, and whether places are linked or not to income levels), as well as the students coming from public schools who did not opt to compete via the affirmative action policies.

55 Resolution 37/04-COUN was not rescinded but, aside from its general provisions, only the offer of supplementary places for indigenous students actually remains in force and is currently being re-evaluated, the result of which is difficult to predict.

56 This communiqué forms part of Process 028785/2014-11, which led to Resolution 22-A/14-CEPE, approved on 25/07/2014. Since the 2010 entrance exam, the candidate's final mark resulted from weighing the mark obtained in the ENEM objective exam (10%) and the mark obtained in the tests for the selection process (90%), even if the ENEM results in a reduction of the candidate's final average (cf. amendment to Resolution 53/06-CEPE approved in 2009).

administrative burden of its implementation” (Process 028785/2014-11, fls.15), it is also true that this step anticipated the end of the offer of places to black students not conditional on any other criteria.

Another aspect worth considering is that the allocation of 2.5% of the 4,830 places in the 2015 entrance exam to the UFPR quotas policy would imply a total of 121 places to be distributed in equal proportion for racial and social inclusion. Since this number virtually equals the number of courses offered by the institution (117 courses in the state capital and another four localities in Paraná state) it would be impossible to allocate a minimum of one place on each course to each inclusion category from the Action Plan without doubling the percentage of reserved places. Apparently this potential outcome did not pass unnoticed. With no legal possibility of subtracting this surplus from the percentage planned to comply with the Quotas Law, the result would be an increase in the global offer of places allocated to affirmative action policies. However, given that this increase will have to take place in 2016 in order to meet the legal requirements and, on the other hand, recognizing that the quota places have so far tended not to be filled in full, CEPE’s decision echoes two themes that have accompanied the institutional life of the quotas policy at UFPR from the outset: the willingness to implement the policy, but containing it within precise limits; and ‘administrative rationality’ as a form of implementing these limits.⁵⁷

This argument is supported by two other changes made to the 2015 entrance exam regulations, the practical limit of which aligns them with the ambivalence suggested above. The first change prohibits the admission of candidates who have already completed a higher education course through the Quotas Law places – a restriction absent under the law, but which the institutions are allowed to institute (Resolution 60/14-CEPE, dated 31/10/2014). The second change, whose origin remains indeterminate, concerns the percentage used to calculate the places allocated to black, brown and indigenous students under the terms of the federal legislation. The rounding (up) of the census data

57 It is worth noting that the change made in 2005 to the criteria for calling candidates for the second phase of the entrance exam, which had profoundly negative effects on the admission of black students, was also made under the pretext of streamlining the costs involved in the selection process.

relating to these categories, adopted when the Quotas Law came into force, was substituted in the table of offered places published in the 2015 Candidate's Guide, by the simple sum of their respective values, meaning that the benchmark percentage fell from 31% (in 2013 and 2014) to 28.51% (in 2015).

Apparently, after an initial phase when the Quotas Law was implemented in literal form, the same diffuse impetus that affected the regulatory framework of the Action Plan after its approval, limiting its scope, now began to act on the federal law. The latter began to contain retroactively provisions more in tune with local practices not attributable merely to specific actors or particular bodies. Here it suffices to consider the multitude of operations needed to put the selection process into practice, the complexity of the calculations that precede and succeed it, the unpredictability that always surrounds collective decisions, and the infinite number of possible intersections between regulatory formulas, bureaucratic routines, technical skills and political effects, to obtain a glimpse of a movement necessarily produced in collective and distributed form.

As I proposed at the outset, the description of various aspects of this movement suggests that setting out from the difference between formulation and implementation as entirely distinct and successive operations is of little help when it comes to understanding the concrete existence of the administrative and legal regulations that constitute a public policy, since it is *between* these extremes that the institutional life of regulations develops and its effects are produced. As I have aimed to show, what the regulation enunciates is also an outcome of practical engagements that render it operational, as well as the intersection between different bodies and processes involved in the production of regulations.

Proposals initially defeated during the debates in the University Council, once reactivated in the production of regulations by bodies lower down the institutional hierarchy, redefined the criteria for racial quotas and their operationalization, which became confidential and dependent on a 'Self-Declaration Verification Committee.' In parallel, initiatives at first located outside the quotas system – in particular the changes to the formula for calculating the number of candidates called

for the second phase of the entrance exam – contributed decisively to the gradual absorption of racial quotas into the quotas allocated to public school students, reflecting the general trajectory of affirmative action policies in the institution.

In the following years, the intersection between public policies run at different levels – the UFPR Action Plan and the Unified Selection System (SISU) instituted by the Ministry of Education – accentuated this tendency and, simultaneously, left the figures related to quota targets less accessible and more unstable. The introduction of the Quotas Law also contributed to the increasing opacity of these figures, in part because of the coexistence of different regulations and conditions for student admission at the university, in part because of the release only of global figures on quota uptake under the terms of the law, with no distinctions made between the different competition categories. Furthermore, while the new legal requirements led to the dissolution of the ‘Self-Declaration Verification Committee,’ they also ended the offer of racial quota places not conditional on supplementary criteria. Finally, the actual number of places reserved for black students at UFPR has tended to decline – an effect in part inscribed in the law itself, but equally dependent on its local modes of implementation.

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Informational Capital and *sens du jeu*: Identifying the Quality of Higher Education

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Abstract

This article investigates the significance of access to higher education for a group of beneficiaries of a governmental scholarship scheme (ProUni) studying at the Catholic University of Rio (PUC-Rio). It investigates the different senses of access to higher education for these scholars, the different meanings of the ProUni in their educational careers, and how their motivations are related to their decision to carry out their studies at PUC-Rio. The analysis is carried out in dialogue with Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital and informational capital. Using questionnaires and interviews, the article indicates how scholars guide and direct their access to higher education, in some cases changing institutions in order to guarantee the quality of their education and to increase their chances of upward mobility.

Keywords: ProUni; university students; informational capital; higher education

Resumo

A partir de questionários e entrevistas com bolsistas do ProUni da PUC-Rio, o presente artigo investiga, à luz dos conceitos de capital simbólico e capital informacional de Bourdieu, qual o sentido dado ao ingresso no ensino superior por esses bolsistas, os diferentes significados assumidos pelo ProUni em suas trajetórias e como suas motivações se relacionam com a escolha da PUC-Rio. O trabalho indica como os bolsistas orientaram seu

ingresso no ensino superior e, alguns casos, mudaram de instituição de forma a garantir a qualidade de sua formação e aumentar as possibilidades de ascensão social.

Palavras-chave: ProUni; estudantes universitários; capital informacional; ensino superior.

Informational Capital and *sens du jeu*: Identifying the Quality of Higher Education

Clarissa Tagliari Santos

Introduction

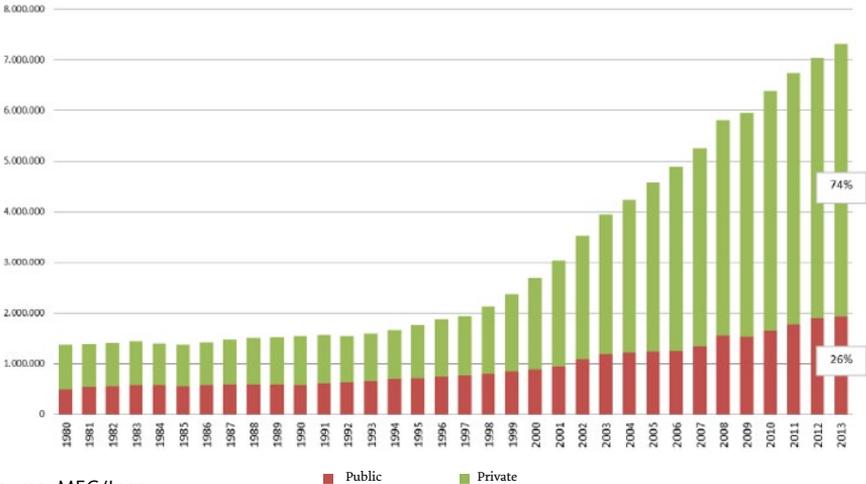
One of the characteristics of higher education in Brazil is that it is relatively young, the first university having been founded in 1934. Brazilian higher education has developed into a complex system of public (federal, state and municipal) and private (religious, communal, philanthropic and private for-profit) institutions. In terms of academic organization, institutions are divided into universities, university centres and non-university institutions (colleges and polytechnics). Unlike the private universities that cater to 75% of all undergraduates in the country (INEP/MEC 2014), the public universities do not charge fees.

Over the past two decades Brazilian higher education has passed through a series of transformations, in particular a significant increase in the number of students matriculated through an expansion of existing public and private institutions and the creation of new ones (Figure 1). Since 2000, affirmative action policies have been implemented in favor of poor and non-white candidates. After a number of years of polemical debate on whether race-based affirmative action was constitutional, the Federal Supreme Court declared racial quotas constitutional in 2012. In August of the same year a federal law (Lei nº 12.711/2012) was passed obliging all federal institutions of higher learning to reserve at least 50% of their places for candidates who had studied in public high schools, with quotas for “pretos” (blacks), “pardos” (mixed-race¹) and indigenous peoples depending on their proportional presence in the

¹ The census term pardo is used to refer to people who define themselves as between white and black. We have used the term “mixed race” to refer to this idea, although, of course, it makes no real sense, since it assumes such an unimaginable category as “pure race”.

state where the institution is based according to the most recent national census figures². For students in private universities, the availability of loans has been increased, and a scholarship program implemented (ProUni) for students who studied in public schools. As a result, the percentage of people in the age range of 18-24 years enrolled in universities has increased from 10.4% in 2004 to 16.3% in 2013 (IBGE 2014).

Figure 1 - Undergraduate Enrollment, public and private sectors- Brazil, 1980-2013



Source: MEC/Inep

It is of particular importance that this expansion of the system has increased the number of non-white and poor students in both the public and private universities. Between 2004 and 2013, students from the wealthiest quintile ceased to be the majority in all universities. In 2004 they occupied 55,0% and 68,9% of places in public and private universities respectively. In 2013, these percentages had fallen to 38,8% and 43,0%, respectively (Figure 2). In the same period, students from the lowest quintile increased from 1,7% to 7,2% in the public universities and from 1,3% to 3,7% in the private ones (IBGE 2014). It is important to note that in absolute numbers there are more poor and black students in the private universities whose overall intake is so much greater than that of the public universities.

2 “Pretos”, “pardos”, “brancos” and “indígenas” are the “ethnic” categories used by the national census.

Figure 2 – Students in public and private universities according to the income per capita quintiles of their families, 2013

Quintiles of income per capita	Public universities	Private Universities
Total – Absolute numbers (1 000 people)	1 522	4 837
1° quintile	7,2	3,7
2° quintile	11,5	8,3
3° quintile	17,3	15,9
4° quintile	25,2	29,1
5° quintile	38,8	43,0

Source: IBGE 2014

Even so, and largely because of the small number of university places, profound differences in wealth of students' families persist. Sampaio (2000) and Vargas (2009) have observed that greatest differences of wealth are related more to university courses than the institutions themselves. As far as colour or race are concerned, the percentage of white students in the 18-24 age range in 2013 was 23.5% and that of non-whites was only 10,8% (IBGE *op. cit.*). Poorer and non-white students continue to predominate in lower prestige courses such as teacher training courses, while wealthier students who can afford to study in high quality private high schools are able to win places in the more prestigious courses such as industrial design, medicine, communications and engineering in the non fee-paying public universities. They are also able to afford the better courses in the private universities.

The ProUni

As part of their strategy to expand higher education, the government of the Workers' Party which claims to represent various social movements and which is dedicated to reducing social inequality, introduced an affirmative action policy for the private universities in 2005; the University For All Programme (Port: Programa Universidade para Todos, ProUni). In total, one

thousand and four hundred institutions of higher education – over 70% of private institutions in the country – have made scholarships available through the Programme (Programa 2010).

The ProUni (Brasil 2005) concedes full and partial scholarships for students enrolled at undergraduate and advanced vocational courses in private institutions of higher education. These institutions, in turn, are liable to certain tax exemptions. For philanthropic private institutions, which already benefitted from tax exemptions, the Programme is mandatory. In order to enrol in the Programme, students must have: (a) obtained at least 450 points in the National Secondary School Exam (Exame Nacional de Ensino Médio, ENEM); (b) a *per capita* family income no greater than one and a half times the minimum wage (for full scholarships) or three times the minimum wage (partial scholarships); and, lastly, (c) attended a public secondary school or a private secondary school on a scholarship (Brasil 2005). The Programme also reserves some scholarships for people with physical disabilities, blacks, Indigenous or mixed-race (*pardos*) students, so long as they meet the other requirements. As in the case of racial quotas mentioned earlier, the percentage of scholarships follows the relative percentage presence of “pretos”, “pardos” and “indígenas” in the state where the institution is based.

Since its inception, the ProUni has enabled over 900,000 scholarship students to access higher education (Brasil 2013). Despite its contributions to widening university access, it provides no guarantee as to the quality of the participating institutions and the courses that they offer. It thus falls short on one of the key factors in the effective democratization of higher education. According to the Operational Audit Report of the Federal Court of Accounts (Brasil 2009), 34.6% of all courses that were registered with the Programme in 2008 had never been evaluated by the National Exam of Student Performance (Exame Nacional de Desempenho de Estudantes, ENADE), and 20.9% of those that had obtained a failing grade. Ten years after the creation of the Programme, no steps have been taken to heed one of the main recommendations of the Federal Court of Accounts: that tax exemptions not be conceded to courses which have ranked negatively. The Report further warns of the dangers of educating a large number of students in courses which are proven to be of low quality.

In a study of ProUni scholars enrolled in what he calls “substandard courses”, Almeida (2012) questions their chances for upward mobility:

[...]These subgroups of scholars, many of whom are studying for licentiate degrees or attending technical courses, and a few studying for bachelor degrees in administration [...] have a less realistic chance of sustainable upward mobility, considering the notoriously low quality of the courses and universities in which they are enrolled. For these scholars, the diploma has only an instrumental value – important, no doubt [...], for there is still an advantage in having a degree in higher education – but an educational title with no greater symbolic distinction from the certificates that they will obtain after the end of their course (ALMEIDA, op. cit: 207).

This matter is particularly important when we consider that ProUni scholars are, in general, the first in their families to attend higher education. They have therefore less experience with which to evaluate the quality of different courses when faced with the heterogeneity of the Brazilian system of higher education.

In my Master's dissertation (Santos 2011), I analysed the difficulties encountered by ProUni scholars who must maintain themselves at university, and trace their careers prior to enrolling in institutions of higher education. I begin this article by providing a socio-economic profile of the students sampled, before presenting results on the role of the ProUni in the careers of 15 scholars up until the start of higher education. I then turn to an in-depth investigation of the factors that favoured their enrolment in the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio), a private, philanthropic institution which is among the best universities in the country³. The hypothesis I will pursue is that these students benefitted from a certain “informational” cultural capital in understanding the hierarchies that distinguish institutions in terms of academic quality and social prestige.

Methodology

Research was based on a questionnaire distributed⁴ in 2010 to ProUni scholars studying Business Administration (henceforth Administration), Law and Psychology. This provided information on the socio-economic

3 PUC-Rio only offers full ProUni scholarships, since students with partial scholarships would find it difficult to cover the costs not included in the ProUni Programme.

4 Since the identity and contact information of ProUni scholars is confidential, I relied on help from PUC-Rio's Dean of Community Relations in order to distribute the questionnaires.

profile of these students, as well as on diverse aspects of campus life. In total, 163 scholars voluntarily replied to the questionnaire, a sample covering freshmen in six consecutive years (2005-2010). These scholars were distributed among the three courses as follows: 38 in Administration, 85 in Law and 40 in Psychology (Table 1).

Table 1 – Research Sample

Course	Total of ProUni Scholars in PUC –Rio (2010.1)	Research Sample	%
Administration	100	38	38%
Law	119	85	71%
Psychology	61	40	65.5%

Source: Dean of Community Relations, PUC-Rio, and questionnaire data.

The ProUni requires that scholarship distribution be proportional to fee-paying students enrolled in the course. There were thus few ProUni scholars in courses which traditionally receive a greater number of low-income students (Licentiate Degrees and Social Services). It was thus decided to restrict the investigation to courses that occupy prestigious positions in the hierarchy of careers and which reveal differences in the sociocultural level of students.

Psychology and Law were selected because they have a high number of ProUni scholars and share certain features in relation to the individual and family characteristics of the student body (ENADE 2006). Since not all scholars enrolled in these courses replied to the questionnaires, a third course was included in the sample. As the end of the semester was approaching, we selected Administration, the course with the highest number of ProUni scholars nationwide and the second-highest number of scholars in PUC-Rio.

Using contact information volunteered by the respondents, five scholars from each course were selected for individual interviews, conducted at the campus. The choice of interviewees took into account race, sex, age, parents' education and the difficulties reported in the

questionnaires. Interviews were recorded with the scholars' consent and transcribed.

Socio-economic profile of ProUni scholars

For the three degree courses analysed in our research, most ProUni scholars were female. The proportion was 75.5% in Psychology (n=30), 63% in Administration (n=24) and 55% in Law (n=47).

Almost 80% of the scholars in our sample fall into the two youngest age sets (Table 2). 52% of the Law scholars, 42% of those in Administration and 40% in Psychology fall into the first set, which indicates a school career with few setbacks followed by entry into university immediately after high school. Most of the scholars in the ideal age set (up to 24 years old) are studying Administration (92%) or Psychology (80%). Law, in contrast, has the highest proportion of students in the youngest age set as well as most over the age of 25.

The significant presence of young students in the three degree courses suggests an uneventful career in compulsory education followed by the immediate start of university. This data, along with information obtained in interviews, suggest that, in many cases, the ProUni presented itself as an easy route for the immediate or almost immediate transition from secondary school to university.

Table 2 – Age sets by Degree

Degree	Age Sets				Total
	21 or lower	22-24	25-30	Over 30	
Psychology	16	16	5	3	40
	40,0%	40,0%	12,5%	7,5%	100,0%
Administration	16	19	3	0	38
	42,1%	50,0%	7,9%	,0%	100,0%
Law	44	19	17	5	85
	51,8%	22,4%	20,0%	5,9%	100,0%
Total	76	54	25	8	163
	46,6%	33,1%	15,3%	4,9%	100,0%

In what pertains to race or colour of the scholars, Psychology is evenly distributed between whites (30%), blacks (30%) and mixed-race (40%) students. In Administration and Law, white scholars are the majority, with a high number of scholars declaring themselves to be mixed-race (39,5% and 40%, respectively), and a lower number of people declaring themselves to be blacks, indigenous and yellow (Table 3).

Table 3 – Colour of the Scholars by Degree

Degree	Colour				Total
	Whites	Blacks	Mixed-Race	Yellow/Indigenous	
Psychology	12	12	16	0	40
	30,0%	30,0%	40,0%	0%	100,0%
Administration	16	5	15	2	38
	42,1%	13,2%	39,5%	5,3%	100,0%
Law	39	10	34	2	85
	45,9%	11,8%	40,0%	2,4%	100,0%
Total	67	27	65	4	163
	41,1%	16,6%	39,9%	2,5%	100,0%

We next present data on the education of the scholars' mothers. We can see that most of the mothers of scholars in all three degree courses have completed secondary school. For Administration and Psychology, mothers who attended school up until the first or fourth grade come second, totalling 15.8% (n=6) and 25% (n=10). It is noteworthy that 52.5% of the mothers of scholars studying Psychology attended primary school only. For Administration, the proportion is likewise high at 36.8%. Law displays the largest percentage of mothers who completed their higher education (Table 3).

It can thus be asserted that Psychology scholars come from families with mothers possessing low cultural capital, while those studying Administration are in an intermediary position vis-à-vis the other two degree courses. There are indications that Law students come from a more privileged background.

Table 4 – Education of the Scholar’s mothers

Degree Course	Never attended school	Between 1st and 4th grade	Between 5th and 8th grade	Completed Primary School	Completed Secondary School	Completed Higher Education	Post-graduate	Total
Administration	0 0%	6 15,8%	4 10,5%	4 10,5%	21 55,3%	3 7,9%	0 0%	38 100,0%
Law	0 0%	8 9,4%	10 11,8%	11 13%	40 47%	14 16,5%	2 2,4%	85 100,0%
Psychology	1 2,5%	10 25,0%	6 15,0%	4 10,0%	15 37,5%	4 10,0%	0 0%	40 100,0%
Total	1 0,6%	24 14,7%	20 12,3%	19 11,6%	76 46,7%	21 12,9%	2 1,2%	163 100,0%

We now present the occupation of scholars’ fathers⁵, a classic operational construct for the identification of the position of an individual in the social structure. We use the socio-economic scale elaborated by Hasenbalg and Silva (1999), composed of six occupational subgroups corresponding to six different socio-economic *statuses*: high (professionals with higher education degrees and high-net-worth individuals); upper medium (medium-level professionals and affluent individuals); medium-medium (non-manual workers, low-level professionals and well-off individuals), lower medium (qualified and semi-qualified workers), upper low (unqualified urban workers) and lower low (unqualified rural workers).

In our research, the two lower-*status* strata were grouped together in a single index, simply termed ‘low’. This is justified due to the small number of candidates in the lower low stratum in our sample. When information on the father’s occupation was not obtained we used information on the mother’s occupation. Instances in which we were unable to obtain any information concerning the parents’ occupation were considered “missing cases”.

The data concerning the father’s occupation indicate that fathers of ProUni scholars tend to fall in the medium medium and lower medium strata. Administration and Law scholars tend to have fathers in the medium medium strata (43% and 42% respectively). For Psychology scholars, in

5 There are a high proportion of mothers in the three degree courses who do not engage in any form of waged labour and fall into the ‘housewife’ category. These are 41% of the mothers studying Psychology, 39% in Administration and 35,4% in Law.

contrast, only 25% of fathers fall into the medium medium stratum. In Law, the second highest percentage of fathers are in the lower medium strata (27.8%). In Administration, the lower medium and low strata account for the second largest percentage, each one at 21.6%. Fathers of Psychology scholars tend to be in occupations with low social prestige and income, with a high percentage (42.5%) of fathers falling into the lower medium stratum. When this percentage is added to the 22.5% of fathers that fall into the low stratum, we have a total of 65% of fathers of Psychology scholars working manual jobs. For Law scholars only a small proportion of fathers are in the low strata, expressing a tendency for a better education and higher income

Table 5 – Occupational Classification of Fathers

Degree Course	Occupational Strata					Total
	High	Upper medium	Medium medium	Lower medium	Low	
Psychology	3	1	10	17	9	40
	7,5%	2,5%	25,0%	42,5%	22,5%	100,0%
Administration	3	2	16	8	8	37
	8,1%	5,4%	43,2%	21,6%	21,6%	100,0%
Law	4	10	33	22	10	79
	5,1%	12,7%	41,8%	27,8%	12,7%	100,0%
	10	13	59	47	27	156
Total	6,4%	8,3%	37,8%	30,1%	17,3%	100,0%

Our sample shows marked differences in the distribution of students among the three degree courses based on the school system attended in secondary school⁶ (Table 4). In Brazil, graduates from federal or private schools have considerably greater chances of continuing on to university when compared with students from other public schools, even when we allow

6 Compulsory education in Brazil is organized in three stages: Pre-school (0 to 5 years of age), basic education (06 to 14 years of age) and secondary education (15 to 17 years of age). Graduation at the end of secondary school is a precondition for entering higher education. Technical education can be followed at the same time as, or after, secondary education.

for variables such as class, race and gender (Ribeiro 2010). Type of school is hence one of the main factors determining educational inequalities. 58.7% of scholars in our sample studied in the State-level public system, with a higher proportion (75%) studying for a Psychology degree. The proportion is lower for scholars studying Law (55.3%) and Administration (48.6%). For both of these degree courses there are high numbers of scholars that graduated from private schools and even higher numbers from federal schools. This is at least partly explained by the fact that the Law and Administration courses at PUC-Rio are more competitive, with more demanding admission criteria, and are hence more rigorous in selecting candidates.

Table 6 – School Administrative Networks

Degree Course	Administrative Network			Total
	State	Federal	Private	
Psychology	30	9	1	40
	75%	22,5%	2,5%	100,0%
Administration	18	12	7	37
	48,6%	32,4%	18,9%	100,0%
Law	47	25	13	85
	55,3%	29,4%	15,3%	100,0%
Total	95	46	21	162
	58,7%	28,4%	13,0%	100,0%

A Desire for Upward Mobility: the Institution as Symbolic Capital

For Law and Administration scholars, the two main reasons for entering higher education were “to attain a better standard of living” (respectively: 67%, n=57 and 74%, n=28) and to “improve living conditions for my family” (respectively 56.5%, n=48 and 47%, n=18). For Psychology scholars the percentage was slightly lower but still expressive: 62.5% (n=25) of Psychology scholars went to university to attain a better standard of living, while 37.5% (n=15) did so to improve their family’s living conditions.

It should be noted that only for Psychology did the “chance for personal fulfilment” gather the highest proportion of answers (65%; n=26). These results thus show that, for Psychology scholars, higher education is conceived in terms of both economic improvement and personal fulfilment, while those in the other two courses tend to put economic motives first.

The academic literature on working class youths (Zago 2007) has highlighted the tendency to view higher education as a means for ensuring a place in the job market, a route for occupying positions with greater prestige and better wages. The same tendency is present among the scholars in our sample, most of whom come from the medium and lower strata of society, and for whom, therefore, higher education provides an opportunity for overcoming their humble social origin.

The indication of PUC-Rio as the first choice institution of higher education also seems to be based on a desire for upward mobility⁷. “Quality of teaching” was the first most common option marked as “very important” or “main reason” in the questionnaire. Other aspects of the institution’s quality, such as infrastructure and social prestige, were also taken into account when choosing to study at PUC-Rio. Scholars who answered the questionnaire with “other reasons” included “*Academic infrastructure, good professors, library*”, “*Degree course excellency, Infrastructure of a private institution*”, “*The most recognized institution*”, “*Great structure and highly rated in the job market*”, “*Wide acceptance of a PUC diploma in the market*”, “*Market prestige*”, etc. Similarly, during interviews scholars regularly referred to PUC-Rio as a university “*of renown*”, “*well-regarded in the market*”, and mentioned its importance for their “CV”.

Studies show that proximity to place of residence is one of the most important factors involved in choosing a university, particularly among low-income students (Almeida 2009; Portes 2007; Zago 2000). However, for three-quarters of all the scholars in our sample, easy access to PUC-Rio was not a determining criterion in choosing an institution of higher education. Indeed, 60% of scholars live very far from PUC-Rio’s campus in the Zona Sul of Rio de Janeiro city. Most live in neighbourhoods in the Zona Norte, Zona Oeste and Baixada Fluminense, as well as in other municipalities of the State of Rio de Janeiro. For these ProUni scholars, distance is less important than

7 The question concerning the choice of institution was formulated in such a way as to evaluate the degree of importance attributed to each of the factors in the decision-making process (“no importance/does not apply”, “little importance”, “very important”, “most important factor”).

the quality of the institution, though the commute remains an enormous challenge for the continuity of their education. The desire for social mobility, together with support from families and the institution⁸, are prime motivations for overcoming this challenge.

It can thus be claimed that, for the scholars in our sample, the excellence of teaching at PUC-Rio, which is directly linked to the social prestige of the institution, is recognized as symbolic capital which can enhance the value of the diploma in the job market. Although motivations of a more practical order are central to the decisions of these scholars, quality is also valued in terms of personal growth and knowledge acquisition:

(...) It's not bad-mouthing, there [referring to the institute of higher education in which she had studied] the professors were great, but in comparison, today, PUC offers a much more comprehensive education. I don't know about other colleges. It [PUC-Rio] educates you to be a citizen, it wants you to think, to criticize. In the other one I went to, no. They [the professors at PUC] offer you a much wider horizon (Marcelle, 3rd term, Law)

The importance many scholars attribute to the market value of a diploma from PUC-Rio is expressed in the fact that 13 of the scholars in our sample had attended one or even two other institutions before being accepted by PUC-Rio. Even though they had obtained a ProUni scholarship to other private institutions, these scholars asked to be transferred or, in most cases, sat the ENEM exams again to obtain the necessary scores for gaining a place at PUC-Rio. We will return to these stories shortly.

First, it is important to observe that the image of PUC-Rio as a prestige and high-quality university seems to bear little relation to the scores that the Institution obtained in the evaluations carried out by the Ministry of Education (MEC). Although some scholars consulted the Student Guide or carried out research on the internet, the main source of information for interviewees were friends, relatives, teachers or acquaintances who had studied at, or were otherwise familiar with, PUC-Rio. In some cases, a university preparatory course was also important in clarifying the alternatives available to those who could not afford tuition.

⁸ PUC-Rio offers material support (e.g., transport and meals) for scholars who are less economically privileged.

The central role of inter-personal relations in choice of institution of higher education is also manifest in the analysis of other factors influencing the decisions of the scholars sampled. “Advice of friends and/or teachers” was the second most common option marked as “very important” or “main reason” in the questionnaire. According to Bourdieu (1996), the social networks in which we are involved play a crucial role in affording knowledge of the education system by providing a more accurate view of the institutional context, the opportunities available and how best to navigate them. Social capital⁹ can thus be seen as one of the means for “gathering” informational capital about the academic world. In contexts such as that of Brazilian higher education, composed of diverse types of institutions of different quality, gathering informational capital is particularly important for understanding the hierarchies that distinguish IES/degree course in terms of academic quality, social prestige and value for money. We will develop this discussion in the last section of the article, but the following passage is revealing of how a mediator-figure can open new opportunities in what pertains to choice of institution:

This matter of coming to PUC was also a surprise for me. Because my mom is in the Church. She and my dad are in a couples’ group and they know a guy who worked at the Vladimir Nunes College [fictional name of a College in the Campo Grande district]. So I decided I was going to do Administration there. So he told me to do the ENEM again to see if I could get the scholarship. When the result of the ENEM came out, we went straight to him, he was sort of a sure thing for getting into university. But when he saw my results, he saw that I had scored well enough to go to PUC. PUC didn’t even exist for me, it hadn’t even crossed my mind. I didn’t have this vision. I was just there in my own world, very Campo Grande, well within the conditions I thought I had at the time. Then when I went to register with the ProUni, I went and put PUC down as my first choice, like “let’s see where this is gonna go”. Then, when I was pre-selected, I didn’t even believe it. I didn’t even know where PUC was, I had to ask for help, find out, ask my boyfriend to bring me here. So, sort of like, one person said something and I went “ah, let’s see” and came here. (Laura, 5th term Administration)

9 James Coleman (2000) also considers information to be a specific form of social capital, defined as aspects of the social structure that function as facilitating resources for the actions of social actors. This underscores the potential of social relations to supply the information that social action is then based on.

Characterization of the interviewees: opening considerations

The tables below summarizes the profile of the scholars interviewed¹⁰ and conveys something of their school careers (“Characterization of school career”). From a total of 15 interviewees, 8 are women and the majority are black or mixed-race. Most interviewees are aged 24 or under. One representative from each degree course studied at a Federal school, the remainder hailing from the State system. In alignment with the tendency observed in the quantitative data in our sample, the fathers of the interviewee did not attended higher education and hold medium-to-low prestige jobs.

Table 7 – Profile of the Interviewees

	Race	Age	City/State of origin	Parents’ education	Father’s occupation	Mother’s occupation	Term
Law							
Rafael	white	24	Hinterland of Minas Gerais	Father: Incomplete Secondary school Mother: between 5th and 8th grade	Small businessman	Small businesswoman	7th
Danilo	Mixed race	23	Rio de Janeiro/RJ (Favela)	Father: 4th grade Mother: Between 5th and 8th grade	Newsagent (deceased)	Domestic	3rd
Marcelle	White	30	Rio de Janeiro/RJ (Favela)	Father: Lower than 4th grade Mother: Completed 4th grade	Mechanic (deceased)	domestic	3rd
Mauro	Black	34	Nova Iguaçu- RJ	Father: Complete secondary school Mother: Complete secondary school	Truck driver	Bus fare collector	8th
Gabriela	Mixed Race	21	Fortaleza/ Ceará (until middle school).	Father: Complete secondary school Mother: Incomplete higher education	Mechanic (Deceased)	Evangelical pastor	3rd

10 The names of the scholars have been changed to protect their identity.

Administration							
Sérgio	Mixed race	24	Rio de Janeiro/RJ (Favela)	Father: Below 4th grade Mother: Complete secondary education	Autonomous salesman	Domestic	2nd
Gilberto	Mixed race	28	Came from the hinterlands of Ceará when he was 9. (Favela)	Father: Between 5th and 8th grade Mother: Complete secondary education	Policeman	Domestic	4th
Laura	Black	23	Campo Grande- RJ	Father: Secondary School Mother: Secondary School	Military Police	Domestic	5th
Clara	Mixed race	23	Rio de Janeiro/RJ (Favela)	Father: Secondary School Mother: Secondary School	Chauffeur (inactive)	Cook/ street vendor	5th
Denilson	Mixed race	20	Rio de Janeiro/RJ	Father: Secondary School Mother: between 5th and 8th grade	Electrical technician	Domestic	4th
Psychology							
Kátia	White	22	Rio de Janeiro/RJ	Father: Completed 4th grade Mother: Between 5th and 8th grade	Confectioner/popcorn vendor	Domestic	9th
Vitor	Black	27	Rio de Janeiro/RJ (Favela)	Father: Below 4th grade Mother: Below 4th grade	Porter	Domestic	9th
Valéria	Black	29	RJ hinterlands	Father: Between 5th and 8th grade Mother: Secondary School	Office Assistant	Municipal employee	10th
Jussara	Black	25	Hinterlands of Minas Gerais	Father: Completed primary school Mother: Completed primary school	Bricklayer	Domestic	1st
Juliana	Black	20	Nova Iguaçu- RJ	Father: Secondary School Mother: Secondary School	Sowing machine technician	Receptionist	7th

Table 8 – School Career

Name and Degree Course	Primary Education	Secondary Education	Professionalizing Course	Work during basic education?	Preparatory Course
Scholars who started at PUC-Rio immediately after secondary school					
Gabriela (Law)	Private	Federal (Technical Education)	Yes, during primary education	No	Yes, during secondary education
Juliana (Psychology)	Mostly Private	State (Technical)	Yes, during primary education	No	No
Katia (Psychology)	Public	Federal (Technical)	Yes, during primary education	No	No
Denílson (Administration)	Public	Federal (Technical)	Yes, during primary education	No	No
Scholars who did not start at PUC-Rio immediately after secondary school					
Sérgio (Administration)	Public	State	No	No	Yes, after secondary education
Laura (Administration)	Public	State (Regular Course- teacher training)	Yes, after secondary education	No	Yes, after secondary school
Clara (Administration)	Private until 5th grade.	State	No	Yes	Yes, during secondary education
Gilberto (Administration)	Public	State (Technical)	Yes, during secondary education	Yes	Yes, after secondary education
Danilo (Law)	Private	State	Yes, during secondary education	Yes	Yes, after secondary education
Marcelle (Law)	Public	State	No	Yes	Yes, during secondary education
Rafael (Law)	Public	State	No	No	Yes, after secondary education
Mauro (Law)	Public	State	No	No	No

Valéria (Psychology)	Public	State	Yes, after secondary education	No	Yes, after secondary education
Vitor (Psychology)	Public	State	No	No	Yes, after secondary education
Jussara (Psychology)	Public	State	No	No	No

It is important to highlight certain trends in the career of the interviewees that point to the importance of a good study environment from the very start of their education. The fact that many of the interviewees' mothers did not work outside the home meant that they were able to follow school routine, keeping an eye on schoolwork, attending meetings and demanding that their children obtain passing grades. In those situations in which lack of education inhibited direct intervention in schoolwork, mothers were nonetheless able to hire tutors or to otherwise stress the importance of study as a means to overcome the family's socio-economic condition. Furthermore, scholars tend to assess their own school careers in positive terms, mentioning their "effort", "intelligence" and pointing to "the school's recognition of their quality".

The importance accorded to studying is reflected in a late entry into the job market for 10 of the 15 interviewees. These students only needed to juggle work and education once they had completed secondary school. Among those who worked during compulsory education, only Marcelle and Gilberto contributed directly to their family's income. Rafael and Clara did no paid work, only helping their parents in their own jobs. Danilo participated in a qualification programme as a bank teller, through the Salesian Centre for Teenage Workers (Centro Salesiano do Adolescente Trabalhador, CESAM), an institution that helps socially vulnerable youth. In this instance, opportunity and experience were more important than financial recompense.

This emphasis on the importance of study ensured an uneventful compulsory education for all scholars in the sample, except Gilberto, whom I will analyse at the end of this article. But school work was only intended to provide the students with better chances in the job market. It was not

treated as a means to access further education. As we will see, the decision to go into higher education was generally taken after the completion of secondary school or some period of work experience.

For four scholars (Clara, Gabriela, Danilo and Juliana), the choice of private school further reiterates the concern with obtaining an education as compensation for a lack of economic and cultural capital. Although less prestigious than other private schools, they were nonetheless seen to be better than public schools. For Vitor, who lived in a favela, the process of socialization involved cutting him off from the community, keeping him “stuck in the home”, a common practice in popular spaces (Souza e Silva 1999). When he went to secondary school, he decided to study in a well-regarded state school outside of the favela in which he lived:

I don't say I studied, but that I did my time there [at the school in which he finished his primary education]. [...] We would go because they gave us meals, many went just for that. Because I studied a little more, there were fights, I got beat up, bullying. Me and my nerd friends. Then when I went into secondary school, I didn't want to study near the Rocinha, I want to go far away, sort of get to know life. So I went to study in Copacabana. [...] I wanted a good school, not that thing of just going through the motions, because I didn't identify with that. (Vitor, Psychology).

A professional qualification was another means to obtain an advantage in the job market. For scholars who attended technical courses, the quality of the courses was a prime motivation¹¹. During secondary school or soon after graduation, vocational courses were also an option for increasing employability.

A further characteristic of the interviewees is the fact that they were single, which freed them from the responsibilities of married life. This allowed some of them to stop working after secondary school in order to prepare for higher education. Marcelle is the only person in the sample who had been married and raised two children, with a demanding routine of study, work and domestic responsibilities.

¹¹ Federal and State technical schools in Rio de Janeiro are generally more well-placed in the ENEM rankings than public schools which are not linked to vocational training nor to institutions of higher education.

Even though our sample is heterogeneous, including a mixture of working and lower middle class students, the evidence makes it clear that one or more of these elements (stress on studying, late start in the job market, good schools, continuous and uneventful education, bachelorhood) was important in providing social dispositions and conditions, so that, once our scholars were able to gather informational capital, they could choose, and gain acceptance, at PUC-Rio.

The ProUni from the perspective of student careers

In this section I analyse the role of the ProUni in the careers of the students prior to entering higher education. For analytical purposes, the interviewees were divided into two groups. The first group includes four students who sat the ENEM exams in secondary school and enrolled at PUC-Rio as ProUni scholars soon afterwards. The second group took one or two years before starting university. When given a chance to further their university career through the ProUni, these latter scholars made full use of the opportunities available, thus expressing, in an exemplary fashion, the transformation of durable dispositions – the *habitus* – into objective strategies. At the end of the article, I will detail their careers, since they help us understand in greater detail the crucial role of different mediators in enabling conformation to the “sense of play”, to use Bourdieu’s words.

In the first group of students, Kátia, Juliana and Gabriela were admitted to PUC-Rio after their first attempt at access through the ProUni programme. Denilson did not get a scholarship to his first-choice course, Law, but gained a place in Administration, being admitted into the second period of the degree. All of the people in this group graduated from federal schools renowned for their quality, which probably boosted their chances of first-time approval. The exception is Juliana, who neither studied at a federal school nor attended a preparatory course. Most of her basic education was obtained in private schools, which she attended on scholarships. She chose a state technical school for her secondary education and did not work at any time during her school career. When selecting a public school for her secondary school, Juliana considered the existence of affirmative action for graduates from the public school sector, and she sought some work experience in case she was unable to obtain a place at a university.

Kátia was the only student in this group who gained entrance to a public university. She explains why she nonetheless chose to go to PUC-Rio: “studying at PUC also helps because of its name, its CV. The UERJ often has strikes, I had gone through three strikes at the CEFET [public secondary school], I was already fed up with strikes”.

Notice that the ProUni was not the only chance for a university education, not even for Gabriela and Juliana who were unable to obtain places in public institutions:

I would not get in 2007 without the ProUni, but I would have kept trying. I had a chance to go into a good university, PUC or public (Gabriela, Law scholar)

[I believe that without the ProUni I would've gotten into university] Because there are already benefits to having gone to a state school for the entrance exam [she is referring to affirmative action policies]. I would have gone to a preparatory course to train (Juliana, Psychology scholar)

These two students believe that, with a further year or two of preparation for the entrance exams, they would have won a place at a public university anyway. A ProUni scholarship thus meant not having to delay entry to higher education. It seems as if this is an expectation that is not always related to entrance exam performance. According to Denílson, in contrast, were it not for the ProUni he would have followed a technical training course in Tourism, since he only decided to enter university once the selection process for public institutions was already under way:

When we don't have a family base – in my family no one has a university education to this day – we don't even think of university. It wasn't my reality. (...) Then I thought: I either go into the job market or into a university. Then I chose to go to university. I thought of going to a public university, but I also didn't know what degree I wanted to pursue. I said: “I'll do it”. I had no time to think, to prepare, not even to think of the degree, it was a last minute thing. I saw the ProUni as the only chance I had, because I hadn't registered at any public university. I said: “No, there's still the ProUni for me to try and get into a private university”. (Denílson, Administration scholar).

It is common to hear from these scholars that they did not consider higher education until their last year in secondary school, either because

they felt unprepared to challenge for a place, or because they had simply not planned for it. School played an important part in enrolling these students in the ENEM, which later enabled them to try for a ProUni scholarship:

I didn't want to take an entrance exam in the last year [of secondary school] because I thought I wouldn't pass if I didn't take a preparatory course. I didn't want to spend money on the exam for nothing. I didn't even ask for an exemption [from the exam fee] because I had already missed the deadline and I wasn't considering it. But my mom said I had to do it to try it out, so that next year I could make it count. I only took the entrance exam for UERJ and the ENEM, because I had to, everyone did it for the school to get evaluated, it was free. When the final period for ProUni inscriptions was approaching, a friend said that she had applied to International Relations at PUC and asked me to go with her. I went and liked the idea. I did some research and PUC was best for psychology in Rio. (Kátia, Psychology scholar).

Actually, I took the ENEM thinking I'd fail, because I hadn't even done a preparatory course. It was even because my mom insisted and because school automatically enrolls all third year students in the ENEM. I then went and took it, all the while thinking I'd fail. (Juliana, Psychology scholar)

I studied, I took a technical course. Then in the last year I thought I'd try a university, but I hadn't thought about it before. But then I sat the ENEM, because the school enrolled us, and since I'd already done it I thought I'd go for the ProUni (Denilson, Administration scholar)

All of the scholars who did not transition immediately from secondary school to university graduated from state schools. All five of the scholars who worked during compulsory education also fall into this group. Except for Laura, the ProUni had not been created when these students were in school. Most never considered any route into higher education when they were in secondary school, either because they considered university inaccessible or because they had never even given it any thought, which highlights the symbolic distance between lower-class youth and higher education. It was because of difficulties encountered in the job market, such as low wages and long working hours, that these scholars began to conceive of a project for accessing higher education. The role of

personal relations and siblings who were already in higher education, as well as awareness of the possibilities offered by the ProUni, all contributed to this aim:

University life began with my sister [graduated from PUC-Rio with a Social Action scholarship], she inspired me and it was through her that I went back to studying. Because until then I had been working in commerce. Before I had been in the Armed Forces. Because we have this culture that we study until secondary school. But I lived like a slave, a robot at work. At the time I started doing ENEM, if I'm not mistaken this was in the first year of ProUni, in 2004. And my mother and my sister said to me: "Do the ENEM", because I complained of how tiring it was to work in commerce. They said: "do it to see if you can change a little, don't keep living like a slave" (Gilberto, Administration scholar)

I didn't associate college with the job market in a direct way. I wanted to get into the job market. But since I saw that working was a drag, I suffered a lot as an employee, having to do things and not being allowed to have an opinion about what you're doing. It was then that I decided to go back to studying (...) Luckily, I had friend who was a teacher at a community preparatory course, we went way back, and I then started to study [at the preparatory course]. (Vitor, Psychology scholar).

For Jussara and Rafael, who come from the interior of Minas Gerais state, further education was also a chance to move to a city that offered more opportunities for upward mobility. The decision to go to university depended on the influence of acquaintances and an ex-boyfriend, for the former, and an older sister, for the latter:

I didn't do it [entrance exam in the third year of secondary school], man, I had no idea, the teachers didn't encourage it, they left students to themselves, you know? I only realised I needed to study after I finished secondary school. I spent half the year doing nothing, and I went: "Damn, I can't go on like this, what future have I got here? What am I going to do in this town? Earn minimum wage"? I said: "I'm going to study". (...) I think if she (older sister) had not left home, I wouldn't have followed. She got into university [public university in São Paulo]. I went along with her to help with enrolment. I didn't

know anything, I didn't even know what the Metro was! And, well, I also saw what a university was. I got an idea. This is the problem in the interior: you don't have a university, people don't leave the interior, they just stay there, in that region, sometimes they have no idea what a university is, what it can provide for you, what you can provide for the university and for society too. I think once you leave the interior and you begin to see, you start establishing contacts, creating a different idea of how much you can contribute, how much you can absorb. (Rafael, Law scholar)

They [secondary school teachers] encouraged me to do the simulation exam in Viçosa, but I never did it, I didn't care. No, it's not that I didn't care, but I thought it was beyond my reach. I thought college was only for people with money. Because I lived deep in the interior. I never thought of myself somewhere else. Even though I wanted to go somewhere else. I thought, how am I going to leave here? How? I wanted to move, to increase my possibilities (Jussara, First Term Psychology)

When asked what made her change her mind and to try, first, for the entrance exam to public universities, and, later, the ProUni, Jussara says:

I started to see that many people did it, many people close by did it, like, a friend of a friend, and an ex-boyfriend who was in higher education and who influenced me a lot. So, doors started opening up for me. (Jussara, First Term Psychology)

These statements exemplify how the dispositions and aspirations of these young people are reoriented as new social situations present themselves. In a perspective grounded in Bourdieu's work, it is the same 'practical sense', which initially inhibited these students from "wanting the impossible", that comes to conform to new expectations in relation to further education, as the students come to realise that the university is accessible to those around them and that they are faced with new possibilities for university access through the ProUni. As Honorato (2005), following Anthony Giddens, notes, graduation from secondary school is a time of intense "reflection" on economic difficulties, and a reorientation towards a university career generally follows from contact with concrete cases of access to higher education. Similarly, Mongim (2010), in her research into ProUni scholars, stresses that it is not only the construction of a plan for

university entrance, but also its actualization, that takes shape through the support of mediators which can be either “personalized” (family, friends, teachers) or of a “formal-legal” type, including preparatory courses and, fundamentally, the ProUni itself.

However, decision to go into higher education is not so easily put into practice. For scholars whose passage from secondary school to higher education was indirect, the entrance exams prove to be a difficult obstacle to overcome. In this group, eight of the interviewees attempted entrance exams to public institutions, but only one was successful. According to Sotero’s (2009) research, one of the reasons students opt for the ProUni is the perception that they are unprepared to compete for a place in public universities. ProUni is thus seen as a more realistic alternative for entering higher education:

I took the entrance exam once, twice, but I didn’t pass. So, through the ProUni it was easier. I expected to go into higher education and study Law. ProUni made this much easier. (Mauro, Law scholar)

I thought it would be an easier way to get in. A more viable opportunity for succeeding. It was a very good opportunity, a dream come true. It was the chance of realizing what would otherwise have been impossible. (Laura, Administration scholar)

When I finished middle school, I didn’t have a very wide perspective of getting into higher education. This came slowly, later, six months after I was already working in a university call centre, when I came to know the ProUni. The enrolment opened up, I did it and got into the Technical Course in Music Production. (Danilo, Law scholar).

Even though the ProUni is frequently mentioned as an easier way to obtain a place in undergraduate courses, this does not mean that acquiring the scholarship requires no further effort from the students. As the table exhibiting school careers shows, among the 11 scholars who started their undergraduate degrees later, nine of them studied at preparatory courses. In some cases, these courses are only attended for short periods of time, no more than a few months. Nonetheless, they are considered important by the scholars, either as a source of information about different ways of

accessing higher education and the different institutions available (five of them found out about the ProUni scholarships to PUC-Rio through these preparatory courses), or as actual preparation for the exams.

Laura first tried for the ProUni in secondary school, but she needed to juggle the preparatory course with a further two years of work in order to obtain the scholarship. Valéria sat an entrance exam for the first time in 2003, four years after graduating. Since she did not pass, she decided to stop working and to study, even attending two preparatory courses at the same time “because I hadn’t studied for four years and I needed to get everything (subjects) up to date”. Since she got a grade in the 2004 ENEM, she entered PUC-Rio through the ProUni the following year.

Mauro never attended preparatory courses. To prepare he looked at past ENEM exams to get an idea of the content, and after two selection processes he got a place at the Law degree course through the ProUni. He explains why he considers that the ProUni to be an easier route into higher education:

50% of the exam, if you watch television, read a newspaper, if you’re into things that are happening around you, you’ll do well. Unlike the entrance exams, which require a more specific knowledge, the ENEM requires general knowledge. This certainly makes it much easier. (Mauro, Law scholar)

For Clara, the ProUni was not only an alternative to the entrance exams for public universities, which she was unable to pass. It was also the means for resuming her Administration degree after losing a ProUni scholarship at a prestigious College in Rio de Janeiro. Residing in a favela, Clara’s father (like Vitor’s) was concerned that she “didn’t mix in”, “didn’t play in the streets”. She claims that she decided to enter university early on, since she “didn’t want the life of people around me”. Studying at renowned institutions was an aim pursued by Clara and her family ever since compulsory education, though with little success. Having been selected by the ProUni for a prestigious institution is, therefore, the realization of this project:

Even if they [her parents] didn’t go to university, and with all their problems, my father is very intelligent and always emphasised study. During the holidays I would stay at home, kids were playing and I was at home studying for the Pedro II [a well-regarded public school] exams. My first victory was the

Administration College, but my first attempt was Pedro II. In secondary school I did [the selection process for four well-regarded schools], all exams I had to sit. I didn't get into any of those, I only got into university. I had been trying for a long time.

Speaking of the reasons for having lost the first ProUni scholarship, Clara explains that, alongside difficulties with a few of the subjects she was studying, there were also concerns of a more practical nature that affected her performance in the exams:

There was Maths I, Maths II, Statistics; it's tough, and I found it difficult. Because maths had been weak in my secondary school. I had to re-sit courses and ended up losing my scholarship. The pressure was high, it was a little complicated for me. Because there was bus fare, lunch. It was too much to take in. And sometimes we need tranquillity to sit down and study. (...) Then I came here [PUC-Rio], I'm going to graduate, it's a good school, traditional, renowned and I can breathe.

For those who never sat an exam for public institutions, there were other obstacles. While still in secondary school, Marcelle attended the Preparatory Course for Blacks and Poor (PVNC) for six months. However, she decided to delay her university plans, since she had to take care of her son and work at the same time. Four years later, in 2007, she sat an exam and got a place to a Law degree at a private university selected because of the "price" of tuition. However, after three periods she had to stop out of college because she was unable to manage the expenses.

Encouraged by her mother, she decided to try for the ProUni as a way of going back to university:

My mother saw them talking about the ENEM on television, about the ProUni. My mother said: "go, go". I didn't want to because I thought I wouldn't be able to do the exam, it had been a long time since I'd done the PVNC. All I studied was Law. (Marcelle, Third term Law)

Sérgio, an Administration scholar, only considered entering higher education through the ProUni. Two years after graduating from secondary school, he unsuccessfully tried for two ProUni selection processes, after which he decided to stop working for a year and dedicate himself to his studies at a community preparatory course. On his third attempt he

put PUC-Rio down as his first choice institution, since he had obtained good grades at the ENEM exam, and even though he remained unsure of his chances: “I put PUC-Rio down as my first choice, though I didn’t even think I’d get accepted, right, to be honest. In truth, I just tried my luck”. Although he never attempted to gain entrance through any other means, Sérgio believes that even if the programme did not exist he would be in higher education “because I would keep studying and trying to get into public institutions and, if I didn’t get in, I would try a private college. I would work to pay tuition”.

The analysis of the statements of the ProUni scholars can take different meanings, which depend on their background and situation. For those who were in secondary school when the ProUni was created, it represented the possibility of not delaying the start of university. Students who were unsuccessful in the entrance exams for public institutions, or who did not consider themselves prepared to sit them, saw the ProUni as their only realistic possibility of entry into higher education. By widening the opportunities for accessing higher education, the ProUni therefore effects a transformation in the perception of students concerning their chances of reaching higher education and, above all, in their chances of achieving social mobility in a smooth manner.

It is also important to note that mothers and sisters who attended higher education play an important part in the decision process. The value that mothers attribute to education, which is initially focused on the completion of compulsory education, reveals itself to be equally fundamental in encouraging their children to sit the ENEM exams, or to resume study for those who were already in the job market. For those with sisters in higher education, these were not only a source of motivation, but, above all, a means for understanding the hierarchy of prestige of degree courses and institutions.

Discovering the *sens du jeu*: social networks and informational capital in choosing PUC-Rio

In what follows, I present the main factors that stimulated and made possible for four interviewees (Gilberto, Danilo, Jussara and Rafael) who

were already in higher education to submit themselves to various selection processes in the ProUni in order to change institution and/or course. The biographies under consideration allow us to understand in more concrete terms some of the trends noted earlier, particularly how informational capital helps to adjust strategies in order to enable upward mobility through higher education. I note that the names of the institutions of higher education mentioned by the students have been changed.

Gilberto

Gilberto is the most atypical of the interviewees. He is the only one who entered the job market at the age of 14 and interrupted his studies while still in secondary school. His parents hail from the Northeast of Brazil, and he came to Rio from Ceará with his family so that his father could be treated for Alzheimer. His mother's dedication to his father's illness distanced her from her children's education, and, as result, they "practically raised themselves". This distance, however, did not mean that she ignored their education completely. For Gilberto's mother, his studies were also a priority, and she encouraged him to pursue higher education.

In the first year of secondary school, Gilberto studied in a technical state school, where he found science subjects particularly difficult. He dropped out of school for a year to join the army, and he returned to school with little motivation, wanting to work "to help around the house": "Actually, I didn't really need it. My mother even told me "the priority is that you study, finish it"". He went back to studying because he was promised a promotion at his retail job if he finished his compulsory education.

In 2004, one year after he graduated from secondary school, at the age of 21, when the promise of promotion failed to materialize and he became disillusioned with retail, Gilberto, encouraged by his mother and his sister, who had just started on a Social Action scholarship at PUC-Rio in 2000, finally enrolled in the ProUni selection process. He believes that not having had to sit an entrance exam in order to obtain a scholarship from the Programme increased his chances of getting a place in higher education. He felt he was unprepared to sit an entrance exam for a public institution:

(...) I thought that what mattered was going through a door, like in a war, and then you had to find your way around in there. I thought it was much easier for me to get a place through the ProUni than through a UERJ or UFRJ [public universities] exam. ENEM was much easier back then, today it's beginning to look more like an entrance exam for public universities. I wasn't sure I could do that [entrance exam for public universities]. Because, the first times, I didn't go to a preparatory course. My sister tried to get me to go [to a preparatory course], but I didn't want to. I thought that what mattered was getting in, today I don't see it that way, I think you need to have the basics.

(...) I had no preparation, I thought I just had to go, heart and soul. I had five options [of institutions in the ProUni], among which I put down PUC-Rio, but it was high-level, for PUC you needed to get 7, 9. And I didn't get it. But I did get a place at a university near my house, UniLopes, for an Administration degree. I became really silly and happy: "My God, I made it!"

Upon receiving the news from his boss that his work hours could not be modified to accommodate his university studies, he became disappointed with the company's failure to recognise his dedication. He had, after all, completed secondary school with great difficulty because of the long work hours. He thus decided to quit and "invest in university life". In 2005, Gilberto began his Administration course at the UniLopes University Centre. His sister, however, insisted that he needed to get into PUC-Rio, which she considered to be a higher quality institution:

Actually, I didn't come because of her, but she would say: "you may even be at a good university, but PUC has this, it has that". So I started to hang out at PUC, at the PUC Fair, which happens every year, and I started to make up my own mind. It slowly got to me.

Although he considers that his time at UniLopes was vital for giving him access to the university world and for encouraging him to read more, specially about careers and human resources, Gilberto, perhaps under the influence by his sister, takes a critical view of the education he obtained at the College:

I liked it, but there were a few problems which I later saw were not OK. You get fooled, it's not the university's fault, but your own for being a part of it all. For example, there were terms there in which I didn't understand anything and the professor still gave me a pass. I basically handed in a blank test paper on matrixes. Today I know what matrixes are because I studied around it and paid my dues (...). So why would I want to get a diploma in Administration if I couldn't do a simple matrix? So, seeing all that, I decided not to fool myself.

Another decisive factor for Gilberto was the importance of studying in a prestigious institution that provided a diploma which was valued in the job market:

There was an interesting segment in Fantástico [a TV show], Jobs from A to Z, with Max Gehringer. I had already decided to come to PUC, but this programme helped me form my opinion. Because someone asked him: does the school, or the name of the school, count? He replied: "Do you want me to tell you something sad? It does. It's a label". This had a big impact on my decision.

While at the Administration college, Gilberto attended two years of preparatory courses and enrolled in two ProUni selection processes, in 2007 and 2008. In the latter year, he obtained a place at PUC-Rio, starting in the second period.

Danilo

In 2004, when still in secondary school, Danilo sat the entrance exam for History at a federal institution, a course he chose because of its lower candidate-to-place ratio. Since he failed to get in, he started working in telemarketing for a private higher education institution, through which he learned of the ProUni and enrolled in the Technical Course in Phonographic Production. Although he obtained a scholarship, Danilo questioned if his choice would guarantee him a job:

In my family, no one has higher education, and since I got in I felt like there was some pressure for me to follow a more traditional career. So as to have this security, to maybe be able to do what my parents never had the opportunity to do. Have a job that pays regular wages and gives me the security of a place in the job market.

Danilo decided to change his degree course, and he attended a preparatory course for four months. It was here that he learned that PUC-Rio offered Social Action and ProUni scholarships:

My [preparatory course] was a mess. So, in truth, I don't think it helped me with anything. What it did help me with was in allowing me to know that PUC-Rio existed, it was there, and that I could have a scholarship at PUC. I discovered the possibility of studying at PUC, but I ended up getting into [the University] Soares Freitas.

In this second attempt through the ProUni, he does not get into PUC-Rio, but he does get a scholarship for Social Sciences at another institution, a course he chose because of the Sociology classes he had at secondary school. It was only at his third attempt at the ProUni that he obtained a scholarship to PUC-Rio, also for Social Sciences, and, later, after a fourth selection process, he was able to start his Law degree at PUC-Rio. According to Danilo, he chose this course because it offered “the possibility of greater security after graduation”.

Jussara

After graduating from secondary school and already with a job, it took a further two years for Jussara to sit her first entrance exam to the federal university system of Minas Gerais. She failed to get a place. She learned of the ProUni through friends, and sat the ENEM exam in 2007 hoping for the ProUni scholarship for 2008. She obtained the scholarship for a university in her town, in the interior of Minas Gerais. However, she had always wanted to leave the interior in order to increase her chances of upward mobility, and she thought that her best shot of achieving this was to study in a prestigious university. Her relation with professors and students attending universities provided her with a more detailed view of the quality of the different institutions. According to Jussara, “in the academic world, you can learn which are the good universities and which are the bad universities”. She then decided to try for the ProUni, only putting down Catholic Universities as her options:

(...) I put down PUC-Minas, PUC-São Paulo, PUC-Rio. I tried various PUCs. None of the others called me, only this one [PUC-Rio] did. And I knew that

any of these universities I chose – and I only chose good universities now that I tried – I knew that any of them that called me would be suitable. I knew it would be difficult to come, because it's always complicated when you leave everything behind to start a new life, but I came, and slowly but surely, I got here.

Due to her unsuccessful attempts at gaining a place in public universities, the student claims that without the ProUni she would never have made it into higher education. She says that she got the scholarship because she always enjoyed studying and she got into the habit of studying by herself for exams in the two years in which she worked. For her, ProUni offered the opportunity to choose a quality private institution:

[ProUni was] an opportunity, only those who have it really know this. You either get into a quality public university or you get into a good private one with a high-quality education. You generally go into a cheaper one, because you don't have the means to pay, but it usually leaves much to be desired as far as the quality of education goes. The ProUni allows this, it lets you choose the college you want, whether it's a bad one or a better one. I think it's a really good alternative for people who don't have money to pay.

Rafael

Rafael's first attempt to get into higher education was also through a public institution, the Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, one year after he completed secondary school. In order to prepare for the entrance exam, he moved cities to attend a preparatory course, which was unavailable in his hometown. After failing to gain a place at this institution, and since he had already sat the ENEM, he decided to enrol in the ProUni, so as to avoid delaying his university career any further and paying for more preparatory courses. In his first attempt, Rafael did not get a scholarship for his first choice, Film, but he did get a place for his last choice institution and course, Law at Faria Júnior University:

(...) my financial situation was at its limit. So I didn't want to spend a further year or semester in the preparatory course, I didn't want to, so I studied hard. (...) My sister had already warned me that Film was a very restrictive area, I didn't even see this, but it would be really difficult to make money. In

Law I would have new perspectives. So I said: 'I'm going to Rio, see how this course is'.

In Rio de Janeiro he met other students, with whom he shared a flat, and through one of them, a Law student at UERJ, he learned of the approval rates at the exam for the Brazilian Bar Association (Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil, OAB) for graduates from Rio de Janeiro universities. After two semesters, Rafael again entered the ProUni selection process and gained a scholarship for another university, better placed in the OAB exam than his original institution. In this new institution he had contact with professors who graduated from PUC-Rio, who spoke of the excellence of the course, which encouraged him to sit the ENEM exam one more time. Since he got a very good grade, he enrolled at the ProUni for PUC-Rio, obtaining the scholarship in 2008. He was able to gain equivalence for some of the disciplines he had studied at the other institutions.

Concluding Remarks

This article has shown how a sample of young students managed to obtain access to a prestige private university amidst a spectrum of private universities of varying quality. The social dispositions and conditions that characterized the sample under analysis were central for these students – once they had gathered informational capital and took advantage of the increased chances for access provided by the ProUni – to choose, and gain acceptance, to PUC-Rio.

In general, entry into higher education is considered improbable or even impossible. But the availability of a selection process that differs from the traditional entrance exams reintroduces this possibility into their horizons as a means to further their desire for upward mobility. The research also shows that the process of changing perceptions and entering higher education, and, more specifically, of gaining a place at PUC-Rio, is collective, since it is put into practice through the medium of family, schools, preparatory courses, teachers and colleagues at university.

I believe that the paths followed by Gilberto, Rafael, Jussara and Danilo express in an exemplary manner what Bourdieu called *sens du*

jeu: the interiorization of the rules of the social game. If, initially, these individuals see higher education as a sort of “social leverage”, they slowly come to perceive that different institutions and courses offer different opportunities. They thus chose to delay their degree in the hopes of increasing the value of their diploma, submitting themselves to many different ProUni selection processes so as to get into an institution that could offer them an advantage in the job market, in terms of institutional prestige, but also in what concerns the quality of the education more generally.

The careers of these students also allow us to assert that this perception of the importance of institutional quality – or, in other words, the acquisition of the ‘sense of play’ – depends, rather fundamentally, on the mediatory role of other social actors. By gathering informational capital, these scholars reorient their careers in order to ensure access to institutions of higher education that do not frustrate their hopes for social mobility. But since institutional quality cannot be guaranteed to all, we must question the degree to which the Programme truly universalizes not only access to higher education, but also the chance for an education that sustains hopes of expected upward mobility.

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The school as a project for the future: a case study of a new Pataxó village school in Minas Gerais

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Abstract

This article presents reflections of indigenous teachers about the role of the school in a new Pataxó indigenous community settlement in the state of Minas Gerais. The data was collected in “narrative interviews” with teachers from this community who attended the first Intercultural Education for Indigenous Educators (FIEI) course offered by the Federal University at Minas Gerais. In these narratives, both the indigenous school and FIEI are seen as a collective project of and for the community. The school occupies a central position in the articulation between traditional ways of producing knowledge and the formulation of projects for the future.

Keywords: Indigenous school; Pataxó teachers; Relation with the territory; Future Projects.

Resumo

O texto apresenta reflexões de professores/as indígenas sobre o papel da escola, numa nova aldeia Pataxó em Minas Gerais. Os dados foram coletados por meio de “entrevistas narrativas” com professores/as dessa aldeia que participaram do primeiro curso de Formação Intercultural de Educadores Indígenas (FIEI), oferecido pela Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais. Nessas narrativas, a escola e a formação são apresentadas como um projeto coletivo, da e para a comunidade e voltados para a realização de seus

projetos de futuro. A escola aparece como central na articulação entre modos tradicionais de produzir conhecimento e a formulação de alternativas para projetos futuros.

Palavras-chave: Escola Indígena; Professores/as Pataxó; Relação com o Território; Projetos de Futuro.

The school as a project for the future: a case study of a new Pataxó village school in Minas Gerais

Karla Cunha Pádua

Introduction

My interest in indigenous education began when I met indigenous school teachers from various ethnic groups in Minas Gerais (Xacriabá, Pataxó, Maxacali, Krenak, Aranã, Kaxixó e Xucuru-Kariri) who were the first cohort of students to attend a course on the Intercultural Training of Indigenous Teachers (FIEI) given at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG). This special undergraduate course, which lasted five years, from 2006 to 2011, was funded by the Support Program for University Education and Intercultural Training Courses for Indigenous Teachers (PROLIND)¹. Through a specific selection process, all candidates were required to present a recommendation letter written by community representatives and signed by the local leadership as a way of guaranteeing the Indigenous Movement's control over the course. This process resulted in 146 selected students (Pádua 2009; Rezende 2005).

The course was organized in three areas: Language, Arts and Literature; Mathematics and Sciences of Nature and Social Sciences and Humanities. There were three thematic axes: socio-environmental reality; the indigenous school and its participants; and multiple languages. Students joined to one of these areas and axes according to their research

¹ In 2009 a new Teachers Training Course was inaugurated with funding from the Federal Universities Reconstruction and Expansion Plan (REUNI), thus transforming the FIEI into a regular undergraduate course with an annual intake of 35 students. (Silva 2012)

interests and the concerns of their communities, so that each one could follow a specific academic curriculum. The course alternated intensive periods at the UFMG usually in the months of May and September, with periods of time that were preferentially spent in the villages. (UFMG s/d; Pádua 2009)

At that time, I was taking my doctorate degree and I was interested in understanding the repercussions of multiculturalism for Education. The presence of these new actors in the corridors of the university led me to choose them as subjects for my research.² I carried out research based on participant observation during the activities of the FIEI, and during the informality of the break time moments between the classes, I also interviewed various indigenous teachers. But the focus of my research was neither the course nor the teaching process, but rather the transformations in indigenous identities at that particular time they entered the University environment.

In 2012, however, I began new research to analyze the repercussions of the FIEI on the life and the teaching practice of the indigenous teachers after they had finished the course. This time I decided to know the home villages of these pupils. So, I began my field research in a small Pataxó village called Muã Mimatxi³, in the municipality of Itapeçerica, Minas Gerais whose school had four teachers who had been students of the first FIEI course: Kanatyó, Siwê, Duteran e Sarah. During the month of May 2012, I made long narrative interviews⁴ with these teachers and also with their colleague Liça. During these interviews, they revealed

2 See Pádua 2009.

3 According to Kanatyó, one of the village leaders, this name in Pataxó means “Little Piece of Land” (*Pequeno Chão*), “Little Forest” (*Pequena Mata*) or even, “Little part of the Forest” (*Pequena Moita de Mata*).

4 This type of interview differs from semi-structured interviews by presenting a single question that generates discussion, giving liberty to the people interviewed to construct their own narrative without interference from the interviewer (Flick 2004; Teixeira & Pádua 2006; Silva & Pádua 2010). Kanatyó (Salvino dos Santos Braz) is the head of the village, married to Liça and history teacher. During the FIEI he carried out research on “Pataxó culture, identity and tradition”, in the area of Social Sciences and Humanities. Liça, (Luciene Alves dos Santos) who is a specialist in traditional knowledge, teaches on “Land Use”. She had never been to school. Sarah dos Santos Braz, the head’s sister is a young widow with 5 children. She teaches Geography and Portuguese and during the FIEI she carried out research on the histories told by her mother, who is the oldest woman in the community, in the area of Language, Arts and Literature. Duteran Braz Alves is not presently living in the village. He taught Sciences and during the FIEI he researched on the Pataxó language in the area of Language, Arts and Literature. Siwê Alves Braz is the head’s son and the youngest of the interviewees. He combines the roles of Coordinator of the school and teacher of mathematics and science. During the FIEI he researched on mathematical games in the area of Mathematics and Sciences of Nature.

relevant aspects of the conceptions which guide the relationship between the Pataxó people with their school and their teaching training. These narratives expressed a form of collective thinking oriented to their future projects, anchored in a particular context of construction of a new village in Minas Gerais. This article is part of the process whereby I set out to understand this context⁵ in which distinct concepts and practices emerge with regard to education and the school, always in dialogue with multiple influences⁶ and yet “tangled with local thought” (Rappaport e Pachó 2005: 40).

Kanatyo, the tribal chief and a teacher at the indigenous school in the village, reminds us of the need to understand this context, when he affirms that education depends on the needs of each “community,” and of each “people,” because perhaps what serves one people, does not serve for me, the education for youth of one people, perhaps is not what I want at that time.” “The education must be conducted in dialog, according to what the community has as a life plan,” he added. For this Pataxó village, what is most important according to Kanatyo is that “the education have a community base,” and “have its feet on the ground of the community.”

This aspect of education as a demand of the community and for the community was indicated by Arévalo (2010) as a characteristic of the specific modes of producing and reproducing knowledge by the indigenous peoples. It is in this sense that the teachers of the Muã Mimatxi village said that they had sought at the university an intercultural education “which becomes part of our life project,” of the “project for a future life” of the village, as Kanatyo emphasized. Sarah, another teacher at the indigenous school in the village emphasized the benefit of the knowledge for her community and for improving collective life, placing herself at its service.

Everything that we learned there, we passed on to the students and also to the community. What we were learning there, what was happening there, did not remain only among the teachers, the knowledge was passed on to everyone and to the students as well [...] The knowledge was not just

5 The research was supported by a grant from CAPES (Coordination for Higher level Graduation Improvements) held at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais of the Universidade de Lisboa, with Susana de Matos Viegas as a my supervisor.

6 About these networks, see Pádua 2014.

knowledge for within the school, only for the teacher, it was for the entire community. (Sarah)

These connections with the needs and the rhythm of life of the communities were already foreseen in the curriculum proposed in the Intercultural Education for Indigenous Educators course. The student-selection process for the course requested a letter from the communities, signed by the local leader, to guarantee control over the course by part of the indigenous movement (Rezende 2009). It was thus a differentiated selection process, without evaluations of knowledge, in which the presentation of this letter written by representatives of the indigenous community constituted one of the criteria (UFMG 2005). This aspect was emphasized by those interviewed, who also mentioned the implications of the commitment assumed towards the community, as well as the collective responsibility of their education.

At first, like always for all the teachers, for all of us who are indigenous, at least in the group of the Pataxó, when we enter in this means of education as a teacher, the first evaluation is made by the community [...] Thus, I did not nominate myself to go, to take the teacher accreditation course [...] and the education I have had. According to the evaluation that the community makes of us, even if I am a teacher and have been accredited, if I don't please the community, there is no way for them to have me go to UFMG. But, as I said, I was chosen. It's like I said, it begins there, it is the community that chooses the teacher, it is not the teacher who goes. So, since I was chosen, I went there and one of our focuses was [...] that what we got there was to bring and pass on to our community here. (Duteran – teacher in the indigenous school in the Muã Mimatxi village)

[...] It was very difficult⁷ at that time, to leave the small boys, knowing that we also had a responsibility to the community, the students, to give them a good education, to bring to them knowledge from the outside, in addition to what we already have, from here within. So, at that time, it was very difficult for me, but at the same time it was a responsibility that I had to my students, to the community. (Sarah)

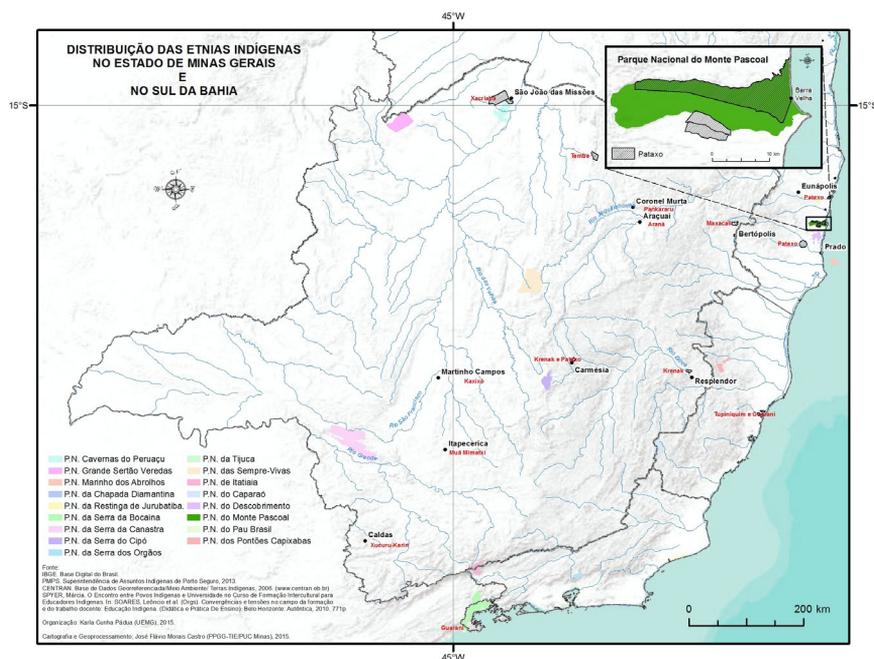
7 This teacher referred to her difficulty in leaving the children of the village to study in the Intercultural Education of Indigenous Educators course, which was held twice a year, usually in May and September, in Belo Horizonte.

But what community does this involve? Who are the Pataxó of the Muã Mimatxi village? We begin by presenting the village, in the way that it was presented to us in the narratives and how we perceived it in the first field contacts.

Rested Earth: the Muã Mimatxi village

The intercultural education course, in which the Pataxó teachers participated, coincided with a quite specific context in the life of their group: the occupation of a new territory and the creation of a new village in Minas Gerais.

Figure 1 – Localities of indigenous ethnic groups in the state of Minas Gerais and the South of Bahia. Cartography and GIS: José Flávio Morais Castro (PPGG-TIE/PUC Minas), 2015.



It occupies an area of approximately 145 hectares, according to Kanatyó, located in the municipality of Itapecerica, MG (See Figure 1), quite close to the district of Lamounier. The residents of these towns

seem to have received the newcomers very well. The people with whom we spoke in the municipality talk about the Indians in the Muã Mimatxi village with respect. They appear in the pamphlets of the municipality as a tourist attraction. At a commemoration in May 2012 of the 100th anniversary of Divinópolis, an old district of Itapecerica, attended by various politicians, the Indians were invited to the opening of the event. They lit a torch, danced and sang for the public, presenting Pataxó traditions. In relation to this respect for the Indians, which is different from that found in other regions of the country, where there are serious and violent conflicts involving the struggle for the land, Duteran commented:

We see that here there was no conflict with other people. We came here, the people accepted us well and we thus see that the way that we are working here, various people admire our work and other relatives that went there (to the course) (said), its often not like that.

According to Kanatyó it had been federal government land⁸ that they first shared with squatters, who left the location in October 2011, when they lost a case in court to the Indians. “They left without a problem, we waited until the right moment and they left” said Kanatyó.

The population of the village is made up of approximately 58 Pataxó Indians from 11 families, who belong to the same “line of relatives” (Kohler 2007). Seven of them are school teachers, who offer distinct disciplines⁹ for small groups of students of different ages. There are two entrances to the village. One of them is close to the paved road that links the municipality of Itapecerica to the district of Lamounier. Along the highway there is a sign is somewhat hidden in the middle of the woods with the name of the village, and a gate which is left locked. To enter the village by car visitors must call a resident from the first house, which is located quite close to the entrance, at the bottom of an embankment.¹⁰

8 According to Carvalho and Miranda (2013), it was land ceded to Funai by the Serviço de Patrimônio da União (Federal Assets Service).

9 In May 2012 there were two teachers of “traditional culture” at the village (of culture, and of land use), four teachers who had studied in the first FIEI and one who was recently approved in the new FIEI.

10 This house is currently unoccupied because the family that lived there moved to another Pataxó village in Minas Gerais, in Carmésia.

Arriving at this entrance from above, walking along the dirt road, one soon sees the home of the head of the village. It is better constructed than the others and, as we discovered later, it is the only one in the village that has a bathroom, which is shared with two other families. Nearly in front of the chief's house there is a small, simple wattle and daub building, where one of his sons live with his wife and children. Behind the chief's house, a bit closer to the forest that borders the edge of the village from above, lives his other son and his family, in a better house, made of bricks.

On the other side of the small road that runs through the middle of the village lies a swampy area that the squatters had used to plant rice. Liça, who teaches principles of land use,¹¹ told us that the land was "resting," so that the natural vegetation could return and attract back wild animals. They mention with pride that they have already begun to see paca [a medium-size rodent] and jacu [a large bird in the *Penelope* genus] in the region, as well as many other bird species. They say that they intend to build a pond for fish in the same area.

The houses in the village are separate from one another and each has a small garden behind where they grow vegetables for their own consumption. Continuing along the road one comes to the center of the village, where the school is located in a new building, with a kitchen, bathroom and three classrooms. The building is clearly the best in the community and the school has become the center of community life, as it has been the case in other indigenous villages, such as the Kaxinauí for example (Weber 2006).

Behind the school, there are more houses and the health clinic, which also occupies a new brick building. Farther back, close to the forest, another teacher from the school lives with her family. Everyone in the village is related to everyone else. Marriage is preferred between cross cousins and prohibited between parallel cousins. Children learn these rules at a very early age.

In this central area, there is a large square, two old run-down buildings, and other small houses, some with wattle and daub walls and dirty

¹¹ A class given by representatives of the community and detainers of traditional knowledge, which does not require specific education. Liça did not study in the Indigenous Educators course, and although it was not in our plans, she spontaneously offered us her narrative, in May 2012.

floors. On the right side there is a woodland, used for rituals and to exhibit crafts when there is an event at the village.

This central area divides the village into upper and lower halves. In the lower half live the women, including the two oldest in the community. The chief's mother-in-law lives alone in an old masonry house, and in the lower half, the chief's mother and her sister with children live in two quite simple houses. At the entrance to one of the houses there is a spigot covered with a tarp used to wash utensils and bathe the children. The chemical toilets, in large and lengthy metal structures, clash with the scenery. There are many plants around the houses. The oldest woman in the community knows their names and their medicinal properties. Some of the species grown are used in handicrafts, others for cooking, as well as the simple pleasure of trying out new species (Cunha and Almeida 2002).

The second entrance to the village is located below these houses in an area that gives access to another forest and to the river. Close to this second gate there is a small road that leads to neighboring farms and to the district of Lamounier, located a few kilometers away.

During the field research we observed that the children move freely through the village unaccompanied by adults. They play in the dirt, do cartwheels, seem happy and are not very noisy. The animals, (dogs, chickens, a toucan) scamper amid the adults and children and are treated with respect. There is always someone making crafts at the door of their houses. The youth who study in the city flirt with each other on the way home. The younger ones who study in the village school participate attentively and quietly in school activities. When an adult is speaking they pay attention, listening and observing everything.

The peaceful life that we found during this first field visit, in May 2012, did not erase the memories of the difficulties faced at the beginning of the occupation: "we lived here for many days under a tarp, later we went to a big house there, we made a few huts there," Kanatyó explained. We heard stories of the cold and rain that they faced without lodging. One newborn baby, the child of a young couple, died in this initial period of the occupation, but the Indians did not like to discuss this. There are different versions of this event and there is a place in the lower portion of the village, circled by bamboo, with

a name in the native language, which we learned was where the child was buried.

Despite the friendly relations between neighbors, Kanatyo complained that “the land is small, there is no forest, no river, no game, little hunting, the animals are scarce and small,” as well as the lack of support and partnerships to develop projects related to the land. He complained that “FUNAI is very distant from us.”¹² As we mentioned previously, the territory where they live is truly quite small.

Liça also highlighted that from the traditional Pataxó perspective of knowledge, “the land is completely tired, sick,” as are the rivers that run through the village:

I work with this side, with the culture of land, because today, not just here, but in all places, the earth is completely tired, sick. In my time, I did not see ill water, I did not see a sick river, I did not see a sick plant, I did not see sick fruit. Game, fish, everything was healthy, whenever I wanted to work with it I did. Now I live on land that is the government’s, [on which] we are building our house.

Here we have no river, we have two rivers, but they are ill. They pass here within this little clump of woods there, tomorrow you will see. The other runs there, and divides the land. They divide the land, on this side is ours. Here too, on the other side, it makes the division. But they are sick.

We see quite a struggle, some support life on the land, others come to destroy it. For this reason the land is like this, moreover we received land that is tired, sick, poisoned.

It is clear that the territory of the village, in addition to being small, has serious ecological problems: polluted rivers, land depleted from previous use that made it “sick” and “poisoned,” impeding its productive use. Liça and Kanatyo refer to the degradation of the land as a consequence of

12 The Regional Coordination of FUNAI [the federal Indigenous Foundation] for Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo is located in Governador Valadares and there are five Local Technical Coordinations in the state, in Carmésia, Resplendor, Santa Helena de Minas, São João das Missões and Teófilo Otoni, all located quite far from the Muã Mimatxi village. See: <<http://www.funai.gov.br/index.php/coordenacoes-regionais>> and <<http://www.funai.gov.br/index.php/coord-tecnicas-espirito-santo-minas-gerais>>

the destruction caused by the squatters who lived there previously. The principal attitude of these Pataxó is, however, of a mild optimism, well expressed in the idea of “letting the land rest” so that new life may be reborn. Now they are trying to recuperate, “working hard with this issue of the strength and energy of the land, of plants,” seeking “something that is useful for our lives, like a fruit tree” (Kanatyo).

This attitude is strongly articulated to political demands and defense of rights (to land, to healthcare and to education) that the Pataxó teachers of this village take to the Intercultural Education for Indigenous Educators Course. According to Kanatyo, when they reached this territory, “there was nothing, it was land that had squatters here.” In addition to a concern for the land, the narratives indicated a concern for the future of new generations, in a context of great proximity with the urban environment.

This was the concern of the leadership, and mine, and is this until today, I still think: What is the plan that we have to develop within the village for our young people? Since our community is small, how will we develop a project for our children and young people? It is based on this thinking that we will try to make this life project, our life plan, because we do not want our children to go there outside and stay outside, we want them to go out and come back to us. (Kanatyo)

All of these issues related to the context of life in the village, according to Kanatyo, are taken to the school for reflection and collective work. They also influence the relationship with the knowledge provided at the Intercultural Education for Indigenous Educators course and with the indigenous and non-indigenous groups with whom they meet during their academic activities.

And we [discovered] the experience of other indigenous peoples speaking of their life on the land, speaking about their struggle, their life, their conquests [...] maturing how we could develop this issue of struggle for land, because at that time our focus was on land (Kanatyo).

Our understanding is that this interest in exchanging with other Indians and non-Indians is guided by a philosophy of sociality in which history is permanently produced in the relationships with the “other,”

which resignifies the memory and produces new possibilities for the future. Culture, from this perspective, is presented as “a set of potential experiential structurings, capable of supporting a variety of traditional contents and absorbing new ones: it is an acculturating device or one that is constituent of processing of beliefs” (Viveiros de Castro 2002: 209).

To understand this philosophy of sociality, Viegas (2002), also referring to the experience of the Pataxó in regional meetings in Bahia, uses the metaphor of trails that suggests the image of trails cleared in the forest, which lead to other places and relationships, opening creative possibilities and flows of coming and going. According to the author, this philosophy is guided by four principles: 1) the history they share, 2) the connection of human action with the environment, 3) the simultaneity of movement and localization and 4) reversibility. In the narratives of the teachers interviewed, these principles are articulated in constant references to the collective history of the Pataxó, in attempts to recover a type of relationship with the landscape that was lost over time and to expand the social connections with other groups. The school becomes an appropriate space for them to undo past mistakes and imagine new realities.

Memory of the Origins: Between Bahia and Minas Gerais

The life of my people was like this, they lived going up and down the rivers, when it was hot they were closer to the coast, when it was cold they went to the center of the forest, in the mountains. That's how the life of the people was (Kanátyo Pataxó).¹³

To understand the relation of this Pataxó group with the school and with the educational process it is necessary to understand the collective history of the Pataxó. Kanatyo refers to their origins when he recalls that:

In the land of our origin [we] were free, we walked all day on the land, there was no fence, you lived where you wanted to live. No one sold, no one bartered, no one was owner of the land, for example, we made a planting here, if I didn't like it or I liked another better, I left that one there, I didn't

13 This statement was collected in the context of my doctoral study. See Pádua (2009: 131).

sell it, I left it there, with those fruits, those things, another relative would pass by and eat, so it became a “ceveiro”¹⁴ that attracted people and animals, and the person would go live in another. Life was like that... (Kanatyo).

Today we see that this question has changed, the communities grew, they were growing with more people, and we saw that for us to continue this thinking...Our people is a people that always traveled in small groups...[This is] the reason we are here. We always lived like this.... (Kanatyo).

Kanatyo’s narrative relates to a time when the Pataxó moved freely between Bahia and Minas Gerais and to the theme of the constant family migrations through this vast territory, which have been widely registered in the literature (Grunewald 2001; Carvalho 1977; Sampaio 1996; Pádua 2009).

About these peoples, known as Aimoré, and their relations since the colonial past, Dantas, Sampaio and Carvalho (1992) mention that the various peoples of the families Maxacali, Pataxó and of the large family of the Botocudos lived by wandering in small bands through the Atlantic Forest, resisting the conquest of their land for three centuries. According to Sampaio (1996), these people did not live in villages like the Tupi. They established themselves seasonally on the coast to gain access to the rich fauna of the estuaries and mangroves, and then returned to the forests.

Viegas and Paula (2009) also refer to the long distance movements of the “wandering,” “untamed” and “wild” Indians with propensity to war, mostly from the Jê family, as the Pataxó, in forests located beyond the Padeiro mountains, in southern Bahia State. These movements have been interrupted, according to the authors, since the 1930s and 1940s, when the land was occupied by Brazilians and transformed into private property.

About the freedom to travel through the land, Duteran also commented that in the past, “the Pataxós always wandered through the forest, like we say, to the center of the earth.” He emphasized that in the past, this was possible “because the space was quite big.” “Before [they put a child on their back and] left, stayed for a time, went, stopped somewhere, stayed

14 According to the Dicionário Aulete, this term refers to a “place where bait is placed for hunting or fishing”. See: <<http://aulete.uol.com.br/ceveiro#ixzz2w5OBp2nH>>. It seems to refer to the places with good hunting or fishing that led the Pataxó to temporarily settle in their wanderings through a vast territory, between Bahia and Minas Gerais.

for a while, until they reached the destination they wanted,” which is no longer possible, because the lands are occupied by the farmers. “Today, it is dangerous to stop on the edge of a farm; there are even police afraid to invade the area, so there is no way”.

D. Josefa said that in Barra Velha (Ver Figura 1) there is a place that the people gave the name of Céu, because there in Céu was a place to meet other groups who came from the woods to the coast. She said that the Pataxó got mussels at the edge of the beach and would exchange them with the people who came from the forest for fruit, game, tubers. So, they had this encounter and they said that when they came, they shouted, there was only one shout, which they used when they arrived and they said: those are the people who are approaching. So they all got together because they all knew. For example, if it was the group of the Jacaré clans, then they would give a different shout, warning that (it was] they were the ones who were coming. These encounters were frequent. And with the Maxakali, they got together to war against another group as well, against the other groups. Often, when there was a war also of people stronger than the Pataxós, a larger group, the Pataxós would take refuge with the Maxakali, or the Maxakalis would take refuge with the Pataxós, so there was always this union between these two peoples. (Dutran)

The older people remember when there was frequent contact between the Pataxó and the Maxacali, and tell the younger members of the village about it. In fact these two peoples have had regular contact, as indicated by their linguistic and cultural affinities and the presence of these historic relations in the Pataxó oral tradition, as emphasized by Carvalho and Miranda (2013). Grunewald (2001) also highlighted the alliances between the Pataxó, the Maxacali and other small groups in the region from the Jequitinhonha to Mucuri to fight the Botocudos, a process that lasted until the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁵

Contradicting Kanatyó, Carvalho (2009) stresses that the Pataxó lived in the forests and usually came down to fish in the mangroves, to exchange forest products for products from the coast and meet Indians from other

¹⁵ The bibliographic research presented here on the historical context is important to understand the wider ethno-cultural environment within which the conceptions of the interviewees are formulated.

ethnicities, considered “relatives”, in a flow of exchanges that was only broken with the deforestation of the region (Carvalho 2009). They turned travel into opportunities to create situations of contact and expand relations with “others,” beyond economic activities, as suggested by Viegas (2002). They thus lived warring, escaping, exchanging products in the forests of Bahia and Minas Gerais, seasonally shifting to the coast in search of fish, to then once again withdraw to the forests, always following the rivers in these journeys. Barra Velha had been their last refuge (Grunewald 2001).

Carvalho dates the rise of the village of Barra Velha to 1861, when it may have combined different ethnic groups, with the Pataxó and the Maxacali, “the only ones among the various ethnicities existing in the area to survive until the present” (1977: 110). Given their historic affinity, due to a long situation of contact, these two people united once again in a more recent past, as demonstrated by the reports about the “Fire of 51.”

The “Fire of 51” and the creation of the Monte Pascoal National Park in 1961, according to Carvalho and Miranda (2013), are related to the migratory movement of the Pataxó of Barra Velha to Minas Gerais. This movement of entire families, such as that of the Kanatyó, is always the fruit of a collective decision, as emphasized by Kohler (2007).

The Fire of 51 and Monte Pascoal National Park

The indigenous teacher Duteran mentioned in his narrative the episode of the “Fire of 51,” that it was related to the migration of the Pataxó from Minas Gerais. In his research into the Pataxó language during the FIEI, he found out about the historical relationships between the Pataxó and the Maxacali, and the connection between the paths between Bahia and Minas Gerais with this event which is deeply rooted in the collective memory of this group and until today is not sufficiently clarified, as emphasized by Carvalho (2009). The Fire of 51 is still an obscure event in which Indians were involved in an assault on a merchant, after they were misled by two men to believe that the merchant had come to resolve a situation of land demarcation, brought about by the creation of the Monte Pascoal National Park (See Figure 1). Residents of Barra Velha village responded strongly against the Pataxó, burning their houses, capturing certain Indians, who

were subjected to humiliating punishments. Those who were able to flee went into the forest or ended up taking jobs in farms of the region. This traumatic episode marked the temporary disarticulation of the old village of Barra Velha, dispersing the Pataxó for a time, until they gradually returned and met once again at Barra Velha (Kohler 2008; Grunewald 2001; Carvalho 1977).

According to Duteran, the Fire of 51 was responsible for the departure but also the return of the Pataxó to Barra Velha in the period after the incident. He affirms that with the passage of time, some families returned, but because of “pressure from the whites” left once again and “returned after a while.” In addition, she affirmed that the Fire of 51 was responsible for the death of many of the elderly, and was remembered as a period in which “our grandparents and great-grandparents became reticent” to say “that they were Indians. So, they fled; all the people there from Barra Velha fled and sought shelter on farms.”

Often the farmers even wanted to kill the Indians, abused and killed them, other [farmers] helped, but helped in exchange for work. You work for me and I will hide you here. So, the people were afraid to say; “I am an Indian” and to use the indigenous name as well. In this way they stopped speaking the language and learned to speak Portuguese, to not be identified as an Indian and be killed, because many were hunted at the time. So, for this reason there is this hesitancy to say that one is an Indian, to speak the language, and they left it aside. So, only some people who left and then returned to Barra Velha speak, at times (Duteran).

Kohler (2008: 9) analyzed variations found in the oral versions of the Fire of 51, observing different emphases according to the sociocultural context in which they were produced. Greater difference was found among the versions in Barra Velha, where the dramatic event took place, than those in Itamaraju, which is farther away.

In the oral reports at Barra Velha about the incident, Kohler (2008) found a certain homogeneity, with an emphasis on the humiliation suffered and how the Indians were reduced to the primitive condition of animals, associated to their past as wild Indians, before their Evangelization. About these humiliations, Nayara Pataxó (apud Professores Pataxó 2007: 17) reported: “Mother also said that they ripped

the scalp of old Júlio and made him eat it, they made him walk and run from the village to Caraíva, running along the beach, goading him, making him run and jump with a harness like a mule.”

After some time, when some families were returning to the village, as in a reported myth, Kohler (2008) reported that the Pataxó began to emphasize their condition as civilized, Catholic, hardworking, honest Indians who fought to conquer their rights, as we can see in the statement below.

It is clearly seen that in Barra Velha, the Indians that survived against wind and tides, who fought and obtained the restitution of their traditional territory, insisted on passing from the undetermined status as foolish, angry, brutish Indians, to that of civilized, hard-working, Catholics, etc. It was a struggle, not only on legal grounds, but also semantically, to be called *Indians* and no longer *caboclos* [mestizos], *tapuios*, and other names that they were given. (Kohler 2008: 9)

The author affirmed that he found among the Pataxó of Barra Velha a certain disdain for the Indians involved in the Fire of 51, because they let themselves be so easily fooled by two men, a situation that would not occur today, given that the Indians are now wiser, and not foolish as they were before. This aspect is also emphasized in a written report on the incident made by an Indian, at the request of a teacher, and transformed into a text to be used pedagogically in the indigenous school at the village of Itamaraju. According to Kohler (2008), this representation coincides with the paternalistic and moralistic vision of the Brazilian Forest Development Institute (IBDF),¹⁶ who considered the Indians of the past to be ignorant and gullible, incapable of distinguishing between good and bad. This representation, according to Kohler, contaminated this written report that presented the Indians as ignorant and manipulated and therefore, responsible for what happened. Nevertheless, we can interpret the affirmation and valorization of the idea that today they are “civilized” Indians, from another perspective, that is, in the sense that they better understand the society of the “whites,” and know how to relate better with their logic.

¹⁶ Kohler (2008: 6) is referring here to the reports of the IBDF – now known as IBAMA (The Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Natural Resources) – which, in the late 1960s described the living conditions of the Pataxó who live in the area of the Park.

This interpretation echoes analyses that show the positive valorization of being a civilized Indian – as is the case of the Tupinambá de Olivença (Viegas 2007) or of the Piro of Peru. (Gow 1991).

While the oral tradition of Barra Velha emphasizes differences between the Indians of the past and the present, the written version of Itamaraju, increasingly influenced by the version of the whites, emphasizes the role of a police captain who quelled the rebellion and put an end to the poor treatment inflicted on the Indians. According to Kohler (2008), these different versions of the Fire of 51 show how the struggle for ethnic recognition also takes place on a semantic level, involving the collective rewriting of the past. In the report from Itamaraju, which portrays a white captain as a protector of the Indians and attributes a passive role to the Indians, the introjection of a negative self-image is observed, which Kohler sees exclusively as an influence of the dominant representation from the world of the whites. In the versions of Barra Velha, whose narrators have actively participated in the movement for ethnic affirmation, another vision of the Indians is highlighted, in which they are authors of their own destiny (Kohler 2008).

This episode, according to Carvalho (2009), is related to the creation of the Monte Pascoal National Park which is considered by the author as a critical event that both triggered a process of dispersal of the Pataxó, but also contributed to their ethnic reaffirmation. The Monte Pascoal National Park was created in 1943 as a national monument, by Decree-Law no. 12.729 published in the *Diário Oficial* government newspaper, to memorialize the discovery of Brazil, preserve flora and fauna and promote tourism. The decree made no reference to the presence of the Pataxó Indians in the area to be demarcated, although their presence in the region has been registered since the seventeenth century (Carvalho 2009).

According to the author, with the demarcation of the area of the park, the state itself triggered an action by the part of the Pataxó community in defense of its interests, which coincide with the period of the 1970s when recognition of ethnic rights was sought (Kohler 2007).

The finalization of the surveying for the delimitation of the area of the park, which took place around 1944, raised concern among the Pataxós. So a leader of the Pataxó community in Barra Velha at the time of the fire, known as Capitão Honório, went to the Indian Protection Service (SPI)

in Rio de Janeiro [then the national capital], to seek support for defense of the Pataxó lands. Carvalho (2009) mentions that documents were presented to various agencies, including a letter written by Captain Honório. Carvalho relates this fact to the destruction of the village, which occurred one year and ten months after the visit.

This author mentions the political and ideological context of the time, suggesting that the persecution of communist members of the government motivated the uprising that left the local population indisposed towards the Indians and triggered an exaggerated police response. She refers to news articles that linked the two instigators – those who allegedly enticed the Indians with promises of land demarcation – to the Communist Party¹⁷ or to the Indian Protection Service. In the case of the communists, the presumption was that they represented “a movement of a social character acting in conjunction with rural populations,” that is, that it was not a simple assault, but an action with broader intentions (Carvalho 2009: 513). In terms of the Indian Protection Service, the fact that the letter from Captain Honório was lost by the institution is presented as an effort to avoid attention from the agency and to facilitate the action of the two agents, whose motivations remain unclear. The author also mentions similar events that were not clarified that took place in the same year in relation to the Xacriabá people in Minas Gerais, which could be related with those that took place with the Pataxó of Barra Velha.

With the Fire of 51, the “tough repression led to the death of two non-Indian leaders, the prison of the ‘captain’ and of ten more Indian men and women, and the dispersion of the rest, in utter despair.” (Carvalho 2009: 513). In conjunction with the demarcation of the land of the Monte Pascoal National Park, this event motivated the dispersal of the group and intensified its intermingling with the regional population. Since the 1970s, however, the Pataxó began the struggle for recognition of the ancestral right to their traditional territory, resulting in the occupation of the entire area of Monte Pascoal in 1999 (Kohler 2007).

17 The author affirmed, however, that this relationship between the Fire of 51 and the Communist Party is a hypothesis that requires careful verification. It is important to recall that in the 1930s other Indians who defended their own cause were accused of involvement with communists. (Viegas and Paula 2009: 192)

Sampaio (2000) also associates the implementation of the park, in 1961, and the prohibition of planting on their own lands with the movement for the dispersal of the Pataxó from Barra Velha.

The author affirms, however, that in the following decades, the struggles over the occupation over the area of the park ended up placing the Pataxó at the historic location of the discovery of Brazil. This transformed the Pataxó – who previously were not recognized as an indigenous people, but as *mestiços* - into the largest indigenous group in Bahia, with the power to reconquer Monte Pascoal as an indigenous territory.

In the 1960s, before the conquest of Monte Pascoal, the Indigenous Protection Service began efforts to raise awareness of the administrators of the National Park so that the Indians could remain on their lands and would have the right to cultivate them, initiating the return of those who had been dispersed. (Carvalho, 2009: 516). In the early 1970s, FUNAI set up an Indigenous Post at Barra Velha and negotiated an agreement with the Brazilian Forest Development Institute so that the Pataxó could plant in the areas of the park where the forest had been cleared in the past (Sampaio 2000). In 1980, the Pataxó won the demarcation of a strip of 8,600 hectares of the park, reinforcing the movement to reunite a portion of the dispersed population. Nevertheless, as Sampaio emphasized, this did not end the impasses generated by the creation of the park.

The agreement between FUNAI and the Brazilian Forestry Institute, which was made without broad consultation of the communities, according to Carvalho's (2009) analysis, was considered harmful to the Indians because it gave them an area of the park composed of sandy swamps while leaving out the mangroves, an important source of Pataxó food. A working group was composed to analyze the situation, resulting in the recognition of the area as indigenous and in the recommendation of its regularization, which was approved in 1991 (Carvalho 2009: 517).

Insatisfaction with this demarcation led to a campaign by the Pataxó for the reconquest of the area of the park, with the support of various indigenous organizations. In 1999, the movement acquired the right to the entire area of Monte Pascoal. Then, new contradictions were established, according to Kohler (2007), with the classification by UNESCO of the park as an ecological reserve. This led to divergent interests between

the environmentalists and those concerned with the welfare of the indigenous population.

It is important to emphasize that these two episodes of the Fire of 51 and the creation of the Monte Pascoal National Park are remembered as deep historic wounds that accompany the historic trail of the Pataxó and with which they had to struggle, politically and morally, to affirm their right to the traditional territory. The histories narrated by the teachers interviewed for our study indicate their identification with this collective history, and present us the new trails they have taken through Minas Gerais.

Opening New Trails in Minas Gerais

Before occupying the current territory in the municipality of Itapeçerica, the Pataxó of the Muã Mimatxi village who left Barra Velha, passed through the Fazenda Guarani Indigenous Territory,¹⁸ in the municipality of Carmésia, also in Minas Gerais. According to Grunewald (2001), the Guarani village with 3,270 hectares took shape in the second half of the 1970s with Pataxó families from Barra Velha, who had lived with Indians of various ethnicities. The Krenak Indians had been living on this old farm that had been used as a prison by the Indigenous Protection Service, to which they were compulsorily transferred, and they only left the area in 1983-1984. Grunewald also claims that Kanatyó's family group moved to Minas Gerais in the 1980s.

Liça, Kanatyó's wife, identifies herself as being a "thorough-bred," Pataxó because she was born in the village of Barra Velha. She affirms that she migrated with her family to Minas Gerais nearly 30 years ago. In a statement from 1998, taken by Valle (2001), Kanatyó told of the movement of her family to Carmésia, in Minas Gerais:

I was born in Barra Velha and I always wanted to get to know more Indians, indigenous nations... I had many relatives of mine living here and I wanted to meet them... there the land was getting smaller... when the IBDF took the Monte Pascoal National Park... there wasn't room for everyone... So the idea arose for me to come here with my family, my parents... my uncle... so

¹⁸ This Indigenous Territory – or reserve – was approved on 29/10/1991 (Ricardo 2000: 713).

we came... then we began to struggle... the land was still not demarcated... we helped in the demarcation... we struggled hard for demarcation [...]. (Kanatyo, apud Valle, 2001, p. 62).

According to Carvalho and Miranda (2013), there are seven Pataxó communities in Minas Gerais, with four of them located at the Fazenda Guarani Indigenous Territory, in the municipality of Carmésia; the Muã Mimatxi village, in the municipality of Itapecerica; Jundiba/Cinta Vermelha, in the municipality of Araçuaí, which is also inhabited by Pankararu and Jeru Tukumã, in Açucena. A total of 349 inhabitants live in these villages in Minas Gerais, of which 246 are at the Fazenda Guarani. There is a movement for the occupation of new lands by groups from the Fazenda Guarani, motivated by “situations of territorial insufficiency and a scarcity of natural resources” (Carvalho and Miranda 2013: 3).

In an interview granted in 2012, Kanatyo justified his family’s move from Bahia to Minas Gerais, and later from the Fazenda Guarani, in Carmésia, to Itapecerica, as an attempt to preserve the traditional Pataxó way of life. He spoke of the changes that took place in the way of life of the villages, including population growth and the presence of non-Indians, to locate a life plan and a future more in keeping with the Pataxó traditions, that they are trying to recover and preserve at the Muã Mimatxi village. This discontentment, like that of Kanatyo, which led many Pataxó families to look for new territory, was expressed by César:¹⁹

[...] The Guarani is a location, I don’t know if you know, various peoples lived there and later went to São Paulo, and only the Pataxó remained and it became a Pataxó village. Except that ten years ago Guarani was going through a very complicated adaptation, with interference from people from the outside, with other ideas arriving and the elders did not adapt to these environments. It is a location that many people go to. There are many people from the outside living inside, they marry with Indians and are living there. The people began not to like this, they said: “ah, I am not going to make my culture for the outsiders to see.” So the people did not feel good like that, living inside, wanting to be Indian without having an indigenous identity. And that’s how we began to look for a new territory.

19 César is a teacher in the village of Cinta Vermelha/Jundiba, in the municipality of Araçuaí. Interview conducted in February 2013, during the second stage of the study, which took place in this village.

Cesar and Kanatyó, then, justified their migrations to escape from proximity with non-Indians who they feel threaten the traditional Pataxó way of life, as well as a search for more territorial space. Nevertheless, Kohler (2007) argues that family mobility as an important aspect of Pataxó culture. This author locates the families, understood as a lineage of relatives, as supports for temporality, and above all, of meaning for the Pataxó. From this perspective, each family has a certain location in the territory and can begin a migratory movement.

According to this author, when the tendency does not prevail for the Pataxó to abandon their place of occupation to head for a new family space, with marriages, a family expands its occupation in the space of two or three generations until it forms an entire community. Kohler (2007: 4) even presents the migratory trend as being deeply inscribed in the Pataxó *habitus*, which resulted from a very old diasporic experience, linked to the movement of catechism that took place in the second half of the 19th century.

The Pataxó's intense family and social mobility, according to Kohler, leads to a conception of places as circuits, routes, itineraries and networks – both diachronic, as well as synchronic – which move the families from one place to another, and at the same time, tell the story of the different steps of family life. This mobility co-exists with the desire to have a home and with a strong appreciation for distinct territories. These apparently conflicting desires do not represent a paradox for the Pataxó.

Another aspect indicated by Kohler (2007) is the economic motivation for the migrations of family groups, given that agricultural production among the Pataxó is conducted by family circuits. These itineraries are established as memories of an entire group, with the support from spatial and temporal references, which have their roots in Barra Velha and whose branches reach the Pataxó villages in Minas Gerais.

The life trajectory mentioned by Duteran relates to the historic trajectories of circulation through the territory, inscribed in the Pataxó way of life. It also points to the permanence of the connection with the mother village, a starting point for the formation of all the others, “the place of the ‘trunks,’” or of origin, and a center of diffusion of Pataxó culture, as Grunewald (2001: 79) emphasized.

I was born in Barra Velha, came to Minas, then returned to Barra Velha and then returned and I am here today. I have lived at Carmésia, now I am living here. I know two Pataxó villages here and I know Barra Velha, which is my true place of origin.²⁰

On these non-linear paths and itineraries, forming circuits of coming and going, between Bahia and Minas Gerais, recalling old trails of the past and opening new routes of occupation and adaptation to new places and territories, the Pataxó of the Muã Mimatxi village today use the school to revive their historic memory, which remains fragmented in the stories of the elderly.

In a group whose “historic memory was sadly sacrificed, leaving only tenuous memories that form a quite fragile framework, obtained at the cost of few and fragmentary statements” (Carvalho 1977: 92), the contact with what they call the Socioecological Calendar tool at the indigenous educators course provided a rich opportunity to systematize these memories. The school occupies a central place in this process, contributing to the recovery of traditional myths and histories and to the systematization of knowledge once guarded only “in the head” and in the memory of the elderly.

The Socioecological Calendar is a methodology for the organization and presentation of results of the Inductive Intercultural Method, developed by María Bertely Busquets and Jorge Gasché. Based on the revalorization and inclusion of indigenous knowledge and know-how, this tool is part of an alternative curricular proposal for college-level education of indigenous teachers, which has been experimented with since 1988 in countries such as Peru, Mexico and Brazil (Silva 2012; Gasché 2013; Pádua and Veas 2013). It was presented to the teachers in the Muã Mimatxi village during the discipline on Land Use during the FIEI, by researchers of the Observatory of Indigenous School Education (OEEI) of the UFMG.

According to Sarah, the “calendar of life here of the people of the Muã Mimatxi village” is an important point of reference for the pedagogical project for the school. In Siwê’s words, it helped “the specific ways of living and working during school hours”:

²⁰ In mid 2013, in one of my trips to the village I learned that Duteran’s family had moved once again, this time back to Fazenda Guarani, in Carmésia-MG.

We worked out our own distinct way of living and working during school hours. So, we put these materials together as parameters of the teaching matrix for the children. For example, what we live and what this means for school learning, for us to apply to the children. So we developed our idea. Now, we have a stronger idea of the specific and differentiated education we desire. (Siwê)

During field research, in May 2012, I observed what were called intercultural lessons that involved all the teachers and students in a collective activity to develop a part of the calendar called “Time and Clear Waters”, where they drew and told myths and traditional histories they had heard from the community elders. Kanatyó made the following comments about this activity:

[...] One of the projects is the calendar of the world, of living and life, which we are still developing. We are also working with a time that we are going to put into the calendar that is the time we christened and feel that it is the Time of the Clear Waters. After this time, [came the time] of turbulence, the time of 1500 onwards, the time of aggression, of the destruction of nature, of wars, and such like. But we don't want to work with this time just now. We are returning in time to the clear waters, trying to strengthen our spirit, our mind, our culture. So we are mapping out this world, this mythical world of the Pataxó. [...] Traditional knowledge comes from there. We are developing these things, making maps. Ever since we were almost finalizing the course, we have been working with this material; trying to exchange experiences and. This is show we are developing our education. The fishbone [of our education], as Márcia Spyer²¹ says, is this calendar that we are working with and with which we will continue to work. [...] Our school is a differentiated school; the teaching materials are being elaborated with the children and also with the community.

The use of drawing as a way of visualizing territorially significant elements in calendars (Bertely 2011) is part of the Inductive Intercultural Method (*Método Indutivo Intercultural*), which, in the Muã Mimatxi

21 Márcia Spyer was general coordinator of the FIEI and is responsible for many of the innovative ideas that have been put into practice in the curriculum of the course.

village, is leading to the elaboration of significant educational materials that have recently been published.²² This transformation of the results of research undertaken by students and teachers into pedagogical and didactic materials that can give direction to the daily life of the school have been very well received in the village.

Mythical figures linked to traditional histories and that appear in the children's drawings drew our attention to the way in which memory is reconfigured in the dialogue between generations. The theme of the creatures of the forest also appears in an interview conducted by Domingos, the pajé in the village of Cinta Vermelha/Jundiba, in Araçuaí.²³ He mentioned the vine of the caipora, the father of the forest, the mother of the rock, the mother of the water, the jundiba, the sucuri, the muçum and tupã (thunder), as spiritual entities found in the Pataxó imaginary. According to his statement, these entities belonging to other kingdoms, those of the enchanted, are capable of communicating with them and helping them in many situations.

For Liça the territory also appears to be “enchanted,” as for Kanatyó, for whom “our spirits also live there...in nature,” as do the ancestors and “the spirits of the elderly of 500 years ago who are present here...” (Kanatyo, cited by Valle 2001: 62).

Kohler (2007) observed the existence, among the Pataxó of Bahia, of a mixture of Catholic beliefs and rituals with elements of enchanted pajelança spirits or those from rural candomblé. In the universe of the pajelança, the character of the wild Indians of the past stand out – the Baquirá²⁴ - imbued with prestige and mystery, who appear as caboclos at the curing ceremonies, invoked and incorporated by the pajé shaman or in the Toré ceremonies, by the participants in the dance. These entities, more present in the ritual universe of men, are perceived as representatives of the ancestral savage world. Their domain is the forest and the rivers,

22 Among publications that resulted from this work and that have been written by indigenous teachers and their students of Muã Mimatxi village, I would mention “Calendar of the times of the the Pataxó village of Muã Mimatxi” (*Calendário dos tempos da aldeia Pataxó Muã Mimatxi*) and “The Science of night and day. (*A ciência da noite e do dia*), both edited in Belo Horizonte: Literaterras-Fale/UFMG, 2012.

23 As we mentioned in note 22, the second phase of the study was conducted at the village of Cinta Vermelha/Jundiba in February 2013. At this time, although it was not in our plan, Domingos told us various stories that were recorded, with his authorization.

24 Wild Indians who live below the Earth and who can come to the surface in defense of the contemporary Pataxó Indians.

places of passage of the subterranean world. Where the caboclos and other creatures live like the father of the earth or the caipora, who are representatives of the subterranean kingdoms and the onça pelada, an entity of the forest, representative of the ancestral world, who threatens the humans who go alone into this environment.

The way that this Socioecological Calendar was appropriated and recontextualized in the practices undertaken at the school²⁵, appears to find a foundation in this collective history and in the cosmology of the Pataxó. As Kohler indicated (2007), the history of family migrations are very old and rooted cosmological concepts guide the representations of the world and a specific way of thinking about temporality, using spatial categories. In this way, the Socioecological Calendar was adjusted to the concepts of this Pataxó group, allowing the articulation of history and memory with a way of life, in a continuous transformation process (Gallois 2004), placing it at the service of collective demands.

Liça tries to transmit to the new generations these particular modes of relating to the territory, which she affirms are part of the traditional Pataxó culture. She highlights the importance of the school, today, for the transmission of this traditional knowledge and for the register of knowledge, previously stored only in the memories of the older people of the community.

My teaching is more within the traditional culture of the Pataxó people, with the work with the land. So, thus, for me, it is good to work in the school. As we always say, our education is learned in the customs themselves, in the practices, within our own life, our routes in the fields, in the work of the land. We ask the mother and father how they could be dealing with the land, looking at the land, working with it, caring for it. It is learning by fireside, in the history class. It is when one learns looking, doing in practice. So, these were the teachings. But today people bring the teaching inside the school, because [...] we are in another world, in a world different from that [...] of the past. [...] Today, there are other teachings as well, there is written learning, from the school. We only have the writing in our head, like me, I only have it in my head. (Liça).

25 Given its importance, this theme was addressed in other studies.

This teacher emphasizes that today, the new generations live in the world “of writing, of the pencil, of the pen” and for this reason it is necessary to articulate the oral knowledge and the practice of traditional culture with that of the school. Since she only stores the knowledge “in her head,” in school she teaches with drawing and research (walking, looking, observing): “I look for the design there and take it and explain it to them. We do it in the field as well, we clean the space of the village.” Liça considers the “teaching” of the school to be good, because it registers “this traditional Pataxó way of life,” “because many things today are disappearing, are also ending and the culture (can) disappear as well.” For Liça, education in the school is a way of “not letting our customs die.”

There are some people who think: “why should the Indians want so much land since they do nothing?” But we will do a lot if we get the land from here as far as Belo Horizonte. As far as I am concerned, there is much that I will do, because I will live on it so I will not want to destroy it. The land will remain alive, if only we could go back in time, I would leave everything new again. When I am really old, or my friends who arrive, they will see. We want land for planting, for hunting, for collecting, not for destruction. This marsh here provided much rice, people were able to harvest so much rice. It was good for them, but for me it is better than it is now. [...] Ah, there is so much that I see here, grass, plants for medicine. There are frogs, insects and there are many rodents. I could even get my food from there. I wouldn't eat the rice, but I would eat some wildlife and my medicine. (Liça)

Liça's narrative reveals some concepts that guide the relationship of the Pataxó at the Muã Mimatxi village with the territory where they live and their attempts to relate the routes of tradition with the future of new generations in work conducted at school. They tell us that the relationship of the Indians with the land is poorly understood, because “we want land to plant, we want land to hunt, gather, and not to destroy.” This is different from the squatters, who depleted the land by planting so much rice. The Pataxó prefer to let the area of the “marsh” recover to bring back the animals (frogs, insects, guinea pigs) and the plants “to make medicine.” They also presents us the desire to recover the “vital breath” and the “principle of fertility” (Albert 2000) of the land, by means of activities that stimulate research as a permanent practice, capable of producing

new social relations and at the same time guaranteeing their social reproduction, as it is evidenced by the following:

Here there are small spaces for us to plant manioc, because an Indian is like that: he plants to eat, not to be able to have lots to sell. It is to eat and leave for the animals in the ground. For this reason, we always say, we always teach, that we plant what we eat, what the animals eat, that we plant for ourselves and the animals. My teaching was this care for the earth, the insects, the plants, what does not serve us, serves the animals, the fruits, the seeds, there is nothing that is wasted in the world and in nature (Liça).

Notions of care and of protection for the earth stand out that are quite different from the utilitarian, productivist and predatory logic of the “whites.” The narrative is close to that of Davi Kopenawa, in which the universe is thought of as a “social totality guided by a complex system of symbolic exchanges between human and non-human subjects” (Albert 2000: 257). In this type of cosmology, nature is presented as a living entity inhabited by spirits and guardians. In the lessons that we observed, the pupils of all ages were activity interested and seemed to share the school project that had been developed by their teachers. Even so, it will be necessary to continue our research to find out the extent to which the conceptions of the leadership are shared by new generations.

As it can be seen, the school presents itself as a new space for learning, and plays, as it does for many other indigenous peoples, including the Kaxinawá (Weber 2006), an important role in reviving the “culture,” at a time in which there is a movement against the devaluation of traditional culture with the intensification of contact. The school is also seen as a way to earn a living for the teachers of the village, but it is above all valued as territory appropriated by them for the elaboration of their future projects, the realization of which depends on the acquisition of tools valued in the world of the whites, like writing.

Liça’s narrative also points to the presence among them of a more practical concept of knowledge, which articulates the recognition and systematization of traditional practices of living with the territory with

the formulation of new perspectives for other modes of living. The school, in this perspective, becomes a space for the transmission of practical knowledge while also linked to daily life and at the same time, for the preparation of local alternatives for the use of territory and of support for the new generations.

Conclusion

As we saw, the Pataxó history is a constituent part of the routes of this Pataxó group that, today at the Muã Mimatxi village, found the school and transformed it into a project for the future. In Lica's narrative, conceptions of territoriality constructed in these historic routes become fundamental links in the development of life projects at the village, in which the school occupies a central place as an articulator of the dialogue between this historical memory and the construction of the present and of the future of the community. Through the school, the teachers of the Muã Mimatxi village hope to re-establish the relationship with the past and with the landscape and produce new realities that guarantee the survival of new generations. Among many other functions, they hope that the school will help them to value, systematize and transmit to the youngest people the traditional understandings about the relationship with the territory that interlink various dimensions of community life, in dialog with the traditional knowledge of the elders.

Today, everything is through what? Through teaching, education in the school. We see lots of struggle, some for the life of the land, others come and destroy. This is why the land is like this, especially we who received a tired, sick, poisoned land. So, for us knowledge is also very good, it teaches us to care for insects, to not use poison, to not destroy what one has, to help what we have and what we also can be retributing to nature as well. It is also because they [the non-Indians] no longer see life like this, they are destroying, polluting the waters, putting poison in the earth, digging the earth and more earth with machines, tractors... To know how to maintain our culture. Our culture is to preserve the earth more. When we got here, there was only garbage, this entire space was full of garbage. So we got it and went cleaning, the teachers themselves, cleaning and encouraging the boys as

well to not do these things, to preserve what we have. And I think this is very good! (Liça)

Emphasized in this way in Liça's narrative, the school today represents one more step in the life trails of the Pataxó in Minas Gerais, an appropriated and reappropriated space that nourishes these people's affinity for a relationship with new knowledge and experiences and that gives potential to the continuous movement of elaborating new syntheses and giving origin to new creations. I refer to all that the school and all its social relations make possible, especially all that emerges from the process of intercultural training. For these teachers, the act of teaching seems to mean acquiring and understanding the point of view of others in order to develop new elements for incorporation and re-signifying. From this perspective, the relationship with the knowledge of "whites" that comes with the school, activates transformations and produces new arrangements that the pupils "orchestrate" themselves. (Pádua 2009).

Liça's statements synthesize the idea that the school is a project for the future, seen as central for reactivating relationships with the territory, conceived in the "tradition," as a living entity that is inhabited by spirits and guardians. (Albert 2000). For this reason she suggests exercising practical activities that articulate the dimensions of study, observation, and experimentation to the dimensions of reasoning, speculation and intuition, as emphasized by Cunha and Almeida (2002). From this perspective, research stands out as a guiding process that articulates the minute and detailed observation of what is seen and heard (Cunha and Almeida 2002), which allows them to conduct experiments, which are understood to be crucial to maintaining, transmitting and expanding knowledge. Our research suggests that these teachers give great value to a kind of practical knowledge, for example, when we are clearing or working the land as Liça said, but also when research results in products such as game, calendars, maps etc.

In this way, at this historic moment, the school presents itself as one more opened trail, which allows them to articulate memory, a relationship with the landscape, expansion of connections with alterity and open, malleable concepts, and in a continuous process of transformation. Carrying in memory their life trails from the past, rising and descending the rivers, this Pataxó group from the Muã Mimatxi village now opens new trails

towards the school, in the expectation of constructing a new future. In the words of Kanatyo, “the school today is our forest, our river, our mangrove” (Pádua 2014), and a source of memory and self-sustainment, a special place for generating fruits that will guarantee their social reproduction and the future of new generations. For this to take place, however, it is necessary to balance knowledges “from here and there” (Sarah), knowledge from the village and from the world, “fishing” from the intercultural collaboration those elements that best adapt to the conceptions and demands of collective life.

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Challenges and limits of an education for all

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate the existence of two different types of school management culture. Data was collected during fieldwork over the academic years 2008 and 2009 in two public high schools in Rio de Janeiro where we observed administrative and pedagogical meetings, classrooms and the everyday life of the schools. From an analysis of the practices and conceptions of management staff, we describe the unconscious grammatical principles that govern the running of the two schools. These become particularly clear in the different selection procedures in the two schools, one of them conducting severe criteria for entrance and the other allowing all to enter but few to reach the end of the course. These two recruitment selection practices reveal distinct expectations and beliefs on students' ability (or inability) to learn.

Keywords: Secondary schooling, management cultures, school ethos, student selection processes and “pedagogia da repetência”.

Resumo

Neste artigo pretendemos demonstrar a existência de tipos distintos de culturas de gestão nos dois colégios pesquisados. Partimos dos dados coletados durante o trabalho de campo realizado ao longo dos anos letivos 2008 e 2009, quando observamos as reuniões administrativas e pedagógicas, as salas de aula e o cotidiano de dois colégios públicos estaduais, de ensino

médio, localizados no Rio de Janeiro. Para argumentar nossa hipótese, descreveremos os princípios gramaticais inconscientes dos dois colégios a partir das práticas e das concepções das direções, agentes centrais na produção da gestão e qualidade da organização escolar. Esses princípios de tornam mais claros nos distintos processos de seleção nas duas escolas, uma delas adotando severos critérios para admissão, a outra deixando todos entrarem, mas permitindo que poucos terminem o curso. Essas duas práticas de seleção revelam distintas expectativas e crenças na capacidade dos alunos em aprender.

Palavras-chave: Ensino médio, culturas de gestão, ethos escolar, práticas de seleção e pedagogia da repetência.

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Introduction

Following the introduction of universal primary education in Brazil at the end of the 1990s, the focus of national debates on education shifted to the final years of schooling: the period of *ensino médio*, or secondary education.¹ As well as exploring the objectives, curricula and student performance at this level (Castro & Tiezzi 2005; Moura Castro 2009), some studies have debated the high levels of repetition. Rio de Janeiro State, on which our study focuses, has one of the worst repetition and dropout rates in the country (Schwartzman 2011), maintaining what Costa Ribeiro in the 1990s called a ‘pedagogia da repetência’ (Costa Ribeiro 1991).

In his analysis of educational statistics in Brazil and the large number of students from all social classes who failed their exams and were forced to repeat the year, Sergio Costa Ribeiro asked: “How can we explain so much repeating of years in all social classes? May there be a pedagogia of repetition? Might this be the cultural foundation of our teaching praxis? Or is it a simple consequence of the inefficiency of the system?” (1991: 2). This is how he answers these questions:

It would appear that the practice of forcing students to repeat years is part of the pedagogical system as a whole, accepted by all the actors as *natural*. The

¹ The education system in Brazil is formed by basic education – composed of infant, primary (*fundamental*) and secondary (*médio*: middle) education – youth and adult education, technical instruction and higher education. Infant education is not compulsory and is offered to children between three and five years old. Primary education is compulsory, comprising nine years of schooling for children between 6 and 14 years and is provided by municipalities and/or states. Secondary education, comprising three years of instruction, is not compulsory and is offered to young people between 15 and 17 years old, and is provided by the states. Youth and adult education is for young people over the age of 18 and is provided by the states too. Technical instruction, aimed at the work market, is for young people, non-compulsory and can be undertaken concomitantly with secondary education. Higher education is divided into teaching diplomas (*licenciatura*), bachelor degrees (*bacharelado*), postgraduate degrees and technological training. Source: Portal Brasil. www.brasil.gov.br/educacao/2014/05/saiba-como-e-a-divisao-do-sistema-de-educacao-brasileiro.

persistence and strength of this practice leads us to see it as a true pedagogical methodology that subsists in spite of all efforts to universalize basic education in Brazil. (1991: 3).

During the school years of 2008 and 2009, we conducted fieldwork in two public secondary education schools, located in the city of Rio de Janeiro: the Olavo Moura State School and the Amazonas State School². Once or twice per week we accompanied the day-to-day activities of principals³, teachers and students, as well as the school rituals and practices common to these microcosms. Our objective was to observe what was happening behind the walls of these schools, seeking to understand the phenomenon of repetition and the consequent exclusion of students from the classrooms.

We began fieldwork knowing that because the two schools were part of the Rio de Janeiro State educational network that they shared the same institutional regulations. We also knew that they had distinct selection entrance procedures for students, as well as different educational results. Armed with this information, we began participant observation, following the teachings of Malinowski (1984) by seeking the ‘flesh and blood’ of native life by observing administrative and pedagogical meetings, classrooms and the everyday routine of the schools. We also interviewed the two principals.⁴

In this article we describe the selection processes used by the two schools and analyse their management cultures, defined as “principles that organize school life and give meaning to their practices and beliefs” (Maggie & Pires do Prado 2014: 71). Our hypothesis is that the two schools possess distinct management cultures — one rational bureaucratic, the other charismatic — each with an ethos that organizes the institution, guides the education of students and interfere in their lives. Both these ideal types reinforce the selection processes of the students attending each institution.

2 All the names of colleges and social actors are fictitious.

3 The administration of schools is made up of a general principal and assistant principals, the number of which varying according to the number of students in each school.

4 The interview was divided into four parts: the first dedicated to collecting the personal data, academic training and professional experience of the director; the second to collecting general data on the school, the director’s functions, school meetings and participation; a third part focused on the political-pedagogical project, student evaluation and assessment of the school in general; finally a fourth part aimed to sound out the opinions of the directors on a variety of issues concerning Brazilian society and the educational system.

We found that the practices and conceptions of the principals of the two schools were vitally important in the differences between them. The central role played by principals in educational analyses is a recent phenomenon. Research on school efficiency in the last decades of the twentieth century has invested in analyses of intra-school processes and the organizational qualities of institutions, seeking to identify the effect of the schools on the educational results of students, taking into account their social, economic and cultural characteristics. Pam Sammons's analysis of the international literature on the topic showed that leadership – usually exercised by the principal – was one of the key factors in school efficiency. Leadership refers to “the quality of individual leaders” and the roles that they perform, “their style of management, their relationship to the vision, values and goals of the school, and their approach to change” (Sammons et alii 1995: 13).

Analysing the Brazilian situation, Guiomar Namó de Mello delineates nine essential aspects to school efficiency. The first aspect is the leadership of principals: “the school's efficiency is associated with a technical coordination whose presence is strong and legitimized in the school environment and [...] the principal is the best placed to assume responsibility for this coordination” (Mello 1994: 338). Although there are factors related to the work performed by teachers and their expectations, Mello presents the principal as the person responsible for creating discussion spaces and setting the school's objectives. The principal is also the one who can work to ensure an adequate work environment and, above all, promote a belief in the students' capacity to learn.

The study carried out by Alves and Franco (2008) presents the recent findings of research into school efficiency in Brazil. One of the factors associated with school efficiency is its organization and management, highlighting the role of the principal. Barbosa (2009) also emphasizes the leading and indeed decisive role of the principal in her analyses of teaching institutions and their educational processes.

In light of this, we aim to demonstrate the existence of two distinct types of management culture in the schools under study, which provide an insight into the production and reproduction of educational inequalities and how these can be overcome.

An education for all? Learning about different selection processes

Olavo Moura State School

Olavo Moura State School, created in the 2000s, had a 2.5% repetition rate during the period of research. During our first conversation with the assistant principal Clara we discovered that the students from the school had performed very well in the external evaluation exams and the university entrance exams. The School received a positive evaluation from the New School Program.⁵ Created by the Rio de Janeiro State Education Department (*Secretaria de Estado de Educação do Rio de Janeiro: SEEDUC*), this program ranks schools each year according to management, efficiency and student proficiency in Portuguese Language and Mathematics, in the assessment known as SAERJ.⁶ In the SAERJ 2008 assessment, the School had 79% of students with adequate proficiency⁷ in Portuguese Language and 62.5% in Maths.

The assistant principal attributed the result to the fact that the School is ‘special’:

Firstly because the students already come here selected, by their age, by obtaining the best marks in their classes and by always having studied at a public school. Secondly the School has always worked towards quality in teaching from the start. But really I think that the difference is in the students’ will. Our students know what they want, they know what they want

5 The New School Program was created by Decree n. 25.959 of 12 January 2000. According to Brooke, “it represents an attempt to improve the management of state schools and hold their directors and employees responsible for the students results” (2006: 388). For more details on the policy and its consequences, see Brooke 2006.

6 The Rio de Janeiro State Education Assessment System (*Sistema de Avaliação da Educação do Estado do Rio de Janeiro: SAERJ*) was created in 2008 and assesses the performance in Portuguese Language and Maths of students from Year 5 to Year 9 of primary education and Grade 3 of secondary education. The assessment includes indicators such as the number of students who took the test, the average proficiency attained by the school and the percentage of students at each level of the proficiency ranking (Low, Intermediate, Adequate and Advanced). Source: <http://www.avaliacaoexternasaerj.caedufjf.net/>. Consulted on 10/11/2014. SAERJ has two assessment programs: the School Performance Diagnostic Assessment Program, known as SAERJINHO, and the External Assessment Program, known as SAERJ. For a historical review of assessment systems in Brazil, see Bonamino & Sousa 2012.

7 Each school has a report card containing the percentage of students at each level of the proficiency ranking: low, intermediate, adequate and advanced. Low and intermediate students are below the learning level considered adequate for the grade/year. Adequate or advanced students are at a level matching or exceeding that expected for the grade/year.

to do with their lives. Here the students make demands on the teachers, they want classes, they want to learn, but the initial shock isn't easy. Some take time to adapt to the demanding pace of the classes, because our work is intensive, we really prepare the students.

The assistant principal's optimism in relation to her students is reflected in her reluctance to criticise them for their lack of 'grounding' or the 'destructured' families, that constitute a recurrent feature in Rio's public schools already described by sociologists and anthropologists (Maggie 2006; Earp 2006; Encarnação 2007; Costa 2012).

When asked what being 'special' meant, the assistant principal explained that the School was founded to meet a "very specific objective." As the outcome of an agreement established between the Rio de Janeiro State Education Department (SEEDUC) and a Federal Technical School (*Escola Técnica Federal*: ETF), its goal was to offer secondary education grades to students coming exclusively from the public system through "an entrance selection process."⁸

This agreement emerged after the reform of 1997 (Federal Decree no. 2.208 of 1997), which separated courses for secondary education and technical training and consequently led to a reduction in the number of compulsory places for secondary education offered by federally-run technical schools.⁹ The proposal was to offer students coming from the public school system the chance to obtain secondary education at a state School and technical training at a Federal Technical School with the aim of equipping them with professional qualifications for entry into the labour market.

The admission exams in Portuguese and Mathematics were not judged to be an egalitarian mechanism for deciding school places and were therefore replaced by what was deemed a fairer method: the selection of students who had obtained the best grades during their primary school education in public schools. In so doing, the aim was to give a chance of access to high quality education to the best students from public schools.

8 This is a unique case of a state college that selects its students based on their performance in municipal public primary schools. The other state schools have not selected their intake since 1998, as we shall see in the description of Amazonas State College. Technical colleges do not select in this way either since they use knowledge tests as an entrance filter.

9 Since the educational reform introduced by Law no. 9.394 of 1996, the offer of places for secondary education has become a priority for state schools.

The selection was made by analysing the pupil's school performance during primary education. All the municipal schools sent their pupils' report cards for evaluation by the principal of Olavo Moura School.

The way in which the selection process was described by the assistant principal seemed fairly rigorous, meeting the criteria stipulated in the instructions. These criteria obey the rational principles of bureaucratic organization insofar as they follow a formal and impersonal process.

The selection process began at the end of each school year when the general principal met with the principal of the Federal Technical School (ETF) to decide on the number of places available for the following year. Afterwards, the School, with the approval of the State Education Department, announced the opening of the selection process to representatives of all the Regional Education Coordination Offices (CREs) of the Municipal Education Department – by official letter or email – and the number of places on offer. The coordination teams of the CREs were subsequently invited to a meeting at the School where the regulations for the selection process were presented, along with the timetable for the various stages up to completion of admission. Next, each CRE informed the municipal schools of the selection process. The schools implemented an internal procedure to choose candidates, whose report cards were then sent directly to their respective CREs, which, in turn, forwarded them for evaluation by the staff members of Olavo Moura School.

Candidates were required to have studied at a public school from the sixth grade of primary education, be aged between 13 and 15, and have attained the grade MB (*Muito Bom*: Very Good) in Portuguese, Maths and Science. According to the assistant principal, the analysis began with the grades that the students obtained in the ninth year of primary schooling. If those chosen from this year did not fill all the places available, the selection continued with the analysis of the performance in previous years. In 2008, the list of students chosen was completed with the analysis of the report cards for the ninth and eighth years. After the selection was completed, the results were posted on the school notice boards, located close to the two entrances, and all the students who had entered – selected or not – were notified.

Another possibility for entering the School exists: some places were reserved for a set number of students approved in the entrance exams for

the Federal Technical School (ETF) who were unable to gain a secondary education place. The assistant principal explained that the agreement meant that the School had to receive up to 10% of the total student places forwarded by the ETF, a situation denominated 'admission residue' and one that had become more and more frequent. In 2008 twenty-eight students were forwarded by the competition, the equivalent of 14% of all those admitted that year, while in 2009 this figure had increased to forty-two students, corresponding to 17% of new places, possibly owing to the need for the Technical School to allocate more students in secondary education. The Olavo Moura School became well-known and acquired a reputation as a 'good school.' The assistant principal stated that they had received 650 requests for places in 2008, but they could only take in 182 students: "I know that a lot of good people were left out, but there are no two ways about it, we have to choose who is going to enter."

Inside the school, it was common to hear the principal, the assistant principal and teachers claiming that the students were motivated to continue working hard on their studies, since all of them had the opportunity to choose one of the technical courses provided by the ETF.¹⁰ At the end of the first year all of them could compete for a place on the technical courses based on the average grades obtained over the school year. From the second year onward, all of them studied at the school during one period of the day (the morning or afternoon) and at the technical school during the other.

The selection process described above can be seen as a compensatory policy since it sets out from the principle that the students are socially unequal and thus, in order to be fairer, the admissions policy at the school was designed to counterbalance these inequalities by restricting the choice of students to those coming from the public school system. Even so the hierarchical dimension of merit is maintained insofar as the students chosen are those with the best school performance.

The divergence between the attempt to make access more democratic and the priority given to selecting particular students on the basis of merit generates a clear tension. This tension can be interpreted at an analytic level as one of the emblematic aspects of the concepts of equality and

10 The students who obtained the best annual averages could compete for a place in the following technical courses: Administration, Civil Engineering – Buildings or Roads, Electronics, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Mechanics, Meteorology, Work Safety, Telecommunications and Tourism.

meritocracy, which, despite encouraging the development of a fair and meritocratic school system, are considered by François Dubet (2004) “a pure petition of principles”:

The desire for fair schooling is indisputable, but the definition of what would be a fair school is highly complex, or even ambiguous. The problem arises from the fact that each different conception of justice evoked immediately contradicts the others. Thus a fair school meritocracy does not guarantee a reduction in inequalities; [...] a school concerned with the singularity of individuals works against the school's requirement to transmit a common culture, which is also itself a form of justice. No perfect solution exists, therefore, only a combination of necessarily limited choices and responses (Dubet 2004: 540).

As Dubet (2004) argues, the meritocratic principle presumes that everyone submits to the same exams and the same school rules – despite many not knowing them – which generates huge inequalities, since performance differences are inevitable: “Ultimately, the meritocratic system creates enormous inequalities between good students and not so good students. However this is true of all competitions, even when the principles behind them are fair” (Dubet 2004: 543).

Analysed within a wider context, meritocracy introduces even more complex dilemmas since the selection and rewarding of the best students through the assessment of individual performance, intended to curb the reproduction of social and hereditary privileges, may become a mechanism generating new inequalities insofar as it gives too much prestige, in terms of honour and status, to successful individuals.

The unconscious grammatical principles governing the social actors of Olavo Moura School are marked by the search to reduce inequalities in school opportunities and to promote equity. For all those involved, the choice of the municipal school pupils who obtain the best grades in primary education does not represent a theoretical problem. On the contrary, selection based on school performance is considered fair by them and the tension existing in the relation between the egalitarian and meritocratic precepts is unquestioned. The school's approach is seen as a ‘great chance’ bestowed to ‘deserving’ students, as well as being considered a legitimate initiative, capable of bringing back the prestige

and quality of teaching “lost over recent years with the decline in state schools.”

In one of the planning meetings, the principal Ritinha emphasized just how fair she considers the initiative of founding Olavo Moura School to be:

If back then in 1999 there had been no educators who thought about the reality experienced by municipal schools and they had not implanted a School like ours, the outcome of a social project that benefitted those who really deserve it, would the vast majority of our students have been approved in an entrance exam? It’s an unknown quantity. Perhaps one or other would have succeeded, but most would have lacked this chance offered by the School.

In relation to the selection process based on the evaluation of school performance, we observed that the actors also consider it to be a mechanism naturalized by the school’s teaching philosophy. Once the selection has been made, the conviction widespread in the School was that all the students can learn thanks to the commitment of the principal, assistant principal and the teaching staff to “educate students with goals in life, true citizens.” The idea of some teachers of respecting the ‘mission’ of “educating qualified students” was that they should give priority to teaching the contents of the curriculum and undertaking rigorous assessments, exactly because the students were considered the “cream of the municipality.”

The Olavo Moura State School takes in students from various districts and favelas in the city, some close and others distant, which is facilitated by its localization close to a metro station in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro.

The school building can be glimpsed from the metro station. Immediately on leaving the station, a ramp can be seen that leads to a small square, usually frequented by students from the school, sitting on benches and concrete tables. During breaks between one period and the next, many students can be seen consuming food and drink sold by the local street traders, such as biscuits, savouries and sweets. This situation occurs regularly because the School, despite having a refectory that serves lunch, has no canteen.

The School is reached along a long alley that leads to a wide open space, used as a patio and parking space by teachers and employees. The space around the patio includes a multi-sport gym, an auditorium, a room – used by the student guild – with a dozen tables and chairs for the students, and

a garden. As well as these spaces there are another two buildings for the exclusive use of the Federal Technical School (ETF).

In front of the patio is the three-storey U-shaped building of the Olavo Moura School, painted light yellow above and covered in light and dark blue tiles below. The left-hand side of the building is also used by administrative sectors of the ETF.

Visible through the glass windows of the ground floor corridor are the kitchen and refectory, and a classroom where the Arts Education classes are held. Located on the first floor are the school office, classrooms, the computer room, the offices of the assistant principal and pedagogical coordinator, the staff room, and the male and female bathrooms. There is also a ramp connecting to the building used for the laboratory classes of the technical courses taken by the school's students. On the second floor are the library and the Afro-Brazilian, African and Indigenous Studies Centre, the other classrooms, the inspector's room, the video room, and the waiting room and office of the general principal.

The library has a collection of around 5000 catalogued books of all kinds, from classics of Brazilian literature to encyclopaedias, dictionaries and educational books on all subjects. There is a section with rare books for consultation only.

Olavo Moura School has around 650 students, distributed across the three years of secondary education and split between morning and afternoon sessions. In 2008 there were 7 class groups in Year 1, 5 in Year 2, and 7 in Year 3. In 2009, there were 8 class groups in Year 1, 6 in Year 2, and 5 in Year 3. According to the principal, the number of groups varies according to the number of technical course places made available by the ETF. In 2008, 214 students were enrolled in Year 1. The following year, this total rose to 247.

According to the data provided by the administration of the Olavo Moura State School, in 2008, of the 214 students who studied in Year 1, 2 failed to pass, 2 left and 4 were transferred. The following year, 208 students enrolled for Year 2, which as well as those approved in Year 1 included another 2 retaking the year. In analysing this data, we noted a management practice of allocating the class groups from Year 1 with a lower number of students, around 30, compared to the groups from Years 2 and 3, which have up to 38 students each. From Year 2 the students undertake a technical

course and the principal tends to group students from related technical areas in the same class group. The reduction of the number of classes from Year 1 to Year 2 is related to the number of students. Year repetition is not a central factor in the organization of the class groups in this School.

Most of the students were described by teachers and by the staff members as coming from low-income families, and a few from middle class families, but the “important thing is that they have a family structure.”

Amazonas State School

Amazonas State School was built in the 1960s and is situated on the boundary of two districts in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro. Between the 1960s and 1980s it was a model school for the state system. According to the assistant principal, the school was recognized because it had “an innovative educational approach” for the time, with good teachers, many of them also teaching in the nearby university, and accepted young residents from districts in the city’s South Zone. It was a period during which public schools conducted a selection process for student entrance and the Amazonas State School received students from the region, some belonging to the city’s elite.

The selection of students for the state schools, the well-known ‘concurso’, namely the admission exam, was banned in the state system in 1998. According to Mendonça (2006), the admission process began to be computerized, via internet or telephone, from 1999 with the aim of reducing the queues at the schools during the admission period. In some schools, queues would form before daybreak with the parents of students who wanted to ensure their children were enrolled. Mendonça writes that the queues were caused partly by the increase in demand for places in secondary education, and partly by the existence of ‘preferred schools,’ that is, “traditional schools or those assumed to possess a high standard of teaching” (2006: 93). In these schools the queues were longer.

The computerized system was improved over the years. In 2004 a pre-admission system was created in which students applied for a place at the school via a call centre. The criteria of age and proximity were used to assign preference when allocating the school places. In 2006 the Computerized Admission System (SISMATI) was created, which enabled the introduction of a pre-admission system via the website of the State

Education Department or via a free phone number set up for the purpose (Mendonça 2006).

The computerized system allowed students to choose from five options of schools and their preferred session (morning, afternoon or night). Student selection was not by order of inscription but according to the following criteria: students with special educational needs; children and adolescents below the age of 18; students already studying in the public system; proximity to home address; and preference for the youngest student in the case of a tie.

After the online admission period, the student received confirmation of his or her new school sent to his or her home. However completion of admission was only possible after submission of the necessary documents at the school. After the documentation period, those who had failed to obtain a place or missed the application deadline could go to one of the admission centres that had been created.

The transition from a system of admission in person – at the school with a contact between the staff members, parents and students – to a bureaucratic and impersonal computerized system was not without its tensions, especially among the families, accustomed to one type of admission process at the school. According to the assistant principal Maria, Amazonas State School was highly sought after: the “competition is huge.” It matches the kind of teaching institution defined by Mendonça (2006) as a ‘preferred school.’ When we began fieldwork at the start of 2008, we observed, even before the start of classes, a notice on the entrance door to the School: “We have no more places.” The admission period was already over, but some hopeful parents and students went to the School directly for a place, invariably in vain.

The principal, the assistant principals and teachers emphasized that the demand for the school was a consequence of the ‘fame’ constructed in the past and also the “School’s excellent location and infrastructure,” principally when compared to other public schools in the state system. Located in a region well supplied by public transport links to all areas of the city, the School has a main building and an external area with various installations.

Amazonas School has a main entrance that stays permanently closed and a vehicle entrance used as the ‘official’ entrance by students and staff. There is a gate for the cars and another for the students: both remain open during the day. On entering the School there is a sports court with stands, a volleyball

court, and at the rear a three-storey building. Running parallel to the courts is a corridor for pedestrians. Irrespective of the time of day, morning or afternoon, we almost always found students using the seating and courts. The sports court is used for physical education classes, during breaks and also in *tempo vago*, 'spare time.' The students use the term *tempo vago* to refer to those periods without classes due to the teacher's "absence". Teachers may be absent either because the school doesn't have a teacher for a particular discipline, or because he or she fails to appear. In Rio de Janeiro, a teacher may be absent for three days without having to present a justification. After this he or she must produce a justification usually a doctor's certificate.

The custom of teachers repeatedly being absent is widespread in Brazil. Such absences are justified by a variety of factors from medical consultations to a lack of motivation to work. When justified by the staff member, these days off usually do not harm his or her career. In the interim, students remain idle for some periods, on different days of the week, since in most cases the principal makes no plans to allocate a substitute teacher for the classes without lessons.

After crossing the courts, the inner patio of the building is reached, lined with wooden benches, also frequently occupied by the students, where a canteen is located and a refectory used by employees and teachers. On this floor there is also the kitchen, the offices of the principal and assistant principals, the coordination office, the administration offices, the library with a collection of 3000 books, and the computer lab with 30 computers connected to the internet. On the first floor there is a pedagogical coordination office, a staff room, the staff and student bathrooms, and twelve classrooms. The auditorium, where theatre plays produced by the students are performed, and another nine classrooms are located on the second floor. The School also has chemistry, physics and biology labs and a dance hall. The computer and science labs, the auditorium and the dance hall are kept locked and are only opened on those days when teachers are using them.

At the time of our research, the school's two thousand students were divided into three periods with 19 class groups each. There were 28 class groups in Year 1, 17 in Year 2 and 12 in Year 3 of secondary education, and a total of 130 teachers. The School divided the class groups into three periods, but concentrated the first year of secondary education in the afternoon. The staff members and teachers believed that this arrangement was best for the

School and the students, since the first year students had a distinct dynamic and needed to learn ‘the school rules’ quickly. The first year class groups were accompanied in the afternoons by two groups from the second year, both formed mostly by students repeating the year. According to the Portuguese teacher, having classes during the afternoon period served as ‘punishment’ to show the students that they were not studying hard enough.

At night, the School offered the three years of secondary education. Whenever reference was made to the evening classes, teachers and staff members claimed that “at night the school is entirely different,” suggesting an altogether lower standard. They pointed out not only the age of the students and the number of them repeating a year, but mainly the fact that the problematic students from the morning and afternoon periods were transferred to the evening period, very often at the request of the principal.

Amazonas School, even though in high demand by the community during the admission period was, at the time of our research, one of the state schools with the lowest marks in the New School Program assessment. In the 2008 SAERJ assessment, 25% of the students from Amazonas School had an adequate proficiency level for Year 3 of secondary education in Portuguese Language and just 8% in Mathematics. The School also had a high rate of repetition, which lowered its assessment by the New School Program. In the first year of secondary education 40% of students failed to pass to the next grade. In Year 2 the rate improved but 30% of students still failed to complete the grade. According to data from the School office at the time of the research, just 8.9% of the students who entered in 2006 were in Year 3 in 2008.

The situation in Amazonas State School is not unique. Schwartzman (2011) shows that the major bottleneck in the educational system in Brazil is not in primary education, as was believed until recently, but in secondary education. Using data from the 2009 School Census¹¹, he points out that “in secondary education, the repetition rate in Rio de Janeiro – 33.3% or one in three students – is one of the worst in Brazil, comparing to 16.3% for Paraná, 18.3% for São Paulo and 21.6% for Minas Gerais” (Schwartzman 2011:

11 The School Census collects statistical educational data at national level, coordinated by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP). It is the main survey instrument for information on school education, covering the different stages and modalities: regular schooling (infant, primary and secondary education), special education and education of young people and adults (EJA). The census collects data on teaching establishments, matriculation, staff functions, and school turnover and revenue from all the country’s public and private schools. Source: <http://portal.inep.gov.br/basica-censo>. Consulted on 10/11/2014.

231). Analysing the profile of the students, he shows that “among youths from 15 to 17 years old, who by age range should be in secondary education, no less than 40% are still in primary education, while 9% no longer study at all” (Schwartzman 2011: 229).

Along with repetition, one of the School’s problems was its low performance in the external learning evaluations by the public education system, such as the SAERJ assessment. As mentioned earlier, the students showed intermediate proficiency¹² in Portuguese Language and Maths, and still had a long way to go to reach an adequate level of proficiency for the grade/year that they were taking.

The principal, the assistant principals and teachers from Amazonas State School were able to explain the reasons for this situation. In 2008, in the pedagogical meeting held at the start of the school year, we witnessed a discussion between the teachers and staff members on the School’s educational indicators, which, according to the latter, were not positive. For the principals, the infrastructure was ‘good’ and the teaching staff was the ‘cream of the system.’ The negative assessment was explained by the “high repetition and dropout rates” of the students, which combined reached 40% in the three years of secondary education. The teachers joined the debate and, as well as criticizing the SAERJ assessment system created by the State for failing to reflect the “reality of the school and its students,” they criticized the students, emphasizing that “they are weak,” “they have no grounding,” mainly because of the municipal teaching: “the failures are there at the start in the municipal schools.”

Along with the students, the families and society as a whole were blamed for the School’s results: “The problem is with the parents, illiterate and alcoholic”; “The problem is cultural, society and the family. How can young people be motivated?” The assistant principal Maria remarked as follows about their students: “Some students arrive here unprepared. The problem isn’t with the teacher; it’s the system as a whole. Society is utilitarian and knowledge is worth nothing.” Whenever she had the chance, the assistant principal compared present-day students with those of the past: “Today we have absentee students who live in difficult communities,” “with family problems and a low level of education.” In sum, the school’s

¹² See note 7.

teachers and managers blamed the family, society and the primary education – offered by another school network – for the low proficiency of their students.

Distinct forms of selecting and excluding students

Based on the descriptions provide thus so far, it can be seen that two kinds of student selection exist: one implemented on entry and the other over the course of the three grade years of secondary education. The first type of selection is undertaken by Olavo Moura and the second by Amazonas. Let us examine how they operate in practice.

At Olavo Moura School, the observations made during the School Council (*Conselho de Classe: COC*) reinforce the high expectation of the staff members and teachers and their belief in the students' capacity to learn, reflected in the low repetition and dropout rates, which did not exceed 2% per grade.

Most of the judgments made by the teachers during the council that we observed in September/October of 2008 concerned the behaviour of the students, taking on an explicitly moral character, evident in the constant remarks about their immaturity and lack of discipline. But apart from emphasizing student lifestyle and behaviour, staff worry about maintaining a high standard, since the expectation was that the school's performance would not decline. This concern became clearer when the teachers debated among themselves the material to be taught. In the heat of the discussion, one of the teachers exclaimed:

When these kids came here they could already imagine that they wouldn't get an easy ride. In the first week of classes, it was already clear what the School would be like. I didn't do 'training school,' I don't want to waste my time teaching them how to behave in class. I want to prepare them to face life outside and know the curriculum required by the Technical School, isn't that why we're here after all?

The principal Ritinha declared: "It's good that you have all posed this question, because if the main stakeholders, namely our students, aren't particularly interested any more, then we need to review our work urgently." The principal asked the teachers to encourage the students' curiosity in

learning: “Listen everyone, when students are keen to learn, they advance. Nothing stops their growth. They have to understand that success is built on sacrifice and dedication.”

Jorge, the student representative, raised his hand and asked to speak. He said that he had talked to his class group and his colleagues had promised to make the July/August period the best of all: “We know that the marks aren’t that important, because what stays with us is our learning. We want to make this commitment to improve.” Apparently some teachers did not find Jorge credible. One of them joked: “He’s just like a politician, it’s all just promises.” The assistant principal Clara, opposing the teachers, encouraged the class group’s initiative: “That’s the spirit Jorge, that’s the idea. By showing application, concentration and motivation you’ll succeed.”

The description of this situation in the School Council demonstrates the school climate of encouraging students and an impression, internalized by the teachers, that the students could be pushed, since they were pre-selected and should be able to live up to expectations. The table showing the overall performance for each class group, presented by the assistant principal in a data show, showed how in the categories evaluated by the teachers – development, responsibility, relationship, participation and discipline – the groups were classified from ‘average’ to ‘very good’ with none obtaining an overall result below the expected minimum.¹³

At Amazonas State School the selection takes place over the three years of secondary education. Various situations enable us to assert this fact. According to the principal Giovana, 28% of students repeated Year 1 in 2008. Data from the School office provided by the principal, show that annually the classes from Year 1 declined in number: from 28 groups they fell to 17, and from 17 in Year 2 to 12 in Year 3. A reduction of approximately 40% of the classes from Years 1 to 2 and around 30% from Years 2 to 3. The principal reported that just 8% of the students from Year 3 had never repeated a year of secondary education.

This practice became even clearer in an observation made in the staff room by a physics teacher. He said: “In Year 3, at the end of the year, around

¹³ The state secondary schools hold four School Councils per year where the teachers evaluate the students and class groups in terms of behaviour, diligence and performance with the following classifications: very good, good, average or poor.

five students were failed per group only. In the second year, a half, and in the first more than half the students.”

The School Council meetings provided us with the opportunity to observe the ways students were selected or excluded. One of the frequent questions concerned the pupils who repeated years: what should be done with them? In Year 1 of secondary education they were distributed in each of the class groups along with the new students entering the School. This information was given by the principal in a School Council after the teachers complained about the excessive number of students repeating the year in one class group. The assistant principal Bia reported that they had put the same number in each of the class groups: 9 students each. After hearing the explanation, one teacher said: “*this class group won’t be together next year.*” The assistant principal added: “*half the group is going to fail the year!*”

In the second year of secondary education, on the other hand, we observed that there were just two class groups in the afternoon period, where “the majority of the students were failing the year” according to the Portuguese teacher. We lacked data on how the other groups from Year 2 had been assembled, but a clue was given by the assistant principal Bia during the School Council: the good class groups from Year 1 could be maintained in Year 2. She told the teachers: “Should some group from Year 1 be kept? We can do this for Year 2, keep a good group together.”

As well as being distributed among the various groups, those repeating a year for the second time might also be invited to transfer to another school. At one School Council the case of a female student was discussed. All the teachers present agreed that Marília hindered the teachers’ work. The assistant principal, who immediately recognized the student in question, explained the situation: “She is repeating for the second time.” And she told them her decision: “If she fails the year again, I’ll send her to Professor Ferreira School.” One teacher, who worked at the latter School, replied ironically: “Why do you always have to send the problems there?” Everyone laughed and the meeting continued.

Unwanted students, repeating years or not, who did not leave the School were transferred to the evening period, viewed negatively, as we have seen by the teachers and staff members alike. Such was the case of Breno, who was studying Year 1 again during the evening period. In the

middle of the year, after various warnings for bad behaviour and a clash with the Art Education teacher, Breno was transferred, at the principal's request, from the afternoon period – when most of the Year 1 class groups studied – to the evening.

What we can note through the observation and interviews with teachers and the school staff is the existence of a system for allocating students, principally after the first year at the School. When they enter the institution, the school has no way of selecting them since there are as yet an unknown quantity. By Year 2, however, the teachers and principal are able to separate the students into good and weak class groups – or in the words that we heard over the course of our research: “this class is good!”, “this group isn't so good,” “it's a complicated class.” Over the year four School Councils were held and we did not observe any class group being positively evaluated by the teachers. All were judged to have a ‘poor’ or ‘average’ performance.

Though different, the two kinds of selection processes described here are widely naturalized by both principals and their teams. While at Olavo Moura School there is selection on entry, which is reflected in the expectations and beliefs concerning the potential for the students to learn; at Amazonas School universal access did not prevent the social actors from finding other selection mechanisms, expressed in practices related to year failures and the allocation of students to different class groups. In the two cases studied, we noted the existence of unconscious grammatical principles that guide the actions of the management teams and that produce ideas concerning the everyday running of their institutions. Such principles and practices lead to the exclusion of some of the students, whose educational performance has failed to match the expectations and beliefs of the School's teachers and principals.

Management cultures: their rituals and practices

Maggie & Pires do Prado (2014) identified two ideal types of management culture through participant observation and ethnographic studies in 32 schools in Rio de Janeiro. According to the researchers, one of the key

elements in terms of defining students' careers are the beliefs and practices of the managers and their relationship to the school mission.

In the first ideal type, named bureaucratic-rational, the management believes that the school makes a difference. The managers seek to run their schools in compliance with outside demands, such as the external assessments and the laws issued by federal and state governments:

This ideal type of management culture produces a school ethos focused on the quality of teaching. The managers utilize all existing channels to liaise with the upper echelons of power – the coordination offices and SEEDUC – and know to emphasize that a good school is one that teaches the highest number of students possible. The principals identify year fail as an impediment to learning. The managers of this ideal type give value merit and fight for the students to do well in the external assessments (Maggie & Pires do Prado 2014: 72-73).

In the bureaucratic-rational ideal type, aside from the rational rules used to plan school activities, charismatic means are also used to obtain the proposed objectives. According to Maggie & Pires do Prado (2014), the studies conducted by their team showed that this type of manager also performs as a 'charismatic' leader in the Weberian sense of the term.

In the second ideal type, charismatic the managers believe that the school's quality is defined by the capacity of the students to learn. The school itself is not seen as responsible for the performance of its students. In this case, the expectations in relation to performance are not high.

They do not organize the school to respond to the demands of evaluations (...), they have an antagonistic relationship with the coordination offices and SEEDUC. The managers emphasize that their objectives are to create critical citizens and give the best students special attention in order to guide them to the university. Education is not for everyone and those who make little effort or fail to respect the teachers are, in general, side-lined (Maggie & Pires do Prado 2014: 74).

Charismatic managers tend to remain in their posts for many years at a time, legitimized by a tradition shared by the families, students, teachers and

employees alike. They may also employ bureaucratic means in their everyday activities, in part because they have to comply with the orders coming from higher level bodies, principally the Education Department, which demands compliance with public policies and set targets.

We can turn now to the paradigmatic cases that illustrate how these two types of management cultures are expressed in everyday school life and in the different forms of selecting students.

The principals

Bureaucratic-rational management culture

At Olavo Moura School there were two principals responsible for the administrative and pedagogical organization. Our first contact was with the assistant principal Clara, professor of geography, who had been part of the principal since 2002. The day-to-day life of the assistant was taxing, since, as she herself pointed out, her job was to deal directly with the students. As assistant principal, she resolved questions related to reserving the projection room or auditorium, disputed every day by the teachers – who preferred to give lessons in these places – and by the students – who often wanted to rehearse a theatrical show or work on a project that needed extra space. Clara left annotations in the notebooks of absentee students, wrote messages to the parents, organized alterations to the school calendar and announced them on the notice boards and distributed text books, and cleared up doubts about the dates of retake tests or events in which the School was participating.

When we met, Clara said that we could continue the research as long as the principal Ritinha consented: “Only she sees everything that happens in the school. Everything goes through Ritinha.” We took Clara’s advice and approached Ritinha at the first general meeting during the pedagogical planning week, held on 11th February 2008.

Ritinha, teacher of administration, has headed the School since its foundation. She was responsible for the administrative decisions that involved the School’s relations with the State Education Department and the partnered Federal Technical School and for all other internal decisions.

Unlike Clara, the principal's work days and times were not fixed. She might not appear some days but, when present, she would stay until after office hours. Ritinha spent most of the time in her office dealing with administrative and financial affairs such as accounting reports¹⁴ or busy producing the reports required by the State Education Office. Normally she met with Clara or with the teachers.

In the first two years Ritinha ran the school alone. In 2002, in its third year of operation, the school had students matriculated in all three grades – 203 in Year 1, 358 in Year 2 and 298 in Year 3 – which allowed her to allocate one teacher to the post of assistant principal. Ritinha chose the geography teacher Clara: “A dedicated teacher in whom I could trust.” By the time of our research, Ritinha had already assembled a team of employees who, she said, “put on the uniform and immersed themselves in the task of keeping the school running.”

In her principal's office there is a recent photo of Ritinha next to the Education Secretary and the state governor at the time. Posters with pictures of all the class groups in graduation robes line the walls, along with certificates won by students in various essay competitions on one wall and, on another, in pride of place, certificates for school management awards.

On some occasions, Ritinha would arrive early at the School. She would head to the staff room to persuade them to enter the classroom five minutes before the first period. In addition, she would talk each week with the teachers concerning the planning and progress of work in the classroom. According to Ritinha, these evaluation moments “need to be well prepared in order to ascertain what helped and what hindered the students' development.”

At Olavo Moura School the ‘mission’¹⁵ promoted by the school community was discussed over the year and put into practice in the “pedagogical project (PP) week.” In these pedagogical project meetings, the principal also encouraged teachers to develop research projects with the students on citizenship and the theme chosen for that year. In 2008, teachers and students centred their research on the theme “Encounter of

14 In 2008, one of the State Education Department's requirements vis-à-vis resource management was for an accounting report to be presented with details on college expenditure. This report had to be presented five times per semester.

15 Olavo Moura College's mission was set out in all its official documents and repeated various times by the directors in the pedagogical meetings: “Develop contextualized educational activities designed to promote the experience of ethical and collective values with an emphasis on preparing for work and intellectual independence.”

cultures – constructing a better world,” in homage to the bicentenary of the arrival of the Portuguese royal family in Rio de Janeiro.

In the concluding week of the pedagogical project, held in May/June, teaching activities were interrupted in order for everyone to take part in the cultural and scientific presentations held in the School yard. On each day of the event, Olavo Moura School would be packed with students and teachers taking in the dance and theatrical shows, arts exhibitions and tents with traditional food.

The Olavo Moura School staff believed that applying the ideals of citizenship is a precondition for ensuring the quality of their work, understood as its capacity to “educate citizens for life.” The relationship between ‘educating citizens’ and the pursuit of excellence in the academic training of students consists in the possibility of connecting these ideals. The complementary character of these elements becomes compatible insofar as the principal and teachers believe that both learning practices related to citizenship and curricular knowledge can be converted into training qualified students and, consequently, into real opportunities for the latter to enter the labour market or higher education.

A consensus existed at Olavo Moura School that the students should seek a high level of excellence in the internal and external assessments. As well as aiming for high marks, the students were encouraged from Year 1 onwards to take part in a wide variety of public competitions, such as the National Secondary Education Exam (ENEM)¹⁶, in order to obtain places on the most disputed technical courses or universities.

From the very first lessons the teachers tell students that they need to “invest heavily in studies.” In the Portuguese class taught by Rubens, references to essay competitions and the demands of the university entrance exams¹⁷ were constant:

16 The *Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* was created in 1998 with the aim of evaluating the student’s performance at the end of basic education. From 2009 it also became used as a selection mechanism for entry to higher education, adopted by the majority of public and private Brazilian universities. The exam comprises 1 essay in Portuguese and 4 objective tests, each containing 45 multiple choice questions on the following areas of knowledge: Human Sciences and their Technologies, Natural Sciences and their technologies, Languages, Codes and their Technologies, Mathematics and their Technologies. Source: <http://portal.inep.gov.br/web/enem/sobre-o-enem>. Consulted on 14/10/2014.

17 Some universities also opt to conduct a selection process independent of the National Secondary Education Exam, involving exams to test the student’s knowledge based on the curricula set by primary and secondary schooling.

This school is an enemy of anyone who leaves studying to the eve of the exam, especially in the hard sciences, because in Portuguese we can still use our prior knowledge. But you need to realize that studying demands sacrifice, effort and commitment, Above all, what you learn here... you have to 'run after outside,' study at home. The biggest failure rate in the entrance exams and the ENEM is due to the student not knowing how to interpret the question. When you experience the pleasure of reading and understanding something profound, you will feel really satisfied.

While expressing high expectations for students' performance, Rubens also complained about the disciplinary rigour demanded by the principal. Like other interviewees, he believed that the everyday actions headed by the principal were too bureaucratic, concerned with meeting the goals set by higher bodies like the Education Department. The overall impression was that Ritinha centralized decision-making and showed a concern with the image the School's outside image.

Even the students had internalized the idea that both the principal and the teachers were committed to making the School function smoothly. Jorge, the student representative, stated: "Obviously there are weak points in any structure, but the principal here freely interact with the students. There is a lot of exchange and dialogue, and that encourages each person's commitment to grow." Assessing the principal's work, another student added: "Ritinha is always away from the School, she has to sort out a load of problems. There's that downside, but the fact that the School has achieved this level it because of her work." However much Ritinha's daily absence was criticized, there was a shared mood of praising the principal and teaching staff's work with the students.

Ritinha had received awards for her administration. Since 2003 she had written the school's application¹⁸ for the National Award for Outstanding School Management. The school won high positions among the finalists and won one of the four diplomas attesting the status on "National School of Reference in School Administration", conferred by the State Secretariat of Education.

¹⁸ The documents produced for this competition are designed to promote the self-assessment of public schools in order to encourage improvements to management processes and the quality of teaching. The highest ranking schools receive the diploma and a lump sum to be invested in educational projects.

Charismatic management culture

At the time of our research, Amazonas State School had a general principal and two assistant principals. The general principal Giovana joined the School's staff in 1970, still young and during the institution's golden period. Before becoming principal in 2001, she taught geography, was pedagogical coordinator and assistant to the principal who made the school 'famous.'

It was difficult to find her at the School because, as she made clear, she had "many outside activities: meetings in the [State Education] Department, in the Metropolitan [Education] Department, and in the regional administration." When she was at the School, she would mostly remain in her office lined with the diplomas received over her time as principal. We met her at the School during two important events: at the staff talk given at the start of the school year, and at the presentation of an award from the State Education Department for the quality of the work undertaken by the School in 2007.

In the interview with Giovana at the end of 2008 we saw how she knew and managed the administrative part of the School and could immediately cite the number of students, the number repeating a year and the pedagogical structure. She was keen to emphasize that she took part in all the students' activities inside and outside the school, including walks and sports competitions. The School held sports and cultural activities with students on Saturdays and the principal, along with a Portuguese teacher, was responsible for organizing these events. The principal did not take part in the School Council meetings. She relied on the assistant principals for this work, as well as the assistant to the principal, João. The two assistant principals were frequently seen at the School, each of them at a specific time of the day. One of them, Maria, aged over 60 and with 30 years' experience working at the School, often emphasized the difference between students past and present. Maria was responsible for making the 'rules of the game' clear to the students.

On the first day of class she entered the staff room and said: "I'm going to visit all the class groups, welcome the students and tell them the school rules: no baseball caps, no short t-shirts, those kind of things." That day we watched her enter one of the classes from Year 1. The students remained silent listening to the rules as they were read out by the assistant principal. After she left, they said: "That's the principal! Here it's different to the municipal [school]," indicating that the rules were distinct and stricter than those at the municipal primary school.

Another time, we watched her enter a biology class for a group from Year 1. The class had run into problems with one teacher and some students had been switched to the evening period. The assistant principal Maria came into the classroom, told the group about the transfer of the students and the reason behind it. The class remained silent. Before leaving, the assistant principal summoned two female students to talk in her office. While the students were rising from their tables, Maria asked the group: “Who is repeating the year?” Two students raised their hand. Maria then concluded: “That’s how things are here: those who don’t want [to study hard] don’t stay.” She then left the classroom with the two female students.

The other assistant principal, Bia. Aged 45, she was the youngest member of the principal team. Like Maria, she worked out of a small office on the ground floor where she received students and teachers. Both women were responsible for running the School Council.

Though present at the School, meeting teachers in her office and coordinating the council, we saw the two assistant principals from time to time in the staff room at times when the teachers were gathered there: between classes and during the school breaks. One day we observed Bia talking with various teachers and, in particular, a biology teacher about the plaque with the School’s mission.¹⁹

The principal’s work of organizing the school and pedagogical activities was assisted by a support team. The educational supervisor at Amazonas State School, Márcia, coordinated the meeting with student representatives and was responsible for talking with the “problematic and unruly students.” She provided information on the students to the teachers and principals members at the School Council.

Another two employees helped the principal. João, a former teacher, was responsible for working out the timetables for the classes and teachers, and also coordinated some councils. Meanwhile Telma, an administrative assistant, organized the hours of the class groups on a daily basis and registered and dealt with teacher absences. Everyday there would be

19 One month after the start of classes, posters were put up on the stairs and in the staff room with the school’s mission. “The school’s institutional mission is to promote the knowledge building and cultural development of its students, empowering them to overcome the difficulties that affect the human condition and work towards their social integration and embodiment of ethical values and citizenship.”

some lesson with an absent teacher or one on sick leave. If there was no teacher, Telma reorganized the group's timetable and the teachers available in order, if possible, to avoid class groups hanging around at the school without lessons. She also allowed students and teachers to leave school early wherever possible. Teachers could frequently be observed asking whether their lesson with a class that was due to be taught by an absent colleague could be brought forward. At the same time, whole groups could be seen waiting in the patio for the next lesson.

The staff room was a particularly good space for observing the teachers' activities. It was common to see them chatting before and after classes and during breaks. They would talk about the students, the class groups and student assessments, as well as about personal matters. When the bell rang for the beginning of lessons, the end of break or a new period, the teachers stayed chatting or marking tests and essays. After 15 minutes, we would see them starting to head towards the classrooms. Before the classes finished, teachers would already be drifting back to the staff room.

We observed that the principal had to negotiate with the teachers for them to comply with the School's activities and timetables. One afternoon, at the end of break, the bell rang and as usual the teachers continued to talk. The assistant principal Bia entered the staff room and asked the teachers: "Listen everyone, I'd like you to head off to your classrooms because the students are milling around in the corridor and today we're without the inspector."²⁰ Some teachers complied with the request. Others arrived in the classroom 20 minutes after the start of the lesson.

Another time, during the start of year staff meeting, the principal asked the teachers to assemble by subject area to organize the school year and programs, which generated some resistance among the teachers: many did not want the meeting to be held and others intended to leave it until the start of classes. The assistant principal Bia addressed each group resisting the meeting and solicited their support: "We know that later doesn't work. It's better to hold it this week."

20 Inspector here refers to someone responsible for supervising the students both inside the classroom and outside.

The office of the principal Giovana was lined with school management certificates and diplomas. In 2008 she received the award from the State Education Department for the quality of work undertaken in 2007, highlighting the school's cleanliness and infrastructure. That year the School was also among the five schools chosen in the 2007 National Award for Outstanding School Management. In 2009, it also received an honourable mention for the 2008 award. It may seem contradictory for an award to be given to a school like Amazonas with high repetition rates and low expectations for the learning potential of students. However, management awards in schools with low student proficiency are common.

The prizes were officially handed out at an event organized by the State Education Secretariat. Even so, the principal, Giovana, held a ceremony at the school to which she invited teachers, students and members of the State Secretariat. In 2008, the presentation of the award for quality of work was made in the auditorium in front of selected class groups with 'good students' and the teachers, as well as authorities from the state government. After the ceremony, a buffet was offered to the guests in the staff room.

Giovana explained to use that the prize was the result of her work as administrator. The ceremony was a way of marking the fact that her mission of putting the school back as a reference had been achieved. She stressed that although the prize was given by the Secretariat, her work was also recognized within the school. She told us that the teachers had decided to name one of the classrooms after her in recognition of her continuous and dedicated work. To begin with she turned down the offer, but later accepted, when she saw that it was a homage and that she was admired both within and without the school.

Expectations of the principals and teachers concerning the students

In the interviews conducted with the principals we asked about their expectations and those of their teachers for the performance of the students on a scale of 1 to 5 – 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. The two principals had distinct expectations.

In the case of Olavo Moura School, they were higher than those of Amazonas, as the principal's remarks suggest: "Our expectation is high,

we want the best for our students. But if we're going to assess their performance, I would give a 4." Beyond this explanation, reiterated constantly at Olavo Moura School, it can be noted that even when the students are not as good as expected or have failed to acquire the ideal scholarly qualities, the principals and teachers continue to share the belief in their potential to learn.

The principal of Amazonas assessed her expectations for the students as a 3 and explained: "It's 3 for Year 1 and 4 or 5 for Years 2 and 3." She added that poverty and social background do not impede pedagogical development: "It's not poverty. When the person wants, they have the opportunity."

Still on the same subject, we asked the principals whether they thought that the school enabled its students to change their lives. Principal Giovana's thought that it did, albeit for some students only: "They will change according to what we give them. We worked here at the school on being independent, adopting a correct attitude to life, posture and values, and these things are difficult, but whoever wants can succeed!"

As the literature has demonstrated – since the studies on the Pygmalion effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968) – expectations tend to function as a "self-fulfilling prophecy." The belief in students' capacity to learn at Olavo Moura School may be one of the factors leading to good performance. The 'Pygmalion effect' can also be applied to Amazonas School, where low expectations can contribute to poor performance. In this case, the "self-fulfilling prophecy" excludes the students.

The principals' expectations are reflected in their attitudes and responses to the students' results in external assessments and awards. At Olavo Moura State School, for example, we saw on the principal's table the results of the 2007 National Secondary Education Exam that had just been published in the press. On this occasion, Clara said that she had been tracking the School's performance in the assessments and was keen to know whether the students had attained a high position in the school ranking. When she saw the figures, Clara was happy because "the results of the students demonstrated once again that they weren't in the same bracket as the other state schools."

That same week some messages extolling the performance of the students in the ENEM were posted on the School notice boards and in the staff room: “Olavo Moura State School, best score in the 2007 ENEM for state schools”; “Educational community, congratulations on the result in the 2007 ENEM. It is working together that promotes our growth. Our goal in 2008 is to be among the top schools. Positive thought and action.”

At the second meeting with those responsible for the students, the principal Ritinha commented that the School has “emerged as one of the best of the school system” and that the School’s high standards had been achieved “thanks to the team’s solidarity and effort”:

All the other problems that the schools have, we have in double. However we have quality because the professionals here are committed to achieving good results. The indicators motivate us even more to continue our journey; otherwise, we would have already lost our way.

At Amazonas State School we did not perceive the same active interest in the students’ results in the ENEM. In our interview with the principal, she stated that her students had shown a satisfactory performance in the tests, but “there’s still a long way to go” and she was working to “encourage the participation of the students.” In practice, though, we observed the opposite. At the end of 2008, we asked the principal’s assistant João about his expectation for the school and the students in the ENEM due to be held the following week. He said: “I don’t know how many students are enrolled in the ENEM. As the enrolments are now online, the school doesn’t know how many are taking part.”

At Olavo Moura School, the students were encouraged to participate in innumerable essay competitions and contests in various subjects. On one of the days of the maths contests, we were surprised to encounter students from all the class groups doing the tests and discussing them in the corridors.

At Amazonas State School students were stimulated to take part in the maths contests, but the results were not widely advertised in the School: rather, they were posted on an out-of-the-way notice board.

At Olavo Moura School, when the external test results were published, various students were invited to the award ceremonies, recounted

as a source of pride by the principal Ritinha, who said she “insisted on being present at all the student award ceremonies.” The valorisation of these students was such that the winners were dubbed ‘star students.’ Everyone in the school learnt when someone obtained a good place in an essay competition or a contest. Usually the principal would invite these students to a ceremony and a photo of them would be taken next to the school flag to be circulated later at the school councils, at parents’ meetings and in the principal’s report.

In July/August 2008, the students from Year 3 took SAERJ’s Portuguese Language and Maths exams. When the results were published, the principal commemorated the performance of the students, who had obtained adequate results according to the proficiency criteria of the exam and far above the average for the State of Rio de Janeiro.

When the State Education Office decided to award notebooks as prizes to the students obtaining the best marks in the external assessment, the students from Olavo Moura School were the most rewarded. The staff members invited the 67 students who had obtained the best marks to turn up at the School without telling them the motive. They were surprised by an enormous poster containing a photo of each student and the text: “Congratulations to the star students for their results in the SAERJ assessment.”

This same prize was awarded to eight students from Amazonas State School. The principal Giovana accompanied them at the award ceremony. The school’s students obtained an ‘intermediate’ level according to the exam’s proficiency criteria. The students winning the award were congratulated by the principal: “You show that dedication to studies is the best route to success.”

The expectations of the principals concerning their students were similar to those observed in the classrooms and reproduced by the teachers. Participant observation allowed us to identify two types of classroom that we shall briefly describe. The first reflects belief in the students and the possibility of everyone learning, while the second describes the opposite process.

The group from Year 1 of secondary education who we accompanied at Olavo Moura School were considered “rowdy and noisy” by their

teachers. When we arrived, the class had already filled up with all 32 students sat in double rows. During the lesson the teacher Simone went over the questions from the first chemistry test. The two boys seated in front of us copied the replies from the notebook of another student, who was sitting in the middle row. The students said that this lesson was “the most difficult of all” and that the teacher was very quick and demanding.

The teacher asked whether the class had done their homework. In the previous lesson, the teacher Simone had written on the blackboard a lengthy summary of homogenous and heterogeneous chemical mixtures and handed out an exercise sheet. More than once the teacher asked whether everyone had done their homework and if anyone had any queries. The response from the students was silence. Simone then said that she would explain something very important:

Understand something. We're not a municipal school here. I'm not checking to see whether your notebook is neatly organized or whether you have nice handwriting, there are no marks for who did everything. The homework is to be done at home! But if you don't do it, it's your problem. If you think that the summaries given in class are unimportant, don't copy them. But be aware that the test is very elaborate because I work with the cream of the municipality, people who make a habit of studying, so I'm going to demand a lot in the exam. Chapters 8 and 9 are concepts and vocabularies; you should read them at home. They won't be in the exam, but you need to know them. Any questions? [She herself answered.] No. So I can carry on with the revision.

The idea that the students were the ‘cream’ – that is, the best of the municipal schools – was widespread among the staff members and teachers, and reaffirmed by the students themselves in the classes. This conception enabled greater investment in teaching, in the reinforcement of subjects that the students found difficult, and especially in situations in which the basic shortcomings in their education was exposed – as the chemistry teacher did in observing that “in terms of content, the students were not as good as they appear.” Even so, the belief was that

the students could learn since they had been ‘filtered’: as the pedagogical coordinator said, “it’s enough to be patient and teach because these kids will go far.”

At Amazonas School, we observed the maths teacher’s first class of the year. The students from Year 1 went a month without a class since the professor was on medical leave. The teacher left the staff room 20 minutes after the bell rang for the start of the period. She began the double-period lesson with the student register and, perceiving the number of absent students, told the class: “You’ve been missing a lot of classes. Especially after the second semester. But that’s good because that way we can work with a select group.”

Next she explained to the 25 students present, four of them repeating the year, the definition of sine, cosine and tangent, stressing that they had to “memorize the definitions. Everything’s in the book.” Some students asked questions, others noted down what was on the blackboard, and another group chatted and passed each other messages. Perceiving the students’ unrest, the teacher said: “I can tell already, even though I arrived today, that class 3 is calm and class 4, yours, is agitated.” After the explanation the teacher wrote some exercises on the blackboard for the students to complete. Next she marked the work with the assistance of two students.

Two students, a boy and a girl, talked during the activity. After a while the teacher remarked: “Don’t fall into her trap, because she’s already been failed.” The female student was repeating a year. After the lesson, the teacher emphasized how she had been at the School for four years and that she only gave lessons “to those who want to attend lessons. I push the level upwards not downwards and naturally the students who want to learn will sit at the front of the classroom.”

The idea that some students wanted to learn while another group would end up repeating the year was widespread among the principal, assistant principals and teachers at Amazonas School. Repetition was accepted by the school team with the argument that the students were to blame for this process. In many cases, the students accepted repeating a year, blaming themselves for their own ‘failure.’ In other cases, though, they justified the fact by blaming the school and teachers for their repetition.

Final considerations

In this article we have described two public secondary education schools in the city of Rio de Janeiro, focusing on the institutions' selection process and management cultures. Both the schools form part of the same state education system, but they have distinct principles, rules, logics, practices and rituals that help us to reflect on the production, reproduction and overcoming of educational inequalities.

We began the description by presenting the selection mechanisms existing in the two schools. Olavo Moura State School selects students on entry. The idea in the school was that all their students have the potential to learn, but it is the School's task to teach and improve them in order for them to be able to attain their objectives, which extend beyond secondary education to include entering the work market and pursuing higher education.

Amazonas State School has universal access, similar to other schools from the state education system. Any young person can obtain a place at the school by applying through the system developed by the State Education Department. However our work reveals that students are also selected, only over the three years of secondary education. The overall repetition rate at the institution over the three years of secondary education is 44%, with approximately 60% of the students in Year 1 of secondary education were failed or left the school before the end of the school year.

Despite the equality in terms of access to the School made possible by a universal system, the practices and rituals naturalize the exclusion of students who repeat years. Selection forms an integral part of the School's pedagogy and is accepted as natural and inevitable by everyone.

Selection is thus something that simultaneously distinguishes and unites the two institutions. Both conduct some kind of selection of their students and believe that it is necessary to select them in order for the school to carry out its mission. One institution selects on entry, by merit, and after the selection of the best candidates believes that all of them have the potential to advance in their studies. The other institution is unable to select on entry, but uses selection mechanisms over the course of secondary education, such as repetition, change in session (morning,

afternoon or evening) and, above all, a disbelief in its students capacity to learn, which leads to the exclusion of some of the students.

Our work also reveals that the two selection practices are reinforced by the principals and their management cultures (Maggie & Pires do Prado 2014). Each institution has principles that produce rituals, rationalize their practices and create expectations and beliefs around the students' capacity to learn.

Olavo Moura State School exemplifies a bureaucratic-rational management culture. It has a principal who adheres to all the regulations set by the State Education Department and who is directly involved with the school's mission of teaching all its students, valorising merit. The principal works with rational objectives that are recognized by her team of teachers. She exerts her leadership with the teaching staff and employees through her presence at administrative and pedagogical meetings. In this way, she constructs an ethos shared by the management team, teachers and employees that stimulates a positive view of all the students.

The scenario encountered at Amazonas State School is different and can be described as a charismatic management culture. The principal works in compliance with SEEDUC's rules and believes that just some of her students, those who 'want to,' will benefit from the educational investment provided by the teaching staff. The principal exerts a 'charismatic' leadership, in Weber's terms, but makes use of bureaucratic mechanisms to comply with external demands. The principal of Amazonas School builds an ethos shared by the management team, teachers and employees alike that dwells on the positive image of some students, those who will manage to achieve the goal of completing secondary education. This ethos naturalizes the exclusion of almost half of the students who, over the course of secondary education, cease to frequent the classrooms.

The two cultural forms of administration that we used to describe the rituals, practices and ethos of the two schools are interchangeable. The construction of ideal types allows us to show that the rational bureaucratic type is characterised by a belief in the merit and capacity of all students. The belief that characterizes the charismatic type is that only a few students have merit and capacity to learn. This helps understand the difference in style between the two principals. In the first case, the principal aims to recognize and follow the objectives and

goals imposed legally by the State Education Secretariat. The principal of the second school is more charismatic in that she aims to fulfil her own personal mission.

Despite finding distinct management cultures, which perceive the family background of the students in diametrically opposite ways, we nonetheless encountered a positive belief in the performance of the students at both schools. While in Olavo Moura School this belief appears in the first year of secondary education, at Amazonas School it surfaces after some students have acquired a set of practices and knowledge essential to the school culture. However, in the case of Amazonas School, this positive belief is not reflected in incentives to take part in competitions and external assessments, as occurs at Olavo Moura School. At both institutions the positive belief in the students is consolidated after the students have been selected.

Our work concluded that the management cultures are essential to organizing the teaching institutions and to composing the representations and practices of the social actors. Nevertheless, the selection process undertaken in both institutions, whether on entry or over the course of secondary education, excludes some students. Selection and belief in merit exist at both schools and reinforce the notion that education is not for all.

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Classifications and moral values in student evaluation boards

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Abstract

This article is an analysis of student evaluation board meetings as a space that reveals the classification systems and mechanisms present in the school and which underpin its moral order. Through field work in a federal school in Rio de Janeiro we aimed to understand how these moral criteria form hierarchies which produce different ways of evaluating students, and as a consequence, inequality.

Keywords: Moral, inequality, education, student evaluation board.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta uma análise dos conselhos de classe como espaços que revelam os sistemas e mecanismos de classificação presentes na escola e que sustentam sua ordem moral. Por meio do trabalho de campo em uma escola federal do Rio de Janeiro, buscou-se compreender como os critérios morais se hierarquizam produzindo avaliações diferenciadas entre os alunos e, como consequência, desigualdade.

Palavras-chave: Moral, desigualdade, educação, conselho de classe.

Classifications and moral values in student evaluation boards

Maíra Mascarenhas

Introduction

Student evaluation board meetings are rituals of great importance for the Brazilian school system. They are meetings that take place at the end of each term of the school year¹ in which the teaching staff – teachers, directors and counselors – meet to assess students' performance. It is at these meetings that the staff share and disclose evaluations and representations on their students as their future is decided².

These evaluations and representations are expressed by categories that comprise the teachers' classification system. These classifications are elements of great importance to understand the school system because they are the means through which the organizing principles of the teaching system are expressed.

In his analysis of teachers' judgments in France, Bourdieu noticed that they had a social origin, but teachers were not aware of it, as they saw them in school terms:

It is also because they believe that they are making a strictly school-oriented judgment that the social judgment disguised under the euphemistic principles of their school (or more specifically philosophical) language can produce their own effect: making those who are the subject of these judgments believe that the judgments are applied to the students or the apprentice philosopher in

1 In Brazil, the school year is divided in terms: four two-month terms or three quarters depending on the school's organization. At the end of each term, students take tests and there is a student evaluation board meeting.

2 In most schools, regulations establish that students' passing is subject to the achievement of a minimum grade, which is comprised by the average of the grades obtained on the exams at the end of each term. However, the student evaluation board has the authority to decide on students' approval even if they did not obtain the minimum grade.

them, to the person and his “intelligence,” and never, by all odds, to his social person. (Bourdieu 1999:198)

Judgment by moral criteria is also addressed in studies on Brazilian schools. A pioneering study was that of Schneider (1981) on “special students” in Brazilian public schools. Recently, the study by Sá Earp (2006) described how moral judgment appears in Rio de Janeiro public schools in student evaluation board meetings as well as in classrooms. In addition to Sá Earp’s study, other works describe how evaluations based on non-academic criteria occur in Brazilian schools (Carvalho 2001; Prado, Sá Earp, 2011; Gomes 2012; Mascarenhas 2013).

This article aims to reflect on student evaluation board meetings as places that allow a privileged view of the classification systems and mechanisms in schools, their morality and the inequality produced among students.³ The proposition behind this approach, is the investigation of the moral dimension of social life, addressing all elements of morality – values, principles and norms – as elements of social life itself. In this regard, we aim not only to understand the school’s morality, but also how this morality constitutes and regulates the agents’ actions⁴.

To do the research, I followed the daily activities of those working and studying at Colégio Volta Redonda, a public school in the city of Rio de Janeiro, from March 2010 to March 2013, systematically studying the school’s everyday activities in all of its environments: classrooms, teachers’ room, recess, grade meetings⁵, PTA meetings⁶ and the student evaluation board meetings.

In 2011, I started to teach at the school, which led to a change in my position in the school, because I coupled my activities as a researcher with those of a teacher. In that way, in addition to going to the school to perform my

3 This paper leads on from my Master’s dissertation (Mascarenhas 2013), whose goal was to understand how the classification systems of teachers and students worked in a public school aiming to investigate the moral values that underlie those classifications. Our goal was also to understand how these systems were related to the interactions between those involved and the production of inequality among the students.

4 Unfortunately, due to this article’s scope, I will not be able to deepen the dialogue with sociology and moral, moral feelings and pragmatism anthropology, but I will certainly do it on another occasion.

5 At the grade meetings teachers and the guidance counselors responsible for each grade meet to plan, share and discuss the progress of the work done by the classes in each grade. They take place at the beginning of each quarter – a total of three meetings a year.

6 PTA meetings take place twice a year at Colégio Volta Redonda. Parents are invited to the school and directors, guidance counselors and teachers disclose information on the school’s plan and demands for the term.

teaching activities, I also carried out participant observation in the classroom and during recess, student evaluation board meetings and teachers' meetings.

This double insertion had implications in the research methodology. Due to my proximity to the field, it was necessary to implement the saying of Velho (1978) on distancing oneself from that which is familiar as a constant research motto.

The fact that it was my first experience as a teacher contributed to the distancing process, which demanded learning what it means *to be* a teacher at that school. In many situations, I benefited from the comments and questions of my colleagues who urged for certain attitudes – for example, becoming stricter when correcting the exams of “undisciplined” students – which revealed their expectations towards a teacher's role.

My position as a researcher and a teacher was also of great importance when following the student evaluation board meetings. These rituals are characterized by secrecy in relation to some of the school staff. Becoming “one of them” was important for me to follow these events and witness situations which would probably be carried out in a different way if an outsider were present.

In addition to participant observation, I held formal interviews with eight teachers at the school on their careers and representations on the school. These were crucial complements to the perceptions obtained during field work.

The school - Colégio Volta Redonda

The Colégio Volta Redonda (CVR), which was founded in 1948, is located in an upscale neighborhood in the city of Rio de Janeiro, with a high Human Development Index (HDI) and one of the highest per capita incomes. It is part of the federal school system and offers morning and afternoon classes from the first year of elementary school to the last year of high school. There are some 700 students and 168 teachers, as well as the director and other employees.

Traditionally the school has been regarded by the general public and the middle class in particular as a traditional and at the same time avant-garde institution attended by the children of the town's elite. This view is associated with the way students are selected, among other criteria. Until the late 1990s, students took an admission exam. After that, the exam was substituted by a random draw of the students from the first to the fifth year of elementary

school. For the high school an exam was adopted and those who scored above the minimum grade (5.0) were then subject to a random draw.

The new rules altered the profile of the students. The teaching staff says the school began to receive students from different social backgrounds, residents of different regions of the city and from different schools, such as municipal and state public schools.

The random draw system was seen as a strategy to democratize the school. As a school principal said: “CVR was seen as a school only for the rich, but that changed a while ago. You can find people from all walks of life here, anyone can study here.”

The change in the students’ profile is commemorated as one of the school’s assets, because it contributes to its role of a public school “for all.” But it is also blamed for the school’s fall in external evaluations, such as the Development Index of Basic Education (Ideb) that is an indicator of proficiency and school flow, and the National High School Exam (Enem) that tests students’ performance at the end of high school, while also serving as an entrance exam for the country’s top universities.

A particular feature of Colégio Volta Redonda is the persistence of the rules for expulsion, which forbid the enrolment/continuation of students who fail any grade twice in either elementary school, middle school or high school. The only grade that is not subject to this restriction is the first grade of elementary school.

Although expulsion was often used in Brazilian schools in the past, nowadays it is applied only in a few public schools⁷. At CVR, however, the persistence of this rule is quite significant, because in the past, being a CVR student was regarded as a sign of distinction. Those who studied there in its first decades stress the strong feeling of belonging and distinction.⁸

Today, the fear of being expelled still exists among students, but due to the changes in the institutional system and the way staff define the school, being expelled has expulsion is no longer as acceptable. Teachers maneuver to avoid expulsion⁹, which is seen as an obstacle in the school’s path to democratization:

7 In Rio de Janeiro, expulsions endures at Colégios de Aplicação da UERJ and UFRJ and at Colégio Pedro II. More on expulsions at Colégios de Aplicação see Kaiuca (2004) and at Colégio Pedro II see Galvão (2007).

8 There is a relation between school and students similar to that at CVR in Colégio de Aplicação da UFRJ, addressed in the book by Abreu (1992).

9 These strategies consist basically of making the possibility of expulsion a moral criterion of evaluation, as we will see later in this article

We opened the school with the draw and we now have all types of students. There are those who come from worse public schools – and what should we do? Lower the standards? Let them be expelled? (Geography teacher)

The staff at CVR believes the school must be democratic, opening opportunities for any student. On the other hand, the expulsion rule is seen as a form of internal selection, which prevents the permanence of students who enter via the random selection system. Thus, the school lets new students in, but cannot make them stay, thus putting its capacity to teach them in doubt.

This produces a permanent conflict in the teaching staff, which is divided between the tendency to expand access and guarantee the permanence of all students - threatening the school's "quality" - and the safeguard of its status by maintaining selection via expulsion. In this way, the school develops its own conceptions of merit and justice which determine the approval or expulsion of students.

The student evaluation board meetings at Colégio Volta Redonda

As rituals, the student evaluation board meetings take place according to a repetitive structure. At CVR, each of the quarterly meetings is different in terms of content, but not structure¹⁰.

They take place during the second shift, that is, during the opposite shift of the classes to be addressed. Thus, if classes take place in the morning, the student evaluation board meeting occurs in the afternoon. The participants are the teachers of the classes under discussion, the director of teaching responsible for the grade, and the SOE¹¹ guidance counselor responsible for the pupils¹². During the student evaluation board meetings, the director, or the guidance counselor addresses each student by his or her name and those participating in the board discuss each student's academic situation and, in many cases, personal aspects, as we will demonstrate later in this paper.

10 The student evaluation boards in which I took part were those of the 9th year of middle school and the first year of high school. As a researcher, I also was present in the meetings of these grades and also those of the 8th grade of elementary school.

11 Guidance Counselor Sector, responsible for pedagogic following of classes and students.

12 With the exception of the last meeting of the year, in the first part of the meetings, the class presidents are invited to hear and evaluate the teachers and leave after that.

At the first quarterly student evaluation board meeting discussions begin with initial information on the students, because that is when teachers obtain the students' academic and personal information. The second round focuses on discussions on each student's situation highlighting those who are facing difficulties or could fail at the end of the year. During the third round, teachers discuss the students who did not obtain the minimum grade to be approved. Decisions are taken on which students will take remedial classes¹³ and those who will not, even if they did not achieve the minimum grade.

At the final student evaluation board meeting the staff discusses the students who took the remedial classes and were approved or not. It is during this last meeting that decisions are taken about the passing or failing of students who did not reach the minimum grade in the remedial classes. That is, students who did not obtain the minimum grade are not necessarily failed.

The four student evaluation board meetings form a process—they are a sequence of actions as in a drama, whose end is revealed at the final meeting, although, in many cases, final decisions are announced at the very first meeting of the year, as we will demonstrate below.

The observations made during the student evaluation board meetings showed that CVR has characteristics that are very similar to those described in the literature on other schools. The “objective” grade (obtained in exams and projects) is not always the only criterion that determines a student's evaluation, because of the presence of “subjective” factors related to the students' school and extracurricular life.

I believe the “objective/subjective” dichotomy is not enough to apprehend the evaluation process. By observing the student evaluation board meetings and the teaching activities, as well as through my own experience as a teacher, I noticed that the grade is not a result of an “objective” evaluation – it is not free from the teachers' subjective appraisal. From the moment a teacher draws up an exam –choosing its content and the way to test it – to the moment he/she corrects the exams

¹³ Remedial class period is when extra classes are provided to students who did not obtain the minimum grade to pass. After these classes, students take a new exam and, if they obtain the required grade, they are approved. If not, they are assessed at the final student evaluation board meeting, which can decide to fail them or not.

and projects¹⁴, as well as the events of the student evaluation board meetings, teachers' subjectivity interferes in the process that determines each student's grade.

I propose, then, that the students' evaluations are comprised of two values: the "cognitive value" and the "moral value." The cognitive value is expressed by the grades obtained in the exams and projects and aims to measure the level of knowledge apprehended by students. But the "moral value" is comprised of a set of factors such as the students' behavior, appearance, family situation and even health.

The cognitive and moral values are not necessarily similar. A positive value in one of them does not necessarily mean a similar value in the other. An important aspect of the moral value is that it is the result of a set of criteria and it is contextual, varying over time, the individual student concerned and the teacher who is assessing him or her. Thus, different moral criteria can coexist in the evaluation of a single student.

While the cognitive value is expressed by grades and is relatively objective, the moral values can only be understood after an analysis of the student evaluation board meetings.

The categories of the student evaluation board

An important aspect of the student evaluation board meetings and which determines students' assessment is the level of recognition that each teacher has regarding his/her students. At the meetings I attended, when a teacher did not identify a student by his or her name, he would often ask for the student's physical characteristics, where he or she sat in the classroom or resort to "the little faces" – a list with the names and pictures of the students.

The need to know who each student is suggests that the grade itself (the cognitive value) is not enough for a complete assessment – it is necessary to know about that *person*, his or her individual characteristics, personality, appearance, background and history.

14 This situation was clear when I followed a teacher correcting the exams of 9th grade students. While she corrected a particular student's exam, the teacher drew my attention to some of his answer which did not match the question. She said: "I know he is a good student and knows the content, but look at his answers! He got a 4.0 but I know he learned. I'm going to give him an extra half point in these two questions so that his grade will be at least above the average."

When I was systematizing the emerging categories in the 22 student evaluation board meetings I attended, I noticed some recurrences which showed patterns and conceptions whose meanings were never brought into question.

The students' appearance and personality are often mentioned by the teachers who might classify them as "cute," "annoying," "pretty," "arrogant," "a darling," "sweet," "beautiful". In an extreme case, a biology teacher had this to say about a student of the first year of high school: "My goodness, she is really ugly. Do you know who she reminds me of? Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride*! I pity, her, I even correct what she writes more kindly, because... poor her!"

A set of recurrent criteria are those regarding school behavior, or, as teachers call it, the student's "attitude." In this set, the main categories are "dedicated," "go-getter," "interested," "engaged". These categories are related to aspects teachers give good evaluations (henceforth called positive categories¹⁵) and are associated with factors such as frequent attendance, participation in class by asking and answering questions, doing school work and observing the rules, as indicated in the statement on a high school first year student:

P¹⁶: She is dedicated.

E: Wow, very! She always asks me questions.

B: She never misses the extra classes.

Pr: That is the kind of student who no one fails.

The criteria mentioned above are related to students' behavior in the face of the school's demands and institutional standards, i.e., the rules and norms that regulate students' social role. These criteria were very important in the teachers' statements when they defended or criticized students at the final student evaluation board meeting, such as in the comment made by a Mathematics teacher on one of his students: "He's 0.2

¹⁵ Positive and negative are categories I used not only to describe the value teachers attribute to the students in the context at stake, but these categories also contribute to a student's good or bad assessment. The value is not absolute, it's contextual.

¹⁶ In this article teachers are identified by the first letter of the subject they teach.

short, but I decided to give it to him. He is very dedicated he's asked me for help, attended the extra classes in the afternoon and sought the interns to clarify doubts."

As opposed to the positive categories, the negative categories are those which produce lower evaluations and represent challenging behavior regarding school demands:

1-B: People, he is that case, his effort this year was nonexistent -- he's never been so uninterested.

P: Yes. The fact is that he really doesn't want to do anything.

F: But the boy is throwing an opportunity out of the window, isn't he? [In a harsh voice]

B: He doesn't attend remedial classes either.

B: He doesn't care, he just doesn't want to. He is very apathetic.

2- G: His problem is that he is totally disrespectful. He is not committed; he thinks he can do whatever he wants, that his father is going to buy him the world.

P: He doesn't want anything. He doesn't have the right attitude. He is completely uninterested.

H: He will get nothing from me, if he needs one point at the end of the year, I won't give it.

G D: He is a problem.

3- GD: Ok, then. Rafael will attend Geography remedial classes, and that's all.

G: He is going to because he didn't hand in his projects. He is very irresponsible and lacks commitment.

H: Look, this boy is intelligent, but has a bad character. To be honest, I can't stand him. (Raising his voice)

B: Me neither, I have to stand him. He is very rude and has no limits. He just wants to do absolutely nothing.

G: We have to give him limits.

B: In his case, nothing is negotiable. I'll give him nothing if he needs help. He doesn't deserve it!

As the dialogues above show, in this set there are expressions such as the student *“wants to do nothing”*, *“sleeps in class,”* *“lacks commitment,”* *“is negligent”*, *“apathetic,”* or *“uninterested”*. In the cases of the students who received such evaluations, the teachers seldom interfered or took positions to favor the evaluation, because the moral values were very low. As the biology teacher said: *“he doesn't deserve it.”*

Along with behavior aspects, we also find criteria connected with cognitive difficulties, present in oft repeated sentences like: *“he is limited,”* *“it doesn't run smoothly,”* *“he lacks a basis,”* *“he is immature/lacks maturity,”* *“a typical municipal school student,”* *“is having much trouble.”* The cognitive difficulty appears as a positive category when associated with the idea of effort, as in the conversation below:

GD: Cícero.

B: Guys, he is very dedicated. Poor guy, he comes to me with his notebook after the class, but ruins my coffee break.

(The other teachers laugh)

M: He is limited, and that's that. But he is a go-getter.

P: He is a more difficult case, making him get grades above the average is expecting too much.

GC: He has trouble, his highest grades are the minimum to pass. He failed 8th grade and was approved by the student evaluation board last year. We must give him a chance.

However, cognitive difficulties can also worsen a negative situation when they are not coupled with a form of “positive” behavior:

M: When he wants and when he studies, he makes progress. But most of the time he just does nothing, shows no concern.

B: I have a student, for example, who has a lot of trouble learning but he passes without remedial classes. He has trouble, but he is also negligent, he is a feet-dragger. He is very apathetic.

A category of great importance is that of students who are “at risk of being expelled.” At every student evaluation board meeting I attended, attention was paid to students who were facing this risk and, in almost all cases the possibility of being expelled superseded the other evaluation criteria at the moment of deciding whether they should be approved or failed.

It is very important to highlight that the possibility of expelling a student is a moral criterion because the teachers see the possibility of being a CVR student as a privilege, as shown in a teacher’s statement on the possible expulsion of student Felipe:

GD: Felipe. He will take remedial classes in Physics, Math, Biology, English and Geometric Drawing. He only passed Geography and History.

P: He’s a very bad student.

GC: I’m a little worried because it is a case of expulsion. His family is poor and his parents don’t have a good education. Everything he has achieved has been his own merit as well as ours.

M: His exam wasn’t bad. But it is very difficult for him -- he is not a high school student

GC: You do remember that it is a case of expulsion.

M: I know it’s bad to expel in a case like this, but we cannot pretend that his grades don’t exist.

H: If he passes now, we will certainly fail him next year. We would be postponing the problem.

GD: Look. I would like you to deal with this case carefully, because CVR is his only chance of studying at a good school.

C: I can tell you he won't pass Chemistry next year. I think it could be even sadder to see this boy suffer and not end his next year.

P: I can say I have a lump in my throat – it's a hard choice to make.

This was one of the tensions which resulted from the school's change in accepting students. As mentioned above, after the random selection process began, teachers identified that the students' profile became more diverse, and a result, quality in the school declined. Before that, students were seen as more qualified – either because of their background or their success in the admission exam – and expulsion was seen as a selection mechanism and a way of maintaining the school's level. The change shifted the approach to a personal question, bringing the privation of an opportunity into play.

Beyond the “school” criteria, there is also a series of criteria regarding students' lives out of school. The use of drugs, romantic relationships and attendance at parties out of the school, for example, are subject to the teachers' moral judgment. In these cases, the transformation of the social and moral issues is made clear, even though they have nothing to do with academic demands, or schools issues (Bourdieu 1999).

In the same way, personal and family “dramas” emerge as elements of the composition of moral value. It is interesting that many times such information was disclosed often by the guidance counselors or one of the directors, but also by teachers who asked: “*But, does she have a story?*” A student's “story” appears as an element to explain the student's academic situation.

The student's family's socioeconomic situation also emerges as important information, because it is seen as a factor that interferes in the students' performance:

GC: Guys, Felipe's family is very poor, his mother is nearly illiterate. So any performance he might have is a lot in comparison with his background.

H: He shows quality – when he wants to. But he just has no interest. When he does something, he does it well, but he really is reluctant to get started.

M: It's self boycott. He is on his way to stay back.

C: And he has another serious problem as he is excluded in class. He is ashamed of his father being a janitor and of living in Rocinha slum.

GC: He doesn't believe in himself. He thinks that "if my family is poor, how can I have this potential?" He probably questions himself.

H: Also his social origins and his race must have an influence.

In these dialogues, we can notice that the student's socioeconomic status emerges when his or her cognitive value is low, which seems to indicate that a low socioeconomic position adds positive value in the assessment of students with low cognitive performance. A poor background is one of the explanations for their poor performance in school, and, since it is considered beyond the student's ability to change, it contributes to the student receiving a good evaluation. I believe this logic is associated with the change in perception of the school's role and the background of the students accepted by the random selection process.

The students' health conditions appear as "attenuating" circumstances when their academic performance is inadequate and also as one of the reasons for their teachers' low expectations, as one of the directors said about a student who had cancer and another who was hearing-impaired: "I think that in the cases of the students like Luisa and Cícero, we have to think about what they can give and not on what we can ask from them (...). We have to try and make them give the best they can."

Often teachers referred to students suffering from psychiatric disorders, especially Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), or those who use medication such as Ritalin¹⁷.

GC: He has ADD. But there is another problem: his mother doesn't take him to the doctor and she medicates the boy herself (...) Also she gives him Frontal¹⁸ every once in a while. So we never know if he's under the effect of

¹⁷ Medicine used in ADD treatment.

¹⁸ Anxiolytic medicine.

medication; we have to guess by his behavior. When he is more agitated and his grades are low we know that he's not been medicated. And she came to school to talk and said that he is now developing OCD¹⁹.

This case demonstrates that the family is another extracurricular criterion used to evaluate students, as indicated by these comments made during student evaluation board meetings: *“God, I want to hit her father!”*; *“That father is unbelievable!”*; *“The boy is the same as his father;”* *“I defend him a lot, because with a mother like that, he is working miracles!”*

The intra-school and extracurricular criteria are structural. However, they are invoked in specific situations and end up influencing the teachers' evaluation and overshadowing negative criteria.

The scale of morality, a classification hierarchy

As moral value is comprised of a set of moral and contextual criteria, during student evaluation board meetings, the categories that appear are combined and their meaning is forged according to the situation involved. But still, there is regularity in what the teachers say; after all, classificatory systems are collective by definition (Durkheim 2000).

When we look at the set of categories gathered during each meeting, we can identify patterns of meaning. Table 1 contains the categories that appeared during the meetings I attended²⁰, grouped according to whether they were positive or negative, academic or non-academic.

We deduce that there are more negative categories than positive ones, and the majority of the negative ones apply to academic values.

When we plot all categories applied to each student, as shown in Tables 2, 2.1 and 2.2, we see that some are more “classified” than others, while there are cases in which teachers say very little if anything at all about a particular student. These students are made “invisible” by the teachers and do not draw the attention of the board.

When we turn to the ethnography of the meetings, we tend to see that the “invisibilized” students are those whose grades are above average and who behave according to the standards expected by teachers. They are not

¹⁹ Obsessive compulsive disorder.

²⁰ To guarantee anonymity, the categories were removed from the first student evaluation board meeting of three classes in 2012.

mentioned at the meetings because their grades are good enough and their behavior doesn't justify praise or criticism. Perhaps these are the students for whom the moral value is not a determinant component in their assessment; only their school marks matter.

Table 1

Positive		Negative	
Academic	Non-academic	Academic	Non-academic
He/she doesn't cause trouble	Mature girl/ Leader	He/she has given up	Arrogant
He/she never misses a class	Abandoned by his/her mother	He/she has trouble following classes	He/she has low self esteem
Great student	He/she lives far	He/she doesn't make an effort	A big baby
He/she clarifies his/her doubts	He/she lives in Rocinha slum	He/she has been approved by the student evaluation board	A complicated case
Good student	He has a dark complexion	He/she understands nothing	Annoying
He/she goes to extra classes	Nothing special	He/she doesn't work hard	Disrespectful
Good enough	Hearing impaired	He/she doesn't care	He/she has a bad attitude
Dedicated	He/she has nowhere to study	He/she does nothing	Underhand
He/she studies hard	Financial difficulties	A difficult case	Bad influence
Asks questions	Great/ Excellent	Very likely to fail	Weird
Genius	Polite	He/she doesn't do any work	Closed person
Intelligent	His/her father is unemployed	He/she talks all the time	He/she is an only child
He/she has failed	His/her father is dead	Uncommitted/ Uninterested	Immaturity
Expulsion	He/she lost his/her father	He/she has difficulties	Detestable

	Poor	A problem/ Worrying	Rude
	English poise	He/she shows no interest	Rascal
	He/she has a difficult family background	He/she has trouble concentrating	He/she has a bad character
	His/her family is educated	He/she has poor dexterity	Spoiled
	He/she has sequels	He/she doesn't participate	He/she uses drugs
	He/she has OCD	He/she wants to do nothing	He/she came from a municipal public school
	The family cannot help	He/she doesn't help himself/herself	Family problems
	He/she takes medicine to lose weight	He/she doesn't work hard	A product of automatic approval
	He/she takes Ritalin and Frontal	He/she has much difficulty	Quiet
	Easy-going	He/she lacks basis	Solitary
	Lovely/ Darling/ Sweetie	He/she lacks interest	Reserved
	Excluded/ Weakened	He/she misses many classes	Reticent
	He/she has a complicated background	He/she has no capacity	He/she boycotts himself/herself
	He/she has a hard life	He/she is on the phone all the time	Sleepy
	He/she is a victim of his/her father's absence	He/she has no limits	ADD
	Love/ A sweetheart	He/she is likely to fail	agitated
	Short	He/she doesn't go to extra classes	Apathetic
	Good /Good girl	He/she doesn't value school	Timid
	Ugly girl	Irresponsible/ Suspicious	Shy
	Pretty/ Cute	Limited/ Weak	Typical municipal public school student
	He/she has a cyst in his/her head	He/she shows quality when he/she wants	Marijuana gang
	Poor little girl	He/she has trouble reading and writing	

Table 2

Name	Categories from the student evaluation board	
	Positive	Negative
Adriane	Easy-going	Agitated
		She has difficulty
		She doesn't care
		She sleeps in class
		A serious problem
		She talks in class
A. Carolina	Nothing special	
André	Cute	He is an only child
	Spoiled	Annoying
	Good	A big baby
Bernardo	He has a difficult family background	He has been approved by the student evaluation board
Carolina	She has financial difficulties	She has been approved by the student evaluation board
	Dedicated	She has trouble
	She has low self esteem	
	Never misses class	
Carina	Ugly	Quiet
	Poor little girl	Sleepy
	She takes medicine to lose weight	
C. Eduardo	English poise	
	Arrogant	
	His family is educated	
Cícero	Dedicated	A difficult case
	He asks questions	He has been approved by the student evaluation board
		He has failed a grade
		Limited

Daniel	Great	
	Good student	
	He has a dark completion	
	Short	
	Intelligent	
	A sweetheart	
	Polite	
Daniela	Weak	
	Underhand	
	Limited	
Davi	He has a cyst in his head	
	His father is dead	
	He has a complicated background	
Elisa	She doesn't cause trouble	
	Good girl	
	Genius	
	Great	
	Lovely	
	Darling	

Table 2.1

Name	Categories from the student evaluation board	
	Positive	Negative
Felipe	Worrying	Reserved
	Poor	Suspicious
	He lives in Rocinha slum	Reticent
	Excluded	Self boycott
		Solitary
		Uninterested

Gabriel	Poor little boy	He has lost his father
		Closed
		Weakened
		Weird
Gabriela	Intelligent	She misses many classes
		She uses drugs
		She has family problems
		She sleeps in class
		A problem
		Uninterested
Guilherme	Expulsion	He doesn't make an effort
		He doesn't value school
Ingrid	She has cognitive difficulty	Typical municipal school student
		She understands nothing
		A product of automatic approval
		She lacks basis
		Immaturity
Júlia	Cute	She talk too much
	Great	
	Sweetie	
	Excellent	
	Mature	
Juliana	She has financial difficulty	She has given up
		She does nothing
		She came from a municipal school
		She doesn't help herself
		She doesn't go to extra classes
		She is likely to fail
		She doesn't show interest

Table 2.2

Name	Categories from the student evaluation board	
	Positive	Negative
Lucas		A problem
		He has a bad attitude
		Disrespectful
		Uncommitted
		He wants nothing
		Uninterested
		Marijuana gang
Luisa	Good enough	
	Hearing impaired	
Matheus	Lovely	He has trouble concentrating
	ADD	A complicated case
	He takes Ritalin and Frontal	He has a lot difficulty
	He has OCD	He asks questions
	He goes to extra classes	
	He studies	
Pedro		He doesn't have trouble
		Apathetic
		He doesn't participate
		He does nothing
Rafael	Leader	He has a bad character
	A victim of his father's absence	He has no limits
	Intelligent	Irresponsible
		Uncommitted
		Irresponsible
		Rude
Tatiana	Expulsion	A bad influence
		She does nothing
		She has a lot of difficulty
		Rascal
		She has no capacity
		She doesn't make an effort
		Likely to fail

Tales	Abandoned by his mother	He has trouble following classes
	Hard life	He doesn't make an effort
	He has nowhere to study	He has been approved by the board
	Financial difficulties	Timid

Given the great variety of categories mentioned at student evaluation board meetings and also the contextual aspect of their meanings, it is very difficult to understand the school classificatory system *only* in terms of macro sociological categories, such as race, gender and class, although these are certainly present in the meetings.

On gender, Tables 2, 2.1, 2.2 show that the negative categories are more recurrent in the male group, which might indicate that they receive bad assessments while girls tend to receive better evaluations. This issue is addressed by the literature of the sociology of education (Barbosa, Randall 2004; Carvalho 2001), but in the case of CVR, it was not possible to identify a clear pattern.

Race was present in some teachers' opinions on the relations established among students, suggesting that discrimination or lack of acceptance worsens their academic situations. At CVR, this category emerged few times during fieldwork, usually spoken very carefully by a teacher or guidance counselor to refer to conflicts between students. The difficulty of acknowledging these conflicts and the significance of race in evaluating pupils doesn't mean they are nonexistent.

As shown before, the issue of social class is present as the teachers make their evaluation at the meetings, because a student's socioeconomic background is often taken into account. However, I do not believe that the moral evaluation that occurs at the school is *simply* a mechanism that reproduces socioeconomic inequality.

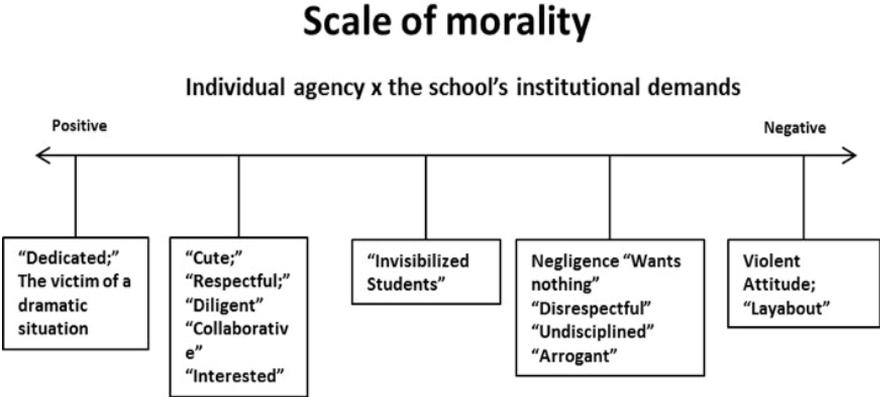
Although the weight of the criteria varies in the evaluation of each student, it is possible to apprehend that bringing these criteria to the meetings is a way to reproduce the inequalities among students, after all, opportunities are given or not to students according to the criteria used to assess them.

In this sense, I believe that it is possible to understand the existence of a scale of morality on which the area of agency and the students' decisions are weighed in the face of the school's demands and institutional standards. It

is important to note that “the school’s demands and institutional standards” do not refer only to the rules and norms in the school’s codes, but also to those implicit rules that govern staff behavior and teachers’ expectations towards students.

In the scale of morality, the lowest values attributed to the situations in which students go willfully against the school’s rules and norms, for instance, as in cases of violent attitudes. In the same area we can find the actions identified as “uninterested,” being labeled as a “layabout” or “wants nothing”. These are followed by behavior regarded as a consequence of a problematic family background.

Among the most valued qualities and situations, and which produce more “indulgent” evaluations, are the students who, despite their “effort,” cannot overcome their intellectual limitations identified by the teachers. Finally, the extreme cases of positive appreciation are those in which there is some tragedy or dramatic situation in a student’s life. Here is a graphic representation of the scale:



The scale of morality establishes a hierarchy of values and situations that might be brought up during a student evaluation board meeting. Each meeting generates its own hierarchy. However, I believe that there is a general pattern in the principles that comprise the scale of morality forged in the tension between the students’ range of action and the school’s rules and standards.

The scale of morality helps us understand the relation between moral value and cognitive value. If a student is given low moral value, his or her

cognitive results will not be altered during evaluation. If, on the other hand, a student is classified with high moral categories, these may have a positive influence on his final evaluation.

Failing as punishment, vengeance and opportunity

The student evaluation board meetings are directly linked to the fail/approval logic that underlies Brazil's entire educational system. Ultimately, their existence and occurrence are connected to the final decision to approve a student or not. As already noted, this decision is not limited to the last meeting of the year, but it may be present from the first meeting onwards, with a clear anticipation of failure for a certain number of students— a characteristic of the “pedagogy of failure” proposed by Sergio Costa Ribeiro (1991)²¹. At the first CVR meetings that I followed, only three months after the beginning of the classes, I came across teachers who showed disbelief in some students' capacity to pass, with sentences such as: “*he is on his way to staying behind,*” “*he isn't going to pass,*” “*he is likely to fail.*” The process of failing certain students began during the very first meeting, even if, in most cases, it was announced only at the end of the year.

Failure had different meanings for the teachers in the cases discussed. This multiplicity of meanings can be understood better through an example of a student in the first year of high school: Tales had not obtained sufficient grades to be approved in three classes, and teachers discussed his academic future at the last student evaluation board meeting.

Those in favor of failing him said he had not learned enough in the classes taught that year and was not equipped to move into the next year: “*He is a student who has a lot difficulty, I don't see him moving to the next grade;*” “*I think that he shouldn't pass -- for his own good. If he goes on to the next grade, it will be chaos;*” “*I wonder if making him stay back with younger students will make him level (...)* Perhaps it is best for him to stay back”.

The Drama teacher had a different opinion and believed that passing the student would be best, as the following dialogue shows:

²¹ Available at: www.sergiocostaribeiro.ifcs.ufrj.br

D: Failing can be good, it's good for some people, but will it be good for him? He already has low self-esteem. We preach that this is a school with such and such characteristics; that it isn't a case for punishment, but I believe he is fragile. I think that we have to put ourselves in his shoes, he has little support.

P: You are speaking of punishment again, and that is not what we are discussing. Failing isn't like punishment, it's a way of developing his capacities.

D: I believe, and I will be repeating myself, that there are different kinds of fail. If everybody tried to help him throughout the year and he did nothing, that means he is a rascal.

P: But in that case, failing is punishment.

D: It's not punishment. It's education, it's different, it's another conception. I think we should think this through.

As shown above, failing can be defined as an opportunity for students to learn what they didn't manage to learn or "grow up"; it can also work as a mechanism of punishment, disapproval of certain behavior, or, ultimately, revenge.

Passing, as a structural equivalent of failing, also has different meanings in different situations. In the case below it appears as an opportunity for a student to continue in the school, as a positive influence on the student's "self-esteem"²², or even as a "prize." This meaning can be apprehended by analyzing the case of Gabriela, a student in the first year of high school:

GC: Now, Gabriela. She didn't pass in Mathematics and failed all terms in Physics.

M: Throughout the year, she showed no interest in school. What is most noticeable in her is her total nihilism. She just doesn't care.

²² "Self-esteem" is a native category used by the teachers.

C: She is very intelligent, she could have done it, but she let things get to this point.

GC: It's hard to mention this, but she has a conflict with her parents. Her mother protects her father – a violent man. So she is stuck between a father who is an animal and a mother who lets her do whatever she wants. Didn't she improve in your classes?

Principal: Her mother said that she was studying hard and not going out at all. But in my opinion, if she can't pass, then that's it. She slept late, she skipped class, she did whatever she wanted and her mother let her.

GC: There is the drug problem, too.

P: She is quite mature, I just think that I don't feel comfortable in approving her in this meeting. And it's not because of her grades. She is one of those cases: are we sending the right signal here? As far as I'm concerned, I believe it's best to fail her.

M: She slept through the year.

P: The thing is that her problem with marijuana was crucial, it really brought her down. It's complicated.

M: I agree with you – passing will look like we are giving her the green light.

GD: I think this thing of “she could have passed, but she chose to give up” is quite complicated.

M: She missed all exams. She has trouble with Math and she doesn't deserve a chance. I think failing will do her good, she will wake up.

G: I think that she has very good qualities. She's made mistakes but she has what it takes.

P: I think that it's very bad when we fail a student, but we usually see that he or she can't do it. But in Gabriela's case, we know that she can. There is issue of

age – what message will we be sending her? What was she doing? She skipped class to smoke marijuana at the entrance with the boys. So I ask myself what kind of message we will be sending her –she can do that and nothing will happen? I don't feel comfortable approving her, either.

B: If we look at her grades, like we did with Tales, we have to approve her, but there are other things at stake.

GD: Guys, don't get me wrong, but a lazy person cannot be awarded anything. She's a smart girl, but she doesn't want anything -- it just can't be. (Raising his voice)

Although some of the teachers highlighted characteristics such as her “intelligence” and “maturity” and guaranteed that she has the “capacity” to move on to the next grade, elements in Gabriela's behavior were crucial to her failing: skipping classes, sleeping during classes, smoking marijuana, “wants nothing”, “gave up.” The predominance of behaviors evaluated negatively and the punishing aspect of her fail were evident in the director's last comment, which ended the discussion. Teachers voted against her approval.

Final remarks

Failing is a central element in the logic of the Brazilian school system. Its function is not only practical – preventing students who “did not learn” from moving on to the next grade – but also symbolic, because it is used as a means of condemning or approving students' behavior. Evidence of this role are phrases that are constantly repeated during the meetings: “*what message will we be sending her?*”, “*what kind of message are we getting through to them?*”

Thus, students are prevented from moving on to the next grade so that they can learn the curriculum, but also the behavior and values considered correct according to the school's morality.

It is evident that the notion of meritocracy has specific characteristics in this school. The ideas of merit and justice are not defined only by cognitive value, but also – and perhaps, mainly – by moral values.

As a consequence, different conceptions of justice appear as the criteria used by each teacher as he or she follows his or her representations of what is adequate behavior for each student – and, in some cases, for their families.

Therefore, the idea of justice is linked to the idea of merit, which in turn, is determined by moral values. But what determines which moral values make failing a student fair or unfair? Why do some students deserve to be approved and others not?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to understand the principles that organize the school's classification system: these moral conceptions are not produced in a vacuum. On the contrary, they are built on dynamics of interaction, in a process in which both students and teachers participate. In this way, it is necessary to look at what happens inside the classroom, as this is the most significant space for the interactions among these elements, and where the categories and representations are built.

The observations in classrooms made me perceive that students who were more frequently cited at the student evaluation board meetings were also those with whom the teacher interacted more in classrooms. This relation is not connected to the quality of the classifications or interactions, but to their volume. In the same way, students who were "invisible" at the meetings, those who were never mentioned by the teachers, underwent a similar process in classrooms: they were often ignored by teachers, who seldom spoke to them (Mascarenhas 2013).

Apart from the classroom, another way that could help us understand how the school's classificatory system is constructed would be to analyze the relation between moral values and the teachers' representations of their own social roles and those of their students.

I believe that the teachers' expectations regarding these roles occupy a central place in this system. In the scale of morality, the categories that have the lowest moral value in the student evaluation board meetings²³ were those associated with behaviors that challenged the demands and rules of the school. When I asked teachers to tell me about disagreeable situations in the school, they said that this type of student behavior caused feelings of "anger" and of being "disrespected." They felt that their authority and teaching skills—their very identity in effect—were under threat.

In contrast, positive evaluations reinforced the teacher's role and identity. The reports of situations that involved "dedicated," "interested" students, as

23 Aside from the student evaluation board meetings, these categories appeared in the interviews with the teachers. In them, I asked the teachers to point out students and situations they considered "positive" or "negative." The elements they mentioned corresponded to the categories used at the board meetings.

well as those who “respected” the teacher, were associated with positive emotions such as “pride,” “satisfaction” and “recognition.”

In this regard, we can say that the indicator of the scale of morality is precisely how much a behavior or a characteristic threatens the teacher’s social role and identity. The students’ range of action and his/her arbitrariness in the face of his/her academic situation and behavior are also an important factor in the hierarchy of moral judgment.

To defend their position when confronted with the academic fate of a student, teachers used discursive strategies to attribute a wider or narrower range of action to students. It is in this sense that family dramas, problems of health, specific personality traits and morality become more important, as they are manipulated by teachers as they argue in defense of what they assume to be the best interests of their students.²⁴.

Moral evaluations are of course not confined to the school I studied, They pervade and indeed constitute all social life. I hope, therefore, that my analysis of a Brazilian school may also contribute to wider understandings of Brazilian society as a whole.

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24 This manipulation involves a process to raise compassion by victimizing the student. When compassion does come into play, other feelings are triggered, such as a need for vengeance or punishment.

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Choice and access to the best schools of Rio de Janeiro: a rite of passage

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Abstract

Each year in the city of Rio de Janeiro a ritual takes place for selecting and distributing groups of pupils among schools providing the second phase of primary education. Called *remanejamento* or reallocation, this process involves school directors, education coordinators and the families of pupils. Since part of the process is protected by secrecy, complete access to the rite proved impossible. However it was possible to analyse what happens through the dialogues of the professionals involved and from the viewpoint of the family members who took part in the process. The article demonstrates that the transfer system tends to separate the pupils based on family background and the relations that their parents have to the networks of solidarity that connect families and the management body of the schools. These multiple belongings separate the pupils who will gain places at the best schools from those who will be enrolled in mid-level or low-quality schools.

Keywords: rituals, Republican schools, educational inequalities, school management, school choice.

Resumo

Todo o ano ocorre, na cidade do Rio de Janeiro, um ritual de seleção e distribuição de grupos de estudantes entre escolas de segundo segmento do ensino fundamental. Batizado como *remanejamento*, esse processo envolve diretores de escolas, coordenadorias de educação e familiares de estudantes. Por ser, em parte, secreto e protegido, não tivemos total acesso ao cerimonial,

mas é possível analisá-lo com base nas falas dos profissionais envolvidos e no ponto de vista dos familiares que participaram do processo. Demonstraremos que o remanejamento tende a separar os estudantes com base em seu pertencimento familiar e no tipo de inserção que os pais possuem nos circuitos de solidariedade que envolvem famílias e corpo de gestão das escolas. Esses múltiplos pertencimentos separam os alunos que terão acesso às melhores escolas e aqueles que serão matriculados em escolas medianas ou de baixa qualidade.

Palavras-chave: rituais, escola republicana, desigualdades educacionais, gestão escolar, escolha escolar.

Choice and access to the best schools of Rio de Janeiro: a rite of passage

Rodrigo Rosistolato

1 - Introduction

Imagine¹ being the father or mother of a child who wants or needs to study in Rio de Janeiro city's public education system. Given that there are 1,008 schools and you need to choose just one, some criteria must be established to make this choice. Suppose that you opt for a school close enough to home to be able to take your child there, within a 15-minute walk. Depending on the particular region of the city concerned, you will still have an average of five schools available. Which to choose, though? That's the question! This article will describe the processes through which families choose schools for their children and try to get them places. We will demonstrate that these choices depend on their families' background and the degree to which their parents are related to the networks of solidarity that connect families and the management body of the schools.

Brazil has two educational systems that run in parallel: a public sector funded entirely by the state, and a private sector organized and run by educational establishments without access to public funds. Both systems are supervised by the Ministry of Education. In the case of the public system, municipal governments are responsible for managing and funding primary education, while state governments are responsible for secondary education. Both municipal and state governments may also receive funds from the federal government and are free to use these resources according to the demands of their education systems.

¹ I have decided to use the discursive strategy employed by Malinowski (1980) with the aim of immersing the reader more directly in the dilemmas experienced by parents during the process of choosing schools for their children.

The private system can only be classified as a system as such because it adheres to the regulations set by the Ministry of Education. These regulations mainly relate to the school curriculum and the organization of primary and secondary level teaching. Decisions on how funds are raised and managed are left to the schools themselves, which are also free to establish the fees for enrolment and their monthly rates.² Hence the private schools form part of the system because they follow the same rules concerning the curriculum and the organization of the various stages of schooling, while remaining independent in terms of their financial administration.

The private system is smaller than the public system. In the city of Rio de Janeiro, the focus of this study, private sector establishments offering primary education cater for 26% of all students (Bartholo 2014). Differences exist between the two systems in terms of performance and repeating years. In private schools in 2013, 3% of students repeated years during the first years of education and 8% during the final years. In public schools the rates were higher: 8.7% for the first years and 11.6% for the final years. These repetition rates meant that for each 100 students matriculated in municipal schools, approximately 18 are behind in their schooling by two or more years.³

This situation is not very different from the context described in 1991 by Costa Ribeiro. Educational policies aim to make educational opportunities more equal, Yet Brazil still has high grade repetition levels and consequently high levels of age/school year disparity. Given that Costa Ribeiro (1991) had already argued that, rather than contributing to the future progress of the children concerned, repeating a year only tends to lead to more repetition, it is sad to observe that almost a quarter of a century later the situation remains much the same.

When the families choose a school for their children, they first have to decide between the public and private systems. Those who, for various

² This administration model differs from countries where school selection policies have been introduced with state funding. In South America, Chile opted for a mixed system involving public, private and subsidized private schools. The private subsidized schools receive public funds through a school voucher scheme. The number of vouchers received by a school corresponds to the number of students that it succeeds in attracting. In a nutshell: the families choose the schools and the government pays the matriculation and monthly fees. For a detailed debate on the school selection policy in Chile, see Elacqua (2012).

³ All the data is available in the school census and was compiled via the QEDU website (<http://www.qedu.org.br/>).

motives, choose a public school are opting for a system with more grade repetition than the private educational system. This fact multiplies the challenges faced by parents since they need to select a school that can educate their children without failing them in subsequent years. There is also another challenge. Rio de Janeiro does not require pupils to be enrolled at schools close to their home, meaning that children can study at any one of the municipality's schools. However the schools differ widely in terms of performance and/or reputation.

Previous studies have shown that a school's reputation tends to converge with its performance, so that a school with a high performance will have a good reputation while low-performing schools tend to have a poor reputation. The convergence between these two forms of classification – performance evaluated through large-scale assessments and school reputation – suggests that even without knowing the educational indicators for schools, the families can compare them, identifying and choosing the best schools from their neighbourhoods.

Costa (2008) explores some of the elements that contribute to a school's reputation. During fieldwork, the author heard a number of phrases that encapsulated ideas of municipal schools and their students. One of the students in the morning classes⁴ asked whether the research group would remain at the school to observe the afternoon classes too, adding that, were they to do so, they would see a different school since only *favelados* (favela dwellers) attended in the afternoon. This reveals the idea that a school with a good reputation is one that does not provide places to *favelados*, while one with a poor reputation 'only' receives *favelados* – the curiosity here being that the pupil was talking about the same school: the difference was between the students studying in the morning and afternoon classes.

In earlier research (Costa, Pires do Prado & Rosistolato 2012; Rosistolato & Pires do Prado 2012) we also discussed the families' views about what constituted a good school. Rather than focusing on the performance of schools in national assessments, the families considered a number of points related to the structure of the school – 'a clean,' 'organized' school with 'teachers who don't go absent' – and its moral order – 'strict,' 'disciplined' school

4 Almost all schools in Brazil offer classes in the morning and the afternoon. Those which offer a full day's tuition are a rarity.

that ‘keeps the pupils in line.’ From the parents’ point of view, the cleaner and better organized the school, with teachers who are seldom absent, the better its reputation. At the opposite end are the dirty schools, disorganized, with teachers who are always off work; these have a bad reputation.

This same set of classifications was also found by Encarnaç o (2007). She investigated two schools with divergent reputations. While the first was seen as a ‘worthwhile school,’ the second was identified as one ‘made for delinquents.’ Aside from the student intake, the main element differentiating the schools was the director. The director of the ‘worthwhile school’ was seen to be strict and serious-minded, ‘an excellent professional,’ which, in the view of the population, contributed to the school’s good reputation.

We were able to observe two sets of classifications that define a school’s reputation. On one hand, the contrast between tidiness and mess, cleanliness and dirt, discipline and lack of discipline. On the other, the existence of *favelados* and *nonfavelados*. In this second set of criteria, pupils with a particular profile – poorer and *favela* residents – are presented as a problem for the schools. The opposite—that the schools are a problem for the students—occurs to no one. No school is ever accused of forcing pupils to abandon it and/or be sent back a year. Here Encarnaç o (2007) provides an important insight into this phenomenon, suggesting that teachers – especially those from schools with a worse reputation – believe that the pupils lack the capacity to learn the subjects being taught to them. We can therefore deduce that schools that are convinced that their students cannot learn the curricula being taught will also have no problem in making them retake the year, placing the blame on the pupils themselves and/or their families.

This is the complex scenario in which parents have to choose schools for their children. If they can find and obtain a place at a school of good quality and reputation, they will increase the chances of their children having successful school careers. If not, their children will face the problems associated with a school expecting little from its pupils and the stigma attached to studying at a school with a poor reputation. As this article will show, in this supposedly universal and republican school system, some schools, considered islands of excellence, stand out and parents compete for places using all the capital – social and cultural – at their disposal. Some act exclusively as individuals or citizens, while others

activate personal relations they may have established with members of the municipal administration.

In Rio de Janeiro, the process of choosing and accessing schools may take place more than once. Considering that the municipal educational system includes schools that teach just the first phase of primary education,⁵ the parents who choose these establishments for their child's initial years will have to change school when the child completes his or her fifth year.

In Rio de Janeiro this question is different since although access to a school place is guaranteed, it does not necessarily mean receiving a place at the school chosen as the family's first preference. Since the schools differ in performance and reputation, and parents know which are the best schools, families need to develop strategies in this highly competitive environment.

The first step in understanding this process – choice and access – was to obtain information on the administrative regulations concerning school matriculation in Rio de Janeiro. The second was to map the viewpoints of the people directly involved in this social situation.⁶ The research focused on families that needed to change their children's school in 2013. To find them, we used the topographical division made by the Municipal Education Office to select two areas of the city where we would try to make contact with the families. It was when we entered the field that we discovered the first signs of the existence of a virtual rite of passage (van Gennep, 1975), as the children involved move from a social position embedded in one school model to another position, corresponding to the final years of schooling. Even so, pupils play only a small part in the process since it is their parents and the directors of their original schools who decide the paths that they will take after completing the initial years of primary education.

This ritual is an 'administrative' process called *remanejamento* or 'reallocation.' As we pointed out above, all the children studying at schools teaching just the first phase of primary education have to change schools for the second phase. Formal rules exist for this transition and they should, in theory, be no more than bureaucratic. However, this process is transformed

5 The first phase of primary education corresponds to the first five years of school, and the second phase to the four final years. After completing the ninth year, the student completes his or her primary education.

6 Here our research worked with the concept of 'social situation' developed by Gluckman (2010).

into a ritual because (i) differences in performance and reputation exist between schools, and (ii) the education administrations tend to classify schools as 'their own' rather than part of an educational system. As a result, school managers take this situation to mean that they can choose students based on criteria defined by each establishment and negotiated during the reallocation ritual. They also therefore treat the moment not merely as a bureaucratic procedure, but as a watershed moment in the life of the pupils.

Parental involvement is also relatively limited. The process is controlled by the school managers, who possess the information necessary for the ritual. The school directors talk to all the parents but do not follow the same set of rules. This specific fact seems to be one of the defining elements of this process. Two families may talk with the same managers, ask the very same questions, yet receive different replies. Everything depends on the kinds of view that the bureaucracy has of the parents that it deals with.

Consequently – and especially given the secrecy involved in these reallocation practices – I argue that the process can be conceived as a ritual insofar as an order exists that confers a sense of collective realization. These practices are conceived and organized for specific purposes and involve a certain degree of exceptionality when compared to the everyday world of schools and families. It is worth pointing out that this conception converges with the ideas advanced by Peirano (2003). Discussing the concept of ritual formulated by anthropologist Stanley Tambiah, Peirano argues that rites should not be rigidly defined at a moment prior to the ethnographic situation. Although theories of rituals can always be proposed, extraordinary social situations need to be observed and conceived through their concrete immersion in the logic orienting their execution and the effective actions of those individuals performing the rituals. This approach helps us to understand the reallocation process and to think of it as a school ritual – the good school ritual.

My main argument is that the rationalized and bureaucratized structure of the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Education Department still depends on rituals that organize the relation between schools and the public that they serve. What I term the good school ritual enters into dialogue with the formally established rules. These are followed but the degree to which they are adhered to depends on the classifications of each student. Some

pupils are transferred to the second phase schools under strict observance of legislation, while others take paths that mix bureaucratic rules and other forms of social navigation. In this sense we can say that although the choice of school is legally assured to the families, the possibility of making the choice a concrete reality depends on the family members' knowledge of the formal rules and their field of possibilities. In theory, everyone has the right to choose any school, but obtaining a desired place depends on knowledge of the formal and informal rules present in the good school ritual, as well as the networks of sociability in which the families are embedded.

The text is divided into three parts, aside from the introduction and conclusion. In the first, I describe the ways in which the research unfolded in the field and the methodology employed. Next I analyse preparations for the ritual. In the third part, I identify the place of *persons* and *individuals*⁷ in the rite. Finally, I emphasize the elements that reveal the non-conflictive coexistence of formal rules and individual strategies when choosing and accessing Rio de Janeiro's municipal schools.

Before we turn to the actual description, it should be stressed that I am proposing an anthropology of education that transcends the physical and symbolic boundaries of school institutions. I look to comprehend the networks of relationships constructed between families and the State when parents come together to define their children's school careers. The article demonstrates that parents are social agents who make use of their capital – social and cultural – in a complex negotiation that will eventually define the educational future of the pupil by determining the school to which he or she will be sent. I also point out that there are two types of families. The first kind interacts with agents of the State as an *individual*, or a citizen, while the second dialogues with them as a *person*, or a relational being. As we shall see, those who relate as *persons* face fewer difficulties in matriculating their children at schools with better performance levels and better reputations.

My use of the category *person* in opposition to the *individual* is inspired by DaMatta (1985), who argues that the relations between Brazilians and the State does not take the notion of the individual – or the citizen – as the ideal basic unit. On the contrary, these relations are oriented by relations

7 As discussed below, this opposition between persons and individuals is taken from DaMatta (1985).

between persons, families, kinship groups and friends. The basic difference is that the *individual* needs to follow universal rules that apply to everyone, in any social space, irrespective of any relations that individuals may have between themselves. The *person*, or relational being, on the other hand navigates socially on the basis of the relations that he or she establishes and the social place occupied as an outcome of these relations. In the specific case of gaining places at municipal schools, universal rules exist that must be adhered to by all the families. In theory, matriculation should be a merely bureaucratic process, but since differences in performance and reputation exist between the schools, some schools are more disputed than others. This dispute is not resolved on the basis of democratic criteria only. It is at this moment that networks of relations are activated and that families with some kind of friendship or kinship relation with the agents from the municipal bureaucracy are seen as *persons* and tend to be favoured during the selection process and reallocation to the best schools.

According to DaMatta (1979), this shift from individual to person is enabled through a ritual of separation, announced by the question *do you know who you are speaking to?* Employed in situations where a conflict of interests emerges, this question allows that people who use to cease being treated on the basis of the universal rules established by the State and be seen instead as a special person to the point of being released from any universalist protocol. This amounts to a hierarchical logic that allows some Brazilians to do anything while others can do nothing, or almost nothing. The author describes social situations in which the demand *do you know who you are speaking to?* is used to prevent the universal rules from being utilized. The ritual use of this question enables people to skip waiting in queue, to park in prohibited spots without being fined and to access public services without complying with the bureaucracy.

The question can be asked by anyone in a superior social position to someone else. An army colonel resorts to it to stop a traffic warden from issuing him a fine; a doctor uses it to enter a hospital outside of visiting hours. Some people also use the same question but are not necessarily in a superior position. In these cases, they present their personal relations. Working for a known politician, for example, allows the employee to use *do you know who you are speaking to?* to say that he or she is employed by the politician and should therefore be treated with much the same kind of

distinction as would be shown to the politician him or herself. There are also moments when *do you know who you are speaking to?* does not need to be used as an explicit demand, simply because all the social agents present already *know who they are speaking to*. This is the case of the situations described here.

It is important to stress that DaMatta (1979) argues that the sphere defined by the State's automatic and free services is oriented towards the impersonal character of legal decrees and formal regulations. The author cites education and healthcare as examples. I shall contend, however, that even in these cases the impersonal gives way to "*do you know who you are speaking to?*" since, in the case of education, although school places are available to everyone, hierarchies exist between the best and worst schools. This context creates spaces of dispute, which tends to be resolved through the use of personal relations. The latter relations allow some individuals to shift to the world of persons while others are treated exclusively on the basis of the existing universal rules. This is not a phenomenon solely related to the distribution of places in the best schools. We are analyzing a general phenomenon, which orients the relations established between Brazilians and the State. What I aim to show is how this ritual unfolds during the distribution of places in Rio's public schools.

2 - Cases that are not a case

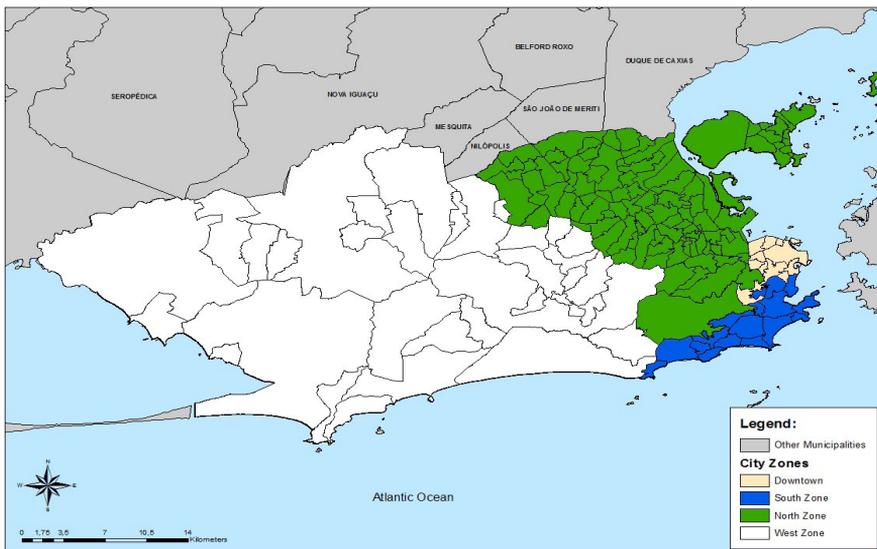
Anthropological studies can be built on case studies. As Fonseca (1999) points out, however, in ethnographic work the maxim "each case has to be taken on its own merits" becomes meaningless. Anthropologists work with individual cases, but guided by the idea of engaging in a debate that encompasses general aspects of the phenomena under analysis. I paraphrase the author's argument in the title to this section since the methodology defined for the research behind this article was inspired by this overall principle.

Initially⁸ focusing on the perspectives of the parents and the relations established with other agents, we first defined the cases to be analysed in

8 The original research project was collective and was proposed by a team from the Educational Opportunities Research Laboratory (LaPOPE), including myself.

detail and the questions to be explored with each family. The Rio de Janeiro prefecture is divided into seven subprefectures: North Zone, South Zone, East Zone, Greater Tijuca, Centre and Historical Centre, Ilha do Governador, Barra and Jacarepaguá. We conducted in-depth ethnographic research in two: the South Zone and the North Zone. The two regions considered in this study were chosen due to their different ranking in terms of socioeconomic level and school performance. As well as the socioeconomic differences, there are also symbolic classifications that identify the South Zone as the locus of Rio's middle class, where intellectual people are found with cosmopolitan worldviews and in search of social ascension and/or differentiation (Velho, 1973; 1999). By contrast, the North Zone would be a more traditional and less cosmopolitan area.

Geographical location of the researched areas - South Zone and North Zone⁹



Neighborhoods researched at South Zone: Ipanema, Botafogo, Copacabana, Leblon e Leme.

Neighborhoods researched at North Zone: Cordovil, Parada de Lucas e Brás de Pina.

At this point in the study, we realized that a macrosociological analysis of the set of schools from the municipal network would be needed in order for us to be able to select the locations for subsequent fieldwork. Here we

⁹ Map made by Karina Riehl.

benefitted from the direct collaboration of sociologists Marcio da Costa and Mariane Koslinski, who provided us with data on Rio de Janeiro's entire educational system and they selected pupils who were changing school during the school year that we wished to investigate: 2013. Based on this data, we selected two regions of the city – the South Zone and North Zone – and a matriculation pole¹⁰ in each region.

The performance differences between the schools in Portuguese language and mathematics can be measured by their results in the 'Prova Brasil' exam.¹¹ The matriculation poles that we analysed are significant as they illustrate how the same educational system can contain very different schools. In the South Zone there is a degree of equilibrium in performance terms. In the North Zone, though, one school stands out while the others have much lower performance levels.

The South Zone pole is composed of 11 schools. Among these are five schools that offer both phases of primary education, five schools that offer just the first phase and one school that offers just the second phase. In terms of the reallocation process, this configuration means that there are five schools sending pupils and six receiving them. It is important to note that the pupils enrolled at the schools teaching both phases are not submitted to the reallocation procedure. This only happens when, for some reason, the parents wish to change the child's school. On the other hand, the pupils who study at schools teaching just the first phase will automatically have to change school.

The North Zone pole is also composed of 11 schools. These include three schools that offer both phases of primary education, six that offer just the first phase and two that offer just the second phase. In terms of the reallocation process, this configuration means that there are six schools sending pupils and five schools receiving them.

In order to build the profile of schools we used information on the grades offered at each and the variable mean obtained in the Standardized Brazil Exam (*Prova Brasil Padronizada: PBP*). The PBP mean refers to the years

10 "A matriculation pole [*polos de matrícula*] comprises a set of geographically proximate schools, constituting an organization with the purpose of allocating students during matriculation periods at the end of a school year" (Rosistolato, Pires do Prado, Koslinski, Carvalho and Moreira, 2014).

11 The National School Performance Assessment (*Avaliação Nacional do Rendimento Escolar*) popularly known as the *Prova Brasil* or Brazil Exam.

2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011. This analysis allows us to rank the schools by performance so that the school referred to here as *Escola Praça* obtained the highest performance among those teaching the first phase of primary education in the North Zone pole. It is also the school with the best reputation, leading to a dispute for the places on offer. In the South Zone pole, the school with the highest performance will be referred to here as *Escola Mar*. Like *Escola Praça*, *Escola Mar* also has a positive reputation in the pole under analysis.

In this text, I present cases that summarize the dynamics of the good school ritual in *Escola Praça*.¹² I made this choice because the pole in which it is inserted is also the most stratified. I describe four cases of families chose the school, of whom only two were successful.

Escola Mar is also included in the analysis later. During fieldwork we discovered that the ritual does not come to a conclusion when the children are enrolled. There is a moment that I classify as a post-ritual when the families go back to negotiate with the bureaucracy with the aim of transferring their children between schools. I describe the structure of this process at *Escola Mar*. Finally, I point out that although differences exist in the socioeconomic and cultural level between the South and North Zones of the city, the similarities between the two areas are clear when we consider the distribution of students within the municipal network.

3 - Preparation for the ritual

The fifth grade of school is a period of transition for primary school pupils in Rio de Janeiro. All pupils who passed the year will proceed to the final grades of primary education and enter school spaces quite different to those to which they have grown accustomed. One of the main changes relates to the number of teachers. The 'auntie' (*tia*)¹³ will cease to exist and all the pupils will have various teachers who cannot be called uncles or aunts (*tios*). This symbolic shift is accompanied by other changes. These

¹² In total, we analysed 52 cases.

¹³ During the first five years of primary education in Brazil, children have just one teacher (usually female). This teacher tends to be called 'aunt' (*tia*) by everyone: students, parents and the school management. This practice forms part of school culture. Unlike the teachers from the first phase, though, the usually male teachers working in the final years of primary school do not accept being called 'uncles/aunts' (*tios*).

include the fact that children no longer queue to enter the classroom, the teachers cease looking at the children's exercise books,¹⁴ and each course has its own exercise book.

For the pupils who studied in schools offering just the first phase, another question surfaces: they will have to leave their primary schools. As well as all the changes inherent to this transition, they will have to go to a different school where they will be unfamiliar with the school life or the employees. Their destination will be decided in the good school ritual.

The ritual involves three main actors. The school directors – and the school management body – are responsible for the preparations for the ritual and for distributing information to the parents before the ritual itself takes place. The parents, in turn, may aim to be directly involved in the preparations to the ritual, but they will not have access to the final rites; they can only participate in the preliminary phase. Neophyte pupils have no control over what happens to them, unless their parents decided to get them involved. When this does occur, though, this involvement is minimal since the parents, at the very most, offer a list of schools and ask their child which he or she prefers.

Rigid rules apply during the ritual's preliminary phase.¹⁵ The work of Bruel (2014) analyses Rio de Janeiro municipality's matriculation policy. Specifically in relation to reallocation, the study indicates that even with rigid rules, space for negotiation between the State agents and the families exists. Each Regional Education Coordination Office (*Coordenadoria Regional de Educação*: CRE) has the autonomy to define whether the schools should ask the families to indicate the schools of preference or whether the institutions themselves (the schools of origin and the CREs) will define the schools to which the pupils will be sent. The author emphasizes that both situations are governed by the formal regulations for matriculation, but they produce distinct outcomes. While in the first case the parents have greater

14 One of the pedagogical practices of teachers during the first years of primary school is to check the students' notebooks. They set homework exercises and later 'mark' the work in the notebooks. This practice ceases in the final years of primary school. An interesting study of the use of notebooks in primary education can be found in Santos & Souza (2005).

15 In the first phase, candidates who have siblings enrolled at the desired school; children of employees working at the desired school; adopted children supported by Municipal Law 2.210 of 21/07/1994; candidates coming from orphanages; parents with children enrolled at a school that offers education to youths and adults; children of teenage mothers and children of refugees with legal priority. Next, after catering for the students who fit these legal priorities, the places are distributed randomly.

decision-making power over the school life of their children, in the second it is the educational bureaucracy that decides their educational future. Hence each director can be said to be able to apply the universal rules and deciding while orienting the families concerned. We talked to the parents who took part in the preliminary phase and they reported different rules, sometimes at the same schools with the same director.

The ultimate objective of the ritual is to transfer groups of students from those schools offering the five first grades to others that offer the four last grades. This process could be resolved by drawing names randomly. It would suffice to know the total number of children who need to be relocated and distribute them randomly among the schools. In this case, a child would be seen merely as an *individual* occupying a place at a public educational establishment. It goes without saying that the schools, in this case, would more than likely be much more diverse in terms of the pupils' racial and socioeconomic background and the cultural capital of the parents. Likewise, we would be unlikely to encounter flow patterns between schools from the same pole.

However, Carvalho's work (2014), using a quantitative approach, has shown that schools actually tend to be socially homogenous and that, in particular, there are flow patterns of pupils between schools belonging to the matriculation poles. Pupils who began their studies in low-performing schools tend to be reallocated to second phase schools that also have low performance. The same occurs with the high-performing schools. This reveals, then, that the distribution of pupils is not random, which allowed us to formulate one of the hypotheses informing the research behind this article. It was likely that the absence of any random allocation of students arose from the fact that some of the children and/or their families were not treated as individuals during the reallocation phase. Pupils treated as *individuals* would be reallocated on the basis of formal and universal rules, and would go to schools with either high or low performance. Those pupils treated as *persons*, on the other hand, would have guaranteed access to the best schools without needing to follow the universal rules rigidly.

Carvalho's work (2014) also analyses a set of interviews with school directors. One of the interviewees, who directs a high performance school of the second phase of primary education with a good reputation in the North

Zone, reported that at the moment of reallocation he simply indicates the number of places on offer and allows the directors of the schools offering the first grades to decide how to proceed. He even remarked that he keeps quiet because the other directors would ‘bite his hand’ were he to interfere. He intervenes only when a director who has never used the places made available by his school asks for one. In this case, he understands that the request must concern a very good student and demands that the place in question is allocated to the director in question. The interviewee added that this seldom occurs, though, because in general the same school directors are responsible for filling the places that he offers.

The account given by this director allows us to perceive a relation between classification as a good student and a place to the best schools. It is not clear, however, what it means to be a good student, though it is possible to be certain about the position that the directors occupy in this ritual. It is the school directors of the second phase of primary education who offer places for those from the first phase to dispute and decide what to do with them. We also observed that the most disputed schools are unable to take in all the pupils who apply for them. Some pupils, therefore, will have to be transferred to other schools with lower performance levels and a worse reputation. Who will these pupils be? What criteria will be used by the directors when they take their decisions?

4 – The Ritual

4.1 – Preliminary rites

Parents have no knowledge of the ritual itself since their involvement is limited to the first phase. When we interviewed them, they offered accounts that allowed us to identify a number of elements related to the student selection processes that precede the meeting between school managers. We obtained accounts revealing that the directors do not treat the parents equally in accordance with strict procedures, which indicates the separation between *individuals* and *persons* in the perceptions of management professionals. Let us examine four cases that together synthesize the potential paths to a good school.

4.1.1 – The place of persons in the ritual

Bianca¹⁶ is an 11-year old girl, white, Catholic, who lives in a favela in Rio de Janeiro's North Zone. She plays the violin and has been invited to perform at marriage ceremonies. Her mother lets her play, but does not allow her to receive any money for it. She realizes that any payment would constitute a work relationship, which could be provide the basis for a denunciation of child labour. As well as her love of music, Bianca also takes part in Maths Olympics at school. Her mother expects her to go on to a university education. Bianca has never repeated a year: she studies for two hours a day after school with the help of a private tutor.

Aline¹⁷ is a 12-year old pupil, *parda* (brown),¹⁸ non-religious, who lives in a district of the North Zone. She never studies when not at school and her mother anticipates that she will complete secondary school. Her mother evaluates her as an average pupil who repeated only one year.

Bianca's mother is single, black, Catholic, has a graduate degree in pedagogy and works at a private school. She did not worry about her daughter's move to a new school transfer because she knew that the ten children with the best marks at her first phase school would be transferred to the best school in the district, *Escola Praça*. This 'rule' is not established in any regulation. She says that her daughter always obtained grades of 9 and 10, which meant she was always confident about the second phase school. At the end of 2012 a meeting was held at the school and the director told them that the ten best students would be sent to *Escola Praça*.

Aline's mother is married, brown (*parda*), non-religious, completed her secondary education and works as a cleaner. She chose the school due to its reputation and because her sister was working there as a cook. We asked whether she was satisfied with the school and she replied yes, she was completely satisfied. Her case is curious because she did not even visit the school. She merely talked to her sister, who spoke to the director who then asked her to bring the documents needed to complete the matriculation. Hers is a significant case since she was at a low-performing school with a bad reputation and yet managed to get into *Escola Praça*.

16 All the names – of children, mothers and schools – are fictitious.

17 Aline's did not authorize recording of the interview.

18 Brazilian census data categories the population as white, black, indigenous, Oriental and brown [mixed 'race'] (*branca, negra, indígena, oriental and parda*.)

Aline's success in moving from a low-performance school of poor repute to a high-performance school with a good name can be explained by the fact that her aunt worked at the desired school. In this case, she was not treated as an *individual*– she did not need to queue, fill out forms or take part in a random selection process. Her mother's role was to activate her kinship network and later complete her enrolment.

Bianca and Aline live in the same neighbourhood, though their socio-economic level sets them apart. Aline resides in a house *no asfalto* – 'on the asphalt' or in the planned urban area of the city – while Bianca lives in the favela. Bianca's mother has a graduate degree and works as an educator at a private school. Aline's mother finished primary schooling and works as a cleaner. Neither of them receives any kind of government assistance. Though different, both girls ended up at *Escola Praça*, but for opposite reasons. Bianca was chosen due to her performance at the first phase primary school. Her mother commented that she was told her daughter would be sent to *Escola Praça* owing to her good grades. She also suggested that pupils are prepared for *Escola Praça*, as may be seen from this interview:

Interviewer: When did you start thinking about her transfer?

Bianca's Mother: No, no. She went because of her grades, because of her average grades.

Interviewer: She went because of her grades?

Mother: Yes!

Interviewer: So you didn't think about her transfer?

Mother: No, no. Thank God! Not me, because it would have been an ordeal for me, I wouldn't have known where to send her.

Interviewer: So what happens, how did you learn which school she's going to?

Mother: The school prepares [the children] and we quickly find out that the best pupils will go to *Escola Praça*. So as soon they enter here [the first phase

school] they are being trained for the place! So they just studied the whole time to go to this school.

Interviewer: Ah, there's a kind of entrance course at the school, then?

Mother: Yes, because this school [Escola Praça] takes the best pupils from here for the sixth year. The sixth year, they select the best.

Interviewer: The best [pupils] from these schools here [in the region] will go to Escola Praça?

Mother: That's right!

Interviewer: So, there's a separate class there [at the first phase school] for those who'll do something like an entrance course?

Mother: No, it's not like that. There's the 4th year and then the 5th, and then in the 5th year the mothers already learn what will happen. The highest ranking pupils will go to Escola Praça, I think there are 10 places, more or less, something like that. Because there's a limited number of places, the pupils have to be distributed and received from other schools.

Interviewer: Oh right. But what exactly was involved, because I have to ask you how you obtained the place she has today. What happened? A meeting..?

Mother: That's right, a meeting, the director said that the best pupils, the 10 best, would go to Escola Praça.

Mother: [Did you choose?] No, I didn't choose. She was nominated.

Aline's grades, on the other hand, were not so good and she had already been sent back a year once, but she was the niece of the school cook. As a result, all her mother had to do was go to the school with the documents needed to complete her matriculation. It can be noted that obtaining a place at the school was different in this case because while Aline's mother used her kinship networks, Bianca's path was determined by the director of the first phase school. Considering the dynamic of the good school ritual in this pole,

it could be said that Bianca was chosen and backed by the director of her first phase school when the places were being distributed. Aline, on the other hand, was chosen because of her kinship relations and it was the director of the second phase school who backed her transfer. The mothers were content because they considered the school staff to be excellent.

It is impossible to tell whether the director used other criteria besides grades to select Bianca from among the other pupils with top grades. What interests us here is the comparison with Aline, who did not have good grades and was classified by her mother as an average pupil, with an average disciplinary record who does not study outside of school. During the interview, her mother, looking at her daughter, declared:

“I don’t know what to do, she doesn’t want to do anything with her life. She must think she’s going to win the lottery or get a rich husband, because... it’s so hard!”

Comparing the two cases, both could be said to have been treated as *persons* during the good school ritual and, consequently, had no problems obtaining a place at the desired school. Nonetheless, the distinct participation of the two families provides a curious contrast. Their destinations were, in some ways, preordained. The first because she had good grades and the second because she was the school cook’s niece. In a sense, Aline had already won the ‘lottery’ that distributes places in the best schools because her aunt’s presence ensured her ‘ticket.’

4.1.2 – The place of individuals in the Ritual

On the other hand, there were some pupils who also chose the best school from the pole but were unable to obtain a place. Vanessa is an 11-year old girl, brown (*parda*), Catholic, who began to study at the age of three, studies two hours each day outside of school and never repeated a year. Her mother is 42 years old, single, brown (*parda*), Evangelical, and studied up to the end of secondary school. She earns some income from odd jobs and rates Vanessa as a good student. She stated that she has ‘*faith in God*’ that her daughter will complete her studies. We asked what would count as completing her studies and she said that it would mean getting a university degree.

Vanessa’s mother began to worry about the change of school before her daughter had completed the first four grades in primary education. She has

other children, who study at a local school with a worse reputation, but she wanted Vanessa to study at *Escola Praça*, because, she said, neighbours say really good things about the school. The teachers are said to be very good and the teaching at a high level. She therefore wanted to try it out and decided to enrol her daughter at the school. She went to the school, talked to the director and was given a form on which she had to choose up to five schools. She put *Escola Praça* as her top choice. She was then told that she would have to wait. She describes the event as follows:

Interviewer: - When did you learn that she would have to change school? When did you start thinking about changing her school?

Mother: - It was the same year that she was finishing the fourth year. At the start of the year the question came up: where were they going to send my daughter?

Interviewer: - At the beginning of 2012?

Interviewer: - So, you began thinking about [the move] at the start of 2012?

Mother: - Yes, back then.

Interviewer: - Is she at the school that you wanted for her? Did you try another school?

Mother: - I tried...

Interviewer: - Which?

Mother: - Yes... I can't recall the school's name. But a really good school...

Interviewer: - *Escola Praça*?

Mother: - No, not *Escola Praça*...

Interviewer: - Is it located here [in the North Zone district]?

Mother: Yes, it is, only it's on the other side.

Interviewer: - Let me have a look at my list here...

Mother: - That's it, Escola Praça, that's it, I forget the name. It's Escola Praça... I think it's Escola Praça... what's the name of that school there, after the other one? Escola Praça? Ah, so yes, that's the one.

Interviewer: - That's definitely it?

Mother: - Yes.

Interviewer: - Escola Praça. So why were you unable to obtain a place there?

Mother: - Ah, because there... the selection is made by the city council, right, I think it's the closest school because, well, my son was there at another school and they placed him there, one of the criteria is that when you already have a child at the school, they more or less immediately decide to put the other child in the same school.

Interviewer: - And when this change took place, did the previous school show you any kind of document?

Mother: - Yes, they did.

Interviewer: - Did they say something about this school? What these schools are like?

Mother: - No, they just sent a paper with a choice, because they give 3 options of school for us to choose from, just that.

Interviewer: - So they didn't say anything about the school?

Mother: - They give you 3 options, and you're the one who decides.

Interviewer: - Do you remember which they were?

Mother: - They were Escola Praça, [and two more schools] because they were really the closest... sending her faraway, you know...

When Vanessa's mother received the letter naming the school to which her daughter would be sent, she realized that her first choice had not been granted. Her daughter was set to be sent to another school. She did not challenge the decision because she also knew the school concerned and thought that it would be fine too:

Interviewer: - So you were allocated the second school. Did you ask why she wasn't sent to Escola Praça?

Mother: - No. In fact I was happy too with the option that they gave us, because my son was already studying there, and he would be able to accompany her going to school too and I've no complaints about the school.

Interviewer: - But when you said just now about the selection being made by the city council, how did you learn that?

Mother: - We send the options, right, and then we go to the school and the school communicates [the decision that] ...your child was transferred. Then it's the CRE, the city council, they're the ones who sort it out. So they put it all in the [computer] system, and the school options come out, where the places are...

From the moment that she accepted the school assigned to her daughter, she had no problems guaranteeing the place. She merely went to the school and completed Vanessa's matriculation.

José¹⁹ is 12 years old, black, and neo-Pentecostal. He began to study when he was 4 years old and never repeated a year. His mother had previously tried to put him in a kindergarten but gave up because "he cried a lot." José always studied in the morning since, according to his mother: "in the morning his head is clearer, so I always try to place him in the morning intake." She thinks he is a good student since he has always got 'B' grades. As for discipline, she classifies him as 'average' since he has been told off for talking a lot to other pupils during class. She thinks that he will continue his studies until the third year of secondary education.

19 José's mother did not authorize recording of the interview.

José's mother is 32 years old, single, black and neo-Pentecostal. She is unemployed and her last completed year of school was the fourth year of primary education. She has two children and receives the Family Allowance (*Bolsa Família*²⁰) and Rio Allowance (*Bolsa Carioca*²¹) for both. She was satisfied with the school where José completed the first years of primary education and did not want the boy to change school. However she understood that the transfer would be necessary because the school does not offer the second phase of primary education.

The year that José was due to complete the fifth year of primary education, his mother went to the school and filled in a form with three schools in order of preference. She chose *Escola Praça* as the first option because “*they say that it’s one of the best schools in the district.*” She wanted to try *Escola Praça* and thought it would be possible because she chose it as the first option. However, when she received the matriculation letter she learnt that José would have to be enrolled at another school. She even asked the director of *Escola Praça* the reasons why her son had not been accepted. The director replied that there were no places available and that “*they had given first option to pupils who already had siblings studying at the school.*” When she learnt that other parents had also been unable to enrol their children at *Escola Praça*, she realized that there were indeed no more places left and did not challenge the decision contained in the matriculation letter.

We can note that Vanessa and José received the same treatment when they opted for *Escola Praça*. Both were treated as *individuals*, their parents filled in a form at the school and believed that their preferences would be guaranteed due to the formal nature of the matriculation process.

Bianca, Aline, Vanessa and José were completing the first phase of primary education, and wanted to continue their studies at the school classified as the best of the district – *Escola Praça*. For that reason, demand for places at this school was higher than supply. Given the democratic rules that, in theory, orient Brazil's education system, the best way for resolving the discrepancy between supply and demand would be a random draw. Those who were selected by lottery would transfer to *Escola Praça* and the others would be moved to other schools. This is not what happened. Bianca

20 Support offered by the Federal Government for poor families.

21 Support offered by the Municipal Government for poor families.

and Aline obtained places at the school through their personal relations with members of the educational bureaucracy and school employees, while Vanessa and José were unsuccessful in securing a place because their parents adhered strictly to the formal procedures.

The cases described here suggest that the opposition between *individuals* and *persons* formulated by DaMatta (1985) still has a heuristic potential in terms of understanding the relations developed by Brazilians with the rules established by the Nation State. Its population continues to practice a contradictory synthesis of universal rules and personal relationships in spaces of dispute. Analysing the four cases, we can note that Aline's family made direct use of personal relations to ensure a place at *Escola Praça*. As a result, despite coming from the worst school in the district and being an average pupil in her mother's view, she gained a place at the best school in the second phase. The other three had different trajectories. Bianca also depended on her social networks since she was chosen and backed by the director of her original school during the good school ritual. She benefited from the positive view of one member of the educational bureaucracy concerning her academic performance. Vanessa and José, by contrast, were not chosen by anyone and had to stick to the more universal rules present in the ritual.

According to Van Gennep: "It is the very fact of living which necessitates the successive passages from one special society to another and from one social situation to another so that an individual's life consists of a succession of stages whose end and beginning form general sets of a similar order: birth, social puberty, marriage, paternity, class progression, occupational specialization, and death. At each one of these general stages corresponds ceremonies whose object is identical: to facilitate an individual's passage from a determined situation to another situation just as determined" (Van Gennep 1978: 27).

The analysis of these cases expands our view of the ritual distribution of children between schools. Unlike traditional rituals where children leave their original identities and social relations behind when they enter the ritual, in the good school rituals the pupils are ranked on the basis of their social background, their performance at the first phase schools and/or their friendship and kinship relations. The relations between their families and members of the ritual and/or the view of an employee concerning the

children seems to guide the paths taken by the students during and after the ritual.²²

4.2 – Liminal rites

The two cases – Aline and Bianca – indicate that the procedures used in the ritual taken into account the capital – social and cultural – brought by the children. They are in a liminal situation, but their prior identities are not completely eclipsed. Having a relative who works at the best school in the district, or getting excellent grades, can act as marks of distinction that conduct the pupils during the ritual. At the same time, though, there are other pupils with excellent grades who are unable to obtain a place at the best school. Ultimately, it is the liminal rites – closed meetings between the schools who make up the poles, with or without the presence of representatives of the Regional Education Coordination Offices (CREs) – that decide the destination of the pupils. We did not receive permission to observe these liminal rites, though we were able to gain access to the narratives of the school managers concerning the process involved.

Carvalho's work (2014) analyses the practices undertaken in the reallocation process. She interviewed the directors of second phase primary schools – i.e. those that receive the transferred pupils – and discovered that their position in the ritual tends to be passive compared to the directors of the first phase schools. At the very beginning of the rite they state the number of places they can offer and the directors of the first phase schools then start to discuss how they will be filled.

The interviews also revealed that there are moments when the Regional Education Coordination Offices take part in the rites, limiting the room for manoeuvre of the first phase directors. In these cases, the school managers

22 During the research we also worked with the hypothesis that politicians influence the distribution of places at schools with the best reputations and performances. This hypothesis was constructed on the basis of one case – mapped at the start of fieldwork – in which a mother turned to a candidate for state deputy in order to obtain a place at the school she wanted. The mother succeeded in gaining the place at the school through the politician's intervention. We failed to find any other case like this. It was described in Rosistolato & Pires do Prado (2012). Based on the arguments proposed by Kuschner (2000), it can be suggested that the impact of this kind of strategy should not be ignored. The author observed the everyday work of a local councillor and reports that requests for places at schools were frequent in these contexts. When they were solicited, the councillor, or one of her party supporters, entered into contact with the schools and asked for the places. The requests were always for those schools considered the best in the district. As part of our research, we undertook participant observation in the directorates of the schools throughout the matriculation period. We plan to be able to discuss these hypotheses apropos these contexts at a later date.

feel encroached upon because the central administration is deciding to legislate on a subject that, in their view, lies outside its remit. When this kind of intervention does not occur, the decision depends entirely on the debates taking place during the ritual.

The interviews indicated the disputes inherent to the ritual. Some directors like to fill all the places made available by the best second phase primary schools because they believe that their pupils are the best and should go to these establishments. Others divide their students between those who should be sent to the best schools and those who could be distributed to any school. It is important to stress that this division begins in the preliminary rituals, when they interact in diverging ways with the families wanting the most prestigious schools. We can argue that those who will gain a place are treated as *persons* while the others, though received too, are treated as *individuals*.

4.3 – Post-liminal rites

The next phase of the ritual is the matriculation of the students in the schools to which they were allocated. From this moment on they become recognized as second phase students and cease to be seen as children due to the autonomy granted after the ritual. There is, however, another kind of path that can be undertaken by families that are not satisfied with the schools to which their children were allocated.

At this moment, the parents return to the active position by seeking out and negotiating transfers for their children. In 2012, the most prestigious school that we analysed in the South Zone – *Escola Mar* – received 9 transferred pupils. Fernandes (2014) decided to investigate these pupils and managed to interview six of them. Almost all – five cases – were enrolled in the public system and decided to change school. The sixth case was that of a pupil from the private system who needed to migrate to the public system.

These cases illustrate the post-liminal rites because all of them were reassigned to the school after the official period of the good school ritual, and chose it because of its recognition as one of the best schools in the district, as well as having the best reputation within the matriculation pole. It was interesting to observe that all the families had access to the same employee when they began their move to gain a place at the best school

from the pole. The families perceived him as someone responsible for a variety of posts at the school and contacted him via their personal relations. He is office worker at *Escola Mar*.

The employee himself was interviewed and described the entire process to be followed when the families decide to seek out a good school after the ritual. The first step at *Escola Mar* is, precisely, to talk to him. Although he is not the director, he presents himself as the best placed employee for resolving issues related to the matriculation of students outside the period. This occurs because the school director asks parents to see him in these cases. The employee's key position was confirmed by one of the interviewed mothers. She says that only this employee managed to solve the school's bureaucratic problems.

You can go there and ask just to see him, because he's the only one who will give you a concrete reply. He can tell you everything you need to know. Indeed people say that the office has 10 people working there, but the other 9 are just extras.²³

The employee's reputation is recognized by all the families who matriculated their children after the good school ritual. He himself explains that the families seek him out directly and says that since he's 'a soft touch,' he understands the families' dilemmas and looks for places for them, even when these places do not officially exist. In these cases, he mobilizes a complex network involving staff from other schools and the Regional Education Coordination Office in which *Escola Mar* is located. These efforts are made as soon as the employee recognizes the mother asking for a place as a *person* who should obtain a place at that school. In these cases, he will even telephone the mother to tell her when the place is available.

The most interesting aspect is that the employee complains that as soon as they obtain the desired place, the families vanish and almost never come back to speak to him. On the rare occasion when they do return, they fail to give him the attention he thinks he deserves. This neglect from the families upsets him deeply since he thinks that the families should maintain the same kind of relationship with him.

All the matriculated families recognize the employee as the person responsible for getting them a place at the school. One of the mothers even

23 Interview conducted by Iris Fernandes on 23/09/2013.

said that when she decided to change her son's school, she already knew about the employee "*via the grapevine*." People from her circuit of friends remarked "*any problems, go to [name of the employee],*" "*if you want something done there [at Escola Mar], if you want a place, talk to [name of the employee] and he'll get one for you.*" These accounts show that although the parents do not go back to thank him as he would like, they contribute directly to constructing and maintaining his reputation in spaces outside the school. He is recognized as director, vice-director, pedagogical coordinator and employee of the school. In short: he is seen as the person who should be approached to obtain a place. As he himself explains, his approach allows him to live up to his reputation.

Felipo and Marina obtained a place at the school by going through the same employee. The account of their access strategies – undertaken after the matriculation period – allow us to perceive the type of relation that he established with the families who look for places at *Escola Mar*.

4.3.1 – Felipo and the direct line to the 'vice-director'

Felipo is 13 years old, brown (*pardo*) and an Evangelical from the Assembly of God Church. His mother sees him as a good student, since he "*has a great capacity to learn, but sometimes he falters, if we don't push him, you know what it's like!*" In terms of discipline, she says that he is average, because he is very lazy and does not study outside of school time. His mother thinks that he will go to university; she says that she will not let the same thing happen as occurred with his older brother, who left school and she did nothing about it. Since 2011, Felipo had been studying in the morning, but when he went to *Escola Mar* he entered the afternoon intake. His mother said that she did not know how this happened and at the end of the year she asked the 'vice-director' to move him to the morning intake. She said that a place became available and he switched her son without any problem. She praised the 'vice-director,' adding that "*whatever we ask from him, he helps wherever possible.*" She said that although her son is at the school that she wanted for him, and she did not try another school, if she could, she would move him to a private school.

The interviewee stated that she did not consult anyone when it came to choosing *Escola Mar*. She already knew the 'vice-director,' because her older daughter had previously studied at the school. As for the process of

choosing the school, she said *“I always said that when he finished [the first phase of primary education] he would go to [Escola Mar].”* The motive for her choice was that the school is good and is close to her place of work.

Rosana claimed that obtaining a place was not difficult. She said that she began to think about changing her son’s school at the end of the year because the school where he was did not teach the second phase. As the school concerned was located in another matriculation pole, she said that her son was automatically transferred to a school from the same region, but she did not want this school under any circumstances. She said: *“I didn’t like the college’s structure, inside or outside, I didn’t like it....”* The mother laughed at her own comments, adding: *“he wasn’t going to study there.”* To sort out the problem, she looked for a place at *Escola Mar* where she already knew the employee, and so *“knew that there would be no problem.”* It was also located close to her work. She said that this was her first option *“because she already knew about it”*: at other schools, she *“would have to talk to the director,”* it would be harder work.

In January 2014 she went to *Escola Mar*, spoke to the employee and told him that she wanted a place, and *“handed in the paperwork that the school requested and that was that.”* When we asked her to tell us how she obtained the place, she replied: *“by knowing someone, if I didn’t know anyone it would be more difficult.”* She added: *“[the employee] is the vice-director, it’s easier,”* and that, as cited earlier, *“whatever we ask from him, he helps wherever possible.”* She said that he had first told her to transfer Felipe to *Escola Mar* back when he was in the first phase of primary education. He said: *“send him here right away,”* but as he was already at a school in another pole, she waited to enrol him in the second phase.

4.3.2 - Marina and the much-loved employee

Marina is 12 years old, white and Catholic. Her mother, Samara, classifies her as a good student with average discipline. She has never repeated a year, she studies outside school three times a week, an hour per day, with the help of her brother or mother when she needs it. Samara thinks that her daughter will study up to university level.

Marina is an interesting case because her mother works at *Escola Mar* and she, by law, could request that her daughter be matriculated at the same school where she works. But at no point did she contemplate taking this

course of action. She told us that her daughter studied at a school in another pole and was therefore automatically transferred to another school from the same pole. She enrolled her daughter because she did not want to lose the place and then went to the employee to resolve the issue.

When she talked to the employee, she said that her daughter was completing the first grades of primary education and he prepared a ‘*pre-matriculation*’ for her. We asked how this ‘*pre-matriculation*’ worked: she said that she did not know exactly, but he made it to guarantee her daughter’s place. Afterwards the employee gave her a certificate and she took it back to the school to formalise the transfer. Her daughter did not even begin studies at the new school where she had been enrolled. Before classes began, she was transferred to *Escola Mar*. When asked whether it had been easy to get a place at *Escola Mar*, she said that the employee knows that “*it’s all a question of understanding based on necessity,*” since he is responsible for matriculation and “*is very aware, [...], he sees the parent’s need.*”

Asked about the response of the director to this, she said that “*she doesn’t even know.*” She related that the person who mostly talks to the parents is the employee, since “*he knows everything*”: he is not on the school board, but he “*knows everything about all the pupils,*” “*he’s more clued up on the children.*” When some situation occurs involving a teacher and a pupil, they always ask him to mediate, listen to both sides, since “*without him the school doesn’t function.*” He is “*super human,*” a “*really good person*” who everyone at the school adores: there is not anyone who does not like him since he always helps whenever possible.

5 – Conclusion

The good school ritual was discovered when we began fieldwork for a research project on school choice and access in Rio de Janeiro. Initially we thought that access to the schools would involve strictly bureaucratic procedures and that our goal would simply be to ascertain the selection criteria used by the schools. Fieldwork showed us that there was a series of far from bureaucratic processes coexisting alongside the rules established by the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Council for enrolling children in municipal schools. This type of dialogue between universalist rules and particularist interests is not found only in the distribution of school places. As DaMatta

(1978) indicated, it comprises a structuring element of Brazilian society. In this article we demonstrate that it manifests in the educational field too.

From the moment when we decided to deepen our analyses, we found ourselves surrounded by a complex circuit of solidarity that both precedes and is sustained after the ritual we name the good school ritual. Here I have shown that parental involvement in this ritual is limited to the preliminary and post-liminal moments. The liminal moments themselves are restricted to the participation of managers from the first and second phase primary schools. They are the ones who in the end divide the pupils up between those who gain places at schools with a better reputation and performance, and others who will be sent to schools with a worse reputation and worse performance. The ritual therefore combines a series of procedures that collectively construct individual trajectories of school success or failure. Even if the pupils who went to the worse schools – in terms of reputation and performance – are successful, they will still receive a poorer education compared to the teaching offered to those chosen for the best schools.

These investigations have allowed us to broaden the debate on the correlation between socioeconomic level and school success because, as I show here, there are cases in which there are no significant differences in socioeconomic level yet even so the pupils follow distinct school careers within the same education system. Furthermore, the research also throws into question the common sense views suggesting that the population does not recognize the best schools. We found precisely the opposite. The interviewees recognize the best schools from their regions and want to enrol their children there. However, they also understand that not everyone will be able to get a place because the route to these schools is marked out and limited to those who recognize the maps providing access to the best schools.

To conclude, analysis of the good school ritual can be said to reveal the inequalities present in a public education system intended to be republican, but which is in fact stratified by school reputation and performance. In a sense, the ritual foments the idea that since the reallocation process is for everyone, it must also be democratic and egalitarian. The analyses described here show the exact opposite. It is a peculiar ritual since, even in

the liminal phase, the neophytes are not equal because their background, their performance and their insertion in networks of solidarity contribute to their trajectories being more or less virtuous.

As argued at the start of the article, the rationalized and bureaucratized structure of the matriculation processes still depends on rituals that organize the relation between the schools and the public that they serve. This is the contribution offered here, along with the argument that the anthropology of education needs to transcend the physical and symbolic boundaries of school institutions to include the network of relations between *persons* and *individuals* who come together to define the trajectories of pupils who want or need to frequent public primary schools in Rio de Janeiro.

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Clocks, calendars and cell phones

An ethnography on time in a high school

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Abstract

Considering that time is an important dimension in anthropological discourse and a key element of the “hidden curriculum” of school, this paper presents the results of an ethnography on time in a high school in João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil. We discuss how teaching/learning processes are organized and experienced in time, paying close attention to the limitations and possibilities revealed by interactions between teachers and students. We first identify the pedagogical temporal units that compose the dimension of structural time at the school, and then identify aspects of time in practice (experiences and strategies). We argue that school time is both a constraint and an opportunity, unfolding in a series of metaphors (“save time,” “waste time,” “kill time”, “fill time”, “pass the time”), which enable ways of thinking about the conflicts present in daily school life.

Keywords: time, school, high school, youth, new information technology (NIT).

Resumo

Considerando que o tempo é uma importante dimensão para a reflexão antropológica, e um elemento fundamental no “currículo oculto” da instituição escolar, este artigo apresenta alguns resultados de uma etnografia com foco nos tempos numa escola de ensino médio em João Pessoa (Paraíba, Brasil). Nosso foco consiste em pensar o modo como os processos de ensino/

aprendizagem são organizados e vivenciados temporalmente, dando atenção aos limites e possibilidades que se revelam nas interações entre professores e alunos. Para isso, identificamos, em primeiro lugar, as unidades temporais pedagógicas, que compõem a dimensão do tempo estrutural da escola pesquisada para em seguida identificar aspectos do tempo na prática (experiências e estratégias). Defendemos que o tempo escolar emerge simultaneamente como constrangimento e como oportunidade, se desdobrando em uma série de metáforas (“ganhar tempo”, “perder tempo”, “matar o tempo”, “preencher o tempo”, “passar o tempo”), que permitem pensar alguns impasses presentes no cotidiano escolar.

Palavras-chave: tempo, escola, ensino médio, juventude, novas tecnologias da informação (NTI).

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Introduction

On a typical weekday morning between September and June some 5 million Americans kiss their loved ones goodbye, pick up their lunch pails and books, and leave to spend their day in that collection of enclosures (totaling about one million) known as elementary school classrooms. This massive exodus from home to school takes place with a minimum of fuss and bother. Few tears are shed (except perhaps by the very youngest) and few cheers are raised.

(Jackson 1990:3)

For children and adolescents, school is an important marker of daily time and an element to consider in projections about the future. The act of attending school divides the annual cycle into two periods—the school year and vacation time—, marks a distinction in the week—school days and weekends—, and even divides the day into distinct periods with respective spaces and activities. Along with family, school comes to play an important role in an individual’s biography, marking the first phases of the life cycle and populating, for better or worse, an individual’s memories into adult life and old age. It is in school that children and adolescents learn to fit and conform their tasks to previously established schedules, dates and places, becoming accustomed to basic elements of a discipline that, not by chance, has many similarities with the working world. In effect, school schedules, calendars, bells and clocks form part of a temporal pedagogy that reflects

values and practices beyond the school walls, and constitute a fundamental element of the socialization promoted there. School is also a setting where other temporalities can be constructed, often in the gaps between institutional temporalities, made possible by the crisscrossing paths and practice of a wide range of sociabilities.

In an attempt to thoroughly examine the temporal dimension of school life, in this paper, we describe some reflections constructed on the basis of an ethnography of time spent in a public high school in the city of João Pessoa, capital of the state of Paraíba, in Northeast Brazil. The fieldwork¹ was conducted during the 2013 school year and sought to identify daily routines from the point of view of the main actors: students and teachers.² Systematic observations were made within the premises of the school attempting to examine, to the extent possible, the full range of educational and social activities. Observations were complemented with analysis of documents and 18 semi-structured interviews (nine with students, eight with teachers, and one with the school's principal).

Our proposal in this paper is to show that not only does time represent an important regulatory dimension in academic activities, but it also constitutes the context in which teaching/learning and sociability practices and interactions are developed. We start by making a distinction between structural time (understood here as the programmatic framework of educational activities) and time lived, which includes concrete experiences (practices and significance) of time in the academic space. The distinction is analytical, since in practice both dimensions are found to be overlapping, but it becomes relevant to ask questions, such as: what are the daily conflicts experienced in the academic institution regarding time management? In what way do the subjects, with their different perspectives/positions in the school, give meaning to the time they devote to the institution? And, finally, what strategies do some use to deal with the ambiguities and pressures of school time? Our focus is to explore and reflect on the way in which teaching/learning processes are temporally organized and experienced, paying

1 Resulted in a Master's thesis defended in the PPGA/UFPB (Souza 2014). We are grateful for the contributions of the examining board, composed of Márcia Longhi and Regina Medeiros, as well as comments from Ivan Bastos in the qualification board.

2 Other authors who also are part of daily school life are the staff and the students' families, and while the latter are not present daily, they are equally important.

attention to the limitations and possibilities revealed in student/teacher interactions. We argue that school time emerges simultaneously as a constraint and an opportunity, unfolding in a series of metaphors (“save time,” “waste time,” “pass the time”), all of which will be duly discussed below (Ramos Torre 2009).

Thus, the paper seeks to provide a contribution to anthropological studies on education from a specific perspective: understanding the school as a place where temporalities are produced, transmitted, learned and experienced. We believe this is a rare approach in an attempt to approximate school life, which could reveal implicit dynamics and frame some of the school’s dilemmas from a different angle.

Problematizing school time

As occurs with space, time is a category that has mobilized anthropological thinking from the inception of the discipline (see Munn 1992; Gell 1992). The way in which societies perceive the flow of things and humans, the way in which societies organize this flow, based on establishing temporal frames of reference, the way in which activities are synchronized, the periodization and seasonality of social life—all these aspects are of interest to anthropologists; however, not always with a singular focus on one aspect separate from the others or with the depth in inquiry required. Time appears to be difficult to examine as a subject of research, as even today the Augustinian maxim echoes strongly: “The problem of time in anthropology, as in other disciplines, is subject to the Augustinian lament: how difficult to find a meta-language to conceptualize something so ordinary and apparently transparent in everyday life” (Munn 1992:116).

With respect to school, something similar happens: its times are generally not problematized; they are *taken as given*, and are not viewed as an integral part of the educational process unfolding therein. Our proposal here is to present the school as a place where students (children and adolescents) undergo a certain type of temporal socialization and where they also imprint new temporalities through its practices. We will present the school in the general framework of its temporal organization and then discuss specific aspects.

According to Sue (1993), although all social practices produce their time, it is possible to establish a hierarchy that identifies some as particularly significant in a society's representation of itself. The author reserves the expression "social times" only for such times, which are responsible for the large collective rhythms, as well as for alterations that affect the rhythm of social life on a daily basis. In our society, these are the three major spheres of time: work time, free time and school time, which are all part of the ordering of the life cycle – education corresponds to childhood, work to adult life, and free time (here equal to retirement) characterizes old age. Outside of this, social times "are at the heart of the dynamic producer of social values (work ethic, learning ethic, hedonism and well-being)" (Sue 1993:64).

Within the three spheres mentioned, Sue (1993) identifies work time as being dominant in modern societies. Since school is a modern institution, the affinity between school time and work time is, in a certain sense, a given. Thus, on the edge of what is considered to be formal education explicitly taught within the school (the curricular contents of mathematics, sciences, Portuguese language, etc.), learning about a specific form of temporal perception and organization is part of the academic institution's "hidden curriculum" (Adam 1995:60), preparing students for their subsequent insertion into the world of work. "If school is the privileged place for the acquisition of disciplines and discipline, the discipline of all these disciplines is the translation of the conception, organization and management of time" (Sue 1993:66).

The elective affinity between school time and work time, more specifically the type of work that began in the Industrial Revolution, is propitiated in the first place by familiarizing the student with time measurement tools: the clock and calendar. As so aptly observed by Adam (1995:61): "Learning, teaching and even the payment of teachers are established and calculated on the basis of calendars and clocks." According to Lasén (2000:66), school functions as a "metronomic society": a society of measurements.

The use of calendars and clocks to determine the duration of social activities, as shown by Thompson (1967), is rooted in the temporal organization of monasteries, mainly Benedictine monasteries, where the monks' daily life was fractionated and determined to the most minimum detail

(prayer time, eating time, work time, etc.). In industrial societies, the calendar/clock system became hegemonic, initially at the hands of the owners of the means of production, then closely followed by its arrival on the mantelpiece in the home, and finally, with the popularization of wrist-watches, even strapped to the very body of the workers. The transition of a society to one in which time was marked by tasks done for another in the framework of abstract clock time took place at the same time the Puritan work ethic was steadily spreading, which led to changes in the perception of time. By internalizing new temporal disciplines, employers and later employees developed an economic perception of time, condensed in the famous phrase penned by Benjamin Franklin, *time is money*. In capitalist society, according to Thompson (1967:90-91), “all time must be consumed, marketed, put to *use*; it is offensive for the labour force merely to “pass the time.” Obviously, this change did not come about without some resistance, nor did it totally eliminate other temporalities, which remain, however, subordinated to clock time.

Therefore, more than constituting mere tools or technologies, the clock and school calendar reinforce in the students a certain notation of time, as well as translating values and expectations regarding the use of time, based on principles such as productivity, rationalization and efficiency: “Every task has its own optimal time. ‘Time-wasting’ is considered acceptable only during specially created periods of time—official break times, weekends and holidays—where it has been redefined for children and adults respectively as play-time and relaxation.” (Adam 1995:64). This is because school is one of the first social spaces where disciplinary techniques are put into operation, products of a new economy of time with respect to learning, and that which Foucault calls “the docile body”: “Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power” (Foucault 1977:152). By organizing a positive economy of time, the academic institution, in theory, aims to prevent temporal waste, optimizing the use of the students’ and teachers’ time; that is, extracting from their time the maximum of available moments and useful work.

If the school’s temporal organization reflects a certain model of work and type of society (preparing students to adapt to the hegemonic time of industrial societies), it is to be expected that the changes affecting these societies also bring changes or conflicts in school time. In this sense, Sue

(1993) argues that the school model described above is outdated, since the distinction between instruction (informal and less important) and education (formal and more valued) no longer has any meaning. The author believes that work time has been displaced from its dominant position in favor of free time, which is beginning to have a growing educational potential, principally due to the proliferation of the so-called new information technologies (NIT). Appropriated by the new generation (those young people that the educational academic process targets), NIT remove the monopoly of the educational act from the school and consequently multiply the actors involved in the pedagogical relationship.

Without opening a discussion here on the shifting work time/free time ratio, we would like to underscore the impact new information technologies have on the learning processes—both inside and outside the classroom. Although this trend is increasingly drawing the attention of education researchers, time as an isolated factor is not necessarily the focus of these studies (see Dwyer et al. 2007; Mamede-Neves & Duarte 2008; Porto 2006). Among other revelations in these studies, there is an apparent consensus on the difficulty of introducing new technologies into daily school life, among other reasons because the school's very foundation is based on the figure of teacher as mediator of the student's relationship to learning, and new technologies discard the role of this mediation. In terms of the relationship to time, new information technologies free learning from its dependence on a previously established chronologically linear project that determines the contents for each phase of learning (academic curriculum) in favor of searches motivated by contingent necessity and choices. Thus, the metaphor of the net replaces the metaphor of the line as representing the learning process.

In addition to these changes and their impact on school time, it is important to note that the socialization of time as proposed by the school never occurs peacefully and without resistance. In his famous ethnography on the anti-academic culture of youth from the British working classes, Willis observes that the official notion of time in school, which values time as investment in the future, the youth counterpoint with “a sense of urgency”: “time is something they want to claim for themselves now as an aspect of their immediate identity and self-direction” (Willis 1977:29). It is therefore important that we observe the way in which the various different

actors in the school appropriate for themselves and propose other temporalities for this space.

Up to this point, we have shown that school time is a precursor to work time, providing an assimilation and training for the discipline that children and youth will later face in adult life. We emphasize, equally, that this is an implicit aspect of school, since the explicit objectives of this institution generally include the transmission of knowledge and civic formation, among other factors. Finally, we point out how changes in the work world can also lead to modifications in the way school organizes its time, or even its conflicts. Our research in this paper rests on how this temporal socialization occurs in daily life in schools attended by Brazilian youth, namely public schools, where students from the poorest population levels are enrolled.

In previous studies (Franch 2008), we suggested that public school can often present a “paradoxical socialization of time,” marked by a discursive reinforcement of the values of meritocracy, based on personal effort and upholding the pillar of access to formal education, but contrasted by the daily onslaught of the routine devaluation of student’s time, as observed in the constant cancellation of classes due to the shortage of contracted teachers, absences and renovations done during school time, among others. In this paper, we seek a deeper understanding of the apparent *gap* between discourse and practice.

Research in a public high school: context and questions

João Pessoa, with an estimated population of 780,738, is often referred to as a peaceful city that offers a good quality of life to its inhabitants, with a range of services available but without the excessive disturbances that commonly occur in urban life. Reasonably well forested and with an attractive climate, the city is framed by well-kept urban beaches where people can go and exercise or take family picnics morning, noon or night. This image of a peaceful city, sold endlessly by the local press and national tourist agencies (and which, to a certain degree, corresponds to the lifestyles of the elite and tourists who frequent the beachside hotels), hides other less-benevolent sides of the city. As one moves beyond the surrounding suburbs, where the more well off families are concentrated,

the city becomes diversified into neighborhoods of unequal infrastructure with reduced availability of goods and services. In one of its most unfavorable aspects, João Pessoa is notorious as the second most violent capital for youth in Brazil, with an adolescent homicide rate of 177.8 per 100,000 (Waiselfisz 2014).

The school where the study was conducted (Josué de Castro),³ is one of the largest high schools in the state of João Pessoa. It offers two shifts of high school, afternoon and evening, and its 968 enrolled students are spread out across 25 classes, with an average of 45 students per class. The school is located in Bairro do Carmo in the western part of the city, an area that was socially and economically well off but began to decline in the 1970s, as the wealthier families moved out to suburban neighborhoods, abandoning the central area. Presently, Bairro do Carmo is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in João Pessoa, with 25,994 inhabitants, 19,388 of who are considered to be at highly at-risk socially. Most students live near the school, but others travel from other neighborhoods on public transportation to get there. This diversity is responsible for certain heterogeneity in terms of social origin, which is also reflected in the diverse appearance of the adolescents in their varying styles of dress and lifestyles.

A researcher who enters Josué de Castro High School for the first time encounters a structure that is extremely common in regional public education establishments: single-story buildings arranged around a central patio, the entire complex surrounded by a wall that separates the school complex, which occupies an entire block, from the street. All the classrooms are equipped with data projectors and air-conditioning, and the installations do not show the air of neglect often found in these spaces. The researcher then will discover, however, that it is not just any school. In 2011, a public university was installed on the premises, which brought some benefits for the operation of the school itself, especially in terms of teachers' salaries and improvement of some infrastructure items. As a counterpart, the school lost the afternoon shift and at the time of our study, some spaces were closed off and not in use. The presence of the university on the school's premises was helping improve the school's image in the city, attracting new students. Students commonly refer to the school as "the university."

3 The name of the school and those of teachers, students and places were changed to preserve confidentiality.

To study time in a school, the choice of a high school presents some particular features, the first of which is the generational perspective. In accordance with Article 35 of the LDB⁴, high school constitutes the final step in Basic Education and targets adolescents aged 15-17 years old. It is known that education in Brazil still endures a significant grade/age distortion. Although the net rate of 15-17-year-olds still enrolled in school is reportedly 84.3%, only 55.2% of this group⁵ effectively attends classes. Despite this distortion, high school education is symbolically and numerically assimilated to adolescence and youth, particularly with respect to daytime shifts (our study was conducted during the afternoon shift), where the grade/age ratio is more balanced. Without trying to reinforce age stereotypes, focusing on adolescents instead of children involves observing subjects with a greater degree of agency, which can be translated into challenges for the use and control of school time, motivated by the search for sociability and other generational interests. Adolescents also present more active appropriation of new information technologies, particularly cell phones and smart phones, which has emerged as a *problem* that schools increasingly need to address (Mamade-Neves & Duarte 2008; Porto 2006).

Another aspect related to choice of a high school is its implicit social profile. More than 29,000 students are enrolled in the city's 94 high schools (46 private and 48 public). Although access to high school in João Pessoa has increased significantly, similar to what is happening in other Brazilian municipalities, the students enrolled at this level still constitute a relatively small portion of the population: 44.4% of the 15-17-year-olds,⁶ who remain unevenly distributed according to their family income. National data show that only 9.8% of the 18-24-year-olds in the richest quintile do not complete high school, while this percentage rises to 50.9%

4 The National Education Guidelines and Framework Law, approved by the national congress in 1996, establishes the country's basic education guidelines.

5 Data from 2011, according to the document *Síntese de Indicadores do IBGE* [Synthesis of Social Indicators, IBGE] (2014).

6 According to the *Atlas do Desenvolvimento Humano no Brasil 2013* [Atlas of Human Development in Brazil], the number of youth aged 18-20 years old who finished high school in João Pessoa rose from 17.5% in 1991 to 47.8% in 2010. Of the 44.4% of adolescents aged 15-17 years old in high school, 32.7% do not present any grade/age distortion, 8.7% are behind one year and 2.9% are two years or more behind. Of the remaining 55.6%, 14.7% are not attending school, 27.1% are still in elementary school, 2.8% already attend university, and 10.9% are in the category "other."

in the poorest quintile (IBGE 2014). In this paper, by focusing on a state high school in João Pessoa, we choose to give visibility to the experiences of youth who mainly live in working class or lower-middle class neighborhoods in the city, but whose educational history is successful in comparison with other adolescents from their same neighborhoods.

The third aspect to consider is the very purpose of high school education, which refers to the representations of the future that the school manages. Existing legislation, namely the 1996 National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB in Portuguese) and the National Education Council Guidelines, attributes a broad educational objective to high school education that incorporates education for work and citizenship, ethical instruction and the development of students' intellectual autonomy and critical thinking, as well as learning several scientific and technological subjects. However, until the 1960s and 1970s, this level of education was preferentially oriented toward the preparation of an economic and/or socially select clientele for their enrollment in university. In a short time, high school education shifted to a public focus, opening to students of diverse social origins, who brought to the school, above all to public school, different backgrounds and distinct expectations (see Menezes 2001; Krawczyck 2011; Sousa & Portela 2008). Despite the changes underway, studies indicate that schools continue reproducing bureaucratic modes of teaching, presenting the students with content that they will supposedly come to grasp and make sense of later when they are exposed to university courses, which, without this solution of continuity, becomes devoid of meaning and out of context (Menezes 2001:205).

These characteristics, which make up the current general picture of the “problems” or challenges of high school education in Brazil, present an important background when attempting to understand how time is organized in Josué de Castro, the object of our observation.

On the track of structural time: units of time in Josué de Castro

For example, try to represent what the notion of time would be without the processes by which we divide it, measure it, or express it with objective signs, a time which is not a succession of years, months, weeks, days, and

hours! This is something unthinkable. We cannot conceive of time, except on condition of distinguishing its different moments.

(Durkheim 1912:10).

To begin our ethnographic approximation, we resolved to closely follow Durkheim's understanding (1912), investigating how the daily flow of life in the school is divided, measured and expressed. To achieve this, we identified the basic units of school time, that is, the units in the school calendar that govern the temporal logic of school practices. These units are programmed from the beginning of activities, with the aim of organizing the transfer of content and day-to-day life in the school. These are not flexible units, since they arise from a structural dimension of time, that of time planned prior to and defining of activities. In this sense, although the school has a certain degree of autonomy in relation to the arrangement of activities, it is very limited, since the planned activities must comply with the national curriculum guidelines.

The temporal units observed include:

a) *The school year.* This is the basic unit of school time; that is, the period in which school activities are carried out. In the case of Brazil, the school year generally runs from February to December, with vacation time in July and recess in January, dividing the year into two periods. The school year has an intrinsic relation with the academic curriculum, constituting the interval of time in which specific content must be transferred, learned and evaluated, so that students can "pass the year." Thus, knowledge is viewed as a process that occurs in a linear and cumulative way, such that the school year is supportive of the image of irreversible time. When a student is unable to assimilate all the content, it is said that he/she "lost the year," and has to repeat it again. Repeating, along with dropping out, used to be much more common situations in the past, but they are still significant in the reality of the Josué de Castro High School: in 2010 the repeat rate at the school was 19.00% and the dropout rate was 33.78%.⁷ The students who repeat need to take the same courses again with the same content, in the hope that during the second opportunity the content will be assimilated.

⁷ For further discussion on the culture of repetition, see Sá Earp (2009).

Although the school year prioritizes the linear, abstract and quantitative dimensions of time, the study revealed a temporality submitted to rhythms and variations that do not depend only on the measurement of months, incorporating aspects of a qualitative order, similar to that observed in other studies (Carvalho 1993). The beginning of the year is marked by a sensation of novelty. In the classrooms, content is presented in a vivid way, students are more interested in the classes, classrooms are fuller. As the year progresses, both teachers and students appear to lose interest, especially after holidays and more markedly after the National High School Exam (ENEM) in November, which can be considered a “strong time” for students and teachers, signaling the decline of pedagogical effort for some others.⁸ The end of the year is a period dominated by exhaustion and by pressure: teachers need to “speed up” to be able to complete the program, students rush so as “to not be left behind.” Complaints concerning the impossibility of completing the content planned for the year are unanimous among the teachers, one that by all indications is repeated year after year. In summary, although the year is presented as a homogenous unit, it *feels* different as the months pass: Teacher W. also complains of exhaustion and the final rush at the end of the year, in order to leave grades and exercise books up to date. Teacher E. said that students don’t want to go to class and teachers don’t want to give classes and that everyone is tired and they finally reach a consensus in terms of classes.

(Field note, November 19th, 2013)

b) *The bimonthly period.* This is another important temporal unit, since it guides the evaluations. Every two months the school has an exam period, a time when students are evaluated with tests that attempt to measure what they have learned in the previous two months. Although the evaluations constitute “special times”, since different temporalities from the routine

8 The ENEM is a test of knowledge test that is given annually in Brazil to individuals who have finished high school and to those who are over 18 years old and have not completed high school and want to obtain the degree. The exam serves as a prerequisite for entrance into a university. Although we will not examine this issue here, we mention that the ENEM appears to be an important marker in terms of teaching practices and the very objective of academic education, which can be assessed by an external institution outside the school. Teachers and students evaluate their performance based on the ENEM, whether by grades obtained (students) or by the frequency with which topics taught in class appear in the exam (teachers). The very purpose of high school is put into question in cases in which the student passes the ENEM while still in the second year, and thus comes to perceive the school year remaining as a “waste of time.” For further reflections, see Souza (2014).

week are established (students can leave early, there are no classes, etc.), they are still an integral part of the school year. Indeed, it is these exam periods that give a sense of meaning to daily school life, establishing sequences of learning, in order to optimize teaching. The interval of two months (from one exam period to another) appears to be an ideal time for learning – the period is not too long to get exhausted, and the content learned does not slip too far back in time to the point of being forgotten. As such, exam periods provide a break in the temporal *continuum* that are vaguely similar to the partitions presented by Hubert and Mauss (1909) in sacred time: time must be partitioned for it to become significant. In school, these intervals appear secularized and are applied in the service of controlling the progress of each student. In addition, the bimonthly exam period is complemented by several other forms of ranking that teachers use in an attempt to increase chances that students pass the year.

c) *The week*. It is during the week that both students and teachers experience their routine, since this is the unit of time that best translates the experience of repetition and the idea of routine. For a pedagogical perspective, the school week is understood to be the five-day period from Monday to Friday, followed by the weekend, which is the cadence in this routine. The importance of the week in the organization of school activities is evident in the fact that it is the only temporal unit with a graphic representation: the school calendar or schedule, which the students should copy in their notebook on the first day of class and then follow for their weekly activities.

d) *The day*. The school day is harnessed to a certain space, the school, which is separated from the street by walls and railings. For the administrative personnel and some teachers, it constitutes two shifts: afternoon and evening. For the remaining teachers and students, it includes only one shift, which lasts a little over six hours. Various factors can alter the length of a day, the most common being the absence of teachers and the resulting reshuffling of classes (“*subida de aulas*”), enabling students to leave early. Classes were also suspended due to unexpected events, such as lack of water or electricity, which unfortunately are not uncommon in João Pessoa.

Days differ from each other according to the schedule of materials taught and also by their position in the week. On Monday the week is “new” and everyone more rested, while by Friday, teachers and students

have grown tired and are anxious for the weekend. Outside of this cycle, the school distinguishes certain days, following the calendar of generally recognized commemorations (including International Women's Day and Mothers' Day). Often on these occasions, the school invites students' families to a gathering at the school, opening up to the surrounding community. There are other ways, however, that the dynamics of the street can spill over into the school enclosure, marking certain days as atypical:

Arriving at school, I noted that the mood was strange, few students, almost empty classrooms but it was a normally scheduled day. In the hallway I found the superintendent and we conversed for a bit. He told me that the school was like that because of what had happened the day before [...] According to him, two criminals were being chased and after they exchanged gunfire with the police in the street, they suddenly jumped the walls of the school [...] Students were running in every direction in the hallways, while the police shot at the criminals. It was desperate and agonizing chaos. Because of this, many students were not in school today; each class had an average of seven students and other classes were not even held.

(Field note, March 27th, 2013)

During the study period, this was the only incident of this type, but in previous years, other tragic incidents had interrupted daily school life. The murder of a teacher and of a student, both by ex-boyfriends, mobilized the school revealing the fragility of the walls separating the school enclosure from the more general dynamics of society.

f) *The class*. The class is the smallest pedagogical unit of time, lasting 45 minutes, and it is one of the richest for research. The class is a moment in which students and teachers, following principles of segmentation, turn to the contents that should be given in a specific, chronometered period. The organization of school hours requires that students be willing to shift their focus of interest in each class (sometimes every two classes) and that teachers have the skills to help the students successfully make this shift and follow the specific contents presented in each class.

Classes take place in closed spaces and almost always replicate an identical arrangement of bodies and furniture; students sit at their individual

desks, theoretically positioned to observe the teacher, though generally grouped by affinity. This spatial arrangement reflects a hierarchy regarding the control of time: in the classroom, the teacher is the master of time, but this dynamic depends on students' support for the pedagogical project developed therein. Observing daily life in classrooms, we perceived that clock time is only one of multiple dimensions at play, the scene that frames the interactions between teachers and students, riddled with negotiations that make such frameworks more flexible.

g) Recess. As its very name implies, recess is perceived as an interstice, free time, a needed escape in the school day. As such, it is not a proper pedagogical unit, since there is no content coupled to it⁹. Lasting only 15 minutes, though occasionally longer if the class before it ended early, recess is marked by the separation of the two main groups of actors in the school's daily life: teachers and students.

It is during recess that students can move about more spontaneously and the diversity comes into focus. One group is the evangelical students, who tend to form small cliques at recess. At events and commemorations, these students also present themselves in a different manner, singing, praising and giving testimony. Despite the monotony of the school uniform, the youths' likes and styles are apparent in colorful accessories, jewelry in the case of girls, brightly colored caps and tennis shoes for the boys, which also reflect the different patterns of consumption among them. There is evident use of cell phones and smartphones to take photos, send messages and, mostly, to listen to music in these periods, and in the classroom, denoting a generational culture marked by the compulsion to connect, to not miss anything (Agger 2011).

The above-described units show that the school day is structurally composed of four different connected dimensions. The first is the linear dimension, as attested by the school year based on the idea that the successful gaining of knowledge is a gradual and cumulative process. The second is the seasonal dimension, also reflected in the school year and to a lesser degree, throughout the day, based on the programming of intervals that establish a before and after in the principal unit of time – interval or

9 Although it may appear obvious, this is an important distinction, since in other contexts the interval is effectively incorporated into the formation, and thus considered a pedagogical unit. See Madsen (2008:168), especially in reference to schools in Hanoi (Vietnam) that use recess to perform synchronized physical activities.

recess for the day, and holidays for the year – , roughly synchronized with periods of work time (two vacation periods during the school year, and one period from work). The third is a routine cyclical recursive dimension that appears in the day, the week, over the long term and in the year. And, finally, a segmented dimension, present in the bimonthly periods and in classes, which relates temporal clock/calendar-measured fragments with the involvement of specific activities (classes) or assessment of knowledge supposedly acquired up to a specific point in time (exams).

These dimensions, which correspond to regular times, are interspersed with special times, mainly through extracurricular activities such as contests or knowledge fairs, which provide other temporalities/spatialities in relation to regular class time, as well as other teacher-student interactions.¹⁰

Meanwhile, in a classroom: dimensions lived in school time

From time as structure that delimits and makes possible pedagogical practices, we shift our focus here to the dimensions of experience lived, revealing time as action and meaning. For this, we start with Munn's understanding of temporalization, which defines "time as a symbolic process continually being produced in everyday practices" (Munn 1992:116). The temporal unit of the class will serve as a privileged entry to offer into evidence temporal negotiations, tactics and strategies on the part of students and teachers in their daily interactions, drawing attention to dimensions such as control, power and resistance, as well as more subjective aspects that refer to temporal experiences and sensations.

a) *Class management: planning vs. improvising.* According to Jackson (1990:12), one of the teacher's responsibilities is "serving as an official timekeeper," deciding when activities should begin and end, whether to grant permission to students' requests (to go to the bathroom, get a drink of water, etc.), as well as announcing the moment in which the class is over, which tends to be assisted by "elaborate systems of bells and buzzers" (Jackson 1990:12). Management of class time provides evidence of the teacher's performance, and is intrinsically tied to questions like personal

¹⁰ It was not possible to address these times here. See Sousa (2014).

investment, charisma and experience, but also to workload and general working conditions.

A key element in understanding the way teachers manage class time relates to the planning of activities. The educational system is based on the assumption that the teacher dedicates an equal or greater amount of time spent in the classroom to tasks like preparing and correcting tests, research and planning. On the other hand, it is evident that pedagogical practice requires a good dose of creativity and capacity to respond to concrete and unexpected situations. While planning is a strategy based on future time, the tactic of improvisation calls for the contingent development of activities in the present. Both these temporal orientations are present in the daily life of Josué de Castro High School: there are teachers who arrive with everything planned, others who plan with a wide margin for improvisation, and still others who do not plan the class and decide at the beginning of class what activities to do. This last situation becomes more common as the year progresses and time becomes more scarce.

In the working of class time, everything counts: life histories and school stories, anecdotes, news and TV programs, future school activities. As such, teachers' time resembles the *bricoleur* of Lévi-Strauss (1989), who constructs his work based on an eclectic set of materials. If, on the one hand, this *bricolage* approach reveals a pedagogical solution capable of connecting with the students in their daily life (sometimes more effectively than the bureaucratic contents of the disciplines), a lack of planning can also transform a class into simply *passing the time*, or even, into an empty way of “fulfilling” or “killing” class time until the teacher can leave:

Second and third periods were classes with teacher João. He spent the first class talking about hygiene and his experiences of falling in love and flirting in his youth and giving advice to students, and the students were greatly entertained. In the second class he talked about the cultural contest¹¹ and assigned a task.

(Field note, May 22nd, 2013)

11 An extracurricular weeklong event that consists of teams of students presenting specific content. The winning teams receive awards.

The teacher arrived ten minutes late. And when she arrived she continued talking about the cultural contest. The room was noisy and chaotic. The teacher sat on the bureau looking at the class schedule and the students continued talking. The teacher asked a student to perform roll call while she organized her class notes [...] The students sing Justin Bieber in the classroom and the teacher asks for silence. The teacher continues to sit on the bureau, barely interacting with the students.

(Field note, May 27th, 2013)

b) *Scarcity, experience and exhaustion: facets of teachers' time.* The difficulty teachers face in planning their classes needs to be situated in the general context of the conditions of involvement in educational work, widely discussed in the specialized literature. In addition to being exposed to the growing intensity and precariousness of the work (Lelis 2012), teachers must often face “violence, insecurity, bureaucracy, low pay, lack of perspective of career promotion, overcrowded classrooms,” as well as “long working days” and the “intense rhythms of educational work” (Alvarenga 2008:100).

In Josué de Castro High School, most teachers supplement their income through part-time work at different schools, spending a good part of their time teaching classes and correcting tests in heavy work schedules, leaving little time for planning. On some occasions, we observed them using part of the class to put their papers and class notes in order while the students performed some learning activity or conversed among themselves. The demands intensify during exam periods, when the teachers must correct the tests and record the grades of all students in the gradebook. There is no doubt that time, in this sense, acts as oppressor of teaching activities, as corroborated by similar results from several studies already conducted in Brazil on elementary and secondary school teachers (Alvarenga 2008, Carvalho 1993):

In the interval between classes, the teacher told me that he was tired, that he had already taught six classes that morning. He teaches three different subjects in another school. He told me that in the other school he uses a microphone to give classes and that sometimes he brings the microphone to this school

as well. On average, his classes have 60 students and that after this school, he is going to another to teach the night shift as well. This is his routine on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The pace slows down a bit on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but he teaches classes every day.

(Entry in field notes, November 8th, 2013)

A scarce resource in daily life, in the long run, time can function as an asset accumulated in the form of experience. Time as an acquired resource emerges in the conversations of some teachers in a similar way to a “time bank” that offsets everyday urgency, as well as valuing age/time of service, therefore differentiating experienced teachers from novices. Without substituting the need for planning and creativity, experience condenses accumulated knowledge through years of practice of the occupation, including the ability to deal with situations that vary widely from what the teacher sees as ideal: “My day today is hectic, as I told you, but since I have experience teaching that subject and I always teach that class, all year, I already have everything in mind, *due to years of experience*.” (Interview with a teacher; emphasis added).

If time accumulated in educational activity can be transformed to experience, valuing a life lived teaching, this same time can also transmute into exhaustion and depletion, generating divestment in the teaching career and the construction of new life projects outside teaching, after retirement: “since I’m already at the end of my career, when I complete 50, I won’t wait a day longer. I’ve already given what I have to give to education” (interview with a teacher). Exhaustion, stress, anxiety, disappointment and illness form part of the daily life of the majority of teachers, some of whom are burdened by many years of service. When accumulated time is synonymous with depletion, younger teachers, however less experienced, have the advantage of still “having something to give” to education and their teaching efforts can engage students more:

The second class was [...] with teacher Rafael. He is new to the school, recently graduated. I admit his class surprised me [...]. Students not only paid attention, but participated in class. I was left wondering if it was because the teacher was young and spoke the same language as the students. Although the class was

short and the teacher dismissed the students before the end of the period, I believe it was a productive class in the sense that the central idea proposed by the teacher was effectively communicated.

(Field note, March 7th, 2013)

c) *Teaching resources and class time management.* The most common pedagogical resources used by teachers in Josué de Castro High School are the white board, the data projector, and the textbook. The board is by far the most widely used tool, although students do not show much interest. Many students do not copy the contents in their notebooks, instead they listen to music or leave the room, they make a racket every time the teacher turns their back to write. The use of the board appears to be more efficient, in terms of adhesion, when the teacher uses it to write tasks that the student must answer during the class. Without entering into the merits of the “copying” method, the amount of time students spent copying in their notebooks was noteworthy when compared with the limited time devoted to pedagogical interaction.

The teacher asked a student [...] to write a short text on the board for the students to translate and earn bonus points. [...] Meanwhile, the students copied the activity and whispered among themselves, the class was calm in comparison with others. [...] The girl who was copying the activity did her best to stand out. When they finished copying the text, the majority of the students put away their notebooks and continued talking or listening to music on their cell phones.

(Field note, May 15th, 2013)

In contrast, the data projector frees up the time spent copying in a notebook, enabling greater teacher-student interaction. The problem with this is the brightness of the classroom: “The teacher presents the material [...] using the projector, but it can barely be seen since the room is so bright and it is not easy to see what is on the slides,” the students complain (Field note, 4 March 2013). Lastly, the textbook is the least-used resource, which causes numerous complaints among the students.

Even regarding the importance of factors like accessibility and the crystallization of pedagogical practices (such as copying from the board), we propose understanding these technologies from the perspective of the control and economy of time. When used as support at certain moments during the class, the whiteboard can function like a *breath* for the teacher, a moment of pause between one interaction and the next, serving to fix knowledge and diversify the activities in the class. However, when the entire class consists of “copying text” from the board into the students’ notebooks, this resource tends to function as a pastime, a way for the teacher to fill out or meet the requirements of the 45-minute class while they control the students—even though it may not be successful. However, the use of the data projector, while not as adequate from a technical viewpoint (due to problems of visibility) enables the teacher to *save time*, due to the possibility of reusing the content for more than one class, even year after year. Here we have two mutually defining dimensions of pedagogical time: the class appears to be an extensive period that needs to be filled, while time outside class, which serves as support for the former, is scarce and must be fully exploited.

d) *Jumps in time: absent teachers vs. absent students.* Another factor that stands out in relation to time in classes is the frequency of “*aulas vagas*,” a phenomenon commonly observed in several other studies (Carvalho 1993; Franch 2008) and that is cause for complaints in online debate forums on public school issues.¹² An *aula vaga* [lit. vacant class] is a class that, although included in the school’s daily schedule, for some reason does not take place. In many schools, this occurs due to a shortage of contracted teachers, but this is not the case at Josué de Castro; the school was fully staffed at the time of our research. Our study observed that *aulas vagas* were the direct result of the absence of a teacher from work. An absence may be official via some formal permission (for example, medical leave); however, in the majority of cases, it has to do with being absent for one day, or departing early from school (whether in agreement with the principal’s office or not), and affects the temporal organization of the school in its daily routines.

12 See Pierro (2014), in widely disseminated text on public education debate forums on the internet.

Far from being an infrequent situation, in Josué de Castro, *aulas vagas* are incorporated into the school's routines, leading to a reorganization of activities called "*subir aulas*" ("moving classes up"). When a teacher is absent, the teacher from the last or second-to-last class of the shift is asked to take the class in place of the missing teacher. Since teachers' schedules are totally full, this request means that any teacher receiving this request is being asked to cover two classes simultaneously (usually in two classrooms). "Moving classes up" is a strategy for everyone to "save time," enabling students and teachers to end the school day early, which occurs at the expense of the content of the classes:

In this classroom there were two classes because 1C had a vacant class and so they decided to put the two classes together and it was difficult for the teacher to control so many students. He appeared very stern and he kept calling the students to order

(Field note, March 12th, 2013)

While the students took the test and conversed, the teacher was talking with me about the school's policy to move classes up. He said that it had its good points and its bad points. When a teacher splits their time between two classrooms, according to him, he can do neither one thing nor the other, so for him there is no upside. He finds the running around terrible and as such, he thinks it is better to stay later rather than move the classes up and leave earlier. He said that he does not like it at all.

(Field note, October 3rd, 2013)

Another situation that occurs is students actively "skip" classes. By tracking the same classes throughout the year, we observed that the number of students attending class fluctuated significantly. The first classes of the day tended to report higher absentee rates, leading to a stricter policy on the practice of letting students arrive after the first class. The last classes also tended to have more absentees.

Often when students were absent, it meant that they did not come to school that day. Frequently, however, students would come to school and

remain on the premises, but outside the classrooms, and then decide to skip a certain class or leave early. Skipping a class is usually not a random individual decision. It tends to involve more than one student and reveals an effort to pursue other uses, forms and rhythms of time than remaining in the classroom, as they perceived it:

I skipped purely out of mischief, I didn't care about anything, I only came to school to hang out, to talk with other students outside. That was mostly how it was, chatting outside, talking nonsense, I missed a lot classes. I couldn't care less about grades, roll call, any of it. (Eduardo, 19, first year)

Students who skip class [play hooky] are also selective and are more likely to skip classes they consider to be less important and teachers they judge to be worse. In this sense, these decisions contain an element of criticism about these classes that, for those skipping, are a "waste of time":

In fourth-period class I found Ray and Renata in the school hallway heading home; they were skipping class. I remained there talking with them [...] the supervisor saw us and came over to speak to us, primarily with the kids about skipping, about them simply skipping and that they shouldn't be doing that, and that leaving class to go home wasn't right [...]. The students said they had no motivation and were disappointed with the classes in [2 subjects].

(Field note, September 13th, 2013)

e) *Goofing off and gabbing: students' time.* Between skipping class and actively participating in class, a series of matrices mark different attitudes of the students in relation to what takes place in the classroom. One of the biggest challenges for the teachers, individually, and the school as an institution, is getting students to support the pedagogical project being developed there. "Anyone who has ever taught cannot help having wondered from time to time whether his students were with him or not." (Jackson 1977:86). In the case of Brazil, studies show that the teachers focus their pedagogical action only on those students who closely accompany the progress of the class, reproducing a division like that of the center/periphery, a practice that ends up contributing to the so-called "culture of repetition" by not motivating students who are having difficulty (Sá

Earp 2009). In Josué de Castro, this type of pedagogical selection was also observed.

The students are roughly divided into two groups: one group sits closer to the front and is motivated to participate in class; the other sits at the back of the classroom, the infamous “rowdy bunch”:

Some students pay attention, the teacher scolds the rest who are talking and says that those who do not want to assist the class can leave the room. At the same time, the students complain that they do not understand the subject but they also appear bored by the teacher’s explanations. The teacher takes questions from some of the students, focusing on those who are more interested. The group at the back converses openly. I observe little use of cell phones, hardly any. While the teacher takes questions from some students, two students put on makeup at the back of the room.

(Field notes, May 7th, 2013)

This class is really polarized. Some girls at the back of the room seem to enjoy chaos and disruption; they keep provoking other girls in front. They all argue and swear during the class and threaten their classmates. One girl told me that they are connected with the “Okaida.”¹³ Confusion breaks out in the room over the competition because these girls do not want to contribute money to perform the tasks for the competition, the banner and model, and they said that whoever contributes will have to face them. And they spent the whole class talking loudly to intimidate their peers, while the teacher pretended to see nothing and continued giving his lesson.

(Field note, May 20th, 2013)

Misbehaving, messing around, disrupting the progress of the class—all these are frequent behaviors that seek to pressure teachers to cut short the class. They are also ways of *temporalizing* (Munn 1992:116) or *making*

13 *Okaida* (OKD) and *Estados Unidos* (USA) are two rivaling gangs in João Pessoa that have channeled the rivalry between youths in different neighborhoods; this has affected school attendance in some of these neighborhoods. The presence of these two gangs in the local scene has been considered an important element in the growing adolescent death rate due to external causes in the city.

time, creating moments that stand out in the monotony of the classes and that become part of the repertoire of memories of youth. As Willis (1977) observed in his ethnography on groups of working class English youths, it has to do with attitudes in the present, since these attitudes enable certain students to stand out among their peers, challenging teachers' authority and showing astuteness and humor. It should be noted, however, that unlike that observed by Willis (1977), the "tactics of resistance" here are not the monopoly of young males. Young females are also protagonists, and not only discretely but also assertively, as narrated in the second scene.

In addition to the internal divisions, there is a general understanding in the school that certain classes are more difficult than others: "A very disruptive class, notorious for being considered one of the worst in the school," "Some teachers had already indicated that this class was rowdy." The difficulty that teachers had controlling classes labeled as "rowdy" was palpable, and they commonly complained of how hard it is to exercise their authority, sometimes referring to the school of the past wistfully (Souza 2014). However, observing the same groups of students over the entire day, it was evident that they do not behave the same way in all classes, valuing some more than others. The pedagogical resources used, interest in the subject, and, above all, the interactions that the teacher is able to establish with them all appear to be fundamental in this difference of attitude.

Orderly or rowdy, all the students appear to value the school as a space not only for learning, but above all for socializing. Few dating scenes were observed, but conversation is present all the time, inside and outside the classrooms: "The class was very agitated, lots of chatting"; "The students there at the back don't stop talking"; "When they finished the activity, the teacher looked at them and they continued talking until the class was over"; "Afterward the students continued talking until recess"; "Even though they were talking, most did the activity"; "The teacher made a call while the students talked loudly among themselves." Conversation constitutes a moment of friendliness in the midst of pedagogical time, providing a positive motivation for going to school: "I am well connected, I like being around these people, from the man standing at the entrance

to the cafeteria ladies, I talk with them all, I really like each and every one and, concerning my classmates, I can say that I have made real friends” (Iracema, 15, first year).

g) *Escaping from “jail”: cell phones and smart phones.* All the students in Josué de Castro have cell phones; many even have smartphones and spend a good deal of their time on the internet, mostly gaming or browsing social networks, such as Instagram and Facebook. Some also use class time to listen to music on their headphones and send messages to their classmates. So, in some sense, these young people are always writing or sending messages or informing themselves, only they do not do it in the way that the school determines: “Writing teachers lament the decline of discourse, but kids write furiously, even if their terms papers on Shakespeare are uninspired” (Agger 2011:128).

The cell phone is a faithful companion at all times in all classes, a generational mark that makes its presence in the entire school. A parallel time has come to exist, a “second class” that occurs simultaneously with the traditional teacher-led class. Use of a smartphone does not necessarily imply that the student is unaware of what is taking place in the classroom, since they have learned to pay attention to several activities at the same time (multitasking), with fluctuating attention. On many occasions, however, the use of technology functions as an escape, enabling students to meet the obligation of remaining in the classroom, without fully sharing in the pedagogical space: “Schools are prisons, and phones allow the inmates to stay connected by tapping on the walls of their own cells” (Agger 2011:128).

Some teachers, recognizing and understanding the students’ fascination with new technologies, view cell phones and smartphones as providing potential teachable opportunities: “Virtually all students have cell phones that are connected to the internet all the time, they research everything on their phones, so I present the activity and say: *research that on your cell phone* [...] While I observed they were all researching” (interview with a teacher). The majority, however, consider that these “digital natives” are wasting the opportunity they have on superficial irrelevant information: “The kids have easy access, they know how navigate it better than we do, they have all the knowledge, but unfortunately I think correct adequation is still lacking because they use it much more to pass

massages, play games, listen to music, than for didactic purposes, as a pedagogical resource” (interview with a teacher). For some teachers, especially those close to retiring, cell phones and smartphones emerge as symbols of their being out of sync with the students’ world, and they voice other complaints about the profound changes in high school education in recent decades:

[The teacher] told me how disillusioned she was with the profession, that she does not feel valued and respected like she used to, that she has almost 30 years of experience in the classroom and today she is embarrassed to say she is a teacher because today’s students do not respect teachers. [She also told me] that new technologies only disrupt things, that she is an old-fashioned teacher, traditional, who likes to use books and she feels nostalgia for the past, when the student respected the teacher. [...] She asked me if I sincerely thought that new technologies helped because she herself thinks they do not, because before students researched in a book and now they don’t even read, they only copy and paste from the computer, she doesn’t see any improvements and she doesn’t even have hope.

(Field note, October 2nd, 2013)

Final considerations

In this paper, we propose a reading of daily life in school based on a classic category in anthropology studies, though one that is usually secondary in analyses of Brazilian schools: time. Following the inspiration of Durkheim (1996), we began identifying the school’s temporal units, understood here as structural time, that operate as a framework for the principal activities that organize daily life and a student’s progression through the school system. Next, we contrast these units with the lived dimension of time, that is, with time constructed by the practices of the subjects (Munn 1992), focusing in particular on the negotiations and experiences in the classroom setting. If by thinking in structural time we are dealing with expressions such as “class time,” “school year” and “schedule,” then time lived brings us to temporal sensations that pose

questions of social rhythms, the limitations of the body, expectations in relation to what each moment in time brings to the individuals, thus translating the fabric of life—“exhaustion,” “laziness,” “indifference,” “anxiety,” “waiting,” “excitement.”

Thus, school time emerges simultaneously as a constraint and as an opportunity; not just an external, imposed time, but a time equally constructed by the subjects that populate this space, in their mutual relationships. From the teachers’ point of view, we observe that some practices that appear not to make sense in terms of efficiency, and that we can understand based on the metaphor of “filling time,” should be contextualized within the current conditions of educational work, which generate a *precarization* of teaching in its material and symbolic aspects (Lelis 2012). This understanding is particularly pertinent in the school studied, since many teachers find themselves nearing the end of their career, in a phase of clear divestment (Lemos 2009). Even among those who are engaged in their work, it is rare to find a teacher who does not show any type of time constraint, although time can also be a positive resource, specifically when it translates into experience. In this sense, teachers’ time appears as a *scarce resource* when we think of their working day, a *vacuum to be filled* (the 45 minutes of class time), and as an *embodied trajectory* in a positive way (experience) or negative way (exhaustion, depletion).

From the students’ point of view, “saving time” appears to be one of the most significant metaphors (Ramos Torre 2009), whether over the long term, when questioning the importance of school after the ENEM (Souza 2014), or in the daily routine, as observed in the ordinary negotiations of leaving class early. On these occasions, students rely on the “power of the weak,” making it unfeasible to continue the class (“goofing off”) or even to hold it (“mass skipping”). They also create other times in the classroom, imprinting on the school their own uses, usually tied to socializing with their classmates, which has little to do with the school’s formal objectives, and at times even contradicts them. In this sense, despite having less power in the school structure, they experience time more as an opportunity than as a constraint; this opportunity, however, is frequently anchored in the present, without necessarily pointing toward the future.

The frequent (structural and generational) mismatch between teachers' time and students' time invites us to think of Mannheim's theses on the "noncontemporariness of those who are contemporary": both are in the same school, but the time of this school has different significations for its numerous actors. The whiteboard and smart phone are metaphors of this mismatch: the time of the board is slow, accompanying the hand that is writing, in the expectation that copying permanently imprints the learning in the exercise book and in the memory; the time of the smartphone is fast, messages connect the student with friends in the street, music allows them to participate in youth culture, social networks instantaneously inform them what is occurring outside, but also invites them to quickly forget what they have learned. While the classmate at the next desk took 15 minutes to copy what was on the board, the student took a photo and stored the information in their device. Students may be "digital natives" but they do not have "experience." Teachers have "experience," and some are even digital natives, but others view new technologies as a threat. There are many routes to roam in many different directions, in order, as one teacher said, "to reach a consensus."

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An interdisciplinary experience in anthropology and education: memory, academic project and political background

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Abstract

This article constructs the trajectory of the introduction of the discipline Anthropology and Education in the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE) at PUC-Rio. The author introduced the course at the end of the 1980s. The text presents several considerations concerning the field of anthropology, defending anthropological studies as an approach to interdisciplinarity between this discipline and numerous others, particularly education. It then emphasizes the political and academic framework in which pedagogy graduate courses were created, such as the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IESAE) of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV), and the PPGE/PUC-Rio. Finally, it reports the experiences lived by the author and her peers that helped construct the memory of the PPGE/PUC-Rio, focusing on both the relationship between anthropology and education and the research and production experiences of the program.

Keywords: Anthropology, Education, Interdisciplinarity, Ethnography

Resumo

O presente artigo relata a trajetória da introdução da disciplina Antropologia e Educação no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação (PPGE) da PUC-Rio. A disciplina foi introduzida pela autora, em fins dos anos 1980. O texto apresenta diversas considerações a respeito do campo da antropologia, defendendo os estudos antropológicos como porta de acesso à interdisciplinaridade entre essa disciplina e tantas outras, com destaque para a área de educação. Destaca-se, também, o contexto político e acadêmico da criação de cursos de pós-graduação em educação, como o Instituto de Estudos Avançados em Educação (Iesae) na Fundação Getúlio Vargas e o PPGE na PUC-Rio. Por fim, apresenta-se um relato de experiência que constrói a memória do PPGE/PUC-Rio, com ênfase na relação entre antropologia e educação e as experiências de pesquisa e produção desse programa.

Palavras-chave: Antropologia, Educação, Interdisciplinaridade, Etnografia

An interdisciplinary experience in anthropology and education: memory, academic project and political background

Tania Dauster

Au point d'articulation entre le monde du texte et le monde du sujet se place une théorie de la lecture capable de comprendre l'appropriation des stratégies discursives, c'est-à-dire la manière dont elles affectent le lecteur et l'amènent à une nouvelle forme de compréhension du monde, de l'autre et de soi.

Roger Chartier

The day before yesterday prepares the wheels of tomorrow.

Murilo Mendes

Preliminary observations

In social and cultural anthropology, “fieldwork,” “participant observation” and ethnography are much more than methodological or technical research procedures. They are knowledge processes and constitute practices that anthropologists use for acquiring the same. The fusion between field research and office research is an epistemological revolution that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century. Up to this point, there was a separation between ‘in situ’ observations and later interpretations based on data collected by missionaries or administrators or by people other than the researcher. The anthropologist’s craft became a combination of field and office research as the means to construct knowledge, in other words, as a way to develop an epistemology.

The mode of knowing through ethnography crosses disciplinary boundaries and is a legacy that anthropology passes onto the distinct universes of the social sciences (Cardoso de Oliveira 1998:17). The analogous concept of culture in anthropology has similar relevance. Moreover, this has been the challenge I have faced in establishing my academic project of teaching, supervision and research, as well as part of my professional training to follow this path. (Dauster 2014b:25). At this time, speaking of this trajectory involves constructing a personal memory and thus incurring the risks, proclaimed by Pierre Bourdieu (1996:183), of the “biographical illusion,” in other words, the idea of a story that represents itself as logical when, in fact, it can retain large inconsistencies and hidden meanings for the author him/herself.

In the words of Bela Feldman-Bianco (2013), in 2005, the anthropological community produced, but did not formalize, a table in which the anthropology of education is classified as a subarea denominated specialized anthropology.¹

In discussing the field of anthropology, the author indicates the prospect of “unraveling the cultural codes and the social interstices in everyday life” (2013:19), as the production of a type of knowledge that contributes to an understanding of today’s problems in relation to social differences and inequalities, together with an understanding of the traditional landscape of values and practices, dilemmas of social inclusion and development, whether these are social or economic.

For decades, the academic and social recognition of this *expertise* has led to an interest in anthropology as a foundational knowledge for graduate and undergraduate programs in education. At the intersection with education, a field in which issues of politics and power are crucial, the following paradox is expressed: while the number of education programs that incorporate anthropology continues to increase, with or without teachers trained in the discipline, anthropology programs still view this relationship with reservation. I fear that the very intersection is undervalued. Education, conceived of as schooling or even in a broader sense, is an object that attracts relatively few practitioners of anthropology from the field of the social sciences. The

¹ I would like to thank Yvonne Maggie for her reading and suggestions, which enabled me to return to past research, Barbara Sette for the competent English version of the text, Dayse Ventura Arosa for her competent revision of the Portuguese text, Ana Beatriz Lavagnino, an intern of my current project, for the collection of bibliographic data, and Phil Bain for the revision of the English version.

anthropologists Delma Pessanha Neves, Simoni Lahud Guedes and Yvonne Maggie² are some examples of researchers on the subject in the area mentioned. However, anthropologists who generally do not have taboo objects seem to have created strategies of detachment and avoidance with regard to education.

I perceive differences, no value judgments intended, between the production of master's and doctoral students in education and that of the social sciences. In this last area, the works are generated within the field of social sciences themselves, within the same frame of references. The field of education, besides having other references, uses the social sciences as theoretical sources, with which it constructs the interdisciplinary dialogue that exceeds its boundaries. The two fields mentioned possess distinct curricular dimensions, purposes, worldviews, traditions, values, classical references and "founding heroes" that mark their analyses and interpretations. Moreover, the researchers from these areas develop their work occupying certain social and academic "positions," establishing distinct academic sociability relationships that necessarily illuminate their representations and investigative practices.

Nevertheless, the sociological and anthropological interest in educational issues has a long history (Gusmão 1997) and a noble lineage. It begins with the sociological works of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), for whom education as a social practice emerges from life in society, thus highlighting the social character of education. "Education is a socialization of the young generation" (Durkheim 1978:10) and "It is through co-operation and through social tradition that man becomes man." Thus, the author states that man becomes a "social being." "Systems of morality, languages, religions, sciences are collective works, social things" (Durkheim 1978:10). His reflection on education as a social phenomenon leads to the conclusion that, to study it, it is necessary to research social life in its interrelations (Durkheim 1978:90). The specificity of the social, which can be explained only in terms of social codes, and not as a function of the individual or the psychological, distinguishes the theory and construction of sociological epistemology that, in turn, has an influence on social anthropology.

2 Delma Pessanha Neves - Professor of the Graduate Program in Anthropology at the Federal Fluminense University (UFF); Simoni Lahud Guedes - Professor of the Graduate Program of the UFF and Yvonne Maggie - Professor of the Department of Cultural Anthropology of the UFRJ.

The work of Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) aligned the field of sociology with the development of French anthropology and leaves a legacy of thinking and research on “education” as a “total social phenomenon” (Rocha 2011:105). The complexity of Gilmar Rocha’s investigation (2011) on the subject leaves little room for syntheses. However, Rocha’s research reveals the meaning of this expression. This anthropologist indicates some of the aspects relevant for understanding education as a total social phenomenon, starting with the fact that the observer and the subject are of the same nature. In consonance with his thoughts, it is evident that education takes place in everyday life, through symbolic actions, body techniques that consciously and/or unconsciously shape the body. He denaturalizes the notion of the body, while demonstrating that it is a product of history and diversity, shaped by cultures and by educational symbolic actions viewed in a broad sense, whether contextualized in the family, the school, in religious rituals or in other institutions, including that which Marcel Mauss called “prestigious imitation.” The notion of body in its phenomenological concreteness is the central focus because it encompasses that which is biological, psychological and socio-historical. The “body techniques” or “effective traditional acts” as “facts of education” are transmitted over time through education and constitute a vast field of study (Rocha 2011:97).

Franz Boas, together with Bronislaw Malinowski, revolutionized the discipline of anthropology in the early twentieth century, when they founded ethnography, based on fieldwork conducted by the researcher himself. Franz Boas (Rocha & Tosta 2009:46) studied the United States school system directly, showing its inconsistency, since while defending the idea of freedom the system is repressive in its practices. The author rejects the concept of race and affirms that of culture, which dilutes explanations of a biological or geographical character to make way for the historical and cultural; he struggles for racial equality and is opposed to evolutionism, while contesting ethnocentric attitudes (Rocha & Tosta 2009:35-36). Following Boas’ lead, “American cultural anthropology” pursues this line of explanation, incorporating political and “applied” aspects on issues of education, nutrition or health. The works of Ruth Margaret Mead (2009:46) are important heirs of this perspective, such that Mead’s work (2009:46) is a significant example of what Boas had in mind, in 1928, concerning the application of anthropological studies as criticism and finding solutions to social issues. According to

Rocha and Tosta (2009:45), this anthropologist is the forerunner of what is meant today by the anthropology of education and/or of the child. At the time, what was perceived as the political action and practical contribution of “applied anthropology” to society was being outlined.

Gilberto Freyre, a former disciple of Franz Boas while attending university in the United States, was influenced by his teacher and marked by cultural anthropology, and is considered to be the interpreter of the formation of the Brazilian patriarchal family. He was an intellectual with international access, though still deeply attached to Brazilian references, particularly the context of the State of Pernambuco, in northeastern Brazil.

In sketching this condensed view of the relationships between anthropology and education, I would like to mention the work of Josildeth Gomes Consorte (1997).³ This anthropologist demonstrates how culturalism infiltrated Brazil in the 1930s, signaling the relationships between the concept of culture and diversity. In the same sense, the attention of politicians and educators was notable, due to the massive influx of Italian, Japanese and German immigrants. Culturalism and education have been linked since the 1930s to respond to the challenges that cultural diversity presented for the educational system (Consorte 1997:26-37). Several substantial works that would contribute to public policies originated from the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (*Instituto Nacional de Estudos Pedagógicos*, INEP), in the 1930s. The author also cites studies by Arthur Ramos (1999:28-29)⁴ in reference to education and

3 PhD in Social Sciences (area of Anthropology), from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP). Professor of the Department of Anthropology at PUC-SP. In the 1950s, she belonged to a group of social scientists that conducted research on education with Anísio Teixeira, at the Brazilian Center for Educational Research. <www.pucsp.br/~csopos/curriculo/josi.html>. Accessed on Sept. 25th, 2014.

4 Psychiatrist, social psychologist, ethnologist, folklorist and Brazilian anthropologist. He was born on July 7th, 1903, in Alagoas, and died at 46, in Paris, France. He was one of the leading intellectuals of his time and eminent in the study of the Negro and Brazilian identity. He was also important in the process of institutionalizing the social sciences in Brazil. In 1926, he defended his doctoral thesis: *Primitive and madness*. In the same year, he received a PhD in Medical Sciences from the Bahia College of Medicine. In the United States, he taught, researched and participated in several symposia at the Universities of Louisiana, California, Harvard and Columbia, alongside important names of the social sciences. In Brazil, he gained recognition and respect from Jorge de Lima, Rachel de Queiroz, Jorge Amado, Gilberto Freyre, Estacio de Lima, Theo Brandão, José Lins do Rego, Aurélio Buarque de Holanda, Graciliano Ramos, Nise da Silveira, Silvio de Macedo, Rita Palmares, Lily Lages and Gilberto de Macedo, among many others, his friends and admirers. He was a humanist, and through his libertarian ideas, fought against imperialism and racial prejudice and was arrested twice by the Department of Political and Social Order (DOPS), during the Vargas dictatorship. In 1949, in the French capital, he was director of the Department of Social Sciences of UNESCO, when he drew up the first UNESCO Project in Brazil in the 1950s. He died helping to construct a peace plan for the world, alongside Bertrand Russell, Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori and Julien Huxley. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Ramos>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

health issues. Other names worthy of mention arose from 1950 onward, when UNESCO, interested in race relations in Brazil, involved renowned intellectuals like Thales de Azevedo⁵, Roger Bastide⁶ and Florestan Fernandes⁷ in their research proposal. I would like to add Josildeth Consorte to this list of researchers located at state research and educational institutions. She worked at the

5 Born on August 26th, 1904, in Salvador, and died on August 5th, 1995. He studied at the Jesuit School, Antônio Vieira (1914-1919), and later at the Bahia College of Medicine (1922-1927), receiving honors for his inaugural thesis: *Fibromyomas of the uterus: notes and statistics in Bahia*, approved on December 23rd, 1927. Doctor and teacher, as he used to identify himself, he was also a man of the press. He began his public service career as director of the Secretariat of the Council of Social Assistance for the Department of Education, Health and Public Assistance. Because of his medical training, Thales de Azevedo was in charge of the first chair of anthropology and ethnography in Brazil, at the College of Philosophy, a discipline that was part of the curriculum of geography, history and social sciences. <<http://www.thalesdeazevedo.com.br/biografia.htm>>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

6 French sociologist. He was born on April 1st, 1898 and died on April 10th, 1974. He graduated from the Faculty of Arts of Bordeaux and from the Sorbonne. A member of the “French mission,” he was part of the core faculty at the College of Philosophy of São Paulo, teaching for almost twenty years in Brazil (1937-1954). He received the title “*Doctor Honoris Causa*” from the University of São Paulo. He was a member of the Societies of Sociology and Psychology of São Paulo, and the Society of Anthropology in Rio de Janeiro, of the Folklore Society in Rio Grande do Norte, and the Ceará Historical Institute. While in Brazil, he studied the Afro-Brazilian religions for many years, becoming an initiate in Candomblé from Bahia. In 1973, Bastide republished “*Brazil, land of contrasts*.” After retiring, he worked in the Social Psychiatry Center in Paris, which he had founded. His last book, *Sociology of Mental Disorder*, used research results from the center. He was awarded the Order of the Southern Cross, a commendation that the President of Brazil awards to foreign personalities, for services to Brazilian culture and for Brazil-France cultural cooperation. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Bastide>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

7 Born in São Paulo on July 22nd, 1920, and died on August 10th, 1995. He was a sociologist and politician, elected federal congressional representative for the Workers Party (PT). He studied until the third year of primary school returning only much later to school, enrolling in a mature student course, which enables adults to complete their schooling. In 1941, Florestan entered the College of Philosophy, Arts and the Humanities at the University of São Paulo, graduating in social sciences. He began his teaching career in 1945 as an assistant professor to Fernando de Azevedo, in the chair of Sociology II. He earned a master’s degree at the Free School for Sociology and Politics with the thesis “*The social organization of the Tupinambá*”. In 1951, defended his doctoral thesis “*The social function of war in Tupinambá society*” at the College of Philosophy, Arts and the Humanities at USP, later established as a classic of Brazilian ethnology, exploring the functionalist methodology. The study of the theoretical and methodological perspectives of sociology became one of Florestan’s characteristic lines of work in the 1950s. His most important essays on the foundations of sociology as a science were later collected in the book “*The Empirical Foundations of Sociological Explanation*.” His intellectual commitment to the development of science in Brazil underlies his activism in the Campaign for the Defense of Public Schooling, he campaigned for public, secular and free education as a citizen’s basic right in the modern world. Forced into retirement by the military dictatorship in 1969 he was Visiting Scholar at Columbia University, Full Professor at the University of Toronto and Visiting Professor at Yale University and, as of 1978, a professor at the PUC-São Paulo. In early 1979, he returned to the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences, now reformed for a summer school on the socialist experiment in Cuba, at the invitation of students of the Academic Centre for Social Sciences. In 1986, he was elected as a congressional representative by the Workers Party, with outstanding performance in discussions during the debate on free public education. In 1990, he was re-elected as a federal congressional representative. He worked for the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo*, from the 1940s, and later, in June 1989, had a weekly column in this newspaper. The name of Florestan Fernandes is necessarily associated with sociological research in Brazil and Latin America. Sociologist and university professor with over fifty works published, he transformed social thinking in the country and established a new style of sociological research, marked by analytic and critical rigor, and a new standard of intellectual activity. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florestan_Fernandes>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

Center for Educational Research (*Centro de Pesquisas Educacionais, CBPE*), an agency of the INEP, with its founder Anísio Teixeira,⁸ who along with Fernando de Azevedo⁹ were at the head of the Escola Nova [New School] project.

8 Born on July 12th, 1900, in Rio de Janeiro, and died on March 11th, 1971. Anísio Teixeira was a lawyer, intellectual, educator and writer. He played a central role disseminating the premises of the New School movement, which in principle emphasized the development of the intellect and the capacity for judgment, rather than memorization. He reformed the education system in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, holding various executive positions. Teixeira graduated in 1922 from the College of Law at the UFRJ, currently the Law School at UFRJ. On returning to Bahia in 1924, at the invitation of Governor Goes Calmon, he was nominated the Inspector General of Education – a position equivalent to the current Secretary of Education – beginning his career as an educator and public administrator. While visiting the United States in 1927, he was exposed to the ideas of the philosopher and educator John Dewey, who would strongly influence his thinking. Returning to the United States (1928), he took a graduate course at Columbia. Back in Brazil, he translated two of Dewey's works into Portuguese for the first time. In 1928, he entered Columbia University in New York, where he obtained his master's degree and met John Dewey. In 1931, he moved to Rio de Janeiro, becoming part of the Board of Directors for Public Education in the Federal District. During this mandate, he established the integration of Municipal Education, from elementary school to university. He became Secretary of Education for the State of Rio de Janeiro in 1931 and conducted extensive reformation in the school system, again integrating teaching from elementary school to university at the state level. In 1932, he became one of the most prominent signatories of the *Manifesto dos Pioneiros da Educação Nova* [Manifesto of the Pioneers of the New Education] in defense of free, public, secular, compulsory education. He published two works on education, which along with his other accomplishments, gave him national prominence. Teixeira founded the University of the Federal District in 1935, in Rio de Janeiro, which later became the National College of Philosophy of the University of Brazil. That same year, pursued by the government of Getúlio Vargas, he moved to his hometown in Bahia, living there until 1945. Teixeira became general counselor for UNESCO in 1946. In 1951, he took the post of secretary general at Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), and the following year he became director of the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP). <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/An%C3%ADsio_Teixeira>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

9 Born on April 2nd, 1894 and died on September 18th, 1974. He was a teacher, educator, critic, essayist and sociologist. At the age of 22, he was made substitute professor of Latin and psychology at the Ginásio do Estado (state high school) in Belo Horizonte, of Latin and literature at the Escola Normal de São Paulo [The Teacher's College of São Paulo], of educational sociology at the Institute of Education of the University of São Paulo (USP), Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology of the college of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of USP, and Emeritus Professor of the same college. He was General Director for Education for the Federal District (1926-30), General Director of Public Instruction for the State of São Paulo (1933), The Principal of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of São Paulo (1941-42), a member of the University Council for more than 12 years following the foundation of USP, Secretary of Education and Health of the State of São Paulo (1947), Director of the Regional Center for Educational Research, which he founded and organized (1956-61), Secretary of Education and Culture for the government of Mayor Prestes Maia (1961), and for years he was a writer and literary critic of the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* (1923-26). In the Federal District (1926-30) he designed, defended and conducted one of the most radical teaching reforms that has been undertaken in the country. He drew up and executed a broad plan for the school buildings, including the buildings on Mariz e Barros street, for the old Escola Normal [Teacher's College], now the Institute of Education. In 1933, as General Director of Public Instruction for the State of São Paulo, he undertook reforms based on the Education Code. In 1931, he founded and directed, for more than 15 years, the Brazilian Pedagogic Library (BPB) within the Companhia Editora Nacional [National Publishing Co.], which formed part of the Undergraduate Research [Iniciação Científica] series and the Brasileira collection. He was the writer and first signatory of the Manifesto of the Pioneers of the New Education. He was president of the Association of Education in 1938 and was elected President of the Eighth World Conference on Education, which was held in Rio de Janeiro. In 1950, he was elected Vice President of the International Sociological Association (1950-53) at the World Congress of Zurich, was a corresponding member of the International Commission for a History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind (published by UNESCO), was one of the founders of the Brazilian Society of Sociology, of which he was president from its foundation in 1935 until 1960, and was president of the Brazilian Association of Writers (São Paulo section). On August 10th, 1967, he was elected to chair 14 of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, succeeding Antonio Carneiro Leão. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fernando_de_Azevedo>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

Ana Waleska Mendonça¹⁰ (2008:43), in her research on the contribution of the CBPE, an institutional project marked by Teixeira's personality and interests, reflects on the dialogue initiated therein, between what she denominated the political encounter of two intellectual traditions which, in her words, arose both from the field of social sciences and from that of education. This interdisciplinary perspective constituted a feature of CBPE's research tradition, later lost following the discontinuity of the Center's activities, which was not strengthened by the implementation of graduate courses in Brazil from 1970 onward. The later inclusion, resumed the link between the social sciences and education through the sociology of education. Later, in 1987, I established the area of anthropology and education in the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio) as a core discipline, without the political tone and goals of the CBPE. In a different manner and with other objectives, the PPGE seeks to articulate the traditions of these disciplines. It has been a long while, however, since the interdisciplinary relationships structure the program and the research that provides the academic tone of the PPGE/PUC-Rio. Nowadays, the PPGE/PUC-Rio distinguishes itself through its multidisciplinary approach to understanding educational phenomena and the interdisciplinarity between the human and social sciences.

Returning to the CBPE, as Ana Waleska Mendonça (2008) highlights, founded on Corrêa (1987), the idea of project present in the participating intellectual discourses has meant the convergence of a reference group around common issues and a sense of political action lent to knowledge production activities, something that the researcher claims is a characteristic of the multidisciplinary work of the CBPE (2008:44). Ultimately, the objectives of the CBPE were intervention in education and in teacher training, based on knowledge accumulated through research. Its interest in the reorganization of society through transformation in schools dates back to 1930 (Mendonça 2008:45).

¹⁰ PhD in Education from PUC-Rio, with post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Lisbon, she is a Professor of History of Education in the Department of Education at PUC-Rio and a CNPq researcher.

Zaia Brandão¹¹ and Libânia Xavier¹² (2008:68) state that, for a decade, the articulation between the social sciences and education was of great relevance to the field of education. The researchers (2008:72) remark that the articles published by the CBPE during the 1950s indicate two lines of production emerging therefrom: one anthropological in character, through studies involving the community, and the other sociological, marked by the theme of stratified organized changes in Brazilian society.

The research conducted by Xavier and Brandão (2008) reveals the influence of the Chicago School, referencing empirical studies on educational issues, Teixeira's relationships with sociologists like Donald Pierson, and the expansion of theoretical references in the interpretation of educational phenomena.

Continuing these preliminary notes, I would like to mention the important set of works realized by the anthropologist and poet Carlos Brandão¹³, from the 1990s. His works on anthropology and education are of a seminal character and this articulation was always present in his academic research and themes of interest.

In closing this introduction concerning the encounter between anthropology and education, it is worth noting the role of Roberto DaMatta¹⁴ at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Education (*Instituto de Estudos Avançados em Educação*, IESAE) of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV)¹⁵ in Rio de Janeiro, which was created in 1971 and closed in 1990.

11 Professor at PUC-Rio, a CNPq 1A researcher and Scientist of Our State (FAPERJ), coordinator of Soced-Research Group in the Sociology of Education and editor of the SOCED Bulletin online.

12 PhD in Education from PUC-Rio and Professor of the Graduate Program in Education of UFRJ.

13 Graduated in psychology from PUC-Rio in 1965, a Masters in Anthropology from the University of Brasilia in 1974 and a PhD from USP in social sciences. He is currently Professor Emeritus at the Federal University of Uberlândia, for his work in the field of anthropology, education, and popular culture, having been awarded Commander of Scientific Merit for the last by the CNPq. <[http://www.trabalhosfeitos.com/ensaios/Biografia-carlos-rodrigues-brand%
c3o/1015533.html](http://www.trabalhosfeitos.com/ensaios/Biografia-carlos-rodrigues-brand%c3o/1015533.html)>. Accessed on Sept. 24th, 2014.

14 This prominent anthropologist is a writer, lecturer and newspaper columnist. He graduated in History at the Fluminense Federal University. He has a Masters and a PhD from Harvard University and was a professor of the Social Anthropology Program of the National Museum of the UFRJ. He is Emeritus Professor at the University of Notre Dame in the United States and Full Professor at PUC-Rio. He has conducted ethnological research and is a renowned thinker on Brazil. He was awarded the honor of Commander by the Rio Branco Order of Merit. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roberto_DaMatta>. Accessed on Sept. 24th, 2014.

15 The Getulio Vargas Foundation is an institution in the area of public and private sector management that has developed research and trained professionals in this field since the 1940s.

Research by Maria de Lourdes Fávero (2001)¹⁶ shows the trajectory of the IESAE, which as part of the FGV, started a master's degree course in education in 1971, at the height of the repression by the military dictatorship. In its conception, the IESAE was assuring the continuity of Anísio Teixeira's work.

What I would like to emphasize here, lest it be forgotten, was the presence of Roberto DaMatta assuming the discipline of Anthropology in the MA in Education at this institute.

The political and cultural context at the time of the creation of the PPGE/PUC-Rio and IESAE/FGV

The creation of the Graduate Program in Education of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PPGE/PUC-Rio) between 1965 and 1966, the so-called lead years in Brazil, is part of an era marked by the military regime, which began with the coup of 1964 and drastically extended until 1979, when it finally ended with the Amnesty Law.

The implementation of the PPGE/PUC-Rio and IESAE/FGV should be analyzed as part of a concrete reality and of a more general problematic, as the historian Maria de Lourdes Fávero writes, "during a period in our history marked by strong repression, by political and ideological control by the Government in relation to educational and scientific institutions" (2001:1). We should also remember Institutional Act number 5, AI-5, the so-called the "coup within the coup" in 1968, when the President of Brazil was given extraordinary powers, suspending existing institutional guarantees and closing Congress, further aggravating a period of persecution and censorship.

In contrast, there was the effervescence of Brazilian popular music, the presence of Elis Regina, Chico Buarque and the Tropicália

¹⁶ She attended the Recife College of Philosophy and soon began participating in the Catholic University Youth (JUC). In 1962, she started working for the Movement for Basic Education (MEB). In 1970, she was hired by PUC-Rio to work in undergraduate studies, where she also began her master's degree, which she completed in 1972.

movement, with Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil;¹⁷ the changes in behavior and customs; the feminist movement and the advent of the pill; changing roles and relations between men and women; the political struggle, in which high school and university students were involved in opposing the military dictatorship; the work of intellectuals “within the cracks” in the system; and numerous other cultural characteristics. In short, somehow there were still spaces to challenge the regime, which enabled a certain transgression of arbitrarily established rules.

Universities were strictly controlled spaces, but simultaneously areas undergoing intense struggles and discussions, not only political, but also concerning the production of knowledge. According to Gilmar Rocha and Sandra Pereira Tosta (2009:48-49), around 1980, a movement began in the areas of humanities for relative criticism of the quantitative research methods that had predominated up to that time, as they also had in education research. The movement proposed opening up to qualitative methods, without underestimating statistical indicators as sources of data and problems. According to the authors, research in education gradually began to conduct case studies, action-research and “controversial” ethnographic research.

The reader will have the opportunity to acknowledge these assertions below, through the works of the researchers mentioned, as a social and historical condition in a specific situation, that is, the PPGE/PUC-Rio.

The “lived memory” – Vera Candau and the inclusion of the discipline of anthropology and education in the PPGE/PUC-Rio

With the expression “lived memory,” Vera Candau, one of the founding professors of the PPGE/PUC-Rio, starts our dialogue. Or rather,

17 Elis Regina, a singer/songwriter of Brazilian popular music (MPB), who first appeared in the music festivals of the 1960s. She actually sang several genres: bossa nova, samba, rock and jazz, and was elected the second best Brazilian voice by Rolling Stones Brasil magazine, in 2013. Chico Buarque is another great name of MPB, a singer, composer and author. Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil are singers, musicians and composers, and two of the principal names of the Tropicália movement, which occurred at the end of the 1960s and had an important impact on Brazilian culture. Caetano is also newspaper columnist and Gil was the Minister of Culture during the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

restarts it, because as coordinator of the “Founders Project”—the construction of the memory of the Graduate Program at PUC-Rio (2011)—, I have been interviewing the pioneers of the program, including Vera Candau, a researcher and teacher and one of the most prominent and influential figures and leaders in the fields of research and education in Brazil. She is known for her works in the specific fields of pedagogy, multiculturalism and teacher training (which she introduced into the PPGE), school daily life and cultural diversity, human rights and public policies, all products of her academic life as a full professor and 1A researcher of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq).

Vera Candau was the academic supervisor for my MA in Education, pursued in the 1970s in the PPGE/PUC-Rio. Later, we transformed a relationship of power, i.e. that of supervisor and student, intrinsically hierarchical and asymmetric, into a friendship. By mentioning the relationship, I attempt to objectify and relativize the degree of subjectivity/objectivity that our dialogue contains, in a movement of controlling one’s own interpretive and approximate intent (Geertz 1989), of knowledge and self-knowledge (Velho 1986:18), while penetrating the academic life of my work universe.

My position as interviewer and researcher, in this case, could be thought of as a radicalization of the “strangeness of the familiar” (Velho 1978:36), since I have been working with colleagues and friends for over twenty years. Issues of neutrality and impartiality could come to the fore, but I start from the perception of the very relativity of these notions. The “strangeness of the familiar” seeks a more complex vision of what is “real,” capturing the “viewpoints” of the actors involved in the problematic studied, their versions, interpretations, codes, values, beliefs, everyday life and ideologies.

In light of that discussed above, interviewing Vera Candau constitutes a dialogical situation in which our subjectivities (Velho 1986:17), our daily experiences at the university and beyond, our academic and existential problems, intimacy and differences, are all placed in the contact situation, in the “interview,” in which our “dialogue,” at my request, follows precise parameters: the “backstage,” the why and how of the insertion of anthropology and education as a core discipline in

the graduate and undergraduate programs in education. This meant the introduction of anthropology within the university system in the area of education, considering all levels of teaching, research and academic supervision. This was yet another pioneering decision by the Department of Education of PUC-Rio, since the master's degree in education was first to be established, before similar courses at federal or state universities (Dauster 2014a).

Before presenting the dialogue with Vera Candau, it is worth noting that the development of this text traverses the boundary between the construction of the memory of the PPGE /PUC-Rio and the inclusion of anthropology and education. While I speak of the introduction of this discipline at PUC-Rio, I necessarily rely on a life history or even an autobiography, for this history is mine too.

This text is thus a product of both my role as a researcher and the construction of a part of the memory of the anthropology and education discipline in the PPGE/PUC-Rio, without the mediation of a researcher. This part of memory falls to me as professor and researcher for over 20 years, with a CNPq scholarship and grants from the Rio de Janeiro Research Foundation (FAPERJ). I also find myself in the role of the narrator of my own trajectory (Queiroz 1988:23) and, consequently, exercising a double role.

In working with “memory,” I base myself on Myriam Lins de Barros¹⁸ (2009), a scholar of Maurice Halbwachs. According to de Barros, “memory” is defined as a social phenomenon, a social construct and as such, there are relations between the individual and collective memory and the place of those who narrate. From this, we infer that between the narrated memory and the reconstruction of the past, relativizations have to be made. Through the work of Michel Pollack, de Barros (2009) shows that narrated “memories” are versions that also possess markers and express ideas, codes and social places. It is worth emphasizing the

18 She graduated in Sociology and Politics from PUC-Rio (1973), obtained her Masters in Social Anthropology (1980) and PhD in Social Anthropology (1986) both from the UFRJ. She is professor at the School of Social Services, at the UFRJ. She has experience in anthropology, with emphasis on urban anthropology, acting in the following themes: family, old age, life history, memory, gender and generation. <<http://buscatextual.cnpq.br/buscatextual/visualizacv.do?metodo=apresentar&id=K4797041E6>>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

words of Gilberto Velho¹⁹ concerning the meaning of “the importance of memory as organizer of subjectivity and relationships between individuals” (2011:173).

I cannot help but refer to the relationships among “memory, identity and project” (Velho 1994:99), which are behind these ideas, for the events reported herein involve my own memory, career and identity construction, in a “field of possibilities” (Velho 1994:100). In this sense, it is understood that “project and memory” “are articulated, when giving meaning to the life and actions of individuals, in other words, to identity” (Velho 1994:101). Not only is the subject’s memory nonlinear, it is selective and fragmented.

Let us move on to the dialogue with Vera Candau, which revealed the facts that led to the introduction of anthropology in the PPGE.

Tania Dauster: Vera, please tell me about your experience with anthropology and education in the context of PUC- Rio.

Vera Candau: Well, the development of research on education in the 1970’s, particularly that linked to Graduate courses, because the Graduate program began in 1965, but the first thesis are from the beginning of the 1970s or so, were very distinctive. I believe research was strongly linked to the quantitative methods with different approaches, surveys, experimental approach, etc., but up to that point, doing research implied in doing empirical research of a quantitative nature. If

19 Born on May 15th, 1945 and died on April 14th, 2012. He was Brazilian anthropologist and a pioneer of urban anthropology in the country. He obtained a degree in Social Sciences from the Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the UFRJ (1968), and a Masters in Social Anthropology, UFRJ (1970). He specialized in urban anthropology and complex societies at the University of Texas in Austin (1971). In 1975, he obtained his Doctor of Humanities from USP. He worked in the areas of urban anthropology, anthropology of complex societies and anthropological theory. He also held several academic positions: coordinator of the Graduate Program in Social Anthropology (PPGAS) of the National Museum, UFRJ, head of the Department of Anthropology, president of the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (ABA; 1982-84), president of the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS; 1994-96) and vice-president of the Brazilian Society for the Advancement of Science (1991-93). As a member of the Board of Advisors of the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute, he was registrar of the first instatement of a Candomblé terreiro as a heritage site in Brazil, the Casa Branca in Salvador. He was also a member of the Federal Council of Culture (1987-88). In 2000, he became member of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences. He was awarded the Grand Cross of the National Order of Scientific Merit (2000) and the Commendation of the Order of Rio Branco (1999). He was a collaborator and visiting professor at several Brazilian and foreign universities. He supervised around 100 dissertations and doctoral theses. Up to his death, he was a Full Professor and Dean of the Department of Anthropology of the National Museum, UFRJ. <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilberto_Velho>. Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

we were to analyze the first dissertations from our department, they were either surveys, even the ones I supervised, or they were very much linked to the experimental method, with a control group, an experimental group, controlled variables, this type of approach. In the 1980s, a dialogue with qualitative research begins to emerge here at PUC. I think Marli [Eliza Dalmazo Alfonso de] Andrézo had an important role in introducing the perspective of qualitative research. The book she wrote with Menga²¹, in 1986, I'm still surprised to this day to see how often it is a reference in doctoral theses and master's dissertations. Thus, the perspective of qualitative research begins to emerge.

TD: Ok, but here at the PUC or here within the departmental program?

VC: I'm talking about the department, and more specifically about the PPGE, because it was more closely linked to the issue of research. And it was important to have another viewpoint, since the very nature of education presupposes looking closely at the subjects involved, so that different readings are made of the meanings attributed by them. This movement begins to assert itself in the area of education as a whole. And more concretely in the PPGE, but not without struggles and difficulties, including discussions that continue up to this day. These are very specific, on point types of research, whether they involve only one group, or a certain number of subjects, and questions arise, such as to what extent can this be generalized, or whether the research results are representative and can be generalized. We were still very attached

20 She obtained a degree in Languages and Literature from the University of São Paulo (USP; 1966) and in Pedagogy from the Santa Ursula University (1973). She completed her Masters in Education at PUC-Rio (1976) and her PhD in Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA) in 1978. She is a retired Full Professor for the School of Education at USP and since 2000, forms part of the graduate studies program in Education: Educational Psychology at PUC-São Paulo. She develops studies in the areas of teacher training and educational research methodology. <<http://buscatextual.cnpq.br/buscatextual/visualizacv.do?metodo=apresentar&id=K4781569Ho>> Accessed on Sept. 30th, 2014.

21 Menga Ludke – Bachelor in Philosophy at USP, PhD in Sociology at the Paris West University, post-doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley and at the Institute of Education, University of London. She was a Guest Researcher at the Jules Verne University, Amiens, France and at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. Full Professor at PUC-Rio and at the Petropolis Catholic University (UCP), she has research experience in education, on problems of training, research and teaching, professional socialization and school evaluation. She coordinates the Study Group on the Teaching Profession (Grupo de Estudos sobre a Profissão Docente, GEPROF), with graduate and undergraduate students of the PUC-Rio and UCP, and is currently studying the problems of supervised internships as the weakest link in teacher training, with a CNPq grant (Lattes Platform, Oct. 1st, 2014)

to these categories, categories stemming from quantitative type of research. I'm not criticizing; it's just that each research approach has a certain logic. So, in this discussion, it seemed to me that one of the limits we had working with the issue of qualitative research was that we weren't articulating with the area of anthropology, because this area is extremely important for studying specific situations, certain human groups, within this logic of seeing how the subjects situate themselves and the meanings attributed by them. In this search, it seemed important to incorporate the anthropological perspective within this dialogue. However, in my view, it was not about just bringing someone from anthropology to join the department; we needed someone who already had a dialogue with the field of education, who, therefore, would not be the odd one out. The idea was to promote dialogue between anthropology and education.

This was what I wanted. That it should be an interlocution between the field of education and the field of anthropology, establishing dialogues and even confrontations. So, in this sense, I was looking for a person who could create this dialogue, based on their experience and training. It was right about then that I ran across Pedro [Benjamin Garcia]²² one day and asked him what you were doing, since you had studied your master's degree with me, and I knew you had graduated in philosophy, had a master's degree in education and had worked with education, that is, you were also versed in the area of education. Also, at that time, you were doing a PhD in anthropology. Therefore, you had the professional profile that I think is important, which is a person who moves through the disciplines, who is by nature interdisciplinary, and has experience in education. So, you were a person who could promote the interlocution between anthropology and education. So, as I recall, this was what motivated us. This new vision of anthropology. It was an entire process of showing that anthropology offers theoretical references and methodological perspectives that allowed us to think about education. And anthropology is an area of knowledge in which the question of

²² Professor and co-coordinator of the Graduate Program in Education at the Catholic University of Petrópolis, retired professor of the UFRJ and CNPq researcher. PhD in Social Anthropology at the National Museum-UFRJ. Author of books on education and literature-poetry.

culture is fundamental. And looking at educational processes as cultural processes was becoming increasingly urgent. In my opinion, this was the process that led us to invite you to become part of the faculty of the Department of Education of PUC-Rio.

TD: Very well. Thanks, Vera, I think that's pretty much what I wanted to know. But tell me one thing, was there a lot of negotiating to get the department's acceptance?

VC: No, I don't think so. There was the advantage that you had attained your master's degree here, so you were already versed in the area of education. So, there were not that many problems, because you seemed to be someone who could develop this dialogue.

TD: And you didn't think about someone from the social sciences?

VC: Not at that time, precisely because I was thinking about someone who had something to do with education. (Interview given to Tania Dauster at PUC-Rio, May 2014)

As the reader can see, Vera Candau's comments on educational research in the 1980s show a certain exhaustion of the quantitative model of research in the area of education. Her vision concerning the interdisciplinarity between anthropology and education indicates the change in theoretical perspectives of the time and the dissatisfaction with the prevailing research model. It raises the issue of working with the concept of culture as a relevant renovation, something that currently pervades a large part of the investigations in the PPGE. Another point worthy of attention is the vision of the pedagogical processes as cultural processes. These are some reasons for the incorporation of anthropology as fundamental to investigations in this area. To end this comment, I want to highlight that great transformations occurred that may be studied at another time, regarding both the approach and the themes and contents of the research conducted by the PPGE from the 1980s to the present day.

Interdisciplinarity and the construction of knowledge along the boundaries

The practice of interdisciplinarity, that is, moving along and crossing disciplinary boundaries, is common to both anthropology and education. Whether working with one or the other, the complexity of the construction of the object under study leads to examining it from different angles.

Thus, given my doctoral studies and my choices, urban anthropology became the basis for my research problems. I begin with the statement by Gilberto Velho (2011:177), that urban anthropology is a huge universe, not a subarea, rather “a meeting point for research and analysis, in which the universe of symbolism and representations is increasingly incorporated into research and public policies.” According to the anthropologist, the importance of crossing disciplinary boundaries follows on from this, without falling into a crude eclecticism, rather as a concept of intellectual work for research **in** and **on** the city, or for other dimensions of the production of knowledge. The author himself mentions, at different points in the text, the connections made among Marxism, Existentialism, Interactionism, authors difficult to classify, Brazilian authors, novelists and social scientists, as well as the classics of anthropology, as sources in his academic training and in his point of view as a researcher.

Given my interdisciplinary training, graduation in philosophy, MA in education and PhD in social anthropology, I “naturally” identified with this style of acquiring knowledge and with the “challenge” of establishing the area of anthropology and education at PUC-Rio. Thus, it came about that I entered belatedly, but with much excitement, into academic life, no longer as a student, but as a professional.

My intention was to show the pedagogical phenomena, practices and representations, without reducing them to the merely pedagogical, since they emerge from historical and social contexts. Therefore, the so-called educational phenomena are cultural phenomena. This relativizing aspect, working the phenomena as social and historical constructs, transforms the construction of the object education, whether

in the context of school or outside it, by emphasizing sociabilities and other cultural and historical processes. The issue of research in school is transmuted, since another theoretical-methodological arsenal is activated to observe and interpret it.²³ I call this a hybrid, interdisciplinary work, undertaken along the boundaries of these areas. In my view, this goes beyond having a reference science to constructing another research object that signifies the junction of two areas, like an amalgam of these.

At this point, without penetrating too deeply into the issue, I want to mention my reading of a Zaia Brandão's work (2008:211) on the identity of the educational field. According to the researcher, Teixeira struggled to develop education as one of the "great scientific arts," citing the examples of medicine and engineering. His work at the CBPE sought to bring educators and social scientists closer together (Brandão 2008:210). It was permeated with the development of the so-called source-sciences of education, as occurs in medicine, which is supported by biology and other sciences (Brandão 2008:211).

Within the curriculum organization that has as core disciplines, sociology, philosophy, history, psychology and, finally, the last one to enter Brazilian programs in education at the university level, anthropology, I discern reflections of this concept of education as something between "art" and "practice," which seeks a source-science as a reference.

I would like to digress momentarily and register the curiously recurrent use of the category "art" in the language of professionals separated by decades, cultures and training, to lend meaning to their practices, as did the educator Teixeira and later, the anthropologist Timothy Ingold: "This sensibility to the strange in the close-at-hand is, I believe, one that anthropology shares with art" (2008:84). There is in fact nothing new in the use of "art" as an attribute of numerous professions, designating a special capability, an ability in the field of human knowledge. This is a social category that can also be applied, for example, to medicine.

23 For this discussion see: OLIVEIRA (2013)

In short, it is said that the educational representations and practices, as presented herein, are worked in all their diversity and heterogeneity, with anthropology as the basis. In my view, a work of articulation crosses the boundaries between these areas, from the inside. Something beyond having anthropology as a reference science, I was seeking an amalgam, an interdisciplinarity.

It is important to state that public education policy formulators have been making significant demands for anthropological knowledge; the education of indigenous Brazilians and that of *quilombolas* are examples of the need for this knowledge. This is a factor for change in both disciplines. Finally, even when maintaining their specificities, both anthropology and education are in meeting processes, considerable disquiet, as well as historical, methodological and conceptual transformations.

The anthropology and education interface is highly heterogeneous. Classifications vary, as some call it the “anthropology of education.” I believe they have different meanings. Having started this area in an education department and as the result of the arguments above, I decided to accentuate the meaning of the interface and the construction of hybrid knowledge, denominating the area I opened up as anthropology and education. Thus, I was seeking the “art” of the interlocution between anthropology and education.

Mediation, culture and ethnography at the PPGE/PUC-Rio

A theory-based educational investigation was developing, under my proposal, from a perspective grounded in the practice of “participant observation, open interviews and direct personal contact” (Velho 1978:36), stemming from a concept of culture and a vision of ethnography as epistemology.

On this journey, I considered the importance of remaining aware that there are several concepts of ethnography (etymologically - writing on culture), and that these understandings have distinct consequences when describing the universes under study. This perspective, which emerged with Bronislaw Malinowski’s foundational text on

ethnography in the 1920s, is taken as reference, particularly regarding its methodological and foundational properties. The text places the reader inside the world of anthropological research, with unforgettable passages on the organization of its knowledge, such as experiencing the daily life of the universe being studied, the search for regularities and extraordinary aspects, the native's point of view. Among other lessons, this text remains indispensable for entering the world of anthropology.

Even so, without going any deeper into this debate, I would like to emphasize the political position of the anthropologist João Pacheco de Oliveira on conducting ethnographic research today. Based on his own experiences with native Brazilian tribes, he distances himself from the parameters of the pioneers in anthropology. He presents ethnography as an exercise in "sharing and communication," in contrast to the so-called colonial practices of anthropology (2013:47).

I also structured myself based on Clifford Geertz's position (1989:15): "In anthropology, or anyway in social anthropology, what the practitioners do is ethnography. And it is in understanding what ethnography is, or more exactly *what doing ethnography is*, that a start can be made toward grasping what anthropological analysis amounts to as a form of knowledge."

Finding our feet (Geertz 1989:23), seeing things from the point of view of the other on their own terms, capturing their categories, values, beliefs, worldviews, symbolic actions, this necessarily cannot be reduced to a question of techniques. According to Geertz (1989:15), it is a matter of "thick description." This author thus defined what ethnography is for him, very briefly, it "is not a matter of methods" (1989:17), but of understanding "cultural categories," which allow the researcher to differentiate, for example, an automatic blink from a conspiratorial wink. It is finding our feet in the culture being studied, in other words, in a "web of significances," believing, like Max Weber, "that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning" (Geertz 1989:15). This is the semiotic concept of culture in

the paradigm of interpretive anthropology. Such understandings can assist in the author's reading and in the reader's interpretation.

This concept of culture, its connotation as a system of symbols and shared significances, was contrasted with other definitions from other paradigms. Deliberately, however, it reinforced the perspective of a symbolic action that needed to be interpreted, such that its meaning is captured in the context studied, in a relation of alterity.

Besides Clifford Geertz's above-mentioned stance, Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira (1998:17) also inspired me, when he pronounced:

the specificity of anthropological work (...) is in no way incompatible with the work conducted by colleagues in the other social disciplines, particularly when, in the exercise of their activity, they articulate empirical research with the interpretation of their results.

His text on the anthropologist's craft (1998:17) sheds light on the work of an ethnographer, which is summarized as: "look, listen, write." On the one hand, the looking and listening concentrate the capturing of reality in empirical research, while the writing is thought as a graphic act, a "cognitive act" (Cardoso de Oliveira 1998:31-32). For another perspective on "anthropological writing" and "textual strategies," one should read Geertz (2002).

Cardoso de Oliveira (1998:33) highlights the ethnographic craft through two attitudes: "participant observation" and "relativization" contrasted with ethnocentrism, expanding our understanding of ethnographical practice. Amid other discussions, authors, issues, readings, through these "clearings," I sought to create the mediations between the anthropologist's craft and the field of education.

At this level of discussion, the work of Timothy Ingold (2008) stands out. Anthropological practice is an epistemological and cognitive "invention." Through its action, it "educates," because it forms other modes of seeing the world, creating other forms of "seeing, listening and writing." Anthropological practice, as an "outdoor action," remembering Franz Boas (Laplantine 1988) and Malinowski (Laplantine 1988), goes beyond providing knowledge of other universes, people and societies (Ingold 2008). Through its *modus operandi*, "an education in

anthropology, therefore, does more than furnish us with knowledge *about* the world – about people and their societies. It rather educates our *perception* of the world” (Ingold 2008:82). Again, I insist it is also formative and transformative, in intellectual, subjective and communicative terms. For Ingold, anthropology implies a relationship of active and dialogic alterity, as the “world” becomes what we understand of it with the “other” and not about the “other” (Ingold 2008:83). We learn that everything can be lived and symbolized in different ways. We go to encounter cultural diversity. He declares that ethnography, liberated “from the tyranny of method” (2008:84) “is a practice in its own right—a practice of verbal description” (2008:88). As a description of a way of life, it has its own meaning.

The task to be undertaken required that master’s and doctoral students dive into this intersection, and discuss the anthropologist’s craft. My action as an anthropologist was to produce a contact situation between the two disciplines to create an interdisciplinary experience, through a process of mediation, seen as movement between these two worlds, lifestyles and differences, observing the pertinent issues that emerged through the students’ practices and representations. We have moved between these universes in classroom situations and research groups. The communication thus established made epistemological transformations possible, along the disciplinary boundaries (Velho 2001:20;27).

This was my way of responding to the tension between anthropology, which seeks the knowledge of cultures in their diversity, and the proposal of intervention and transformation that is, largely, a characteristic of education. This contrast expresses distances and differences in the practices and representations of anthropology and education.

Pursuing “inside” knowledge. Research, however, should be based on questions, problems, conceptions and practices elaborated in contact with anthropological literature. Thus, another way of writing and thinking was forged that aggregated cultural categories and meanings from the “other’s” point of view, in a relation of alterity. Additional research objects thus emerged, seen as social and historical constructs, and other attitudes and practices of educational research.

Ways of Working

Returning to Gilberto Velho (1978), the adopted practice underscores the possibility that sharing cultural legacies with those we live with must not blind us to discontinuities and differences, generated by different paths, choices and lifestyles. For the anthropologist, researching in large cities and metropolises reveals the heterogeneity that the social division of labor, institutional complexity and cultural traditions express in differentiated and even contradictory worldviews.

From a more traditional perspective, it could be said that this is what allows the anthropologist to carry out investigations in his own city. That is, that there are clear internal cultural distances in the urban settings we live in, allowing the “native” to conduct anthropological research in groups different from theirs, even if they are basically close. (Velho 1980:16)

This approach requires the researcher in education to adopt a certain attitude of “strangeness” while working in their own city, and to think according to different reference systems, that is, according to other forms of representing, defining, classifying, and organizing reality and daily life, other than their own terms.

Another aspect is worthy of attention. In his analyses, Velho (1981) warns of the risk of observing social segments as if they were independent, self-contained and isolated units. Reflecting on the urban context, he signals to the social heterogeneity that the notion of a complex society carries with it and asks a crucial question: “How can sufficiently significant experiences be found to create symbolic boundaries?” (1981:16). On the other hand, what can be communicated and shared, what are the values, what are the limits of the symbolic negotiations? (1981:18-19)

These questions are equally relevant to educational practice and to thinking about other versions of the phenomena that interest the educator, in other words, they generate boundary knowledge, hybrid knowledge between anthropology and education, which are present in institutional research, dissertations and theses.

The choice of the empirical field focused on the school²⁴ and the university, as well as other social spaces, such as networks of graffiti artist, filmmakers, writers, while questions linked to training and education in a broad sense have remained.

The dilemmas that may exist cannot be obstacles to the teaching of anthropology in education, even considering the risks of trivialization or misinterpretation and the distance between the different ways that authors and schools of anthropology are appropriated, whether the reader is situated inside or outside the social sciences.

Roger Chartier (1990) says that the works do not have a single, intrinsic meaning and that they are appropriated by plural practices and concrete readers, which lends them to contradictory and different meanings, according to their trajectories, competencies, positions and dispositions. How do anthropological authors and texts migrate to other areas? What is read? How is it read? How does the articulation between these fields happen?

The courses, both graduate and undergraduate, were organized with texts and articles by anthropologists. My MA and PhD graduate students have read the area's literature intensively. Supervisory meetings were used to indicate authors pertinent to the ethnographic data that emerged during the fieldwork, and described in the field diary. Moreover, these were occasions to value the cultural categories and the "native" point of view, in their own terms, "interpretations" to construct other interpretations. The objective of this practice is to achieve what I call an "epistemological conversion" in the investigative strategy and demanded an intense supervisory relationship.

In other words, ethnography forged in the subject, since it is a theory, a practice and a way of knowing, through participant observation, field diary, the exercise of relativism, contrasting with ethnocentric attitudes, the foundations for establishing an "epistemological conversion." I see ethnography as a profound experience, which modifies being in the world and the vision that is constructed of the context in which we as investigators are inserted. This is how I was training researchers

24 For other interpretations and classic anthropological methodology, see the works of Yvonne Maggie (2006).

in education, capable of thinking strategically like ethnographers while conducting their research. In other words, incorporating an other logic of actuating and representing the social universes in their diversity; a contextualization, focusing on the social relationships and on the emerging significances, eschewing ethnocentric attitudes, capturing “cultural categories” and meanings.

It is about learning another language, another code, that allows the professional to discover other questions about the so-called educational phenomena inside and outside the school, as well as exercising another kind of fieldwork.

Research groups that include undergraduate and graduate students constitute a training practice. This academic sociability offers theoretical growth and a collective construction of the object. Over the years, I conducted the institutional research projects that stem from a teaching and investigative project, supported by the CNPq, by research grants and an undergraduate research scholarship, and by financial resources from agencies that support the development of research in this country, such as FAPERJ. The basis of this was an academic context in which the teaching/research relationship has value. Taking these conditions into account, it could be said that institutional research is an important part of the academic supervision and formative practices of researchers. According to the university statute, candidates should enroll in one of these projects: master’s students for a semester; doctoral candidates for the entire academic year; and undergraduates for the period determined by their undergraduate research grants. Many of the graduates remain in the study group for the period they are pursuing the course, and others, even after having completed their degrees, maintain ties with the group.

The research group activities included weekly meetings, readings with critique preparation, bibliographic surveys, participation in fieldwork and in the interview process, participation in the analysis of participant observation data, writing reports and articles, and taking part in seminars. I integrated myself into every step, seeking to develop a dynamic process, where the object of research is collectively constructed, while considering the heterogeneity of the students.

A practice was outlined that was quite distant from the ethnographic concept of an eminently personal experience. It was a complex experience, in which the individual and collective were mixed, until the students withdrew to write their theses and dissertations, while remaining in tune with their institutional projects.

There were several orders of limitations, like time limits or difficulties in apprehending and interpreting the ethnographic data, and restrictions on the prolonged contact situation that is expected in an ethnographic research project. The investigation was fragmented into multiple daily activities. For institutional reasons, the research groups suffered periodic changes in their composition due to changes in their membership.

These constraints were partly compensated by a fluctuating observation, a permanent state of alertness, in which the intellectually positioned team captures the significant data in contexts of relationships of alterity. The anthropological elaborations and interpretations during group meetings were genuine exercises of orality, argumentation and debate, and constituted a production of social knowledge that was understood as collective authorship. The image that comes to mind is one of an “orchestra,” where the professor-researcher is the “maestro.”

The fruits of the work

In the “Presentation” of the translation of Howard S Becker’s article *Studying urban schools*, which included another of his articles *Research in urban schools*, Ana Pires do Prado²⁵ and Ludmila Fernandes de Freitas²⁶ remark that Becker, a sociologist from the United States, is widely known in Brazil with several works on urban anthropology published here. However, they underscore that his works on schools and their social actors are barely known among us.

In this work, published in 1983 in the United States, the sociologist speaks of several impasses affecting ethnographic research in schools,

25 Professor at the Faculty of Education at UFRJ.

26 Doctoral student at Graduation Program in Sociology and Anthropology (Programa de Pós-graduação em Sociologia e Antropologia, PPGSA), UFRJ.

which I recognize from my experience. They include a reserved attitude from the institutions, concerns about possible failures, apprehension about evaluation, the researcher's desire to understand the institution in its entirety, and generate feelings of resistance in the professionals in the field under investigation. Besides those mentioned, the institutions also show a certain exhaustion, nowadays, in terms of being a subject of research and not getting anything useful in return.

An overview of the research conducted may help the reader to understand the dynamics of the work carried out and the interpretation of its meanings.

In the early 1990s, Marilut Mata (a former teacher at PPGE/PUC-Rio) and I conducted an ethnographic study in a school in a *favela* in the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro. The issue of "school failure" is a recurring theme in educational research, especially when it comes to the working classes. The intention, however, was to find the "strangeness" in the problematic, and to research understandings different from those disseminated within the school system, particularly the experiences of the students, their families and their surroundings, looking for values, attitudes and behavior seen as symbolic action.

During the fieldwork, the contact situation involved children from seven years old upward, who attended school and came from families constituted mostly by informal workers, as well as the teachers. During the participant observation, semi-structured interviews were conducted on the daily lives of the students, trying to dive deep into the universe of children who defined themselves as "poor," "workers" and "students."

Relativizing the focus on "school failure," understanding it as a social construct, transformed our initial view of this phenomenon. The relation between school and work, in the lives of these students, appeared as the expression of meaning-filled values in their survival strategies. This way of life reminds the concept of "the brief childhood," proposed by Ariès (1981), which still persists among part of the working classes, supposedly excluded from success in school by the educational logic.

According to Ariès (1981) the place where education happens is fundamental regarding the so-called “childhood feeling.”²⁷ This is why I argue that the child who works and studies remakes the image of childhood of the *Ancien Regime*, experiencing a dense sociability in the *favelas*, which requires another understanding of school organization. Without generalizing, the paths of relativism lead to an impasse between educational logic and the ways of thinking and acting of this community sociability, which are not guided by this “childhood feeling.” This is because it lends an other meaning to childhood experiences and has a different concept of the child and childhood founded on distinct rules and familial organization. This clash of worldviews produces the exclusion of these children from the world of school. On the one hand, we have the school, based on the model of a “long childhood,” which drives this student away. While on the other, in the relationships established between work and school, concrete social relations emerge among a portion of students, parents and the school that I call, paraphrasing Ariès, “the short-term school”. Since learning only the rudiments of reading and writing are considered enough by the families, and child labor is an imposing reality, dropout rates from school are high (Dauster 1991;1992).

Ethnographic research is approximate, interpretative, and encourages the researcher to look for other problematics. Thus, an interest in researching the themes of reading and writing present in the school emerged, viewing these as cultural and historical artifacts, rather than reducing them to the educational angle. In this context, an interface was constructed with the work of Roger Chartier (1990), providing a referential to illuminate the practices and representations of reading, as well as of those of literacy.

From then on, the research projects were marked by the encounter with the work of Roger Chartier, in other words, with cultural history.

I transported issues that cultural history has confronted to the ethnographic situation, namely: the relationship between reading and

27 The English translations of Ariès use the term “idea” for *sentiment* (original in French: “*sentiment de l’enfance*”), which literally means “feeling.” I prefer the latter, since it provides a more precise idea of the concept, especially associated with children. (N. RT. Dayse Ventura Arosa).

writing and the individual's way of life, the representations and practices of reading and writing, their social uses and their meanings in different social universes, such as school, university, digital classrooms, networks of writers of youth and children's literature, and networks of award-winning writers. Thus a research program was constituted, generating theses and dissertations. Gradually, a group of researchers formed who defined themselves as the Study Group in the Anthropology of Reading and Writing (*Grupo de Estudos da Antropologia da Leitura e da Escrita*, GEALE). It is worth emphasizing that a broad view of education was adopted since the group was about interpreting anthropological processes for training readers.

The purpose was to identify and research *ad hoc* the social construction of these categories, given the historical and social variability of the figure of the reader/writer. Ethnographic descriptions revealed values, attitudes, tastes, competences, techniques, representations and practices differentially for adults, youths and children, in relation to crafts, activities and social background. How did these subjectivities and identities transform into the relationships between the practices of reading and writing?

With these questions disentangled from cultural history, we were interested in encountering "readers" in their concrete practices. A public primary school (elementary school today), situated in a neighborhood of the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro²⁸ was fertile ground for fieldwork. Participant observation lasting months was undertaken in a 3rd grade class (now the 4th year), involving 38 students who lived in a nearby *favela*, with the same characteristics of the students of the first research mentioned. Their ages ranged between 8 and 14 years old, which showed the existing learning gap, according to the standards that prevailed in the school system. The fact that these pupils from this *favela* study outside it, marked a difference from the students in the first study, since it meant that their families had other material and symbolic resources conducive to other interests, investments in the schooling of their children and opening horizons, which allowed them relative distance

28 Daily life, social practices and values among working class urban sectors – the differential diffusion of writing and reading and the meaning of the image among the youth. PUC-Rio/CNPq. 1991-1994.

from their own social environment. A certain hierarchy was established among children studying inside or outside the *favela* community, with a view to a broader social experience.

Without going into physical and social descriptions of the space, I will comment on the social and educational uses of reading. The school's goal is to produce an educated individual. How is this education achieved? Students performed individual and group tasks that imposed other desk and chair arrangements. Notebooks, mimeographed exercises and a few literature books were passed around. The blackboard, a constant reference in the classroom.

The girls' interactions with their personalized notebooks and diaries were significant, revealing, according to Ariès (1991), signs of other relationships of the subject with herself, specific to the advent of modernity. The handling of these notebooks decorated with collages, drawings, thoughts and facts revealed the importance given by the girls to the expression of feelings, affections and recording of valued facts.

Participant observation demonstrated that students read and write according to distinct practices and sociabilities. A pleasant reading can be one involving reading a poem or article aloud. Silent reading, however, can be thought of as a laborious activity, when each student reads to him or herself, spelling, deciphering letters and enunciating words to expand their own understanding of the text. These social processes show school reading as exercise, work, training, identification of signs and meanings, constraint and surmounting.

What is reading? For the teacher interviewed, not all students showed the ability to read, because for her, the meaning of the act of reading is the sense that is given to what is read. Many of the students were merely decoders of words and phrases. According to the teacher, the process of becoming a reader is constituted by several different stages, and its basis is decoding.

In my view, the opportunities that these students have for developing "silent reading" are precarious, whether in the classroom or other spaces of sociability, such as the familial space. This happens because the opportunities they have for contact with and handling books are rare, as are the opportunities for the use and the appropriation of books. At this

point, we should recall what Roger Chartier's work indicates, that the practice of silent reading, among other data, is what opens up the paths of intellectual work and develops other forms of subjectivity, interpretation of the world and the construction of individuality.

One of the main arguments raised, resulting from this observation (Dauster 1994; 2003), resided in the following perspective: while admitting that "the reader is born" in the public school, he or she is forged in a constrained and limited way by his or her own life conditions and by the opportunities the school system offers. Without generalizing, I know there are examples of individuals who had the same kind of school experience and overcame these obstacles and difficulties in their life experience. However, in the games of inclusion and exclusion that weave the webs of society the chances that these students have to develop silent reading as a practice and to have contact with so-called good literature are rare. It is interesting to note the instigator role of women, mothers and guardians, in the valuation of reading habits and the education of children.

In the wake of the questions raised about the representations and practices of reading in the urban setting, through anthropology and cultural history, I contacted writers of youth and children's literature who defined themselves as professional writers²⁹. I used Gilberto Velho's (1986) dialogue-research, actuating through a network, as one writer indicated another I should interview. A collection of data sprung from these interviews in the line of life history and perceptions about the formation of a reader and the meaning of school from this other point of view. Some significant points emerged, as I will now narrate: for the interviewees, the reader is formed by contact with people who have an emotional effect on them, through identifications, values and gestures; the taste for reading does not follow a formula, and thus literary books should not be used as learning material. The writers question the use of files, inserts and evaluations when it comes to the reading of literature; on the other hand they believe that the school could create access

29 The role of school in forming readers. PUC-Rio. CNPq. 1994-1997. Professor Pedro Benjamin Garcia and I organized a book titled *Web of Authors*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2000, awarded by the Fundação Nacional do Livro [National Book Foundation] as Highly Recommended, containing the interviews with these authors.

mechanisms to libraries, newspapers, museums, cinemas, weaving the web in which the reader is formed; following this line of thought, reader training should be part of the context of public policies, in that it is the school's responsibility to avoid a purely affective, pleasurable discourse in relation to reading. It is not a matter of discarding the pleasure of reading, much to the contrary, but to provide situations for debate, the exchange of ideas and collective discussions about texts and books. Finally, for writers, the act of reading implies liberty, autonomy and the option to choose as fundamental devices when discussing the social and differential construction of the reader. In short, "education" and the formation of the reader occur in diverse sociabilities, as can be glimpsed from what the writers expressed above and briefly presented here (Dauster 2003).

With no intention of exhausting the subject of PPGE research projects, I will continue, however, to briefly discuss the investigations that unfolded concerning the practices of reading and writing in the context of the university, the basis of my craft as professor and researcher, demanding a posture of the "strangeness of the familiar" (Velho 1978) during the investigation.

Another problematic appeared that is rooted in the preceding studies, which is the progressive enrollment of students from the so-called working classes at a private university thought of as elite. The enrollment of these students after having passed the entrance exam, but facilitated by a scholarship program, represented a social transformation and a significant conquest for these students. However, another side to this conquest appeared that was distressing due to tensions and provocations, which are worth mapping, since these involved impasses in social contact among students from different social strata. The diversity could be felt in terms of color, codes, attitudes, clothing, and other social markers.

I present a brief discussion the research entitled "University students - lifestyle and reading practices" (PUC-Rio/CNPq, 1998-2002), about the relationship between students and literate culture, in this context. One of the questions on the agenda focused on the way the enrollment and permanence of these students was experienced at the time.

I concentrated on 19 students, between the ages of 20 and 40 years old, from the courses in education, history and social services, that made up a highly heterogeneous group in terms of color, living conditions, education and religion. The majority of these students took the so-called “pre-entrance” exam community courses, and having passed the entrance exam, all of them obtained scholarships, the condition for their entry and permanence in the institution.

The conflicts and tensions manifested themselves in feelings of discrimination stemming from colleagues from the more economically privileged backgrounds and some of the teachers. The students complained of the stigma attributed to public schooling, through accusations of a decline in the quality of teaching at the university and due to their own difficulties with reading and writing. From the point of view of non-scholarship students, there were attitudes of avoidance in relation to scholarship students with regard to group assignments. Among these, complaints about a decrease in the value of their diplomas were current, and criticisms were made related to class dynamics due to the presence of the supposedly less academically prepared scholarship students in carrying out the assignments.

In short, the inclusion of the working classes was experienced in a tense, prejudiced manner, and provoked several forms of distancing from less economically favored students by those better off, for example, when constituting groups for work assignments. Other constraints revealed were related to the use of certain spaces in the university where the scholarship students did not feel at ease. Symbolic boundaries stemming from feelings brought about by social and cultural differences and life styles were part of the reason for the complaints and processes of incompatibility. Even so, these behaviors were not uniform, there were exceptions. Both teachers and students sought to facilitate mediations and meetings, trying to surmount these social obstacles.

The so-called “de-elitization of the university,” far from being a linear process, was transforming academic relationships (Dauster 2004). At the time, access to the university for the working class people was primarily concentrated in the areas of education, history, geography and social services. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the narratives

of the teachers interviewed allowed us to relativize the commonly cited stereotype that only students from working class backgrounds suffered difficulties with the educated norm (Dauster 2007;2007). Numerous students from more economically privileged backgrounds presented similar predicaments.

During another research project,³⁰ I interviewed nine teachers, men and women, working in the areas of humanities, social sciences and technical scientific, aged between 39 and 70 years. The contacts were made through my own acquaintances and through indications from teachers answering the survey at the same university. From the result of these interviews, I highlight only some recurring points that compose the *ethos* (Geertz 1989: 103), that is, the lifestyle, behavior and social values of this universe: the idea that the production of knowledge has an ethical and social function, the importance of transmitting various reading and writing practices in the training of students, the teaching relationship inspired by dialogue, together with digital technology practices, which imply other writings and readings. Intense cultural changes were observed due to the use of computers for communicating between teachers and students, and comments on the multiple roles exercised by teachers (teaching, research, supervision, administration and lecturing) and the emergence of new academic styles, due to the introduction of digital techniques that changed the tasks of teachers and students (Dauster 2007).

The continuity of studies on the representations and practices of reading, in this same universe, led me to observe and perceive facets of the uses of the so-called “educated norm” and its relationships with handwritten and digitally written texts.³¹ This observation was conducted over more than a semester, in a discipline called Teaching Practices I, directed at undergraduates, gathering together a female universe of education students. The heterogeneity of the group lay in their varied insertion in terms of economic and sociocultural situations and

30 Research “The symbolic field of the university – the teachers, cultural diversity and academic excellence.” PUC-Rio/CNPq, 2003-2005.

31 Research “Writing in the university: university students and the relationships between reading and writing” PUC-Rio/CNPq, 2005-2008.

in their relationships with the digital world, since not all of them had a computer at home. The course had a twofold objective: competence in computing and teacher training in education. The organization of the classes consisted of sending texts and consulting texts online, a characteristic that partially changed the relationships between teachers and students. These texts were classified as “conferences” and “documentation,” they were “mandatory” and “complementary” and the students comments were made online. At that time, around 2005, teachers began to demand that all student assignments be delivered typed. Part of our course was held in the computer center, to allow all the students to have access to a computer, and it was said that the practice occurred in a “classroom without borders.” The written representations of the undergraduates expressed their relationships with the machine and with the digital world. Thus, a distinction was noted between digital and non-digital writing, voicing distinct meanings between one activity and the other, from the students’ point of view. The students’ interpretation, for example, was that “academic,” digital writing was for university use, while the “personal,” on paper, was used to express their emotions (Dauster 2010).

During my postdoctoral studies in the Graduate Program in Social Anthropology at the National Museum of Brazil (*Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social, Museu Nacional, UFRJ*), supervised by Professor Gilberto Velho (2009), it was proposed that I examine the processes of the formation, identity construction and representations and practices of writing, through interviews, based on the life histories of eight award-winning writers.³² They all authorized me to use their names, because their enunciations were both personal and authorial. The writers contacted belonged to several different generations. Since I did not want to be restricted to interviews, to broaden my interpretation, I attended literary events, book signings, lectures, various types of activities in which the writers were the protagonists, and other occasions where they were the theme of the literature. I read articles in newspapers and magazines; I read the authors’ books and texts.

32 “Women and literate culture: an anthropology of the forming award winning writers”. Research Project PUC-Rio/FAPERJ, 2009-2011.

Accompanied by doctoral students (Ana Maria Loureiro, Anderson Tibau and Lucelena Ferreira), I visited the writers' homes, except for Nelida Piñon, who agreed to meet us at the Brazilian Academy of Letters. In contrast with similar circumstances, my feelings led me to think on the particularly dramaturgical character of this contact situation, without doubt due to the dialogism and sense of alterity in being with professional women from the world of writing and fiction.

This research inspired me to formulate the question-problem: How do you “become who you are”? (Nietzsche), which orientated both my inquiry and my interpretations. What emerged from these interviews was the role of family in creating a taste for literature and the arts, the organization of their daily work life as an expression of the place that reading and writing had in their lives, the blurring of genre boundaries regarding the value and the practice of youth and children's literature *vis-à-vis* literature for the adult universe, the value of the classics in the intellectual formation of each individual. Strong emotions linked to the literary world permeated the encounters. References were discussed concerning the meaning of “memory” and “invention” for the craft of fiction writing, recurrently appearing associated with the production of literature. Another relevant point that was discussed, which involves and sustains literary works, is how the practice of research is indispensable to the construction of a considerable part of fictional works and their characters.

I broached the subject of the existence or absence of a feminine writing with the writers. This controversial issue brought up contrary and contradictory positions, both affirmative and negative. From their narratives concerning the feelings involved in writing fiction, the imaginary experience of “living” other multifaceted “lives” emerged. Writing is also living other lives, being embodied in characters that lend meaning to trajectories and identities.

What emerges from all this? Observing the writers' trajectories, fictional works, experiences of other codes, construction of characters and life experiences, I appeal to the notion of metamorphosis (Velho 1994:29) to illuminate my interpretation, since to forge characters and stories is also to have the privilege of living and reinventing other lives,

identities, times, symbolic situations and choices (Dauster 2012).

I am currently working on the project “Founders - the social construction of the memory of the Graduate Program in Education at PUC-Rio (2011-...), the first graduate program in education in Brazil, trying to unveil the background of the implementation of the program, becoming close with the social actors and their points of view concerning the role of the PPGE/PUC-Rio. It falls to me to interpret the nonlinear historical and social processes of the program’s development, views on research, teaching and supervision of the teachers participating in the project, as well as thinking about the social and academic function of the institution during different phases.

Inconclusions

There is no doubt that the school, considering its concrete plurality, is a social invention and represents specific cultures, daily lives full of rituals, values and beliefs. It constitutes a rich territory for observation and ethnographic analysis, along with other situations for sociability that are formative. As an ethnographer, I have worked in schools, universities, professional networks and other social networks. My view of “education” is broadened, for it encompasses other formation processes and observed the codes found in schools and universities as cultural-historical constructs.

Over the last few years, I have seen the expansion and consolidation of the field of anthropology and/of education. There are numerous research projects and reflections to be carried out. To indicate only one, I would raise the issue of the possible differences between theses and dissertations produced at this intersection, when pursued in the social sciences and/or education fields. Is anthropology done outside the social sciences? Or is ethnography done, but not anthropology? In what terms is ethnography done outside the social sciences?

In short, this is an account of a teaching and research experience in anthropology outside the social sciences carried out in a graduate program in education. From its beginnings in 1965, at the height of the military dictatorship, the PPGE/PUC-Rio presented pioneering

characteristics, because, as I have said, it was the first MA in education in Brazil. Another attitude of similar importance was precisely that it was the first to implement the discipline of anthropology and education. It fell to me between the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 21st century, to exercise the role of mediator between these nonlinear boundaries. This narrative should not be read as a linear either, since it indicates styles, aspects, choices and emphases within my own trajectory of teaching, researching and academic supervision. It has the flavor of memory. It cannot hope to be exhaustive on what has been lived, and the work continues in many forms.

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Prejudice of Mark in the Middle Classes: Text and Context of Oracy Nogueira's “Pretos and Mulatos”¹

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Pretos e Mulatos entre as Camadas Médias [“Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes”] is an unpublished text written in 1985 by Oracy Nogueira (1917–1996). The original pages (preserved thanks to the Fundo Oracy Nogueira,² today under the care of the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz in Rio de Janeiro) indicate that it was written with the intent of being published. The 104 typed pages (hand-numbered by the author, full of both typed and handwritten scribbles and corrections) are preceded by some “notes for publication” (on how to organize the table of contents, footnotes, reference bibliography, and headings/subheadings). It is not known where it was to be published and why it was not. This short

1 In Brazil the terms used for racial classification are part of a cultural domain loaded with symbolic meaning and are difficult to translate. As we did in the edition of Nogueira’s previously unpublished research appearing in this same issue, we have opted to leave these terms in Portuguese (in *italics*), followed by our “best approximate translation in English” (in quotation marks). The problem immediately becomes evident in the translation of the terms *preto* (used in the title of Nogueira’s article) and *negro*, also used on occasion by the author. Literal translations of *preto* and *negro* would be “black” and “negro.” The cultural sense of Brazil’s *negro*, however, differs from the U.S.’s “negro.” Since the 1980s in Brazil, the term *negro* tends to bestows an element of ethnic value, while “negro” in English is more neutral and it is the term “black” that bestows added ethnic value. In the United States, there is also the highly discriminatory and pejorative “nigger,” practically banned from a white person’s lexicon and restricted to use exclusively among blacks in the banter of intimate relationships. *Preto*, in turn, the most commonly used term in Nogueira’s research on the traditional racial classification system in the 1940s and 1950s, is still in popular use today, although the term *negro* has become hegemonic in academic and politically correct circles. There is still the subtle nuance on the spectrum of color - *preto retinto* [dark black], *mulato claro* or *escuro* [light or dark mulato], *pardo*, *moreno* - characteristics of racial prejudice of mark, as identified by Nogueira. These terms, while they may not be common in academic literature, continue to be used widely in the country. Some of Nogueira’s passages will need editorial notes on usage of terms and meaning in the context of how a term is used.

2 The Fundo Oracy Nogueira [“Oracy Nogueira Archive”] results from my research on the making of social sciences in Brazil from 1940-1960 conducted in the Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The first steps of this research followed the valuable autobiographical elements presented by Nogueira in his “Introduction” to *Tanto preto quanto branco* (Nogueira, 1985). The Archive was established in 2007 with support from the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa no Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ). I directed the Fundo until 2012, when I oversaw its donation from the family to the Casa de Oswaldo Cruz, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, in Rio de Janeiro [<http://arch.coc.fiocruz.br>].

article commends the welcome opportunity for its publication in the present issue of the journal *Vibrant*³ and seeks to place it historically and in the context of the author's body of work.

Although "*Pretos and Mulatos*" remained unpublished, Nogueira did publish a major work that same year of 1985: *Tanto preto quanto branco* [Both Black and White] (Nogueira 1985), a book that brought the author's notable contribution on Brazil's racial prejudice formulated in the 1950s to a new moment of the country's history and social sciences. The transitional political process then underway in the country – from military dictatorship to democracy – was gaining enthusiastic momentum in 1984 with the *Diretas Já* ["Elections Now"] campaign. The social movements that arose in the late 1970s were flourishing, with wide debates about both politics as well as specific rights. In the mid-1980s, the women's, gay, and black movements were all thriving, especially the *Movimento Negro Unificado* ["Unified Black Movement"] (MNU). Launched at a public protest in São Paulo on 7 July 1978 in response to discrimination against four black youths in the Tietê Regattas Club, the MNU movement reverberated and spread throughout Brazil. In addition to the struggle against the so-called "myth of racial democracy," the movement sought greater participation of blacks in higher education.

A catalyst for Oracy Nogueira's research was an article by movement leader Neusa Barbosa published in the *Folha de São Paulo* [a newspaper in São Paulo] on 6 November 1983. In it, Barbosa pointed out the miniscule number of blacks (1%) among the graduates from two major universities in São Paulo (Universidade de São Paulo – USP – and Pontifícia Universidade Católica) as well as their almost total absence among professors and mid- and high-level administrators. At the time, the MNU struggle helped motivate Oracy Nogueira to undertake the research for "*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes.*" In addition, the 1980 census provided updated population data categorized by skin color and new academic research on race relations was being published.

3 I would like to thank the editors of this issue of *Vibrant* for the opportunity to publish Nogueira's original text as well as this brief article. Special acknowledgement and thanks to Yvonne Maggie for her support during preparation process.

In the early 1980s there was little discussion about racial quotas⁴ or how procedures for access higher levels in public universities should be changed. These discussions came years later, in the late 1990s, and especially after the United Nations held the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa in September 2001.

The sociopolitical context in Brazil was completely different, and “*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes*” – completed in 1985 – provides a valuable record of this historical moment. Even more, Nogueira’s research gives us an enticing development of his fertile thinking on the dynamic of racial relations and racism in Brazil. For all these reasons, to read Nogueira’s research now calls for contextualization, which we propose here. It is important that the reader become familiar with some generally little known aspects of Nogueira’s professional work and career. It is also important to place “*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes*” in the context of what we now know about Nogueira’s work. His book *Tanto preto quanto branco*, published in the same year of the writing of “*Pretos and Mulatos*” (1985), provides a keen perspective on the author’s motivations.

Tanto preto quanto branco (Nogueira 1985) brings together two notable texts. The first – the culmination of a long journey of study, research and reflection – is the powerful *Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem* [“Racial prejudice of mark and racial prejudice of origin”], originally presented in 1954 at the International Congress of Americanists in São Paulo.⁵ The second text, written 12 years earlier, marks the very beginnings of the author’s comprehensive approach to Brazilian racial prejudice. It is the astute *Atitude desfavorável de alguns anunciantes de São Paulo em relação aos empregados de cor* [“Unfavourable attitudes by some advertisers in relation to employees of color in São Paulo”], originally published in

4 For discussion on establishment of racial quotas in public universities ([Racial Quotas Draft Bill] or PL 73/1999) and the so-called “Statute of Racial Equality” (PL 3.198/2000), see Fry, Maggie, Maio, Monteiro and Santos (orgs.) (2007). For a specific case study, see Maio and Santos (2005). For a broader critical perspective on the persistent application of the notion of race and its racist implications in the present, see Fry, 2005.

5 “*Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem*” was also published in the classics section of the magazine *Tempo Social* (Vol. 19, No. 1. November 2006, pp. 287-308). Versions in English and Spanish (translated by Nogueira himself) were published in the online journal *Vibrant (Virtual Brazilian Anthropology)*. Vol. 5, No. 1, Jan-Jun 2008 in the section Déjà Lu.

1942 in the journal *Sociologia* based on a Master's course paper. The course teacher was Dr. Donald Pierson, who was also his thesis advisor. In the article, the young student formulated a hypothesis (later fully stated in the first text mentioned above) on the presence of a type of racial prejudice in Brazil unlike the racial prejudice found in countries such as the United States and South Africa and also not synonymous with class prejudice, as other Brazilians leftwing thinkers maintained.

Nogueira had planned to include a third text in the book: "*Relações raciais no Município de Itapetininga, São Paulo*" ["Race relations in the Municipality of Itapetininga, São Paulo"], an important account resulting from his participation from 1952 to 1954 in the UNESCO-sponsored race-relations research conducted in the states of Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Before then, Nogueira's work had only been published in a collection edited by Bastide and Fernandes (1955), a compilation of research studies conducted in São Paulo.⁶ As previously stated (Cavalcanti 1996), the Itapetininga study shares an organic relation with the 1942 article and the 1954 comparative essay and must be included in a balanced evaluation of Nogueira's work.

Nogueira's research on racial relations in Itapetininga (which he usually refers to as the "Report") examines the patterns in black/white relations in this municipality of the state of São Paulo over three centuries (mid-1600s to mid-1900s), weaving history and statistical data with ethnography and direct observation. In the best tradition of community studies, Itapetininga was the locus of a comprehensive case study from which emerged the concept of **prejudice of mark**, a pattern of racial discrimination prevalent in Brazil in the mid-1900s. It is an insidious and subtle form of racism that does not exclude but discriminates against the *negro*; it does not classify people by their ancestry (origin) but rather by their skin color and physical aspects of their appearance (phenotype). This type of racial prejudice is not absolute and definitive but rather is tuned into the spectrum of colors and tones of skin, in which basically the darker the skin color, the greater the discrimination. Social ties or personal merit can cause a shift in the classification of an individual, yet

6 For a closer look at Nogueira's participation in the UNESCO research, see Cavalcanti (1998). To see more about the range of studies in the UNESCO project, see Maio (1999).

in the broader social environment racism remains intact. Racism in the United States, as Nogueira already explained at the end of his “Report” (Nogueira 1998), operates very differently from racism in Brazil, as it explicitly segregates and discriminates, even legally (it is notable that racial segregation was not legally abolished in the United States until as recently as 1964). Furthermore, unlike Brazil, U.S. racism classifies individuals according to their ancestry, independent of skin color. It can assume passionate characteristics, compromising the judgment of whites about acts attributed to blacks, and producing, for the group discriminated against, an ever-present and obsessive awareness of discrimination.

For editorial reasons, then, the “Report” was left out of *Tanto preto quanto branco* (Nogueira 1985).⁷ In the context of that collection from 1985, however, the gap was filled by a rich 66-page introduction (completed in 1979). In that introduction, from an emotional as well as intellectual and academic perspective, Nogueira gives a heartfelt account of the central place race relations has held in his personal and professional journey. Given the relative decline of Nogueira’s work (especially in the 1960s), his “Introduction” gives the reader, like me in the early 1990s, the sense of an author’s reckoning with himself and his times.

Tanto preto quanto branco posthumously honors two important individuals in Nogueira’s childhood in the city of Cunha in São Paulo state. Dr. Casemiro da Rocha and Maria Rita da Silva reinforced the experience of respectful even affectionate coexistence between blacks and whites in both the public and private spheres of the small town. Dr. Casemiro de Rocha was a Bahian doctor, *preto retinto* [“dark black”] and the political head of Cunha during the entire First Republic (from 1899 to 1930) respected by the local white elite (who if they could, would deny his color) (Nogueira 1992). Maria Rita da Silva (the *parda* [“light mulato”] woman hugging two white girls in the photo on the book cover) was the beloved nanny of Oracy and his two sisters – children of public elementary school teachers. The parents’ series of moves to ever-larger cities (first Catanduva, then Botucatu, and finally São Paulo) meant that

7 Years later, in 1998, the “Report” was published by Editora de Universidade de São Paulo (Edusp) under the title *Preconceito de Marca: As relações raciais em Itapetininga* [Prejudice of mark: Racial relations in Itapetininga] (with revision, organization and an introduction by Cavalcanti, Maria Laura).

the “social distance [was also increasing] between the white circle to which my family belonged and the circles of people of color, such that I never again would have the opportunity to live with such intimacy that was characteristic of my childhood in my hometown,” he recounted (Nogueira 1985: 56).

Race relations is also a central theme in his Master’s studies, undertaken from 1942 to 1945 in the then *Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo* [“Free School of Sociology and Politics of São Paulo”] (now the *Fundação Escola de Sociologia e Política*) [“School of Sociology and Politics Foundation”], and in the course of his doctorate in the Sociology Department of the University of Chicago (1945–1947). In the *Escola Livre* in 1939, before he graduated, Nogueira was a teaching assistant to Donald Pierson, who also became Nogueira’s advisor for his Masters.⁸ Pierson, for his part, had been mentored by Robert Park at the University of Chicago (Valladares 2010) and his doctorate thesis was published in English (“Whites and Blacks in Bahia”) in 1942, and later in Portuguese as the classic *Branços e Pretos na Bahia* (Pierson 1971). Pierson brought the University of Chicago’s rich tradition of sociology and anthropology to the Brazilian academic environment (Vila Nova 1998, Velho 1999, Valladares 2005), in which the study of race relations was a matter of privilege. “Race and culture,” a course originally taught by Robert Park in his teaching period at the University of Chicago, was offered annually by Donald Pierson at the *Escola Livre*. Academic records show that Florestan Fernandes, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Oracy Nogueira himself took the course and the comprehensive English version of the set of lectures can be found in the Fundo Oracy Nogueira.

In the Introduction, Nogueira wrote: “As an undergraduate I came into contact with classic works by Nina Rodrigues, Manoel R. Querino, Oliveira Vianna, Arthur Ramos and Gilberto Freyre. Before going to the United States, I had already studied the works of Robert E. Park, Melville J. Herskovits, E. Franklin Frazier, W. Lloyd Warner, E.B. Reuter, Edwin R.

8 Nogueira’s Master’s thesis, presented in 1945, is also a classical and original work on the stigma of illness that approaches tuberculosis as a social experience. *Vozes de Campos de Jordão: Experiências sociais e psíquicas do tuberculoso pulmonar no estado de São Paulo* [“Voices from Campos de Jordão: Social and psychic experiences of the tuberculosis patient in São Paulo”] was republished in 2009, by Editora Fiocruz, with the organization and introduction by Maria Laura Cavalcanti.

W. Embree, E. V. Stonequist, John Dollard, and others” (Nogueira 1985: 63).⁹ Nogueira arrived in the United States in 1945, shortly after the publication of two books essential for the study of relations between blacks and whites and problems of democracy in the United States: *An American Dilemma* by Gunnar Myrdal (1944) and *Black Metropolis* by St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton (1945). He participated in the seminar by Drake and Cayton to promote their book and also read James Weldon Johnson’s *The autobiography of an ex-coloured man*, which made a profound impression on him (Nogueira 1985: 64).¹⁰ His professors included Lloyd Warner, Herbert Blumer, Louis Wirth, Robert Redfield, and Everett Hughes (his advisor). Nogueira also conducted some field research in Chicago, sharing experiences with blacks and other groups that were victims of discrimination, participating in inter-racial groups to combat racism, and undertaking a trip to the South of the country with colleagues.¹¹

After returning to Brazil (in 1947), in the early 1950s Nogueira was invited by Alfred Métraux to participate in the UNESCO research on racial relations, joining a group of social scientists whose names marked the era and history of Brazilian social sciences: Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes, Luiz de Aguiar Costa Pinto, Charles Wagley, Thales de Azevedo, and René Ribeiro, among others. As described by Maio (1999), those studies not only proposed different interpretations of racism in Brazil but also presented different ways of conceiving and applying social sciences. In this context, it can be said that Nogueira was the first intellectual clearly to grasp the anthropological and cultural nature of racial prejudice, summarized in the concepts of **prejudice of mark** (Brazil) / **prejudice of origin** (United States). Since these two types of racism arose in two very different cultures and societies, they produce significantly different effects, always unarguably negative. Through the

9 In terms of interest in social sciences in the years 1940-1960, Castro Faria (1984) noted the budding “anthropologization of sociology” or “sociologization of anthropology” practiced by Nogueira and promoted in the academic setting of the *Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política*. See also the work of Corrêa (1987) for the resurgence of interest in the history of anthropology in the country. Many other studies followed, built on this foundation.

10 James Weldon Johnson also helped organize the *National Association for the Advancement for the Colored People* (NAACP), which Oracy Nogueira joined when he lived in the United States.

11 The Fundo Oracy Nogueira houses important documents from this rich period of the author’s life, including programs of the subjects studied, drafts and final papers, field notes and, original notes on records of impressions, sketches of research projects, newspaper clippings, among other documents.

identification of the dynamics of the distinct forms of racism in Brazil and in the United States, Nogueira also hoped to help the development of appropriate strategies to combat each type of discrimination.

All this took place between 1940 and 1960, which was then followed by a distinctly arid period in Nogueira's professional trajectory (Cavalcanti 1996; 2009). After Donald Pierson left the *Escola Livre* in 1952, the graduate studies division began a long steady decline.¹² The rich theoretical dimensions of the University of Chicago's socio-anthropological tradition (Smith 1988; Coulon 1995), brought to Brazil by Donald Pierson, which were decisive in the formation of the first generations of ELSP graduates, then lost their institutional niche. Nogueira himself would leave in 1957, initiating a long itinerary through different institutions, including the *Centro de Pesquisas Educacionais* ["Center for Educational Studies"] in Rio de Janeiro. In this new era, São Paulo's social sciences would continue their institutionalization especially in the University of São Paulo, where in the 1960s and 1970s the so-called *Escola Sociológica Paulista* ["Paulista School of Sociology"] would consolidate its hegemony (Miceli 1989, 1995). Nogueira would join the Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences at the University of São Paulo in 1968. In 1970, his expertise in "methods and techniques" paved the way for his transfer to the Department of Social Sciences (Nogueira 1964). In 1978, Nogueira became full professor of Applied Sociology in Economics in the Faculty of Economic Sciences, and retired in 1983.

As previously mentioned, in 1979 Nogueira completed his "Introduction" to the awaited collection of his previous writings on race relations which was finally published in 1985 (Nogueira 1985). And, as we indicated, only two of these works were published in the book. The study of "*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes*," conducted from 1983 to 1984 and finished in 1985, was therefore undertaken in the interval between the preparation of *Tanto preto quanto branco*, already completed in 1979, and its publication in 1985. "*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes*", therefore, holds a place in the already-retired professor Nogueira's revisiting of the subject of race relations.

¹² For a good overview of the incubator role of the *Escola Livre* from 1930-1950, see Kantor, Maciel & Simões (2009), which combines personal testimonials and analysis.

When we read “*Pretos and Mulatos among the Middle Classes*” from today’s perspective of Nogueira’s contribution to the understanding of Brazil’s racism,¹³ the writing surprises us not only because of its originality and clear style but also for the author’s modesty. Nogueira presents it simply as an “individual testimony eminently descriptive in style.” Still he reminds us that his upbringing and lifestyle made him feel confident that his data reflected the collective and inter-subjective experience of Brazil’s middle classes in general and the middle classes in São Paulo state in particular (p. 13).¹⁴

Nogueira began his research in the same year of his retirement (1983) and his writing can also be seen as a rite of passage, since he moves from a series of USP academic events to more personal social circles. Along with *Velho* (1978), Nogueira observes a personal universe and its particular features and transforms it into socio-anthropological knowledge.

As previously mentioned, in the USP at that time there was “no type of explicit or direct criteria for selection based on racial traits” (p. 10). Seeing limited opportunities for more systematic research at the University at that moment, Nogueira decided to reexamine the subject of race relations based on his own formulation of **prejudice of mark** by testing the hypothesis of one of its insidious aspects: darker skin tones mean greater discrimination. “The main underlying hypothesis was that *pretos* would be absent from the majority of situations and events to be described, while *mulatos* (even if under-represented in relation to their proportion in the general population), would be present” (p.2). According Nogueira: “Racial data in Brazil must be presented disaggregated by *preto*, *pardo* and *mulato*, since aggregation under the single label of *negro* can hide the more precarious condition of the first (*pretos*) in relation to whites and of their greater inferiority, however slight, as compared with *pardos* or *mulatos*.” (p. 13).

13 In the 1980s, DaMatta (1987) drew attention to Nogueira’s formulations in his study of the “Fábula das três raças” [“Fable of Three Races”] or “Brazilian racism.” Maggie (1991) also addressed Brazilian racism as a color classification system; and Farias (2006) discussed the dynamics racial relations through the analysis of color classification on Rio de Janeiro beaches. In particular, Teixeira (2003) – who discusses several of Nogueira’s writings, but obviously did not know about this previously unpublished research – studied the “color” of students and professors in different academic fields at the *Universidade Federal Fluminense* [“Federal Fluminense University”] in the 1990s in terms of analysis of statistical data and career and life paths.

14 The page numbers are those of the text original 104 typed pages that can be found at the Fundo Oracy Nogueira, now kept by Casa de Oswaldo Cruz/Fundação Oswaldo Cruz [<http://arch.coc.fiocruz.br>].

Also in the early 1980s, in addition to the population census, important works on the subject of race relations were published, which the author discusses in his writing. These include the thesis of Manuela Carneiro da Cunha on black Brazilians who returned to Africa in the 19th Century (1985)¹⁵ (which led our author to undertake a fascinating historical incursion into colonial and imperial Brazil), an article by Hasenbalg (1983) and a book by Clóvis Moura (1983). These authors also analyzed and commented on the 1980 census data and their voices are added to Nogueira's argument. These discussions introduce an apparently unpretentious ethnographic study, conducted with a combination of tenacity and a certain refined touch of self-irony. By the end of his study, it is with confessed relief that Nogueira revealed he was finally freed of the obsession of closely examining the phenotype of all those around him. Constant and focused attention in social situations on the precise tone of skin color of those present is not a common cultural practice in Brazilian society, Nogueira tell us, and actually is quite opposite to the country's popular etiquette on race relations, which calls for discretion and not scrutiny.

Nogueira drew on his presence at, and participation in countless different academic events in the USP – including selection panels for masters and doctorates; public exams for applicants to professorship posts, varying homages, concession of honorary degrees; lectures and events – to calculate and analyze the composition of those present by color categories in the population. Likewise, with the same objective, the author also wrote of social gatherings in his personal life – baptisms, weddings, anniversaries, visits and outings, visits to a barber's shop and to a rally for democratic elections (*Diretas Já*).

We journey along with him, from the academic setting of the University of São Paulo to social engagements of a more personal nature in Taubaté, Osasco and Cunha (his homeland). His writing becomes steadily more expressive and fluent, narration replacing the monotony of description. This is particularly clear in the case of a visit to express condolences to the widow of an acquaintance, who although distant was greatly admired by Nogueira. The man who had died was white and from a traditional family; his widow,

¹⁵ The thesis was presented by Carneiro da Cunha at the USP in 1984 and published as a book the following year, which is why we cite the book here.

born in Europe, also wealthy, he supposed “had African ancestry albeit remote” (p. 57). During the visit that he narrates, he had a lively conversation with a young adult *mulato*, educated in law, extremely intelligent, even erudite. When Nogueira was leaving, he asked the widow who the impressive young man was and was surprised by her answer: “My son!” (p. 58).

Nogueira worked from an ethnographic perspective, identifying natural categories based on common sense to describe people from their own perspective. This strategy enabled him to demonstrate again and again his theory that Brazilians perceive people based on their physical features or characteristics and not on their origin. As in a friendly conversation, the situations and stories Nogueira writes about present convincing data and persuasively reveal the subtle dynamic of prejudice of mark in action in the context of São Paulo’s middle classes.

To translate Nogueira’s exquisite analysis into English, then, is not an easy task. The first footnote of this text addresses the difficulty of translating racial classification terms, which tend to be charged with particular cultural and symbolic meanings, which themselves vary from situation to situation. In his writing, Oracy Nogueira uses racial categories with great propriety, following the current use in the literature at that time or by those interviewed. The problem calls for the reader’s careful attention. The term most widely used by Nogueira in his text is *preto*, which sometimes comes from day to day usage, sometimes from demographic censuses. Censuses from more than 100 years ago used the population’s self-classification for color, requesting interviewees to select between categories of color/race: *branco*, *pardo*, *preto*, *amarelo* and (after 1988) *indígena*. However, the term *negro*, which translates into English as black, is also used by the author in some passages with the meaning made popular by the black movements, that is, as a racial identity, although rarely used in day to day life in the early 1980s. The 1980s, however, as already noted, were transitional years. During that period, sociologists also began sometimes using the term *negro* to refer to those who declared themselves either *preto* or *pardo* in census returns. Although Nogueira did not fully agree with this strategy (which in his view camouflaged the real situation of *pretos* in Brazilian society), he did use it in some instances.

In the introductory passage on the history of slavery in Brazil, Nogueira outlines the continuities and ruptures that occurred with abolition. His

careful attention to the terminology of social classifications allows him to show that, even in slavery, distinctions *de marca* [of mark] already existed, as well as an ambiguity in meaning of the terms *livre* [free], *liberto* [freed] and *escravo* [slave]. Slaves are described with the historiographical expressions that use “*africano*” to designate an African-born slave or *liberto*, and “*crioulo*” for a slave or *liberto* born in Brazil. For Nogueira’s argument, it is significant that the latter, born here, could be *preto* or *pardo*. Culturally, the term *crioulo* in Brazil, therefore, has a very different meaning than its current English translation “Creole” (a descendent of Europeans born in the colonies or mestizo of black and European descent). Also, in the literature and documents from the period of slavery to the mid-20th century (especially newspapers), the term *preto* was commonly used to refer to slaves; later, the term *negro* became popular in referring to a slave who rebelled or escaped (Schwarcz 1987).

In Nogueira’s descriptions of individual physical characteristics observed in events in São Paulo in 1983 and 1984, he alternated between “negroid characteristics” and “mark of African ancestry.” In the accounting and analysis of color categories used in these events, the classification spectrum opens wide, ranging from *preto retinto* [dark black] to darker or lighter *mulatos* – *pardos*, *pardos claros*, *morenos*, *morenos claros* and finally the neighboring types that include “a limit of tolerance that may vary from region to region, according to the population density of *negros* and *mestiços*” (p. 24). The term *mulata*, which has a special connotation in Brazil, is sometimes used to refer to women. The double meaning of the term *moreno* is noteworthy, referring to both dark color from birth as well as the darkening of skin color resulting from exposure to the sun. *Moreno* is still the most widely used category in Brazil’s race relations etiquette to refer to dark-skinned people without directly referring to color or “race”.

Finally, we draw attention to Nogueira’s choice to use *pretos* and *mulatos* in the title of his study. The decision is consistent with his hypothesis that, while every shade in Brazil’s racial color spectrum suffers the effects of prejudice of mark, *pretos* are the group that feels the effects most strongly. To understand Brazil’s racial situation, Nogueira believes that data must be disaggregated in categories of *preto*, *pardo* and *mulato* and not aggregated in the single category of *negro*.

The problem of Brazilian racism, Nogueira tells us, results from the association of dark color with servile conditions and low social status, a cruel legacy left by the past of slavery. Outside the time limits of a real but historically circumscribed symbolic association, Brazilian society had evolved this particular association, transforming and assigning black population's phenotype features to reified symbols of social status. With the steady growth of mixed marriages, especially among the poor, and a certain flexibility in social mobility of some black populations (although extremely limited, for example, in comparison with the absorption of the Italians in São Paulo as shown by Nogueira in his study in Itapetininga), this symbolic reification of phenotype features would also explain, according to our author, the "embarrassment of color" in more favorable social settings. Such details of classification and variability produced a "poly-segmentation" in Brazil that goes along with discrimination by shunning, a kind of ritualized avoidance. Nogueira insists, however, that the population is never divided into two distinct groups – a problem that the United States has faced and continues to face (occasionally dramatically) in the present.

With respect to the University of Sao Paulo, Nogueira reflects that it is an academic institution of excellence and therefore would naturally be highly selective. However, the general presence of *mulatos* in the events studied and the infrequent presence of *pretos* clearly revealed the under-representation of *pretos* in the academic environment, based on the 1980 census's population composition by color category. For Nogueira, discrimination alone does not explain the full picture. In his view, determinants included structural socio-economic factors, the universe of cultural expectations, and unequal access to basic primary and secondary schools.

The prophetic nature of Nogueira's essay is worthy of note. It comes down to us as a lesson for the future, to which he might well return, as we now do with the eyes of the present.

Translated by Lyle Prescott

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Pretos (Blacks) and Mulatos (Mulattos) Among the Middle Classes

São Paulo, 1983-1984¹

Oracy Nogueira (1917-1996)

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Oracy Nogueira in a ceremony at Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo in the 1950s. He is the second from right to left. Fundo Oracy Nogueira, Casa de Oswaldo Cruz.

Explanatory Note: In an article published in *Folha de São Paulo* on November 6, 1983, Neusa Barbosa stated that negros [blacks]² accounted for less than 1% of graduate students at the University of São Paulo (USP) and at the Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC SP). Among the employees of these two universities, she said: “at the middle and upper levels, including among the teaching staff, there are hardly any black people at all.” It was this report that gave the author the idea of investigating, through participant observation, the presence of pretos [blacks]³ and mulatos at events

1 Editor’s Note. Oracy Nogueira (1917-1996) wrote this text in 1985 and it remained unpublished until now. The originals are kept at the Oracy Nogueira Archives now held by Casa de Oswaldo Cruz/Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, in Rio de Janeiro. This editor, Maria Laura Viveiros de Castro Cavalcanti, who organized the Nogueira Archives, revised the text’s typed originals including additional footnotes indicated as Editor’s Notes. The paper was also adapted (with omissions always indicated) to fit the space available in this Journal.

2 Editor’s Note. Since the 1950s some researchers have aggregated two census categories—*pretos* (blacks) and *pardos* (browns)—into a single category. Some of them defined this category as *não-brancos* (non-whites), others as *peças de cor* (people of color), more recently, as *negros* (blacks). The reasoning was that the social characteristics of *pretos* e *pardos* were very similar in comparison with the whites, and that *negro* is also a category used by militants to classify all those who see themselves as black. Because of these specificities, we have maintained the original Portuguese terms in italics throughout this translation, with the exception of *brancos* (whites), where the meaning is more or less the same as in Britain or the US.

3 Editor’s Note: *Preto* (black) is a common sense term used to designate a person with very dark skin.

organized by the University of São Paulo, as well as at cultural and social events outside the University, which I attended for this purpose during a period of twelve months from December 1983 to November 1984.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The issue

The *Folha de São Paulo* published the above-mentioned article by Neusa Barbosa on November 6, 1983. It was entitled “At the university, *negros* don’t acknowledge the presence of racial discrimination.”

Briefly, the article affirmed that, in the University of São Paulo and in the capital’s Catholic University, out of a total of almost 50,000 undergraduate students, less than 500 were *negro*, according to data from militants of the University’s *movimento negro*.

As regards the employees at the two universities, the report continues: “... Although *negros* are rarely hired, it is clear that the vast majority of them work as servants, cleaners, waiters, drivers or, at best, as clerks. At the middle and higher levels, teaching staff included, *negros* and *mulatos* can hardly be found.”

The report also refers to the difficulties encountered by the *militantes negros* in their efforts to create awareness amongst their university colleagues of their condition of being *negro*. According to one of these militants, these colleagues not only resisted being identified as *negros*, but also accused the *movimento negro* of being snitchers.

Without disputing the precision of these numbers, nor considering whether it was appropriate to present the data from each of these universities separately, I have no doubt that they reflect, in the three segments that they cover – students, teachers and other employees – the already well-known structure of the Brazilian labour-force, in which, [...] whites occupy the more privileged positions and *negros* – *pretos* and *mulatos* – the less privileged, in terms of employment and the socio-economic structure in general.

This provided me with the motivation to undertake the present study, which consists of the systematic observation of the presence (or absence) of *pretos* and *mulatos* amongst teachers and students at the University of São Paulo.

As I did not wish to commit myself to develop a formal and systematic project, nor to request sponsorship from any institution, I ended up by limiting my research to the observation of the presence or absence of *pretos* and *mulatos*

in situations and events inside and outside the University of São Paulo, which I was supposed to attend as part of my professional and social activities. Those events were attended by people from the middle or upper social groups, who made up either the entire number or at least the vast majority of those present, with the exception of occasional occurrences, which could enrich this research.

I also decided to limit the observations to a period of one year, from December 1983 to November 1984. Now that this period is over I can admit that it was a year of an uncomfortable and self-assumed personal obsession, the end of which was accompanied by a great feeling of relief, as I was at last free from the systematic observation of the racial appearance of the people that surrounded me, an attitude which is by no means characteristic of race relations in Brazil, nor is it a part of our culture.

The main hypothesis was that *pretos* would be absent from the majority of the situations and events to be described, whereas *mulatos* would be always present, even though underrepresented in relation to their proportion in the Brazilian population as a whole.

1.2 Colour and social hierarchy in the past

With the discovery or, more appropriately put, the invasion of what is today Brazil's territory by the Portuguese, two ethnic groups, both physically and culturally different, confronted one another – white Europeans and Brazil's indigenous people.

As the whites began to impose their will on the various Indian peoples, they began to brand them as either 'wild' or 'savage' (those who lived in tribes), and 'domesticated' (those who had been baptised and acculturated).

Due to sexual contact between white men and Indian women a mixed group of people soon began to emerge.

Due to the Catholic Church's intervention, and above all to the Jesuits, the human character of the indigenous people was formally proclaimed, and soon their disguised exploitation began under the pretext of Christianising or civilising them.

The importation of Africans to work as slaves began even before the end of the 16th century, when the first sugar plantations were established.

There were approximately 5 million Indians at the time of the discovery. This number was soon to be drastically reduced by a combination of factors: wars, arduous labour, adverse living conditions and the infectious diseases

brought by the invaders. The number of *negros africanos* on the other hand, continued to increase significantly due to the flourishing slave trade.’

In the case of the *negros*, miscegenation soon began as a result of sexual contact between white males and female slaves. The shortage of white women was a significant motive for this contact between the male invaders and Indians and *negras* [black women], and contributed for our society’s attitude of indulgence towards *mestiços* [mestizos]. *Negros* who were born in Brazil, no matter if they were children of African couples or of mestizos were called *crioulo* [creoles], and this established a distinction between imported slaves, called “Africans”, and slaves born in the colony.

Soon after the first importation of African slaves, at the end of the 16th century, manumissions began, although the scale of these increased substantially only in the 18th century. As by law the children of freed slaves were also free, the population of African descent began gradually to include not only *pretos* and *pardos*⁴ but also freed slaves, and *ingênuos* – *pretos e pardos* who had never been enslaved.

As long as slavery lasted, *africano* [African] and *preto* would be the paradigms or prototypes of the slave.

If, on the one hand, the greatest stigma was attached to the attributes *africano* and *preto*, due to their association with slavery, there was a certain reluctance, even repugnance, at maintaining *pardos* as slaves. Bernardo de Guimarães’ novel *A Escrava Isaura* is historically plausible, as Burlamaqui⁵ illustrates (Apud Carneiro da Cunha 1984: 102)⁶ and Verger (1968).

It was freed *africanos* [Africans] and *pretos*, who also suffered the regular legal restrictions on their freedom, both of movement and occupation, who

4 Editor’s Note: We decided to keep in Portuguese all the words, such as *pretos* [blacks], *negros* [blacks], *pardos* [whiter mulatos], as *moreno* [light mulatos/sun tanned] used by Nogueira that belong to the Brazilian racial classificatory system, such as understood by Nogueira. Cf. “Skin Color and Social Class”(Vibrant, vol. 5, n. 1. January/June 2008), his own translation of “Preconceito racial de marca e preconceito racial de origem. (...)”, originally published in 1954 (Nogueira, Oracy. *Tanto preto quanto branco. Estudo de relações raciais*. São Paulo: T. A. Queiroz, 1985). It must be noted however that when Nogueira refers to the slavery period the term *preto* has a different meaning. Only fugitive and rebel slaves were called *negro* in the 19th century.

5 Editor’s note: The reference is to Frederico L. C. Burlamaqui’s book *Memoria Analytica á cerca do commercio d’escravos e á cerca dos malles da escravidão domestica*. Rio de Janeiro: Typografia Commercial Fluminense, 1837. The novel *A escrava Isaura* [The slave Isaura], de Bernardo Guimarães, was published in the context of Brazilian Abolitionist Movement (1875). The heroine is a slave that has no African or black features – she has straight hair and an almost white skin, and is also very well educated – and who is pursued by the dissolute son of her mistress who becomes her master with his mother’s death. She is finally freed by her love, a young liberal white man who challenges all social and racial prejudices and marries her.

6 Editor’s note: Nogueira is quoting from Carneiro da Cunha’s post-doctoral thesis, whose bibliographic reference is maintained. The thesis was published in book form as *Negros estrangeiros; os escravos libertos e sua volta à África*, in 1985 by Editora Brasiliense (SP). A new edition appeared in 2012, revised and extended, published by the Companhia das Letras (SP).

were the most likely to be confused with slaves and ordered to prove their status as free men.

The degree of solidarity between slaves and freemen with African ascendancy was limited by a number of factors: the different levels of education between Africans and *crioulos*, as well as their different attitudes, and the differences between tribes that originated from different African nations or that belonged to different cultural traditions. On the other hand, among the factors that contributed to solidarity between the two groups were: kinship ties (enslaved parents who wanted freedom for their children, brothers who were free and wanted to obtain freedom for their siblings), as well as identification with the same tribal or ethnic ancestry.

However, different interests and forms of behaviour emerged among the slaves themselves, depending on whether they were rural or urban and their differing functions – plantation slaves, semiskilled slaves, *escravos de ganho* [slaves hired out], *escravos de aluguel* [slaves for hire], domestic slaves etc.

Liberty, either purchased or granted freely by slave-owners, was the utmost aspiration of any slave; manumission, as well as any other benefit that the slave might expect, depended entirely on the plans of his master. As manumission without payment generally depended on certain conditions, such as serving the master or his family for a certain amount of years, it may be considered as a form of indemnity, or of remuneration.

As Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (op.cit.: 21) points out, manumission was less probable “in areas and times of economic prosperity” and more common during times of economic depression.

Women, however, had a greater chance of achieving legal freedom than men; the *crioulos* a greater chance than the *africanos* [Africans]; the *pardos* a greater chance than the *pretos*. In the case of women there were a number of reasons for this: they were less essential to the slave-based economy; frequently they were their master’s concubines; cultural or family reasons (in the case of bastard children, for example), and paternalism on the part of the slave owners.

Carneiro da Cunha also affirms that the African was always *preto*, whereas the *crioulo* could be either *preto* or *pardo*, and the *pardo* was necessarily a *crioulo* [creole]. Thus, although the correlation between colour and legal and social condition was not entirely linear, it is nevertheless true that

the combination of colour and condition was fundamental in the hierarchical structure, which went from the most privileged to the least privileged: rich whites, poor whites, freed *pardos*, freed Africans, slave *pardos*, *pretos*, African slaves.

At one extreme were the rich whites, the plantation owner or his equivalent; at the other the African slaves. The African slave, *preto* and a cultural stranger, was at the same time the most despised and the most feared by the members of the dominant class. Manumission could modify the form of individual subjugation, but, in general, and particularly in the case of the so called *manumissão* “gratuita” [“free” manumission], this by no means exempted the ex-slave from dependence on his former owner, or on his family and social class. The ex-slave was expected to continue to serve and show deference to his/her ex-owner. ‘Ingratitude’ could be punished by revoking freedom.

Furthermore, the *pretos* or *pardos*, who had been freed or born free, were more likely to be subject to drastic or violent punishment than a slave, as their punishment did not damage the property of a given slave owner. As an example Carneiro da Cunha quotes what happened to those who revolted in the so-called *revolução dos alfaiates* [the tailors’ revolution] in 1798, in Bahia:

“Two freemen [that is, born free], and two who had been [recently] freed, all *pardos*, were hanged; then three of their corpses were cut into pieces and displayed in the public square. The other freed slaves were abandoned on the coast of Africa. The owners of the slaves who had been involved were forced to sell them. None of the white conspirers, radical intellectuals who belonged to the upper classes, were condemned. The government looked the other way while the civilian leader of the revolt escaped, and a plantation owner who had been deeply involved in the plot managed not to be caught by marrying the Governor’s secretary’s daughter” (Carneiro da Cunha op. cit.: 50-51).⁷

Throughout the 19th century, the *população livre de cor* [free population of colour], in other words those who were evidently of African descent,

7 In the same passage, the author recalls the case of a slave who was one of the leaders of the revolt of 1835, also in Bahia, whose death penalty was commuted to 600 lashes, after his master appealed to the Supreme Court of Justice, and concludes by quoting Nina Rodrigues: “Banishment for the freemen, flogging for the slaves, this was the repressive, convenient and economic solution that suffocated the seeds of future revolts without losses to the human property of the slave owners.”

grew faster than the white population, while part of the increase of the latter, in absolute numbers, was due to the incorporation of the whiter and richer *mestiços claros* [lighter mestizos], to the extent that foreign observers made a distinction between ‘European whites’ and local ones.

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, who presents a table based on estimates and censuses of the distribution of Brazil’s population according to colour and legal status, from the end of the 18th (1798) to the end of the 19th century (1872), draws attention to certain factors that distort the figures. Regarding the censuses, she says:

“There is a general tendency to believe more in the censuses than in any of the other estimates. However, the censuses were known to be subject to a number of inaccuracies. In ecclesiastical censuses slave owners often did not declare their slaves so as to be exempt from the tithe (Adrien.Balbi: 1822 tome 2:229); in government censuses they often did not reveal the number of freed slaves so as to exempt them from military conscription or to avoid paying certain taxes; and, after 1871, they frequently increased the number of slaves in order to receive compensation from the freedom fund for slaves that had died (see, for example, D. Alden: 1963). There were also political considerations, one of which is particularly relevant: according to the American traveller Thomas Ewbank (1856: 430), ‘With respect to certain segments of the population, discretion was considered appropriate by the authorities. Thus no trustworthy comparison between the number of whites and the number of *pessoas livres de cor* [free people of colour] is provided, allegedly due to the overwhelming majority of the latter’ (apud Carneiro da Cunha op. cit.: 18-19).

As to the other estimates, the same author continues:

“The estimates, on the other hand, although also false, reveal certain aspects that the censuses conceal. The relatively reduced numbers that the British attributed to the whites came from consular data based on criteria of separation and assimilation that looked extravagant to Brazilians and which probably considered the majority of ‘local whites’ as *pardos*. The British Consul in Pará, for example, made a distinction between native whites and foreign whites, whereas he maintained just one category for all free *pretos*, whether *pretos* or *pardos*. And we know that, in Brazil, free *pretos* and free

pardos were systematically distinguished in all census and the category *homem livre de cor* [free man of colour] simply wasn't applied." (Carneiro da Cunha op. cit.: 19-20.)

Continuing her comments on her table of estimates and of censuses, Carneiro da Cunha states:

"The numbers, however false they may be, do however make it clear that in the whole of Brazil during the 19th century, up until the abolition of slavery, the free population was larger than the slave population (although at times they were almost equally balanced), whereas the population *negra* and *parda* was always greater than the white population" (op. cit.: 19-20).

This information is significant as it reveals one of the characteristics of the racial situation in Brazil before abolition: the numerical superiority of non-whites over whites, even when the indigenous people are not included. It also reveals the tendency to distinguish African slaves from *crioulo* slaves - and *preto* freemen from *pardo* freemen -, while absorbing the whiter mestizos into the white group. This led foreign observers, including Gobineau, to emphasise the presence of *mulatos* even in the highest social levels. There is in fact a poem by Luís Gama,⁸ "Bodarrada", that is a satirical confirmation of this permeability of the social structure that permitted African mestizos, especially the whiter ones, into the higher echelons.

1.3 Colour and social hierarchy in current Brazilian society

Currently, whites constitute over 50% of the Brazilian population. This is partly due to the incorporation of successive generations of whiter mestizos and also partly due to European immigration, which increased significantly between the end of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century, at rates which substantially altered the country's ethnic-racial

8 Editor's note: Luís Gonzaga Pinto da Gama (1830-1882), a black Bahiano, son of an ex-slave and a Portuguese slave owner, was brought up by his father, who sold him as a slave at the age of 10. He studied, escaped, and proved his status as a freeman. Poet and abolitionist, "Bodarrada", his poem mentioned by Nogueira, is part of the posthumous work (1954) *Poesias Satíricas*, and treats any idea of 'purity' of race ironically: "(...) *Bodes há de toda casta/ pois que a espécie é muito vasta.../ há cinzentos, há rajados, /baios, pampas e malhados./ Bodes negros, bodes brancos./ E, sejamos todos francos./ Uns plebeus e outros nobres./ Bodes ricos, bodes pobres./ Bodes sábios importantes, E também alguns tratantes.../Aqui, nesta boa terra,/marram todos, tudo berra (...)/ Para que tanto capricho?/ Haja paz, haja alegria./ Folgue e brinque a bodaria./ Cesse pois a matinada, /Porque tudo é bodarrada!*" The poem compares Brazil to a 'bunch of goats' of every conceivable type, colour, social class and profession, and ends up by asking why everyone just don't settle down and enjoy it all. It is written in free iambic tetrameters characterized by its distinctive rhyming scheme: AA, BB, CC, DD, EE, FF, G, HH, II.

composition, above all in the southern states, from São Paulo down to Rio Grande do Sul.

As far the country's social structure is concerned, although there have of course been changes, it cannot be denied that whites, *pardos* and *pretos* still occupy positions that closely correspond to those of their predecessors in the 19th century. It is even possible to state that, in the regions with the largest numbers of European immigrants and their descendants, discrimination against *pardos* and *pretos* has become, to say the least, more open and visible.

Furthermore, the 'whitening' of the population, as a consequence of European immigration in the above-mentioned regions, has probably resulted in the displacement to the whiter tonalities of what may be called the 'borderline type'. A human type that presents very slight traits of African ascendancy and is easily incorporated into the white group without being 'conspicuous', in other words, without attracting attention. This type is not clearly defined and is perceived only in a semi-conscious way, and may vary in accordance with the racial composition of each region or locality and, in particular, of the dominant social levels. This is an interesting hypothesis for further systematic investigation.

An undergraduate student from one of the north-eastern Brazilian states, where he studies at a Federal University, observed that in his State he had never doubted his classification as a white man, even though his signs of *mestiçagem* [metizagem] would be unlikely to pass unnoticed in São Paulo.

A white lady, who is married to a professor at São Paulo University, both from the state of Rio de Janeiro from where they moved to São Paulo about 15 years ago, told me that, when she returned to the state where she was born to visit relatives, she began to notice traits of African ascendancy among her friends and acquaintances that she was previously unaware of.

Several graduate students originating from a variety of States, mostly in the northeast, have shown an interest in the study of racial relations. However, they tacitly place themselves in the category of whites, despite their evident non-European features.

A colleague told me of an incident that occurred during a meeting of social scientists from all over Brazil that took place in one of the

north-eastern states. One of those present, a sociologist and militant of the *movimento negro* from Rio de Janeiro, became indignant with one of the other participants, who had been born in the state and had never lived outside the region, who insisted on identifying herself as a white woman. After insistently referring to her as non-white, the militant sociologist exclaimed: “What can one do, when a *negra* woman insists on presenting herself as a white one?”

I know of the case of a politician born in the northeast, with slightly *traços negroides* [traits that indicate African ascendancy], who was visited by a group of *negros* militants who wanted to enlist his support for one of their projects. With the intention of showing his support, he declared: “You, *negros*, know that I have always been concerned with your problems.” One of the members of the commission, indignantly, corrected him: “Not our problems, your Excellency! Yours too!”

According to the 1980 census, Brazil’s population is composed of 54.7% whites, 38.4% *pardos*, 5.9% *pretos* and 0.6% *amarelos* (yellows).⁹ As these figures are based on self-identification or declaration, one can say that, with the exception of the ‘yellows’, 44.3 % of the population recognise themselves as descending from *negros* and indigenous groups. And although it’s not possible to ascertain the proportion of whites that do have *negro* or indigenous ascendancy, whether not perceptible or ignored, I have no doubt that it must be more than 1/5 of the difference in the proportion of those who declare themselves to be whites and those who declare themselves to be non-whites (Moura 1983).

In the State of São Paulo, the same census showed the proportions as 75% whites, 18.5% *pardos*, 4.6% *pretos* and 1.9% yellows. Thus *pardos* and *pretos* combined made up 23.1% of the population. The proportion of whites and yellows in the population of São Paulo is greater than in the country as a whole, while that of *pardos* and *pretos* is lower.

9 Editor’s note: Yellow – the colour *amarelo* in portuguese – was applied mainly to people with Japanese ancestry in Brazilian censuses and in common language until the 1980’s. It referred to descendants of immigrants who came to Brazil in great numbers from 1908 until the late 1970s. The category also include Koreans and Chinese. The terms then used in the censuses were white, *pardo*, *preto* and *amarelo*. Nogueira also uses the term *oriental*, as a synonym of *amarelo*.

In Brazil, the data from the censuses on the distribution of population by category of colour are essential for obtaining an idea of the relative size of the respective groups. However, one should not ignore their lack of precision, as it is largely the result of a generalised tendency among interviewees to consider themselves to be whiter than they actually are, or to avoid identification by taking refuge in euphemisms (Nogueira 1985). Personally, I find it difficult to believe that *pretos* in Brazil represent only 5 % to 6% of the population, as the 1980 census establishes. There must have been *pretos* who declared themselves to be *pardos* and *pardos* who declared themselves to be whites. The proportion of non-whites (excluding the category yellow) increased from 35% in 1940 to 41% in 1950, and it stabilized at 44% in 1980 with no new immigrant waves that would explain it (although with a minor, but somewhat disconcerting drop to 38%, between 1950 and 1960, which is probably due to the census's uncertain methods). This increase can be attributed to the greater degree of politicisation of non-whites, with the consequent increase in the proportion of those that decided to declare themselves in this category.¹⁰

Referring to the contrast between whites and non-whites in the areas of income distribution and education, nationwide, according to the 1980 census, Carlos A. Hasenbalg comments:

In Brazilian society the criterion of race plays an important role in the distribution of people among the different hierarchical social levels. The preliminary results of the Demographic Census of 1980 allow us to see this in relation to the two main dimensions of the social stratification system: levels of education and participation in the distribution of income. As concerns the level of education of the population of people over 5 years old, the proportion of people with less than one year of study or with no education at all was 25% among whites, 47.7% among *pretos* and 48% among *pardos*. At the opposite end of the scale, the proportion of people with 9 or more years of education was 14% among whites, 3% among *pretos* and 4.6% among *pardos*. The data referring to the average monthly income of the economically active population, 10 years old or above, shows that the proportion of those that receive a minimum wage was 24% among whites, 47% among *pretos*

¹⁰ For data on the increase of non-whites, cf. Moura, 1983.

and 44.7% among *pardos*. On the other side of the scale referring to the distribution of income, 14.4% of whites, 2.4% of *pretos* and 3.3% of *pardos* received more than five minimum wages (Hasenbalg 1983: 53).

The same author summarises the data from the 1976 National Household Survey (PNAD) on the participation of the respective *grupos de cor* (colour groups) in the country's occupational structure:

...the proportion of economically active people working in non-manual occupations was 23% among whites, 4.7% among *pretos* and 9.9% among *pardos*. Inversely, the non-white groups were disproportionately concentrated in manual agricultural occupations, characterised by the lowest level of wages: 44.4% among *pretos*, 42.8% among *pardos*, and only 30% among whites. (Idem: 54)

Referring to earlier works of his own, and those of Nelson do Vale Silva and Lúcia Helena G. de Oliveira, and without dismissing the historical causes such as “the aftermath of slavery and the competition with foreign immigrants during the period immediately after abolition”, Hasenbalg prefers to explain the racial stratification in Brazil as the result of the inequalities in the opportunities for whites and non-whites: “In other words, racism and discriminatory practices that currently exist are the fundamental causes for the reproduction of racial inequality and the restriction of *negros* and their descendants to positions of social subordination” (Ibidem: 56).

1.4 The character and methodology of this study

Even though there are no explicit criteria for the direct selection of students based on racial features, it would be difficult if not impossible for a public institution, which does not charge fees, like the University of São Paulo, not to reflect the characteristics of Brazilian population's distribution according to categories of colour. The very process of selection that results from the economic inequality between whites and non-whites is, in itself, largely responsible for maintaining the highly disproportionate percentage of whites and the low percentage of non-whites among the students who directly benefit from what the University has to offer. As the majority of the teaching staff, who are responsible for achieving the

University's goals, is in their majority recruited from among previous students at the University, or from ex-students of similar institutions with a similar or even more restrictive selective process, the same distribution is seen here. These two segments – students and teaching staff – are distributed from the middle to the top levels of the university's social hierarchy, while the other institution's employees range from manual workers to positions that require higher educational qualifications in specific areas. It is therefore this last group that most directly and precisely reflects the occupational distribution of Brazil's population and of the State of São Paulo according to categories of colour.

It would thus be of the greatest relevance, in any census of the population of the University of São Paulo, to request information on the colour of its members. This information, as in the case of national censuses, would depend on self-identification or declaration. Clóvis Moura (op. cit.) affirms that, in the 1980 census, respondents used 136 expressions to describe their own colour or that of their family members¹¹. In the case of a census within the University, it would be possible to compare the data resulting from self-identification or declaration with the observations of a well-prepared team of interviewers.

If this could be done, the results of such a census or of such a sample-based enquiry among groups of students and teachers of the University of São Paulo could show either the existence of a general selectivity or a specific one based on socio-economic factors.

We can assume that there is a general selectivity, one that extends to all the courses at the University, and a specific or differentiated selectivity that depends on the nature or the rules of each course. Courses with extremely competitive university admission exams that require full-time study, meaning that students are not able to work - such as Medical School and Engineering – would be shown to be more selective, whereas, in less demanding areas like Human Sciences and Literature, less selectivity would be found.

Another hypothesis, based on more than 30 years of experience working at the University of São Paulo, is that *pretos* are entirely absent, or very

¹¹ Clóvis Moura made a mistake in this case. It was not the census of 1980 that asked this question, but a supplementary survey of the PNDA [National Household Survey], in 1976, as Hasenblag comments above.

rare, both among students and among the teaching staff, whereas *mulatos* and *pardos* although their numbers do not correspond to their proportion of the population as a whole, are represented in both segments. It is thus very rare to observe a didactic, cultural or scientific event, or even a board meeting, where they are not present and where they do not participate.

The Brazilian racial situation requires that data referring to *pretos* and to *mulatos* or *pardos* must be presented separately, as bringing them together under the single title of *negros* may end up by producing misleading results concerning the more precarious living conditions of the former in comparison to whites, and of their disadvantage, although not so large, when compared to *mulatos* and *pardos*.

By using the term *mulato* I intend to distinguish the *negro* mestizos from the descendants of native groups, whether mestizos or not.

As there was no prospect of a census being conducted at the University of São Paulo, nor of a sample-based enquiry, I decided to use my position as a participant observer to collect data about the teaching staff since my contact with the students, with the exception of graduate students, had almost ceased after my retirement.

The data that were collected in this way, between November 1983 and December 1984, obviously reflect the opportunities I had to participate in University events - although these were drastically reduced after my retirement - as well as the accuracy of my observations. Though, given my persistent interest in the study of racial relations, during which I got used to paying attention to features of African origin among Brazilians, I probably have this ability to a greater degree than the average Brazilian of my socio-economic level. Given certain situations and events, this skill implies noticing certain features of African origins that would probably pass unnoticed in people under ordinary conditions, even though these people are generally inclined not to draw attention to this aspect of themselves, preferring it to remain unnoticed. This bias is thus advantageous rather than prejudicial to the aims of this research.

Although the project began with the objective of observing situations and events at the University of São Paulo, I later extended it to events outside the University. Thus, during the above mentioned period, I systematically observed and described events at which I was either participating or

a spectator, at and outside the University of São Paulo, that were attended, typically or exclusively, by people from the middle to upper social levels engaged in these events, except for the few cases which I have used as counterpoints.

I did not intentionally seek out situations or events at which *negros* – *pretos* or *mulatos* – were present. The opportunities for observation appeared spontaneously as a result of my professional commitments and social interests. Thus, in addition to events at the University of São Paulo and at related or similar institutions, I observed and described events related to the life cycle that involved people personally known to me, such as baptisms, marriages, birthdays, funerals, tributes, domestic entertainment activities and a mixture of situations including the inauguration of a fashion shop for young people, a political rally demanding direct elections for the presidency of the Republic after the rejection of the Dante de Oliveira amendment to the constitution, and others that I will describe in due course.

One of the problems I faced was that of counting the number of people present at each event and their division according to racial categories. When this number was in single digits I counted those present one by one. When the number was relatively large, and subject to variations due to people arriving and others leaving, I attempted to count the number of those present when the group was relatively stable. In the first place, I aimed at assessing the total number. For instance, in the case of the number of people present at a church wedding, when the church was full, I counted the number of pews and the fixed or average number of people per pew. Multiplying this figure by the number of pews, I arrived at a total. If there were people standing, I counted them and added their number to the result. The next step was to count the number of those present who belonged to minority segments – *pretos*, *mulatos* and *orientals*. Subtracting this number from the total number of those present, I obtained the number of whites. Obviously, the larger the number of people present, the more imprecise the figures for each group became, without affecting, however, the assessment of the overall number of people present.

In some cases, perhaps in the majority, due to the nature and circumstances of the events, I did not have the opportunity to question people present about their own self-identification or how they would identify other

people present or about any other questions of interest to this enquiry. On the other hand, I was always concerned with accuracy as to the social level of those involved, including their occupations and other social roles, the sumptuousness of the environment, the solemnity of the occasion and of course the number of participants. I also sought, in the presentation of each event, to include any information and associations available that would contribute to its appreciation or interpretation. Obviously, one cannot expect any precise representativeness of the situations presented here according to strict statistical criteria.

The situations and events, which I am about to describe, were registered in notes as immediately as possible, and eventually documented (invitations, programmes etc.).

This study does not intend to be any more than the testimony of an individual, written in an eminently descriptive style, of the presence of *pretos* and *mulatos* in social situations and events whose participants belong to the middle and upper levels of the social hierarchy. Readers whose reality is analogous to mine – whites from the middle-class – may judge the plausibility of the results and may test them by making similar evaluations in similar circumstances, if they think this is worth undertaking. However, due to his professional condition and life experience, the author has allowed himself to presume that his conclusions reflect the collective and inter-subjective experience of the middle-class of Brazilian society in general, and specifically, of the State of São Paulo.

For the purposes of presentation and due to their apparent affinity, the situations and events have been divided into four groups: Group 1 – situations and events at the University of São Paulo; Group 2 – situations and cultural events outside the University of São Paulo; Group 3 – situations and events connected to the life cycle and to domestic life; and Group 4 – miscellaneous situations and events.

Each group includes an introduction, intended to give an overall view and emphasise the more significant data in terms of the purposes of this research, followed by a presentation of each of the cases, one by one.

The presentation concludes with a summary that lays out the main results of the investigation and discusses hypotheses or problems for future research.

2. Situations and Events at the University of São Paulo

2.1 Pretos and mulatos on the teaching staff

The University of São Paulo is made up of 32 teaching and research units, based in *campi* or at separate locations in the capital and interior of the State.

In general, the units are divided into departments. These form the smallest and most homogenous units in regard to teachers' qualifications, teaching and research. Each department administers undergraduate and graduate courses in its respective academic area.

The University has approximately 4,000 teachers, of which 75% work in the capital. On the campus in the capital, where the concentration of teachers and students is the largest, the units are spread over an area of 400 hectares, and there are further units and dependencies outside the campus at various locations around the city.

The campus at Ribeirão Preto has 581 hectares; the Piracicaba campus, 840; the São Carlos campus, 38.68; the Bauru campus, 33.66; and the Zootechnics Centre at Pirassununga, 2.333. Thus the overall area of the various units and aggregate bodies of the University occupy an area of more than 4,200 hectares.

Obviously, in the same campus, intimacy and conviviality between teachers (and students) occur most at the department level, less at the unit level and even less in the teaching and specialized research areas – human and biological sciences, technology, mathematics, philosophy, literature and arts – occurring only sporadically between teachers (and students) from different areas. Even rarefied, if they exist at all, is the conviviality between teachers and between students from different *campi*.

Thus it is difficult, if not impossible, for a teacher to obtain an overall view of the University or to be informed about the personal characteristics of his or her colleagues on the teaching staff, with the exception of those with whom he or she is in direct and constant contact in the same unit and department.

As the author of this research project I had direct and on-going contact with my colleagues from the Social Sciences department, in the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, and in the Economics department, in the School of Economics and Administration, where I also worked.

In both departments, I have met *mulato* teachers and, at the Social Sciences department, I was acquainted with a *preto* colleague, who was born in an African country. I also know about two other *pretos* professors, one of whom works in one of the departments in the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, and the other at São Carlos' Engineering School.

There are *mulatos* professors in several units and departments, such as in the School of Economics and Administration, in the Economics and Accountancy Departments, in the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, in the Departments of Social Sciences, Geography, History and Philosophy, and in various departments at the Law School.

Antonio Cesarino Junior, a leading figure in developing Labour Law in Brazil and nowadays a Professor *Emeritus*, who gained international projection through his work, taught at the Law School – the oldest unit at the University of São Paulo – until a few years ago. For many years he was known as the only professor *preto* at the University. When he retired, Brazilian and international colleagues collaborated on writing a book as a tribute to him.

It is well known that, in the past, prejudice and discrimination made it impossible for professionals *pretos* to gain access to the teaching staff at the Law School. Almeida Nogueira (1912) tells how, in the 19th century, José Rubino de Oliveira had to repeat the entrance exams numerous times before being appointed to a Professor's Chair.

Nowadays, one would imagine that the underrepresentation of *pretos* and *mulatos* on the teaching staff at USP's teaching and research units is due rather to socio-economic inequality and to the lack of educational opportunities among these racial categories than to prejudice or discrimination. I have no knowledge of any case where one professor was preferred over another based on discriminatory criteria.

Consulting the mimeographed document "Distribution of Teaching Posts for the First Semester of 1984", produced by the Economics Department of the School of Economics and Administration, the author verified that out of 74 professors, two were *mulatos* and a further two "*orientais*". The document does not mention two *mulatos* who left the university during the semester to which it refers – one of whom occupied

a position as director, elected by his colleagues, and the other who was well-known for his published works and consultancy activities outside the University.

In the lists of professors for 1983, published by the Department of Social Sciences of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, there are the names of 61 professors, among whom I identify three *mulatos* and one *oriental*.

In February 1985, when it was expected that some of the Secretaries of the São Paulo State government would be appointed as ministers by president Tancredo Neves, the names of two *mulato* professors at the University of São Paulo appeared in the press as probable members of his Secretariat, one of whom was already the head of an important State institution.

In the cases of *mulato* professors, it is hard to know how they identify themselves in racial terms and what is their position in relation to the *movimento negro*. I believe that, in the majority of cases, their attitude is one of neutrality, which cannot be judged in a simplistic way.

If in some cases this apparent indifference to the *negro* population's problems could be seen as the manifestation of an eagerness for social mobility, similar to the conduct of a poor white person who becomes wealthy, in others their interest in the specific problems of racial discrimination could be seen to be implicit in the interest they take in broader reformist or revolutionary movements.

It should also be kept in mind that in general people are pragmatic and have a tendency not to involve themselves in troublesome situations or problems from which their social ambience has preserved them. A more intimate knowledge of these people would be necessary in order to know how they define themselves and what positions they take, with the exception of cases where the latter are public or ostensive.

In the case of one of our most prestigious *mulato* professors – whose ideas and intellectual activities are frequently commented on and who is generally considered to be a *mulato* by his colleagues –, I discovered through an intimate friend of his that in his private life he considers himself “in no way” as a *mulato*. When I was young, I met this professor's older brother, a doctor, who was also a *mulato*. When I visited him at his

home, the young doctor introduced me to his father, who was unmistakably *preto*. As he escorted me to the door, the young man explained that his father had not always been so dark, that his skin had darkened due to a kidney disease.

Out of a total of 12 events that I observed at the University of São Paulo during the period of research, which appear in the section entitled “Situations and events in the University of São Paulo”, nine of them included the presence of *mulatos*; six the presence of *orientais*; and one the presence of *pretos*.

In the events narrated case by case below, I have observed the presence of *mulatos* as teachers, members of examination boards, candidates for academic posts, members of the public or speakers in formal occasions. However, I only observed the presence of *pretos* at one of the 12 events. Thus this investigation shows that there are almost no events at the University of São Paulo without the participation of *mulatos*. It also shows that the participation of *orientais* is rarer, and that of *pretos*, virtually inexistent. Considering the proportions of these racial categories in the population of the State of São Paulo, shown by the 1980 census, there can be no doubt about the underrepresentation of *mulatos* and *pretos* and the overrepresentation of *orientais* at the University. This situation is not due to selective criteria within the University, but mainly to the life conditions and social contexts of these segments of the Brazilian population.

2.2 Events at which I was present

Congregation meetings and solemn sessions

In December 1984, I attended a Congregation meeting and a solemn session at the School of Economics and Administration, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the University of São Paulo and celebrate the launching of a book on the history of the School, coordinated by Professor Alice P. Cannabrava.

I counted 35 people at the table and in places of honour, including the rector, the representatives of the governor and of other units of the University, the director and vice director of the School itself as well as the members of the Congregation, among them two *mulatos*, one of whom held a high-ranking post at the University and had an important role in the session.

Those that attended, according to my calculation, numbered 40, including professors who were not members of the Congregation, employees, students and ex-students. Among these 40 people, I counted the presence of 4 *mulatos* and 5 *orientais*. [...].

Meeting of graduate-level professors

In October 1984, I attended a meeting of Anthropology professors from the graduate course at the Social Sciences Department of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences. 15 people attended, 9 men and 6 women; 14 whites and 1 *mulato*.

Academic exam for Full Professor

In June 1984, I read a notice in the *Folha de São Paulo* concerning the examination of João Baptista Vilanova Artigas for Full Professor at the School of Architecture and Urbanism.

Born in Paraná in 1915, he graduated from the Polytechnic School of São Paulo in 1937, and became the State of São Paulo's most famous architect, and one of the most prestigious in Brazil. He gained international recognition due to the originality, boldness and beauty of his projects, which include the building that houses the School of Architecture and Urbanism at the Armando de Sales Oliveira Campus, the Morumbi Stadium and the headquarter of the Santa Paula Yacht Club, as well as a new plan for the Vale do Anhangabaú, with walkways, viaducts, trade union and residential buildings, schools, industries, most of which are in the State of São Paulo.

He was one of the founders and organisers of the School of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo in 1948, and in 1962 he conceived the bold architectural project for the building that housed it. He was the spokesman of "more than 30 classes of graduates all over Brazil", according to Professor Paulo Mendes da Rocha, and together with Lucio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer, he was one of Brazil's most award-winning architects.

Due to his political militancy and to his critical position as regards capitalism, Artigas was arrested several times after the 1964 military coup, and in 1969 he was suspended from the University under Institutional Act nº 5. He was readmitted as a professor at the School of Architecture and Urbanism in 1980, under the amnesty offered by the government of General João Figueiredo.

In the oral and didactic examinations, Artigas once again showed his exceptional professional qualities, his erudition and his concern with social problems. He concluded his oral exams with slides showing his most important works, accompanied by explications and personal remembrances.¹²

Although the exam was given very little press coverage, due to the candidate's prestige and to the obvious implications of redressing the wrongs he had suffered this was probably the exam that attracted more public interest than any other at the University of São Paulo over the previous 20 years.

Although a precise analysis of the public that attended is not possible, everything seems to indicate that in their majority they were made up of ex-students and teachers from the School itself where the exam was happening. However, I also recognised teachers from other units; a student who came up to speak to me told me that he was from the Department of Social Sciences.

At the didactic examination, the number of people present was estimated at 70, distributed as follows: Whites – 61.43% (43); *Mulatos* – 32.85% (23); *Orientais* – 5.71% (4); *Pretos* – 0. For the oral exam the public was estimated at 300 people, distributed as follows: Whites – 85% (255); *Mulatos* – 10% (30); *Orientais* – 5% (15); *Pretos* – 0.

Both at the didactic and the oral examinations, the predominance of whites is evident, followed by *mulatos* and *orientais*, with a complete absence of *pretos* (excluding those employed to operate the tape recorders and projectors and others that came in and out bringing water, coffee and chalk).

The author cannot explain the discrepancy between the substantial presence of *mulatos* at the didactic examination, a number that was reduced by a third at the oral examination. It was estimated that one third of the public for the didactic examination was made up of women. Of the five members of the examination board, one appeared to be a *mulato claro* [light-skinned *mulato*].

12 For biographical details of João Batista Vilanova Artigas, see the article published on his death in the *Folha de São Paulo*: “Sepultado Vilanova Artigas, o arquiteto dos jovens” (local report); “Preocupado com a utopia” (local report); “Nas construções, a marca da genialidade” (commentary by Vivien Lande), January 14, 1985, page 13; “João Batista Vilanova Artigas. As idéias do velho mestre”, interview with Paulo Markun, two months before his death, and “Mozart e Salieri”, commentary by Beatriz Albuquerque, January 19, 1985, p. 51.

Academic examination for Associate Professor

On December 12, 1984, I participated as an examiner at the academic examination for Associate professor in the Department of Social Sciences at the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences. The other four examiners were all women and there were no non-white participants. The examination consisted in judging the *curriculum vitae*, with no sessions open to the public.

Academic examination for Distinguished Professor

From December 3 to 7, 1984, I participated as an examiner for *Distinguished Professor* in the same Department.

The committee included five men, among whom there was one *mulato claro*.

During the 'practical examination' which, in this case, consisted of the analysis of myths, two young women were also present, one of whom was white and the other *mulato*.

23 people were present at the oral examination, in addition to the examiners, distributed according to colour as follows: Whites – 78.3% (18); *Mulatos* – 17.4% (4); *Pretos* – 0; *Orientais* – 4.3% (1).

Due to a lapse on my part, I failed to note the number of those present at the didactic examination. At the reception held for the successful candidate, on the night of December 7, those present were estimated at approximately 70, among whom nine were *mulatos*. There were no *pretos* present.

Postgraduate Admission Committee

A) In December 1983, I participated as an examiner for admission to a Doctor's degree at the Economics Department of the School of Economics and Administration, in which the candidate was the grandson of a Japanese family.

In addition to the examiners, there were six persons attending, five men and one woman, all white with the exception of one of the men, who was a *mulato*. Of the five examiners, three were white and two, *mulato*. It is interesting to note that no *orientais* were present.

B) Also in December 1983, I participated as examiner for admission to a Master's degree at the History Department of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences. Of the examiners, one was *mulato*, another

white, and the third had slightly negroides features. Of the fifteen assistants, one was *mulato*.

Defence of Ph.D.'s theses

A) In November 1984, I participated as an examiner of a Ph.D. thesis where the candidate was a female, a professor from one of the federal universities from a state in Central Brazil. Her thesis, which was in anthropology, was the result of her studies at the Social Sciences Department of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences. The committee was composed of three white professors. Among the two stand-by substitutes, one was a *preto* professor from Zaire and the other was white.

B) On December 10, 1984, I participated as an examiner in the defence of a Ph. D. thesis in anthropology, in the same Department, where the candidate had taken the gay movement in São Paulo as his subject. The other two examiners on the commission were women, both white.

C) On the same day, I participated in another committee for the approval of a research project for a Ph. D. thesis in the same department, in the area of sociology. The candidate presented a project on the theme of nationalism among intellectuals in Rio de Janeiro during the *República Velha* (1889-1930). The other two examiners were both white male professors.

Bestowing the title of Emeritus Professor

In August 1984, I was present at the ceremony to bestow the title of *Emeritus* Professor on Antonio Candido de Mello e Souza, who had retired as a professor of the Literature Department of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, after having worked for many years as professor at the Sociology and Anthropology Department at the then School of Philosophy, Sciences and Literature.

The ceremony took place in the large reception hall of the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences; the places were among the most sought-after for any such event over the last 20 years. At the table, in addition to the Professor, sat the School's director, professor Ruy Galvão de Andrada Coelho, and the representative of the Congregation and member of the Literature Department, Professor João Alexandre, who had proposed the title of *Emeritus* for Antonio Candido.

The public was unusually diversified, including professors, students and employees from the School of Philosophy, Literature and Human Sciences, professors representing other units from the University of São Paulo, including the Law School, where Antonio Candido had been a student, as well as representatives from two of São Paulo's State Universities – UNICAMP and UNESP.

I calculated that 250 people were present, distributed in racial terms as follows: Whites – 92.8% (232); *Mulatos* – 4.8% (12); *Pretos* – 1.2% (3); *Orientais* – 1.2% (3).

The very high presence of whites (92.8%) is evident, similar to what occurred at Professor Vilanova Artigas' oral examination that ended his exams for Full Professor. On the other hand, of all the events at the University of São Paulo which are narrated in this article, this was the only one at which the presence of *pretos* was equivalent to that of *orientais* (1.2%). At the same event the presence of *mulatos* corresponded to 4.8%. On the way out, a retired Full Professor from the Geography Department introduced me to one of the *pretos* participants as his colleague.

Inauguration of a scientific society

In December 1983, I participated in a meeting for the inauguration and election of the first directors of the Brazilian Society of History and Science. Founded on the initiative of professors from the University of São Paulo, the new entity is, by nature, multidisciplinary and affiliation is open to interested parties nationwide.

At the session there was a representative from the Federal University of Pernambuco, who had been invited because he happened to be in São Paulo at the time; however almost all the others present were well known professors from the University of São Paulo, from the various areas representing the biological and human sciences and technologies, according to the conventional division.

Among those present were a number of the most renowned professors in these areas, who also enjoyed international repute. This was thus a unique occasion for taking a sample, if not a statistical one, that was highly representative, at least in its trans-sectorial aspect, of the teaching staff of the Institution, with the exclusion of the literature and arts department.

At the time when I made the count, 44 people were present, distributed according to colour criteria in the following way: Whites – 50% (22); *Mulatos* – 18.18% (8); *Orientais* – 2.27% (1); Dubious or borderline – 29.54% (13); *Pretos* – 0.

As was to be expected, the whites predominated, totalling 50% of those present, or 79.5% if one adds to the previous percentage those ‘borderline’ individuals, of whom it was not possible either to be sure or to entirely exclude the presence of *negroide* features. There was a significant representation of *mulatos* (18.18%), even when excluding any ‘borderline cases’. The one oriental present represented 2.27% of the total. There were no *pretos* present. The 13 ‘borderline cases’ - that is, *morenos*¹³ about whom there was some doubt as to whether or not their appearance indicated the presence of Afro-descendant marks - represented 29.54%. There were five people at the table, including three white females, an oriental female and a *mulato* female. There were only 7 women among the public, that is, 19.9% of the total; the female gender was therefore neatly underrepresented.

In Brazil, people are considered to be white, regardless of having or not African ascendancy, as long as they have no evident features of this ascendancy. There is an indefinable borderline of inclusion that very possibly varies from region to region, in accordance with the density of the *negros* and *mestizos* in the population. Thus there are always people with slight traces of *negroide* features who are incorporated into the white population; the limits of tolerance and the frequency of this inclusion depends on the regional demography.

In his classic study on the racial situation in Salvador, Donald Pierson (1942)¹⁴ used the expression ‘white from Bahia’ to refer to individuals who were socially considered to be white but who nevertheless revealed traces of African ancestry. As this phenomenon is by no means restricted to Bahia, I prefer to use the expression ‘borderline’ to designate these individuals.

After this first experience of trying to identify ‘borderline’ cases in the task of counting the people present at events to be described according to

13 Editor’s Note: The Brazilian colour category *Morena* or *Moreno* is used either as synonym or even as an euphemism for *pardos* or *mulatos claros*. It is also very frequently used as a term of admiration to refer to sunburnt whites. It is also used, rather like “dark” in English to refer to people who are not exactly blondes, even though they may not be perceived as having African ancestry

14 Editor’s note: Nogueira refers to the first edition of Donald Pierson’s book, published in Brazil in 1945 with the title *Mulatos e pretos na Bahia: Um estudo de contato racial*, by Companhia Editora Nacional (SP). A new edition was published in 1971.

colour criteria, I decided not to be concerned any further with this, preferring to incorporate them into those numbered as whites.

In a previous work (Nogueira, op.cit.), I have argued that the cases of families that have been able to trace back to illustrious *negros* ancestors show how, by selective marriage with white or whiter partners, the process of being incorporated into the white population has been completed within three or four generations.

3. Situations and Cultural Events Outside the University of São Paulo

In this section I've included events that I witnessed during my investigations in education or cultural institutions that are not part of the University of São Paulo. In all there were six events, including the installation of the Board of Directors at an educational foundation, a meeting of that Board, a meeting to discuss the profession of sociologist in one of the teaching units of the same foundation, the admission ceremony of a new member to the Paulista Academy of Letters and two lectures which I gave on racial relations, one of which was to teachers and graduate students at the School of Philosophy, Sciences and Literature, promoted by a foundation in Botucatu, and the other to teachers and students of a graduate course on the campus of UNESP in that city. (...)

The inaugural session of the Board of Directors
of an educational foundation

This event took place in December 1983 and, although not specifically related to the University of São Paulo, involved the presence and participation of its teachers and thus, due to its nature, was very similar to the events narrated above.

Given that a number of irregularities had occurred in the administration of the foundation and in the teaching institutions that it funded, the Foundation's Curator decided to dismiss the members of the previous Board of Directors and replace them with a group of intellectuals, most of whom were teachers at the University of São Paulo.

On the day of the session there were 10 people at the table, of which 8 were men and 2 were women, among which there was 1 *mulato*, 7 whites

(including one with obviously European features whose father had been a *mulato*) and 2 *morenos*, probably of African ancestry.

The public, which I calculated at around 50 people, was made up of teachers from the University of São Paulo, teachers and students from the teaching units funded by the Foundation, as well as other guests. The distribution per category of colour was as follows: Whites – 62% (31); *Mulatos* – 14% (7); *Pretos* – 4% (2); *Orientais* – 6% (3); Borderline – 14% (7). [...].

The two main teaching institutions funded by the Foundation administered undergraduate courses along the same lines as those of the University of São Paulo, at its campus in the capital. The courses were in Social Sciences and Librarianship. Although these were paid courses, the monthly rates are considered below-average and, as the classes were given in the city centre, they offered a greater chance to people who work to attend them than the courses offered by USP. This may explain, in part, the relatively high proportions of *mulatos*, *pretos* and *morenos*, some of whom probably descend from Africans. These are obviously hypotheses, not facts.

Meeting of the Board of Directors of the educational foundation

In October 1984, I was present at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the School of Sociology and Politics of the São Paulo Foundation. Those present included 9 counsellors, 2 directors and the Curator of the Foundation. Of the counsellors, 7 were men and 2 women. All those present were white, including three with probable African ascendancy.

Discussion of the profession of sociologist

In May 1984, I visited the head office of the School of Sociology and Politics Foundation, in the morning, in order to deal with a matter in hand with the Director-General, Professor Gabriel Cohn, and was unexpectedly invited to participate in a discussion that was about to begin about the profession of sociologist.

They told me that an impasse had occurred, as the meeting coincided with another of a nationwide nature, in which the same theme was to be debated, and consequently many of the interested parties and guests that had been invited were no longer able to be present. Even so, I calculated the number of people present as 50. The majority were students and teachers of

the foundation's social sciences course; a representative of the Sociologists' Association of the State São Paulo was also present.

There were 3 people at the table, two of whom were white and one *mulato* (all men). The 50 people present were distributed according to colour in the following way: Whites – 56% (28); *Mulatos* – 30% (15); *Pretos* – 6% (3); *Orientais* – 8% (4). The relatively high proportion of *mulatos* is worth noting, as well as the presence of *pretos*, which would seem to reflect an increasing level of awareness in relation to their specific problems, with the consequent motivation to study social sciences.

Session in honour of a new member of the Paulista Academy of Letters

In May 1984, I was present at the Paulista Academy of Letters, at the ceremony in honour of a new member of the house, Ibiapaba de Oliveira Martins.

The June/July issue of the magazine 'The Writer', produced by the Brazilian Union of Writers, noted in an article that the new member had been proposed by Tito Lívio Ferreira, a colleague at the Academy, who was quoted as saying: "Never since I've been here have I seen so many people in that kind of event".

The same magazine commented on the diversity of ideological tendencies represented:

"(...) A variety of tendencies were represented, with the presence of Ignácio Loyola Brandão, Fábio Lucas, Ricardo Ramos, and even the poet Mario Chamie, formerly the Cultural Secretary of the municipality of São Paulo. And personalities such as Paulo de Tarso Santos, ex-Secretary of Education in the government of Franco Montoro, trade unionists such as Waldemar Maffei and Joaquim Cardoso, and government authorities such as R. Nacim Saad, the regional delegate for labour relations in São Paulo, politicians such as Gíóia Junior, a federal deputy for the PDS and the town councillor Luiz Tenório de Lima, member of the National Commission for the Legalisation of the Communist Party." And further: the representative of the Paulista Association of Letters, Genésio Pereira, and the veteran writer Abguar Bastos, who before the military coup of 1964 had been president of the Nationalistic Parliamentary Front.

I calculated the number of people present at 300, distributed in terms of colour as follows: Whites – 82% (247); *Mulatos* – 16% (50); *Pretos* – 1% (3);

Orientais – 0. One of the three *pretos* present was a well-known member of the Brazilian Union of Writers. Of the 22 academics present, two were *mulato*.

Lectures on racial relations

In May 1984 I gave a lecture entitled “Race Relations in Brazil” at the School of Philosophy, Sciences and Literature of the Toledo Teaching Institute in Botucatu. Approximately 50 people were present, including teachers and students, distributed in the following way: Whites – 86% (43); *Mulatos* – 10% (5); *Pretos* – 4% (2); *Orientais* – 0.

After concluding my lecture I invited questions from those present, but there was no response. It was only after the session was closed that some of the white teachers present asked me questions.

In November 1984, I returned to Botucatu to give a lecture on race relations to students of the graduate course in medicine, veterinary studies, agronomy and biology, at the Julio de Mesquita Paulista State University. There were 31 students present, among which I counted 3 *mulatos* and 1 *oriental*. In addition to the coordinator, three visitors were present, one of whom was a *mulato claro*. All of those present were university graduates.

After my presentation I invited questions from those present, however only one of the youngest students, a *mulato*, asked me whether racial prejudice was instinctive, that is, innate, “because in all living species, similars attract and different repel!”. When the session was officially closed, another student, a *pardo* and one of the oldest among the group, came up to me, to share his anxiety about the aggravation of prejudice that he had been observing.

Before beginning my lecture I distributed a questionnaire to the students in which they were asked, apart from the usual data concerning self-identification, to classify all those present between whites, *pardos*, *pretos* and yellows, including the category to which they felt to belong. I received answers from 31 students, of which 13 were women and 18 men. The ages of the students were between 22 and 41, with average ages of between 26 and 30, and a declining numbers of older students, as follows: Up to 25 – 12.9% (4); 26-30 – 38.7 (12); 31-35 – 22.5 (7); 36-40 – 19.4%; 41-45 – 6.5% (2).

As far as identification by colour was concerned, 3 students recognised the presence of 2 *pardos* in their group and 7, the presence of 1, whereas I had identified 3. 23 registered the presence of a single yellow student (female) and 2 stated that all those present were white. There was unanimity as to

the absence of *pretos*. The total number of people present was evaluated at between 23 and 34. This was largely due to the late arrival of some students and because some included visitors in their calculations. The two students who indicated ‘all of them’ as white did not give a total for those present.

One of the students who entered the word ‘all’ into the category ‘whites’, added a comment: “If I were to count all the whites, *pardos*, etc., apart from getting it wrong, it would distract my attention from the lecture!!!” This 27-year-old student, who considered himself white, was a student of genetics.

The most significant fact related to the exercise of classifying the others is that only 10 students, or approximately a third of those present, identified the presence of *pardos*. In other words, 21 of those present, or two thirds, failed to notice this category, including them in the white category.

As concerns self-identification, 28 of those present, or 90.3%, considered themselves white; none considered themselves *pardo* or *preto*, and just one considered herself yellow. 2 people left this item unanswered, one 29 year-old and one 38 year-old; they happened to be two of the three who had been identified as *pardos*.

Thus, when we consider the classification of *mulatos* and *pardos*, the data confirms the tendency towards ambiguity, especially when the individuals in these categories belong to the medium or superior social levels. The data also confirm their tendency towards not assuming their identity. These results serve as a suggestion for specific research under more appropriate conditions to compare the tendencies in self-identification and in the identification of others in terms of racial categories, in the state São Paulo and in Brazil as a whole.¹⁵

4. Situations and Events Connected to the Life Cycle and to Domestic Life

This section covers 21 events¹⁶, including baptisms, birthdays, a priest’s anniversary, weddings, a visit to an old people’s home, a visit to a

¹⁵ Editor’s note. This last sentence belonged originally to the introduction to this item, here suppressed, where the author announced his results.

¹⁶ Editor’s Note. The description of 8 events were suppressed in this edition: “a baptism”; “the birthday of a 60-year-old lady”; “the reception for a young engineer”; “a wedding in Taubaté (May, 1984)”; “two weddings in São Paulo (June and October, 1984)”; “a wedding in Lorena (December, 1984)”; “a visit to an old people’s home, a 7th Day Catholic Mass”.

preta who was allegedly over a hundred years old, funerals and recreational gatherings.

[...] the presence of *mulatos* was observed in 80% of these events or situations, and that of *pretos*, in 50%. *Mulatos* appear as members of families that are socially accepted as white, as visitors received with the greatest deference and as participants in a wide variety of events.

There are some cases of special interest: 1) a young man from a traditional white family who married the daughter of a *mulato*, who was also the niece of a *mãe de santo*, whom he had met at an Umbanda cult; at his catholic wedding the young man wore the same white suit and yellow tie that he had ordered for his Umbanda wedding ritual; 2) two *mulato* executives who were received with great deference to play bowls at the house of their industrialist neighbour; 3) a *mulato* whom I met in the house of a widow whom I was visiting to offer my condolences. When I asked her who he was, she proudly replied: "He's my son!"; 4) a *mulato* woman who owned an old people's home, whose daughter married the grandson of a famous judge and writer from the state of Minas Gerais, in defiance of his family's prejudice; 5) the cases of priests and deacons, of prosperous members of the liberal professions, and of politicians. In all of these cases, in general, the *mulatos* protected themselves with the discretion displayed by those who risk being demoralised, as in Goffman's conception.¹⁷

Birthdays

A) A girl's birthday

In October 1984, I attended the birthday party of a white girl who was turning 10, whose mother was a divorced social worker.

Including adults and children, there were 50 people present, including a white lady with *negroide* features (nose, lips and face), a teacher and art

17 Editor's note: In his master's thesis, defended in 1945, under the orientation of Donald Pierson, at the then Free School of Sociology and Politics (SP), the analysis proposed by Nogueira of illness as a social experience clearly foresees the concept of stigma, coined in the 1960s by Erving Goffmann to explain the particular form of prejudice suffered by people afflicted with certain illnesses or physical deficiencies. This dissertation - *Vozes de Campos de Jordão. Experiências psíquicas e sociais do tuberculoso pulmonar no Estado de São Paulo* - was published in book form in 1952, and a new edition, organized by this editor, was published by Editora Fiocruz in 2009. It should be noted that, between 1945 and 1947, Nogueira and Goffman were contemporaries in the Ph.D. program at the Sociology Department of the University of Chicago. Cf. Cavalcanti, Maria Laura "Oracy Nogueira e a antropologia no Brasil: o estudo do estigma e do preconceito racial", *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais*. Vol. 31, pp. 5-28, 1996.

exhibitor, who was married to a *mulato escuro* in the liberal professions (who was not present).

This woman's husband is one of the most elegant men I know. His suits are made of English light cashmere, ordered from his tailor, and his shirts and underclothing are bought at *Rua Augusta*. As well as a successful professional, whose clients are wealthy and the large majority of whom are white, he also has an exceptional talent for business. He is a property owner in the capital as well as in other municipalities of Greater São Paulo, as well as possessing valuable antiquities, jewellery and art works. His friends consider him "a true diplomat" due to his elegant manners and the way that he dresses. He also has his own driver.

The last time that I visited them, he happened to mention that his new driver was *preto* and that a neighbour's dog always tried to attack him, to which his wife responded: "Some *preta* [black person] must have mistreated this dog".

The relatives included the girl's grandparents (a University Professor and a high school teacher), her mother (a social worker), a bachelor uncle who was a civil engineer, an aunt who was a psychologist married to a business manager, and their two-year-old daughter; an uncle who was an economist married to a psychologist, and their three-year-old daughter; a cousin who was an economist and married to a social worker and their two daughters of 7 and 3 years old.

The other visitors included: a couple, one an architect and the other a sociologist, with their 10-year-old daughter; a couple of writers in their 70s; a 40-year-old economist who was divorced; a woman who worked in a real estate agency and her boyfriend; a lawyer with her mother; a 60-year-old woman, the wife of a lawyer, with her divorced daughter and 2 children; a social worker with her daughter; 3 engineers who were colleagues of the uncle, one of whom was accompanied by his wife and a young daughter; an industrialist with three young boys; a retired judge and his wife, who was a retired teacher; and a 35-year-old *mulata*, a single mother who had been brought up by an aunt of the hostess, with her 10-year-old son.

While the *mulata* girl helped serve the guests, her son, whom the girl's employer, a widow with no children, is bringing up as a middle-class boy, played with all the other children, very naturally.

The white lady with *negroide* features is one of the most respected friends of the birthday girl's grandmother, and if she'd been accompanied by her husband, he would certainly have been treated with the utmost deference. The two children of the couple, one a lawyer and the other an economist, have both had exceptional social and professional success and, despite their slightly *negroide* features, they consider themselves to be white and are also thought to be white in the social *milieu* to which they belong.

B) The birthday of two young people

Also in October 1984, I went to the birthday celebration of two young men, both married, who live in São Paulo. As they both had birthdays in the same month they decided to commemorate on the same day, a Sunday, at their parents' house in a town about a hundred kilometres from the capital.

A third brother, also married, lives in São Paulo. All three are white, married to white women and successful both socially and professionally. The oldest is a partner in a small but flourishing industrial firm; the second is an architect and the third took over his father's commercial activity. Two of the three have children – all four of whom are white and very European looking.

The father is *moreno*, a 'borderline', and the mother is the daughter of Italians, very white and European looking. The two paternal uncles are whiter than the father, the grandmother and two aunts are all fat and *mulatas escuras*, and fat like "*negras minas*"¹⁸.

About two years ago the parents retired from their retail business in São Paulo and returned to the town where they were born, where they live in a large house that was built by their architect son, with a 10 by 5 metre swimming pool in front of it and a metallic entrance door with remote control.

Everything was busy in the house, starting in the morning and continuing for about nine hours until about seven in the evening, with aperitifs, soft drinks, beer, whiskey and snacks prepared for the guests. The barbecue began at 12 and lasted for the rest of the day.

While the adults drank beer, ate and chatted, the adolescents and the children spent most of the time in and around the pool.

¹⁸ Editor's Note: *Negra Mina*, or *Negro Mina*, is a term that designates women and men from one of the different groups of slaves that arrived in Brazil. The slaves were classified according to the port of origin. In this case, the port is the Castle of São Jorge da Mina, in West Africa.

I counted a little over 30 adults and 10 to 15 children, distributed as follows:

- the host couple, described above. Age: 60
- their three sons, all *claros* [light skinned]; their wives and grandchildren, idem.; sons and stepdaughters, all around 30 years old.
- six married couples of approximately the same age with their respective children, all white, except for one couple of which the wife, a niece of the hosts, was a *mulata clara*.
- three married white couples of around 40.
- the hosts' brother, an older white man who was a lawyer and a judge, and his wife, both around 60 years old.
- one of the sons' parents-in-law, the father-in-law was tall, white, of the northern Italian type, and his wife a *mulata clara* whose daughter, the daughter-in-law of the hosts, is white. The parents-in-law were around 60 years old.
- a white couple from São Paulo, retired teachers in their 60s.

Recreational domestic gatherings

A) A barbecue

In October 1984, a civil engineer, a bachelor, white, around 30, decided to give a barbecue at his parents' house in São Paulo.

It took place on a Sunday and started at 11 o'clock. At 12 o'clock the food began to be served, accompanied by beer and soft drinks.

There were between 25 and 30 people present, as follows:

- the owners of the house, a couple in their 60s;
- their son, mentioned above, one of their daughters, a divorced social worker of around 30, accompanied by her daughter (the hosts' granddaughter) who was about 10; another daughter of about 20 with her husband who was a company manager of around 30, with their two-year-old daughter (also the hosts' granddaughter).
- a white civil engineer from Ceará, a friend and colleague of the son, in his 30s, with his wife of around the same age and their daughter of 2 years;
- another civil engineer from Ceará, a friend of the former who had invited him, a *mulato claro*, and his white wife, both around 30, accompanied by a friend, also white and of about the same age;

- an economist, white, of around 30, who was a nephew of the owners of the house, and his wife, white, a social worker of around 20, with their two daughters of 3 and 7 respectively;

- a friend of the son who was giving the party, around 30, a salesman, accompanied by his wife, a computer specialist of around the same age, white, with their daughter of 2. There was also a wife's friend who was white and around the same age;

- the father of the house's owner, a white lawyer in his 60s, accompanied by his *mulata clara* wife, who happened to mention in conversation that she was a cousin of a female professor at the University of São Paulo who was married to an important member of the National Congress. The couple was accompanied by their son who was a *mulato claro*. The family has a high standard of living, with a large house in one of the most valued beaches in the State.

B) Bocce and other activities

In September 1984, while I was in a small town in the interior of the State of São Paulo, less than 220 kilometres from the capital, I visited an industrialist, who was a northern Italian and married to a wife who came from one of the ex-Soviet countries after the Second World War. They were married immediately after the Armistice, and came to Brazil, where their only son was born. Today the son is around 30 and works at a high level of administration in one of the establishments of which his father is a partner.

The father has light brown hair and reddish skin and the mother is blonde. The son is blonde like his mother, and after his divorce from his first wife, with whom he had a son, married a woman who was half Japanese and half Brazilian. They live in São Paulo and own a large house on one of the most valued beaches in the State, as well as this house in the mountains, with a swimming pool and bowling alley.

I arrived at 11:30 for a brief visit, and was taken to the bocce alley where the owner of the house was playing bocce with one of his Italian partners who also owned a large house in the neighbourhood. The pair was playing against an executive from a company that did not belong to the group, and a liberal professional, both *mulatos* from the capital who owned large houses in the same condominium.

While I was being taken to the bocce alley, my wife was taken onto the terrace besides the swimming pool where the hostess and her daughter-in-law were sitting at a table laid with coffee, cakes, wafers and desserts.

Her son and grandson could be seen from the swimming pool. The grandson was blonde, showing no sign that his mother was Japanese-Brazilian. With them was a young local tradesman, of similar age, who came from one of the most traditional families of the municipality, whose maternal grandmother was Lebanese. He was with his son of about 4 or 5 years old.

The two men whom I identified as *mulatos* have white wives and live and socialise with the other owners of large houses in the condominium without suffering any discrimination. I don't know how they identify themselves in terms of their skin colour, but I'm sure that in the community they are thought of as rich white men. During our brief contact both gave me the impression of extraordinary self-confidence and self-esteem as well as an obvious feeling of well-being in their *milieu*.

Weddings

A) São Paulo, December 1983

In December 1983 I attended the catholic wedding of João Antonio, 22, white, the son of a lawyer and journalist friend of mine, from a traditional family, whose wife, white and blonde, is of Italian descent.

The ceremony took place at the *Igreja da Cruz Torta* in the neighbourhood of Pinheiros. The whole church was decorated with wicker baskets of white chrysanthemums. The bride, 20 years old, arrived in a veil, tiara and white dress, in the traditional style, and the bridegroom, unexpectedly, wore a white suit and yellow tie.

I estimated the number of people present at around 400.

The father of the bride was a *mulato* of medium height, stocky, and the mother, a white lady. I was later informed that he was a male nurse and also an important figure in an Umbanda¹⁹ temple. The bride was a *morena*, a girl with straight hair, with no visible signs of African ancestry.

After the religious ceremony there was a reception with food and drinks in the reception room of the apartment building where the family of the

¹⁹ Editor's Note: Umbanda is a syncretic Brazilian religion in which African, Catholic and Indigenous practices and beliefs melt together.

bridegroom lived, in the district of Higienópolis. Almost the same people who attended the church service were present at the reception.

About a third of those present were relatives and guests of the bride, and I calculated that most of these were *mulatos claros*, with the exception of two uncles who were dark-skinned *mulatos*.

The remaining two thirds were made up of relatives and friends of the bridegroom, including male and female cousins whom I already knew, 'borderline types', a girl with oriental features who was married to a white man, both around 40, a Japanese man about the same age, with a streak of grey hair, married to a bridegroom's white cousin and accompanied by his nine-year-old daughter, *morena*, and a baby boy in a pram, *oriental*.

I learned later that between the various ceremonies and gatherings, the wedding had occupied four weekends: during the first, gift-giving parties were held, in which the friends of the bride and bridegroom arrived with useful presents for the couple's everyday life; the civil marriage took place on the second weekend, on the third the Umbanda wedding, and lastly, the catholic ceremony.

It is interesting to note that during the catholic ceremony, as the priest addressed the young couple, he emphasized the virtues of the bride, making his own influence on her education quite clear. I don't know to what extent he had decided to ignore her connection with Umbanda. The bridegroom's suit and yellow tie, I was told, were the same he had worn at the Umbanda ceremony.

When I showed my curiosity as to how the bridegroom had begun attending Umbanda rituals, I was told that as the youngest son of parents who already had three children, he went through a period of maladjustment during adolescence: he didn't have the energy to continue with his studies, or to take on a regular job. He spent most of his time at home, doing nothing, exasperating his parents. Recourse to doctors and psychologists was to no avail, until someone suggested that they took the boy to an Umbanda temple.

The boy gradually recovered his gaiety, got a job in a manufacturing firm and, at the same time, occasional roles in TV advertisements. An obviously important factor is that it was at the Umbanda rituals that the boy met his wife to be.

A year after the wedding, I learnt that the young couple spent alternate weekends with his family and with hers. As a friend of his family, I am witness to the fact that their daughter-in-law was completely accepted by his parents, sisters-in-law, mother's in-laws and all his other relatives.

B) Cunha, July 1984

We arrived at Cunha on Tuesday the 10th, at around 6:00 p.m. We had intended to arrive earlier but had had to turn back because we'd forgotten the wedding present for the daughter of *Senhor* José Veloso. In order to collect the present we wasted around an hour and a half.

Senhor José Veloso, or more precisely José de Oliveira Veloso, is a *mulato* whom I have known since childhood. He was also in the same class as my older sister at the Dr. Alfredo Casemiro Rocha²⁰ grammar school. I remember his father Marcolino de Oliveira Veloso, *mulato ventre-livre*²¹ an illegitimate son of Benedito de Oliveira Veloso with a slave.

Mr Veloso is nearly 70 and has children from two marriages. His first marriage was to a white woman, a granddaughter of Italians, and great-niece of Mr Neco Fornitani. (One of the latter's daughters, Olga, was a classmate of my sister, and one of the sons, Luiz or Lulu, was a classmate of mine). Mr Veloso's second marriage was to a *mulata*. He had two daughters and two sons with each of his wives, making a total of eight children.

The family is known locally as exceptionally hard-working. At home, the father makes savoury snacks and sweets that are sold at his cafeteria in the city's downtown area or are ordered directly by customers; his sons and daughters help him with the work. Once, when I'd met him a few years before, he had just been commissioned to make thousands of rice cakes to be distributed on the eve of the Feast of the Holy Spirit. On religious feast days he is seen playing his bass as a member of the local music band. A lady who once saw him playing in a procession under

20 Editor's note: The last book that Nogueira published while he was alive is a biography of Dr. Alfredo Casemiro da Rocha, a mixture of historical and romanticized recollections, entitled *Negro Político. Político negro*. São Paulo: Edusp, 1992.

21 Editor's Note: The *Lei do ventre livre* [Law of the free womb], September 28, 1871, declared that the children of a slave born from that date on were free.

heavy rain asked him whether he wouldn't catch a cold, and he replied that "Nothing happens when we do something with love."

Two or three of his daughters usually work at the snack bar – the oldest daughter, who is overweight, around 40, and the younger daughter, thinner, of around 30, as well as another one of about 20; all three are *mulatas*. When it's required, or when they are able to, one of the brothers also comes to help. On various occasions I have met João there, kneading dough and frying pasties, pies or chicken dumplings.

When I taught in Itapetininga, in the 1970s, I had great admiration for a Japanese family whose daughter, a university professor, and son, a student at the University of São Paulo Polytechnic School, came to help their parents on their stall in the local fair at weekends.

The Veloso family is sort of a Brazilian equivalent of this immigrant Japanese family.

João Veloso, whom I've seen so many times working in the snack bar, had been approved at an state civil service entrance examination as an English teacher, and also worked at the local school and has even translated a book. In addition, he is the founder and director of the Cunha Centre for Culture and Tradition, and as such, as well as collecting and looking after objects and documents related to the history and culture of the municipality, he writes documents and chronicles which are then mimeographed and distributed in Cunha.

João is a *mulato escuro*, although for some of his friends he looks like an Indian. On weekends and holidays, he and Pedro, another of Mr Veloso's sons, look after the swimming pool that is used by fee-paying customers, which affords them a little extra money. On the same property, also at weekends and on public holidays, they open in the evenings their 'pizzeria' in a thatched cabin, built with extraordinary good taste. Pedro is the whiter brother, who dedicates his time to painting and to the study of art at a teaching institute in the town.

Every time that I've been to the pizzeria I have seen Pedro standing over the fire making delicious pizzas, that are praised even by local wealthy Italian immigrants.

Recently, the family acquired a small farm, 16 kilometres from the town, where they are planting, among other things, a fruit orchard and other crops, and are reforesting the land with pine trees. João went to Campos

do Jordão to learn how to breed trout, as he also plans to engage in trout farming. He hopes that within five years the farm will release them at least from having to run the pizzeria.

The Veloso family brings to mind the words of Roger (1971) about the tendency of upwardly mobile *famílias negras* [black families] to develop a certain degree of Puritanism, valuing work and austerity as a means of dignifying the family's self-appreciation.²²

His daughter was going to get married on Saturday the 14th. So, on July 11, 1984, at 7:30 p.m., we went to visit Mr José Veloso to deliver our wedding gift.

In the morning, we had already met João, who had told us that his father had been ill, in a diabetic coma, and had just come back home from the hospital.

The house is in a meandering dirt road, narrow and steep, that begins with a Methodist Church. (...). When we finally arrived at the house, the daughter who was to be married was coming out. She apologised to us and explained that she had to leave for a while and would soon be back.

The house is below street level, so that one has to go down three flights of steps, with about 10 steps in each, to reach the front door. The steps lead down to an area of about 10 by 4 metres, overlooked by a window and the door.

The oldest daughter, who looks after the snack bar, showed us into the living room, where her father was resting in an armchair with two *mulato* gentlemen at his side. In the living room there was a table, two armchairs, half a dozen chairs and a colour television set. A number of girls, all *mulatinhas escuras*, came in and out, some of them greeting us while others just looked at us shyly; we did not know if they were daughters, nieces or other relatives of Mr Veloso. He apologised for not getting up and regretted being so ill at a time when he needed to do everything he could to organise his daughter's wedding.

In response to a question of mine he told me that he had eight living children – four girls and four boys – and that a further eight had died. Those who are still alive are the offspring from two different marriages.

Shortly after we arrived a young lady entered, *pele alva* [white skin] and typically European looking, accompanied by four children of 9 and under,

22 For analogous observations on middle class black people in Campinas, see Barbosa (1983).

who were also white, and one of them had a freckled face. She kissed the old man fondly and did the same with his oldest daughter. She explained that she was a relative – I don't know whether a sister or a niece of Veloso's first wife.

While the children were playing in the garden – including my granddaughter and her friend – a young lady began to talk to my wife. She was the daughter of Mr Neco Fornotani, a tinker I had met when I was a child. Thus she is a granddaughter of Italians and a sister of Dona Mariquita Santana, Benedito de Aguiar Santana's widow. Benedito was a grandson of Major Santana, and was a childhood friend of mine. When I moved away from the town,²³ he had already entered the seminary but was never ordained as a priest. He ended up studying law and working as a lawyer in São Paulo. He died shortly after building a house in a small farm, in Cunha, where his widow now lives.

We had already visited this house a number of times, as my wife used to bring printed material for Dona Mariquita, for her religious activities. Recently she had begun to drop the material off at her sister's house in the *Largo da Matriz*. This sister was precisely the lady we had just met and who told us that she was a 1st and 2nd grade teacher, but due to poor health she was now retired. She was overweight as a consequence of her illness.

Dona Mariquita is also a retired teacher and a 'sister of the Eucharist', collaborating in the activities of the local Catholic church as well as in those of other Catholic churches in the municipality. She has a son who is a journalist in São Paulo, a daughter who is married and lives in Rio Grande do Sul and another unmarried daughter who lives with her. It took me some time to notice that Dona Mariquita's sister calls her brother-in-law José Veloso 'Uncle', as he is much older than she.

About five years ago, before we had bought our own house in Cunha, we went to a barbecue in the atelier of the ceramic artist Cidraes, invited by the brothers João and Pedro Veloso. A number of white girls were also there and the brothers told us that we were meeting some of their white relatives.

23 Editor's note: Oracy Nogueira was born in Cunha (SP), on November 17, 1917, and lived there until he was 10, when the family moved to Catanduva, then to Botucatu, and later to the city of São Paulo. It was there that, in 1940, Nogueira started the Baccalaureate course at the Free School of Sociology and Politics, in 1942, going on to study for his Master's degree at the Graduate Studies Division under the tutoring of Donald Pierson.

I asked Mr Veloso if he had ever lived outside Cunha, and he told me that he had lived in São Paulo and in Taubaté. He had worked as an employee of the Cunha Town Council, in the State Department of Roads and Transport and at a bakery, until he managed to set himself up on his own, in his home town, as a baker and vegetable seller, with his snack bar as a retail outlet.

He returned to Cunha when his children had grown up and needed to study: “It required a great deal of sacrifice to get my children through school. I even worked in three places at the same time: the Town Council, in the bakery and as a self-employed baker. I used to sleep four hours a night!”

The house is rustic although made of brick. Its irregular shaped living room looks more like a trapezium than a rectangle. At a certain point Mr Veloso exclaimed: “On Saturday (the day of the wedding) you’ll meet all my relatives together!”

While we were there, a 70-year-old lady arrived, a *mulata escura e esbelta* [dark, slender mulato woman], whom Mr Veloso introduced to us as his sister. When he told her who I was, she remembered my parents, who had been teachers at the Dr. Alfredo Casimiro da Rocha Grammar School before 1930. She left before us; later, as we were going to Jorge Prudente’s house, at around nine p.m., we saw her crossing the Coronel João Olímpio Square on foot.

On Saturday the 14th, at 11 a.m., we arrived at the wedding in the city’s Central Church.

There were between 200 and 230 people in the church, most of whom were *mulatos* of varying shades with different combinations of African and European features. I noticed a very *preto* young man and a lady of a similar colour standing at separate locations.

Everyone was extremely smartly dressed, with the appearance of middle or upper-class people. There was a young woman with oriental features whose hair was arranged with combs, forming a bun. She arrived and sat down on a bench beside five young *mulatos*.

On most of the benches – I counted 32 of them – the composition of the occupants varied a lot, with *mulatos* of different shades and whites.

When the recording of the wedding march began the procession entered, led by a little blonde girl, with white skin and a pink face, about four years old, a daughter of the sister-in-law whom we had met at Mr Veloso’s house.

Pedro came ahead of them with a camera to take pictures of the various moments of the ceremony.

The bride entered on her father's arm. He was wearing a dark suit, but no tie, and walking bowlegged, clearly unwell, which made the scene even more moving. The bride was wearing a veil and tiara, with a long dress as in traditional weddings.

When we sat down, we found ourselves next to a slender gentleman with grey hair and white skin, of around 70, whom I imagined to be an Italian or a descendant of Italians. When we began talking to him he told me that he was German and had come to Brazil when he was 12. He had lived in Paraná and had come to Cunha a few years before. He told me that he had a tremendous wish to visit Germany, where his mother had died "exactly on the last Happy Night" (Christmas Eve), but that he couldn't afford the fare.

I saw the daughter of the town's Mayor in the church; she was a daughter of *Senhor* Benedito Fornitano. I also saw D. Lolinha Moreira Querido and various other members of the local white elite.

At the end of the ceremony I was able to observe the groups of family members, best men and bridesmaids. Most of them were *mulato*, with a few whites amongst them. The groom was a bald *mulato* who looked as if he was from Brazil's north-east, and in his family group there was a middle-aged couple holding hands – he, a blond, or red haired man, who had a reddish skin, looking like a German; and she, a *mulato*.

When we greeted the groom, who lived in Guaratinguetá as informed in the invitation, he told us that he indeed did live there but was hoping to come and live in Cunha as soon as possible. Both he and the bride appeared to be around 30. She is *mulata*, of a similar colour to her brother João.

At 3 p.m. I noticed cars arriving and people chatting merrily at the pizzeria, in the area near our house. I believe that a more restricted wedding reception was held there for a smaller number of people than those who had attended the religious ceremony.

A priest's anniversary

On a Saturday in June 1984, I was happy to attend a gathering in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of Reverend Canon Enzo Guzzo's priesthood, at Santa Cruz High School. Reverend Enzo is a Professor at the Catholic University of São Paulo, and has been in the 1960's

the mentor of the Catholic University Youth (JUC. *Juventude Católica Universitária*).

Due to his great achievements as Professor at the university and mentor of JUC, Father Enzo had obtained considerable esteem from his ex-students, very many of whom had been persecuted following the military coup of 1964 and have since gained political prominence after the Amnesty of 1979 and the elections of 1982.

Father Enzo himself was persecuted and marginalised in the years following the 1964 military coup. Thus this tribute, as well as celebrating his long career as a priest, was also a way of compensating the wrongs and misunderstandings to which he had been subjected.

After the mass there was a cocktail. Leading state and municipal authorities and well-known intellectuals were present, as well as members of their families, friends and ex-students of Father Enzo.

I calculated the number of people present at 200, among whom I counted 30 with *negroide* features, including 2 who held top positions in the State government, and 5 *orientais*. I didn't see a single *preto*. The group with *negroide* features, then, constituted 15%; the number of whites present, 82.5%, and the *orientais* 2.5%.

Visit to a *preta* [black woman] supposedly one-hundred years old

On a Friday in June, 1984, in Cunha, at three in the afternoon I went to Chicão's house, so that, as we had agreed, he would take me to interview a *preta velha* [an old black lady] in the district of Boa Vista. For some time he had been telling me about this woman who, according to her grandson, was over a hundred years old. He even thought she could be 105 years old.

When we arrived at Boa Vista we went to the house of the caretaker of the São José Church (sometimes referred to as the Holy Family Church), where we were received by the caretaker's wife, a *morena* middle-aged woman, who appeared to me to have indigenous features, chubby, with a young face and very fine teeth. Afterwards Chicão told me that she was the great-niece of *Senhor* Pedro Prudente from Espírito Santo state, a farmer whom I know. At the side, cleaning the house and then the front terrace, there was a girl, also *morena*, of around 25, probably her daughter.

Chicão asked the caretaker's wife where *Dona* Tertulina's house was. When I asked her how old the *preta* was she thought I had asked her own age

and replied “43”. When I asked the question again she said that she imagined that the *preta* was about 90. The house was further down at the end of a narrow path, about two kilometres away. She suggested that we should walk because it would be very difficult to come back up by car. Chicão thought that it would be better to go as far as we could in his VW. And it was in this way that we arrived at the beginning of the woodlands that climb up the mountain that overhangs the path. At this point, on the left, there was a wooden entrance sided by the barbed wire. Chicão stopped the car and we entered on foot. After a hundred metres or so we reached a small plot where there was a wattle hut with a tiled roof. Outside the house a 60-year-old *preto* man was weaving a pannier, with five or more already finished beside him on the ground. There was a *preta* with *cabelo pixaim* [crinkly black hair] working near some trees. Ducks and chickens were foraging near the back-yard that sloped up the hill towards the church.

While we were still at a good distance away, Chicão began to shout, requesting permission for us to enter, to which the man and the woman replied: “Of course! We are pleased to welcome you!”

A woman came out of the house. She was obviously much older than the other. Both of them were barefoot with dishevelled hair; the man was wearing rubber boots. With Chicão’s help I explained that I was interested in speaking to old people, to get an idea of what life used to be like in Cunha. The man and the woman interrupted their work and invited us to come in.

The house belonged to the older woman and to a brother who was ill, and for this reason remained in the bedroom. The woman who received us (who was 73) said that she was the sister-in-law of the house’s owners and the aunt of the man who was weaving the panniers.

The latter told us that his name was José Benedito Ferreira and that he was 64. He lived with his wife and 10 children, in Barra, 35 kilometres from Boa Vista, but still in the municipality of Cunha, near the border with Paraty and Angra dos Reis, where he had a small farm with three *alqueires* of land. His oldest son was 30, and the youngest 6. He told us proudly that his oldest son doesn’t drink, gamble, or smoke and doesn’t take part in any quarrel. He only leaves the house to buy something if his father is unable to go.

I asked about his other children, to which he replied that all were the same, orderly and responsible. When I asked him how he could afford to

bring them up and he replied: “By working. Each one doing his bit.” And then he added: “Hard work never harmed anyone.”

He and his aunt spent part of their time in Barra and part in Boa Vista, helping the families at both sites. In Boa Vista they plant corn, beans and potatoes, as well as owning a few goats. They travel between the two districts about every two weeks.

To make the panniers, *Senhor* Benedito cuts the bamboo [*taquara*] in the nearby forest and leaves it outside for a day. He makes two a day, depending on how many orders he has. At this time of year people need the panniers to transport beans and corn on the backs of animals. He sells them for 5 or 6 thousand *cruzeiros* each.

He told us that he could not read because when he was a boy, in the countryside where he was born, near to the town of Campos Novos, there were no schools and private teachers were very expensive. His father was “weak”, in other words poor, and couldn’t afford to pay. But all his own children have been to school and learnt a little, “enough to get by”.

Inside the house, there was a small rustic table and two long benches along the outside wall. On the right there was a wood-burning stove alight.

Chicão sat down on the lowest bench, while I sat on the highest; *Senhor* Benedito sat on a three-legged stool and the women remained standing, the oldest leaning against the table. While we chatted, the owner’s sister-in-law put water in the kettle on the stove to boil in order to make us coffee, but as she went to get the cups out of a small cupboard beside the table, Chicão asked her not to go to the trouble as we’d had some coffee “just now” before leaving his house. We thanked her and said that on a future occasion we would be happy to accept.

The oldest woman told us that her name was Tertulina Correia de Siqueira and that she’d been born in the district of Conselho, in Campos Novos, where she lived until a few years after her parents died. Her parents had 12 children of whom five were men and seven women. “All of them have died. All of them are gone. Only Antonio (72), who is here, is still alive.”

She did not recall having ever known anyone who had been a slave.

She was the third child, with two older sisters. She lost her father or mother “in the same summer”, the father first and then, a month later, the mother. They both died of smallpox. She had to bring up her younger brothers and sisters and has never married.

She knew nothing about the owner of the land where her father worked. Her mother, her brothers and sisters as well as herself, all worked on the land, planting corn, beans and potatoes.

I asked if she remembered Dr. Rocha. She replied: “Yes, he was a *preto* doctor who once cured my father who is now dead.”

She remembered the Feasts of the Holy Spirit, of St Anthony and of St John. She said that she had never learned to read, giving the same reasons as *Senhor* Benedito had.

Her father’s name was Calisto de Siqueira, and her mother’s, Cristina. Chicão thinks that she descends from slaves who belonged to the Siqueira family, as is the case of Canon Siqueira.

She told a story about Dr. Rocha. Once a child was taken to be baptised, but the priest had refused to do it. The parents said that if the child would die as a pagan the priest would be the one to blame. This is probably the same case I had heard before about the priest who refused to baptise a child whose godfather was to be Dr. Rocha, because the doctor was a freemason. She didn’t know the name of the priest.

She couldn’t tell us the year of her birth. She only repeated several times that she was “almost a hundred years old”, at which her brother shouted out from the back of the house: “She’s 85!”

The house where they live and the land where they plant are in the parish of São José. According to Chicão, the 70 *alqueires* were donated by a farmer called Porto many years ago, and the brother and the sister, with the aid of Benedito and their aunt, look after the property. I asked them if they were obliged to give a part of their production to the priest at the parish, to which *Senhor* Benedito said no. They help the priest every year at the Feast of São José. Recently, Father Mauro got everyone together to clear the land where the animals donated for the Feast were to graze, and they had gone to help. *Senhor* Benedito praised the priest who had worked the whole day at their side with a scythe.

Chicão explained that, in the municipality, all the small farmers prefer to plant corn, as it provides food for the horses, chickens, pigs as well as for the family themselves; and corn, even when affected by dry rot, can be kept from one year to another. They plant less beans because they spoil easily if they are not sold immediately after the harvest. Of the rest they plant a little

of everything – potatoes, peanuts (beneath the table in the living room there was a basketful of these), pumpkins and fruit.

The important thing is to plant little and to take care of it well. He gave an example of one of his brothers, Neco Carminho, who planted a lot, but only cleared the land and was not able to harvest it all. He thus ended up harvesting less than 10% of what he'd planted. This was when *Senhor Benedito* said for the first time “Hard work never harmed anyone.”

Chicão joked: “You have the best boss in the world – São José”. To which *Senhor Benedito* replied, with a look of contrition, “And we need to give him a great deal of attention.”

Mournful Situations

A) Funeral for a University Professor

In July 1984, the economist and sociologist Vicente Unzer de Almeida died in São Paulo. He graduated in Social Sciences from the Faculty of Sociology and Politics [Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política], in Legal Sciences from the Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC) and had graduate degrees in Economics from Vanderbilt and Chicago Universities.

Apart from having worked in government posts and in a private company, Vicente Unzer de Almeida had taught for many years on the Social Sciences course at the Faculty of Sociology and Politics, as well as at the São Luís Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences in the capital, and at the Valeparaibana Teaching Foundation in São José dos Campos. In recent years he continued to teach at the Economic and Administrative Sciences Department of the Armando Álvares Penteado Foundation in São Paulo and in Osasco and at the School of Journalism at the Casper Líbero Foundation, also in São Paulo.

The dead man had been my close and loyal friend for more than 50 years. Our friendship began at high school in the hinterlands, when we were colleagues on the undergraduate course of Social Sciences at the Faculty of Sociology and Politics, in São Paulo. We always discussed our studies and projects, confident in the sincerity of each other's criticism. Although we were different in temperament and philosophy of life, we had great mutual respect, and were a source of doubt and self-criticism to one another - *ego* and *alter ego*. Thus it was with consternation and complete sincerity that

I participated in the tributes that followed his death, and it is not without some resistance that I describe it here.

At the wake, which took place at the Getsêmane Cemetery, I calculated that about 50 people were present, including the dead man's family, relatives, colleagues and friends, who, in terms of colour, were distributed in the following way: Whites – 84% (42); *Mulatos* 12% (6); *Pretos* 4% (2); *Orientais* (0).

It is a curious fact that the distribution of whites, *mulatos* and *pretos* corresponds very closely to their proportion in the population of São Paulo.

The two *pretos* present belonged to the family of a woman of the same colour who had been brought up by the dead man's mother-in-law.

Among the *mulatos* present one was an old friend of the family, who enjoyed a very good standard of living and was married to a white woman who accompanied him; another, the priest who conducted the funeral, a man of around 65; and an adolescent whose posture and appearance indicated that he was also a person with a privileged standard of living.

B) Tribute at the University

One evening in September 1984, I fulfilled my duty by attending a tribute to Professor Vicente Unzer de Almeida at the School of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Osasco, which is sponsored by an educational foundation of the municipality.

There were speeches and the Villa Lobos Conservatory Youth Orchestra played symphonic pieces (the orchestra is also funded by the Technological Institute of Osasco).

The ceremony took place in a large, semi-open space, with the orchestra at the front, facing the public. Most of the assistants sat in chairs arranged in rows for the audience. Close to the orchestra and to the point where the speakers would stand there were three rows of chairs reserved for the more important guests (close family, government authorities and colleagues of the deceased). This group was formed of about 30 people, and included the mayor, town councillors and municipal secretaries as well as directors of the Foundation. Among them I counted five *mulatos* including one who was *escuro* [dark], among them two of the main orators at the event.

Apart from the young conductor, who looked Italian, the orchestra had 26 players whose names were given in the programme. Among them I counted 7 *mulatos* and 2 *pretos*.

Besides the people who were seated, there were numerous others who were standing at both sides of the room.

I calculated that there were around 400 people present, among whom I counted 9 *pretos*, 5 *orientais*, around 100 *mulatos* (accounting for a quarter of all those present). According to categories of colour they were distributed as follows: Whites – 71.50% (286); *Mulatos* – 25% (100); *Pretos* – 2.25% (9); *Orientais* – 1.25% (5).

The relatively high number of *mulatos* can perhaps be explained by the composition of Osasco's population, one of the largest industrial complexes in Greater São Paulo, with an overwhelming presence of factory workers.

C) Visit of commiserations

In recent years, I met a nice couple, even though I didn't get to know them well. The husband was white from a traditional family, the grandson of coffee planters and the son of a leading industrialist, who had been a leader in his respective economic sector a few decades ago. The man was a small businessman who had a reasonably good standard of living, although he no longer enjoyed the wealth that he had known in his childhood and youth. He was around 60 years old and lived in one of the large houses that his father had built to leave to his children, in one of the most wealthy residential districts of São Paulo.

His wife, who is about five years younger than him, also came from a wealthy family. She was born in Europe while her parents were living there. An intelligent, elegant and attractive woman, and I immediately observed that she might have some African ancestry, though remote,

In the middle of 1984, her husband died, and given the respect I had for him, I decided to make a visit to offer my condolences to his widow. When I arrived, on a Sunday afternoon, I was received in the living room where, beside the widow, there were two couples, as well as a lady and an adolescent.

One of the couples was composed of a *moreno* between 45 and 50, and a very white woman about 10 years younger. The other was made up of a

man of about 35, *mulato*, as could be clearly seen from his skin, hair and nose, and a white woman about five years younger.

I soon discovered that the middle-aged lady was the sister of the deceased and that the adolescent, at the time studying business administration, was his nephew; however, during the confusion of the introductions, I did not catch on to the connections between the other people present and the deceased and his widow. A short time later, however, the conversation became more animated and I found out that the older man was a lawyer who had studied at the Largo de São Francisco Law School and was now a bank manager, and that his wife was a librarian. His friendship with the family had begun when he was a fellow student of the oldest son of the deceased (the business administration student's father) at the Law School. Soon after this son arrived; he was about 45 years old and looked very much like his father.

The 35-year-old *mulato* man was also a lawyer who had graduated from the same Law School, but was now in advertising, working directly for companies rather than at an agency. As the conversation continued, he gave me the impression of being intelligent and erudite, and also appeared to be a good classical linguist. In short, he was a versatile, well-informed man of exceptional intellectual vivacity. His wife was a graduate in literature and showed an interest in semiotics.

On the way out I discreetly asked the widow who the man whose was conversation was so interesting was, to which she replied, bursting with pride: "My son!"²⁴

5. Final comments

Antonil's metaphor

The studies and available data show that, at the present time, whites, *mulatos* and *pretos* in Brazilian society occupy the same place as their predecessors did in the Colony and in the Empire. The first enjoy the most favourable socio-cultural and economic conditions, control the means of

24 Editor's Note: Section 5 of the original text, called "Diverse situations and events", in which Nogueira reported 9 events - "Visit to a ceramist"; "In a beer bar"; "Inauguration of a Brazilian Pacifist Movement"; "Inauguration of a fashion shop"; "Visit to a painter"; "Political rally for direct elections"; "Charismatic Mass"; "Manifestations of 1st and 2nd grade students on the subject of race relations"; "Conversations in a barbershop"- was excluded.

production, exercise the best-paid professions and have the most prestige; the second have an intermediary place, at a considerable distance, however, from both whites and *pretos*. The latter group are in a far more precarious position, far worse than that of the *mulatos*. In other words, the European phenotype continues to correspond to the most desirable socio-economic conditions, the African to the least desirable, and the different nuances of the combination of *preto* and white are distributed along a *continuum*. The somatic features, specially the skin colour, but also the characteristics of the nose, lips and hair, have been reified and were transformed into symbols of social status. This way of classifying people configures what I've called the prejudice of mark that tends to shun rather than exclude or unconditionally segregate those with *negroide* features (Nogueira, 1955 and 1985).²⁵ Brazilian society is multi-segmented according to the criteria of racial appearance, rather than divided into two separate groups, with the predominance of those with exclusively Caucasian ancestry, as is the case in North America. The metaphor coined by the Jesuit Andreoni (whose *nom de plume* was Antonil)²⁶ to describe colonial society in the 18th-century could be altered in the following way to describe Brazilian society in the 20th: "Brazil is a paradise for the white man, a purgatory for the *mulato* and a hell for the *pretos*." In the original metaphor the Jesuit considered Brazil "a paradise for *mulatos* and a purgatory for whites," as he also understood the difficulties of the latter group, despite their privileges.

Given the association of dark colour with situations of "opprobrium", to quote the word adopted by Guerreiros Ramos,²⁷ a certain prudence surrounds the mention of the dark colour, so that those who are themselves darker in colour often avoid mentioning their colour, preferring euphemism

25 Editor's note: The date 1955 refers to the "Relatório das Relações raciais no município de Itapetininga", which was part of the UNESCO research into racial relations carried out between 1952 and 1954. It was originally published along with the results of the other research work carried out in São Paulo, in a book organized by Roger Bastide and Florestan Fernandes. A revised version was published separately in book form, organized by this editor, under the title *Preconceito de Marca. As relações raciais em Itapetininga*, by the Editora da Universidade de São Paulo (Edusp) em 1998.

26 Editor's note: João Antonio Andreoni, an Italian Jesuit, who wrote his book *Cultura e Oportunidade do Brasil* under the name of André João Antonil. The work is considered the best record of the Portuguese colony at the beginning of the 18th century. It was published in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1711. The 1922 Brazilian edition, with a bio-bibliographic study by Affonso Taunay, was reissued in 1982 by Ed. Itatiaia (Belo Horizonte) and Edusp (São Paulo), and is now in the public domain.

27 The sociologist Guerreiro Ramos (1915-1982) was Oracy Nogueira's personal friend. For an evaluation of his work, see Oliveira, Lucia Lippi, *Sociologia do Guerreiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFRJ, 1995.

or even silence. Meanwhile, other members of the conversation also avoid saying anything explicit so as not to provoke susceptibilities, except in situations of conflict.

Pretos and mulatos at the University of São Paulo

A commentary in the press on the scarcity of *pretos* and *mulatos* on the teaching staff at the University of São Paulo and at the Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC) was the spark that ignited my curiosity and led to my undertaking the research for this article.

By its very nature, the University of São Paulo has to be highly selective in the admission of students and teachers; both positions have considerable prestige, creating demand that is unequalled by any other national institution of a similar nature. Nevertheless, our participant observation for more than 30 years, and the data that I collected during a year of systematic observation, although incomplete, shows that it is rare, if not impossible, for an academic event at the University of São Paulo – whether a lecture, entrance exam or ceremony – not to include the presence of *mulatos* on the teaching staff, or as candidates, students or spectators.

In the Departments of Economics and Social Sciences, the two departments where I was able to identify the presence of *mulatos* on the teaching staff, they represented 2 to 3% and 4 to 5% respectively. In both cases there were no *pretos* on the teaching staff. (...) There is the single exception, that of an African who collaborates as a Professor and research with the Graduate Program.

Considering that *mulatos* make up at least 18.5% of the population of the State of São Paulo, and *pretos* 4.6%, (figures which refer only to those that declared themselves as such in the 1980 census), one can get an idea of the degree of underrepresentation of both these groups.

It will be noted that *orientais* (Japanese, Koreans and Chinese), who make up 1.9% of the population of the State, according to the same census, represented the same proportion as *mulatos* in the Economics Department, and a considerably lower proportion in the Department of Social Sciences.

Knowing as I do the way that the entrance exams for students and teachers have been carried out at the University for many years now, I do not believe that racial discrimination *per se* can explain the proportions by which these groups are represented.

The underrepresentation of *mulatos* and *pretos* is primarily due to a process of socio-economic filtering: the requirement to start working young in order to support the family; a home life that doesn't motivate or prepare children to stay within the education system, and the lack of financial capacity on the part of the parents to provide formal education for their children, enabling them to complete the courses that would motivate them.

Families, whatever the colour of their members, tend to imbue their children, both formally and informally, with aspirations for an education and career that are compatible with their resources.

Apart from unequal opportunities of access to the basic schooling system – preschool, primary and secondary schools – discrimination is also likely to substantially affect the destiny of non-white students (as well as that of poor students, as one of the consequences of their poverty) through the expectations of their teachers, most of whom are from the middle class and imbued with its values, tending to encourage students that are more aligned with their own expectations, that is, whose attitudes, behaviour and skills appear to them to be the most promising. Thus candidates for a place as a student, and later on, possibly, as a teacher, arrive at the University gates already having been filtered by all the circumstances listed above.

Furthermore, candidates for a place as a student tend to choose institutions and courses that match their aspirations to what is practically possible for them. In the case of *orientais*, who, unlike the *mulatos* and the *pretos*, are overrepresented among the students and teachers at the University, the explanation would appear to be the material and psychological support they receive from their families. Consequently, their higher aspirations lead them to concentrate on courses that prepare them for professions of greater prestige or that are more economically rewarding, above all engineering and medicine. Considering the Human Sciences, this would explain the greater concentration of this group in the Economics Department rather than in the Social Sciences Department.

Pretos and *mulatos*, as well as other candidates from less privileged social classes, tend to opt for courses that require less expensive preparation and are suitable for the individual who intends to pursue a career that will provide him or her with an adequate income.

The purpose of these reflections is to promote a greater awareness that discrimination *per se* is not responsible for the underrepresentation of *pretos* and *mulatos* among the teaching staff or among the students at USP and other similar institutions. It is important not to underestimate the barriers that those who succeed in getting a place inside these institutions have had to overcome.

Once the barrier of the entrance exam has been overcome, and if after that he manages to be admitted as a Professor, the career of a *mulato* will depend basically on his personal merit and on his capacity for making the best of the opportunities that arise.

In the sectors of the University that I know best there are *mulatos* who are held to be the most skilled among their colleagues. It is not unusual to find them in positions of command, both at the university and in research institutes or centres, with a wide reputation outside the University as professionals, technocrats or politicians.

I have not mentioned *pretos* in the comments made above due to the rarity and virtual nonexistence of representatives of this group on the teaching staff of USP. However, the case of Professor Antonio Cesarino Júnior, the retired Full Professor of the Law School, should be mentioned. He has been a highly regarded teacher and professional who founded the Labour Law department at the Law School.

Mulatos and pretos in situations and events outside the University of São Paulo

In the situations and events outside the University of São Paulo described in this article, even those for the most privileged classes, there were always *mulatos* present, even though underrepresented in relation to their proportion of the population as a whole. Pretos were not entirely absent; this does not mean, however, that prejudice and discrimination don't exist, but rather that they are expressed in Brazilian society by shunning rather than completely excluding these groups.

It is significant that most of the *mulatos* and *pretos* whom I observed at events such as weddings, funerals and others, were members of *casais mistos* [mixed couples] (in which one of the spouses was white), or of *familias mistas* (in which some members are white and others non-white). It is also significant that in the conviviality observed with *casais mistos* or families

they do not consider themselves as such, and consequently are not seen as such by their circle of friends since their *mulato* members do not define themselves as such. Adding these cases to those of people with evident *negroide* features whose identification as whites never seems to be doubted, neither by themselves nor by their circle of relations, we can admit that the definition of “white” in Brazil is analogous to the definition of “*negro*” in the United States: “Every individual who is recognised as such by his community is white.”

The first wedding described in this article, that of a young man from a white family to a girl from a mixed one, has a number of relevant implications to this study: 1) the acceptance by family and friends of both the Umbanda and Catholic ceremonies (and thus of both the European and African legacies) is an example of convergence that frequently occurs in Brazilian society, and an eloquent one since the bridegroom arrived at the Catholic ceremony in the suit and tie that he had specially ordered in accordance with the symbology of the Umbanda rite; 2) the fact that the bride was a member of a *família mista* [mixed family] indicates the acceptance within the contingent of whites of someone who descends from a *família mista* [mixed family] whose phenotype had been depurated from *negroide* features; 3) the easiness with which this marriage was accepted by both families; and 4) the underlying tendency towards the individualisation of identification, which is characteristic of the Brazilian racial situation.

If in this case, and in the cases of the other *mistos* weddings described in this article, a certain negotiation between the two partners or the two families seems evident, it should be borne in mind that such an aspect is present in almost all, if not in all interactional situations. Human beings have a capacity for the refinement or sublimation of their own impulses, which results in their behaviour rising above the purely animal level. People who don't believe in such a capacity resort to the scepticism of La Rochefoucauld, who saw only egoism and crude calculation as the motivation for all human actions.

Equally significant was my contact with *negros* who evidently showed traces of what Roger Bastide calls “puritanism”, in the sense that they express the ethics of work and politeness as relevant aspects to success.

Even more significant was my observation of how, in middle-class circles, the *mulato* is very far from being an exotic or conspicuous outsider.

On the contrary, in the majority of situations he goes unnoticed. Who else, apart from this researcher, would have noticed, for example, that the priest who conducted the wake of the University Professor was *mulato*?

To conclude, let me say that I do not consider the reflections made in this article as “conclusions” of this research. They are rather associations and hypotheses engendered by the research, compatible with the situations and events I observed and with my knowledge of the racial situation in Brazil gleaned from other sources.

Cunha, March 10, 1985.

Oracy Nogueira

Tradução de Marcus Peter Carlyon

Revisão Técnica de Maria Laura Viveiros de Castro Cavalcanti

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Reflection and activism: Aracy Lopes da Silva and the National Education Plan

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It is difficult to think of another topic that simultaneously poses as many challenges to anthropological reflection and indigenist activism as the question of schooling among indigenous peoples. By taking both sets of challenges in her stride, anthropologist Aracy Lopes da Silva became a leading light in the field of indigenous education, her commitment to the issue spanning from the 1970s when she headed the Education Subcommittee of the São Paulo Pro-Indian Commission, to the 2000s when she completed a series of edited works that disseminated the results of a wide-ranging research project on Anthropology, History and Education, coordinated by herself at the University of São Paulo. Across these thirty years, we see an anthropologist deeply committed to the rigour of the discipline, embraced with enthusiasm, and to a cause for which she fought vigorously. She was widely recognized both inside and outside academia. While reflection and activism often overlap and merge, one almost always compromising the other, Aracy Lopes da Silva's academic production and activities in the area of indigenous education reveal that she knew, like few others, how to administrate them, weaving connections and interfaces where appropriate, preserving open spaces when necessary.

As well as her studies of the Xavante and her work on their onomastics, mythology, cosmology and indigenous history, Aracy Lopes da Silva set various benchmarks in the field of anthropology and education. Two collections edited by her helped shape the studies of schools and indigenous peoples in Brazil. The first, *The Question of Indigenous Education (A questão da educação indígena)*, published in 1979, collates papers and reflections from the First National Meeting of Work on Indigenous Education. Promoted as part of the activities of the Education Subcommittee of the São Paulo Pro-Indian Commission, the meeting brought together more than fifty educators, indigenists, missionaries, linguists, anthropologists, sociologists, physicians and legal experts in order to swap information and experiences relating to formal education in indigenous lands. The second, *The Indigenous Question: guidelines*

for primary school teachers (*A questão indígena na sala de aula: subsídios para professores de 1º. e 2º. Graus*), from 1987, brings together articles by specialists with critiques and proposals for a more adequate approach to the indigenous theme in schools. This latter volume led to a sequel some years later, a new collection of essays entitled *Indigenous Themes in the School: new guidelines for primary school teachers (A temática indígena na escola: novos subsídios para professores de 1º. e 2º. graus*, published by MEC, UNESCO and Mari/USP in 1995. She also authored a guidebook for educators, *Índios* (from 1988) and a book for children and adolescents, *Histories of Truth (Histórias de Verdade)* (from 1984). These works had a profound impact on the academic debate over schooling among indigenous peoples, on the dissemination of anthropological knowledge to a public wider than the specialists, and on the public policies gradually being adapted at the time to the new legal frameworks instituted by the 1988 Brazilian Constitution still in force today.

Another set of books, published more recently, consolidated and disseminated an interdisciplinary and inter-institutional approach, the main objective of which was to develop an approach to education that promoted sociocultural diversity, combining the perspectives of anthropology and history on education and taking as an empirical and theoretical reference point the intercultural dialogue between Brazil's indigenous and non-indigenous populations. This collective enterprise highlighted the school as a key space for cultivating new forms of coexistence and reflection in this field. Under Aracy's coordination, 19 research subprojects set about investigating topics like socialization and knowledge transmission processes in indigenous societies; the impact of the introduction of writing and schooling; and the historical relations between the State and indigenous societies in the field of education. This collective work resulted in what are today fundamental collections in this field of studies: *Anthropology, History and Education: the indigenous question and schools (Antropologia, História e Educação: a questão indígena e a escolar)* (2001); *Teaching Practices in Indigenous Schools (Práticas pedagógicas na escola indígena)* (2001) and *Indian Children: anthropological essays (Crianças Indígenas: ensaios antropológicos)* (2002).

Between the first and second set of publications, the more visible dimension of many histories and processes, we find Aracy giving lectures at university, training students, supervising dissertations and theses on topics like schools, children, infancy, socialization and knowledge transmission,

publishing diverse articles, and working politically in both government and non-government spheres in search of a better direction for school education in the villages.

Under her leadership, the Mari Indigenous Education Group was set up at the Department of Anthropology of the University of São Paulo – a space designed to articulate anthropological reflections on the potential for new school education practices in indigenous lands. Based on the valorization of indigenous languages, knowledge and practices on one hand, and on political engagement and activism on the other, the group set out to promote rights and public policies capable of transforming the meaning of the school as an institution within indigenous communities.

At the invitation of Silvio Coelho dos Santos, in his capacity as president of the Brazilian Anthropology Association, Aracy represented the association on the National Committee for Indigenous School Education following its creation at the Ministry of Education (MEC) after the latter was assigned the mission of coordinating indigenous school education in the country in 1991. There she contributed to the elaboration of the *National Guidelines for Indigenous Education (Diretrizes Nacionais de Educação Escolar Indígena)* (1993) and the *National Curricular Reference for Indigenous Schools (Referencial Curricular Nacional para as Escolas Indígenas)* (1998), two foundational documents underlying the paradigm shift experienced by indigenous school education in recent years: from State welfare actions to an indigenous right. This work alongside the State, seeking to inscribe anthropological and indigenist concerns in the public policies targeted at Indians, in which the latter acquired visibility in diverse settings, was always undertaken by Aracy in a playful, critical and non-partisan way, anchored in her endeavour to theorize the question of schooling among indigenous peoples without ever shrinking from pointing out the lapses and deficiencies of government action.

Indigenous school education in the law bills tof the National Education Plan

Engaged along with other anthropologists, linguists, educators and indigenists in constructing public policies that incorporated respect for sociocultural diversity, Aracy Lopes da Silva played an important role, albeit

little known, in defining proposals that inserted the issue of school education in the 2001 National Education Plan (NEP) Law.

Following approval of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education in 1996, the Federal Government was obliged to present a law bill to the National Congress within the space of a year containing a National Education Plan, with directives and goals for the next ten years, in line with the World Declaration on Education for All, adopted at the Jomtien Conference (Thailand) in 1990.

Responsibility for drafting a proposal to be presented by the Executive fell to the Ministry of Education. This in turn assigned one of its agencies, the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research (INEP), with the task of drafting and presenting a law bill containing the plan – a task that was carried out with the assistance of the Higher Education Studies Nucleus (NUPES) of the University of São Paulo. Faced with this mission, the anthropologist Eunice Ribeiro Durham invited Aracy Lopes da Silva and myself to write a preliminary version of a chapter that would contain a set of global and specific goals capable of guiding the actions of the Brazilian state for indigenous school education over the next decade. As part of the activities of Mari/USP, we worked on a text that included a history and diagnosis of indigenous education, proposing targets to be implemented over the short and long term. This draft text was discussed by INEP and MEC's National Committee of Indigenous School Education, which united representatives of government bodies and civil society organizations. Following various additions and modifications, this text was included in the proposal submitted by the Federal Government to the National Congress in February 1998.

This proposal by the Executive was presented to the National Congress some days after the submission of another law bill entitled the *National Education Plan – A Proposal of Brazilian Society*. This latter proposal had resulted from a wide-ranging discussion process among educational movements consolidated in 1996 and 1997 by the National Forum in Defence of Public Schooling at the 1st and 2nd National Education Congress, held in Belo Horizonte (MG). The federal deputy Ivan Valente, then still a member of the Workers' Party (PT) representing São Paulo, and the member of a cross-party parliamentary lobby in defence of education, backed the proposal and submitted it as a law bill.

To the surprise of those who had not been accompanying this movement, the Civil Society NEP, as it became known, contained just a vague reference to the fact that Brazil's indigenous population had the right to quality school education that simultaneously respected their cultures and social organization, and included them socially and politically in national life. Encouraged by a group of students from USP's Postgraduate Course in Anthropology, Aracy Lopes da Silva drafted an amendment to the Civil Society NEP, which was presented by herself to Deputy Ivan Valente, with the aim of filling the gap in the plan: were the latter to be approved in its proposed form, it would have effectively omitted a series of important proposals for consolidating the indigenous right to differentiated education and for structuring this new educational modality within the teaching systems. However, the initiative – which revealed Aracy's personal commitment to improving the legal framework supporting the right of Brazil's indigenous peoples to a differentiated education – was not backed and the proposals formulated in this text drafted by Aracy were omitted. The Civil Society NEP bill continued to be discussed in the National Congress ignoring the demand to regulate this new teaching modality that was gradually extending its reach within the country's indigenous policies.

The National Congress appointed Deputy Nelson Marchezan (PSDB-RS) to coordinate drafting the new law. He produced a Clean Bill, based on the plan presented by the government, but inverting the order of priority of the plans presented in the Legislature. Making use of the diagnosis of the educational situation outlined in the Civil Society NEP, but prioritizing the directives, objectives and goals of the government's own NEP, Marchezan drafted a new bill for the National Education Plan that, after debates, hearings and the inclusion of amendments and modifications, was approved as Law 10.172 by the National Congress in January 2001. Indigenous school education was included in a specific chapter, as had been proposed in the law bill presented by the Executive, containing a diagnosis, directives and 21 objectives and goals.

On Aracy's text

The text published by Vibrant in this issue, in homage to this anthropologist who, like few others, allied anthropological reflection

with indigenist activism in favour of the rights of indigenous peoples, remained unpublished, circulating among a small number of people only. It comprises the amendment drafted by Aracy to the proposal for the Civil Society NEP. As narrated above, this was eventually omitted. A text certainly dated and written for a specific purpose comprises an important historical document, revealing the kinds of ideas, practices and movements that become submerged when laws and regulations are approved and issued. The text also reveals Aracy's personal efforts and engagement towards incorporating proposals into a law bill with the aim of reorienting the persistently oppressive form assumed by the school institution in indigenous contexts.

Describing a series of innovative experiences in school education then under way in different villages around the country, Aracy emphasizes the possibility of moving beyond the integrationism and assimilationism that had marked the processes of introducing writing and schooling among indigenous groups since the beginnings of colonization. In the text she proposes guidelines that could consolidate these experiences as models for structuring the State's action in the provision of a school education respectful of the linguistic and cultural singularities of indigenous peoples and assuring them better forms of inclusion in Brazilian society. Proposing an administrative model for structuring and orienting this new modality within the existing teaching systems, her text reveals a concern to ensure that the scientific, aesthetic and philosophical knowledge of indigenous peoples would not succumb to the imposition of school knowledge.

Various of Aracy's proposals in this text, which combines ideas and proposals under discussion at that time, were incorporated over the years in government initiatives and programs, some of the well-executed, others completely distorted. More than fifteen years after it was written, this text has a documental importance as a snapshot of the ideas and reflections found at the end of the 1990s on indigenous school education. Today it also acquires a very pertinent and critical posture in the face of the current distortions of government policy for indigenous school education. Some of her proposals in the area remain avant-garde, still found on the list of demands made by the indigenous movement. Reading it is not just a chance to revisit our recent past: it is an invitation to reflect on

the present, not only on the issue of education in indigenous villages, but above all on the persistently difficult fate of indigenous peoples in Brazil.

Translated by David Rogers

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National educational plan: Indigenous School Education



Aracy Lopes da Silva (1949-2000)
Fotos do arquivo da família

Explanation

One of the basic demands made by the popular indigenous movements that emerged from the start of the 1970s in Brazil was recognition of the right to quality school education, adapted to the unique sociocultural and linguistic characteristics of the many different indigenous peoples inhabiting the country.

This proposal signalled a clear rejection of the integrationist and assimilationist ethos that had oriented the imposition of schooling and writing among indigenous peoples from the very beginning of Portuguese colonization. At the same time, it also meant a clear valorisation of the school's potential as a space for critical reflection and discussion of the living conditions of indigenous peoples as they become included in Brazilian society. Along the same lines, the school was conceived as a means for indigenous groups to access essential information on the larger world of which they now inexorably formed part.

The idea that there is not necessarily any incompatibility between the introduction of schooling among indigenous peoples and the preservation of

their linguistic and cultural specificities became one of the most important tenets of the indigenous movement in the country, combined with the fight for recognition of their territorial rights and of their existence as Brazilian citizens of the present and the future. In making these demands, indigenous peoples were supported by key sectors of civil society, motivated by the desire for less violent relationships between ethnically differentiated sectors of the population, by the positive perception of Brazil as a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural country, and by the commitment to building democracy in the country.

In the field of education, this conception was anchored in innovative school projects, implemented in different regions of the country, formulated by specific indigenous groups in close association with non-governmental organisations, universities and pastoral agents. One of the most consistent outcomes of these projects was the emergence of a large contingent of indigenous teachers in the country, dedicated to building a properly indigenous form of schooling, united in local associations and regional organisations responsible for hosting periodic meetings and producing documents setting out proposals.

Though varying in their execution, these projects shared, in the past as now, the conviction that as well as possessing their own scientific, aesthetic and philosophical knowledge elaborated over centuries of observation, experimentation and deep reflection, indigenous peoples have their specific educational methods and processes, which existed long before the introduction of schooling among them.

Certain in the knowledge that the school is a supplementary institution incapable of replacing indigenous education, but necessary as a space of interlocution with the non-indigenous world, indigenous movements in Brazil and the sectors supporting them invested a huge effort in support of their rights in the field of education. Recognizing the legitimacy of these demands, the 1988 Federal Constitution guarantees indigenous populations the right to differentiated, specific, intercultural and bilingual school education. It also recognizes the distinct identities of indigenous peoples and their right to maintain them, and assigns the State the duty to safeguard and project the cultural manifestations of indigenous societies.

The regulation of these rights is primarily determined by two legislative instruments. Decree 26/91 assigns responsibility for coordinating indigenous

school education initiatives to the Ministry of Education (MEC) and responsibility for their implementation to the federal states and municipalities, after consultation with the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). Interministerial Directive 559/91 establishes the National Indigenous Education Committee, with representatives from indigenous peoples and non-indigenous civil society, a long-standing demand of the organizations involved with indigenous issues in Brazil.

Likewise, Article 78 of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) reaffirms the need to recognize the sociocultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous peoples in the country and guarantees them an intercultural and bilingual school education, respectful of the knowledge, languages and sciences of these peoples and their right to the preservation of their own identities and the recuperation of their historical memory, as well as guaranteeing indigenous peoples access to “the information and knowledge valued by national society.” The same law (Article 79) assigns responsibility to the Federal Government for technical and financial support to states and municipalities for the development of initiatives in the field of indigenous school education, emphasizing the need to consult the communities over the implementation of programs with the objectives of “strengthening sociocultural practices and maternal languages.” The notion of differentiated schools to cater for indigenous populations is also explicitly set out in Article 79 of the same law, which establishes a directive requiring the development of “specific curricula and programs that include cultural contents corresponding to the respective communities,” anticipating the systematic publication of “specific and differentiated didactic material.”

In practice numerous obstacles still need to be overcome in order for specific and differentiated indigenous rights to be fully respected. Recognition of these rights at legislative level and in Brazilian educational policy has been achieved through persistent indigenous mobilization and the support of their collaborators. The creation of the Indigenous Education Committee, an Indigenous Schools Support Coordination Group and a line of funding for targeted educational projects, the elaboration and publication by the MEC of teaching materials in indigenous languages, and the development of Curriculum References for Indigenous Schools are some of the positive results of this process, successes to be preserved, widened and improved. On the other hand, enormous difficulties still remain in relation to physical

infrastructures and the training of indigenous teachers. Many of the schools operating in indigenous areas reproduce the authoritarian and assimilationist approaches of the past, imposing outmoded pedagogical methodologies on the communities hosting these schools. This directly contradicts the constitutional and legal precepts assuring indigenous peoples an education that is bilingual (or multilingual, depending on the local context of each indigenous group), intercultural, differentiated and specific.

In the case of indigenous schooling, the recommendation is for educational policies to be administered and executed by the relevant authorities at state level, based on principles defined by the Ministry of Education in accordance with current legislation. Various reasons exist for this recommendation. On one hand, the concentration of these policies at federal level – the situation prior to 1991 – has already proven to be an unviable model given the huge sociocultural, linguistic and historical diversity of today's indigenous peoples. This is compounded by the lack of sufficient personnel with specific training and the sheer extent of the linguistic, anthropological and historical knowledge already accumulated on these peoples, albeit still partial, which impedes the training of specialists capable of working with the full range of existing situations. The ways in which indigenous communities are incorporated in regional and national social, economic and political life also varies widely, and thus how the indigenous groups define their projects for the future. These need to be matched by equally differentiated pedagogical projects and curricula.

At the same time, we need to take into account the critical considerations already set out in the National Education Plan for Brazilian Society concerning the potential for exclusion contained in the proposal for transferring primary level schooling for indigenous populations to municipal control. It should be remembered that, generally speaking, when it comes to the conditions for survival of these peoples and their specific rights, it is at municipal level that the most violent conflicts tend to break out, whether motivated by land issues and the economic and political interests associated with indigenous territories and their natural resources, or caused by prejudice and discrimination.

For these reasons, the transfer of primary level education of indigenous peoples to municipal level can more often than not have negative consequences. Nonetheless, given the specificities of the indigenous population

in the country, some exceptional situations exist that show the need for flexibility: ‘indigenous municipalities’ in Amazonia or in other regions of the country (mostly inhabited by indigenous peoples, who are represented politically and occupy posts in the executive and the legislature) and places where a successful partnership was consolidated between local councils and indigenous communities. Though the exception to the rule, these are situations in which municipalisation enhances the local indigenous population’s democratic access to a differentiated and high-quality school education, with the communities participating actively in their construction and execution.

The opening of the National Education System to the specific requirements of indigenous peoples, to the multiplicity of situations and the sociocultural diversity that characterize them, thus becomes as a means to guarantee hard-won indigenous educational rights.

In sum, it is worth repeating here what was written in the National Plan for the Education of Brazilian Society: “...indigenous peoples must be assured the right, as citizens of the country, to quality school education, with a view to their social and political inclusion in national life and, simultaneously, respect for the culture and social organization of each indigenous nation. It is the State’s duty to guarantee all the necessary conditions – human, linguistic, financial, physical and technico-pedagogical – for this education to be provided within this framework, ensuring that government actions are coordinated with the work developed by agents of the movements and entities that unite the struggles of these peoples.”

Directives

- The State shall be responsible for ensuring that the country’s indigenous communities and peoples have access to differentiated, intercultural, bilingual (or multilingual) and specific school education, adapted to the sociocultural and linguistic characteristics of each population, respectful of indigenous knowledge, conceptions and practices in all their diversity and of the right of indigenous peoples to maintain their own identities and cultures.

- Indigenous school education, thus conceived, shall also provide a means for the population to access universal information and knowledge

(scientific, philosophical, technological, aesthetic) essential to living in an interethnic society. Similarly correct, updated and anthropologically-based information and knowledge on indigenous peoples must be disseminated to non-indigenous sectors of the Brazilian population with the aim of developing intercultural and social relationships informed by respect, tolerance and comprehension of mutual differences and by the repudiation of all forms of discrimination and violence.

- Indigenous school education shall be included in the National Education System, under the terms by which it is defined in the Federal Constitution and the LDB. An Indigenous Schools Support Coordination Group and an Indigenous Education Committee will be run by the MEC, with ample representation of both indigenous peoples and specialists with substantial knowledge of the issues involved in indigenous school education.

- In relation to pedagogical and curricular guidelines, the National Policy for Indigenous School Education should be informed by the documents collectively produced and already available: “Guidelines for the National Policy for Indigenous School Education” (MEC 1993) and “Curriculum References for Indigenous Schools” (MEC 1998), which contain the principal demands of the indigenous movement in Brazil.

- In order to guarantee the effective construction of intercultural and bilingual education, the category ‘indigenous school’ shall be officially created within the teaching systems and legally regulated, guaranteeing the autonomy of the indigenous schools, both in the use of public resources and in the definition of their pedagogical and curricular projects. The latter must be elaborated locally, with the effective participation and authority of the indigenous community in all decisions relating to the operation of the school and preferably implemented by indigenous teachers.

- The continuity, strengthening, improvement, amplification and official recognition of the projects currently being implemented in indigenous areas for the construction of a differentiated school education will be guaranteed, including in relation to the demands of specific communities for indigenous schools from the fifth to eighth series.

- In relation to indigenous rights, the ‘affiliated classes,’ ‘rural schools’ or ‘rural extension classrooms’ found today in indigenous lands should be de-affiliated and regulated as autonomous indigenous schools.

- The conditions will be created for the formation of indigenous teachers and the professionalization of indigenous school administration, to be carried out ideally by members of the respective community.

- The state education systems will be responsible for indigenous school education, guaranteeing the possibility of formal agreements with municipalities, indigenous associations, universities and non-governmental organizations, when requested by the indigenous communities in question.

- The MEC should maintain, expand and strengthen the already existing lines and programs for funding educational projects, the elaboration and publication of specific teaching materials, including those needed to train indigenous teachers, to be implemented by indigenous and non-indigenous non-governmental organizations, universities or education departments.

- Indigenous teachers shall be assured specific training, undertaken while in employment, through ongoing programs that guarantee their access to the latest theories and methodologies relating to school teaching and learning, especially those concerning research, critical reflection and the collective building of knowledge.

- The state teaching systems shall establish the professionalization and public recognition of indigenous teachers and the regulation of the 'indigenous teacher' as a specific career with competitive exams and titles adapted to the sociocultural and linguistic particularities of the indigenous communities to which they belong and where they will teach.

- Providing access for, accompanying and maintaining indigenous students on higher education courses at public universities will be guaranteed, along with the possibility of creating specific higher education courses for indigenous teachers.

- Continuous training programs for non-indigenous professionals at all levels of the national education system involved with indigenous school education. These programs will be run with the indispensable assistance of specialists from universities and non-governmental organizations and should ensure information on the specific legislation on indigenous rights, and an introduction to knowledge on indigenous languages, societies and cultures in the country.

Goals

- Enable the right of indigenous peoples and communities to build their own differentiated school education with official recognition and support from locally developed projects that meet the collective needs, demands, interests and projects of indigenous populations, respecting their lifestyles, worldviews, pedagogical processes, historical experiences and the situations of monolingualism, bilingualism or multilingualism experienced by them.

- Ensure the improvement of learning levels and quality teaching in indigenous schools, guaranteeing respect for indigenous sciences, conceptions and practices and for access to the knowledge of other cultures and civilizations.

- Legally regulate all the teaching establishments located in indigenous lands, characterizing them as ‘indigenous schools’ and ensuring that their operation respects the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain their languages, cultures and traditions, worldviews, their own learning processes, and their distinct ethnic and cultural identities.

- Guarantee that the indigenous school population and indigenous teachers have access to the material, financial and intellectual benefits available to other schools, assuring the schools and indigenous communities the right to free choice and autonomy in their use.

- Maintaining and expanding the lines of funding already existing in the MEC for indigenous school education and adapt – for the benefit of indigenous schools – support programs such as school libraries, school meals, TV Escola, teaching books and school transportation, and create new programs that meet the specific demands of indigenous schools.

- Create or structure and strengthen Indigenous Education Nuclei (NEIs) in the state education departments (and, where applicable, in the municipal departments), assuring they operate responsibly (as defined in Directive 559/91). These sectors have the task of promoting, monitoring and managing indigenous school education programs, training indigenous teachers, training indigenous education professionals and publishing specific teaching materials under the supervision of the MEC’s Indigenous Schools Support Coordination Group and in close dialogue with the indigenous communities from the region concerned.

- Publish, within two years, information and knowledge allowing the professionals involved with indigenous school education to understand clearly

and precisely the specific rights assured to indigenous peoples by Brazilian legislation. This information must be of sufficient depth to enable them to collaborate effectively with indigenous communities and teachers in the execution of educational projects that respect the autonomy of the indigenous school, the diversity of the situations experienced by indigenous populations in Brazil today and their projects for the future.

- Assure that every indigenous teacher attains the minimum level of qualification demanded by the LDB by providing access to specific programs via the National Education System. These programs will be elaborated and implemented through the coordinated and cooperative initiatives of government, indigenous organizations and communities, non-governmental civil society organizations and universities with recognized competence in the processes involved in indigenous schooling.

- Universalize the provision of educational programs to the indigenous population in Brazil within the space of ten years, respecting each community's options concerning the presence of the schools and their contents and methods, the age ranges to be taught, the school calendar and so on.

- At federal level create – with linguistic, anthropological and pedagogical assistance from specialists in indigenous issues and extensive indigenous participation – evaluation programs for the indigenous teaching training courses, the educational projects under way in indigenous areas and the performance of the departments responsible for indigenous education and the organizations responsible for specific projects, with the aim of improving indigenous school education in the country.

- Register indigenous school establishments and produce an indigenous school census, recording the demands of local communities, especially those referring to teaching from the fifth grade to higher education.

Translated by David Rogers

Review

Rita de Cássia Fazzi. 2004 (new ed. 2012). *O drama racial de crianças brasileiras: socialização entre pares e preconceito*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntico. 224 p.

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In 1997, Rita de Cássia Fazzi spent hundreds of hours at two public schools in Belo Horizonte, talking with over one hundred children, aged 6-14, about their attitudes and ideas having to do with color and race. She conducted in-depth interviews with about half of them; played games with them involving dolls of different phenotypes; watched them interact in a variety of settings; and listened carefully to their accounts of interactions in the home. The result is the extraordinary *O drama racial de crianças brasileiras*, one of the most multi-layered treatments of racial prejudice in Brazil that I have seen in a long time.

The book grows slowly on you, moving deftly through three layers of racial stances/understandings. At the first layer, Fazzi describes in fine ethnographic detail the insults, jokes, stereotypes and epithets to which children at the darker end of the Brazilian phenotypical spectrum are subjected (though she is careful to identify individuals not in “objective” terms, but by alternating between self- and alter-identification). The section on the multiple contexts in which children refer to each other as “ugly” and as *macacos* is, to my knowledge, unique in the literature in its detail. Equally important, Fazzi unveils the racial insults that take place inside of families (147), driving home the point that living together as family does not prevent racial stereotyping (149).

The second half of the book allows another layer to appear: that in spite of the insults and stereotypes, the children in her sample hold that “*as características afetivas, morais e de competência devem ser ressaltadas e devem ter maior importância do que as características físicas, aparentes, que, como visto, propiciam ingredientes para a gozação racial.*” (210) Put differently, though the children indulge in racial insults and jokes, they constantly try to hide them from

adults, to apologize for and criticize them. One of the fine discoveries of the book is that children readily deploy both religious and secular discourses that “relativize” racist language. Among other things, the children can be heard saying that “we are all children of God” (188), that “people are all the same”, that character, morality and intelligence are more important than color; and more. One can’t help but be encouraged by such patterns.

Then Fazzi arrives at a third, deeper layer. She argues that all these “relativizing discourses”, while important, are *fragile*, a fragility that becomes apparent as soon as two children classified in different racial categories *come into conflict*. Conflictual situations, she writes “unleash prejudiced behaviors, such as verbal aggression and insults, based on racial characteristics.” (210) This offers is a dialectical model of racial attitudes, as a contested field, in which racist ideas get activated in moments of tension and conflict. While Fazzi does not claim to have solutions, she suggests that children’s existing anti-racist discourses need to be reinforced, before they become mere masks for inequality and prejudice, through instituting anti-prejudice curricula in schools, as early as kindergarten.

The book has weaknesses. While Fazzi points out that her sample of low-income children tends to hold more obviously prejudicial ideas than her sample of middle class children, she never really develops a convincing argument as to why this might be the case. The best she can muster is that the poor kids may be more exposed to Pentecostal associations of the devil with blackness – not exactly a persuasive argument, since a growing percentage of Brazil’s middle class now participate in neo-pentecostal churches. In addition, while issues of race and color are intimately linked to the body, sexuality and gender, Fazzi never really explores these themes. Given the importance of the pre-adolescent period in terms of early gender identification, it would have been illuminating to hear more about how racialization mapped onto gender. Fazzi also does not pay sufficient attention to the location of the children in place and time. While clearly Belo Horizonte is not Brazil, what part of Brazil is it? Is there anything we should know about the history of race relations in this city that might help us understand the specifics of the racial terms kids use? And then, how might we understand the context of 1997? This was, of course, a period of early public articulations about racism, it Fernando Henrique’s early pronouncements, the publication of Raça, and the first stirrings of a public debate about affirmative action. Do

these form part of the backdrop or not? And to what extent and in what ways have things changed since then? (It has after all, been nearly 20 years since the research was conducted).

But these are quibbles. The scholarly literature on color and race relations in Brazil has over the past 30 years focused on showing that life chances are distributed unequally according to phenotype and that self-esteem is routinely assailed in Brazil by Eurocentric aesthetics and ideologies of Euro-superiority. Rita de Cássia Fazzi's book raises the bar of such studies, pushing us to think about the racial ideological field in Brazil not as a simple hegemony, but as a tense, conflictual arena of battling hegemonies and counter-hegemonies. Whatever we may think of Fazzi's policy recommendations, her portrayal of Brazilian children's racial attitudes is among the most subtle and finely drawn in the literature.

Review

MACAGNO, Lorenzo. 2014. *O Dilema Multicultural*. Curitiba: Editora UFPR/Rio de Janeiro: GRAPHIA. 303p.

Jean-Philippe Belleau

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Multiculturalism has become, as we know, a thriving academic industry, particularly in North America. The key words “multiculturalism” and “anthropology” on the online bookstore amazon.com’s search engine displays over 1,000 books. With such a mass of works, why then read Lorenzo Macagno latest book, *O Dilema Multicultural*?

For two reasons. The first one is that Macagno has in the past made a point of not falling in the traps of anthropological commonplaces. In his recent article “Uma antropologia do político?”, his charge against the use of philosophical concepts in anthropology and most particularly against “recognition,” which he branded as shallow and falsely operative in anthropological situations, augured well for a potentially provocative work on multiculturalism. As we know, Charles Taylor and Kwame Anthony Appiah’s classic *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* had linked multiculturalism to “recognition”, Macagno’s *bête noire*. Honneth, Habermas, Taylor and other philosophical *grands noms* have put both multiculturalism and recognition at the center of the modern condition and in doing so, Macagno argues, have become the vade-mecum of social scientists working on these subjects. However, as Macagno explains, the point of anthropology is to explain what people do and not what they should, a basic argument that today somehow gets lost in an acid bath of values, ethics and personal academic strategies. What irritates Macagno most, particularly in the fourth chapter of the book under review here, is philosophers’ use of anthropological categories and particularly of the discipline’s central one, culture, without these philosophers mastering the “most basic debates of [anthropology]”. Interestingly, these authors do not seem to have read non-Western philosophers on recognition either, which is, to put it mildly, quite ironic if

¹ In *Análise Social*, 210, XLIX, 2014, pp. 163-189.

not *un comble*, since we are talking about, well, multiculturalism, and even more so since they are talking about... recognition. (Or would it be, rather, that there is something fundamentally provincial about some multiculturalist thinkers?) The works of 10th century philosopher Abhinavagupta come to mind; most of the dimensions and dilemmas of recognition were already clearly delineated by this Indian philosopher from Kashmir.²

What then determines an academic book's success, asks Macagno, or more specifically what turns an average book "into a *Suma Teologica*"? The academic public's longing at a given historical moment. Macagno recalls interesting departmental anecdotes: how baffled some of his colleagues were to see their students in awe with Paul Gilroy's *Black Atlantic* but incapable of reading Edmund Leach's classic *The Kingdoms of Highland Burma* –as a result, the same colleagues asserted, young anthropologists prefer to "study hi-hop rather than the arduous maps of kinship". As Daniel Varisco, as well as Roberto Calasso, have suggested elsewhere, the success of Edward Said's work in spite of screaming methodological and epistemological flaws can only be understood by its coming out at the right time before a Western public eager to consume guilt and denunciations. For Jean-Marc Mandoloso, whose work on Foucault is less ironic than Sahlins' but definitely more damning, what matters above all else is the public's expectation and longing. When a scholar is astute enough to perceive this expectation and longs public recognition, he/she will produce such books. Interestingly, Macagno locates the popularity contest syndrome that (some) anthropologists are afflicted with in the multiculturalist academic industry. "Maybe, searching for a lost popularity, they carnivalized our most precious methods and theories to flee free of doubts the boring labor of butterfly collectors; on the other hand, they ventured to win another title, no less unworthy: that of storytellers" (p. 113). Thus, Macagno's book is also about integrity and his approach to scholarship undoubtedly jansenistic.

Macagno proposes also a reflection on the anthropological critique of multiculturalism, 20 years after Turner's classic article on the subject. Coining the concept *homo ethnicus*, Macagno detects a new essentialization of collective identities in an intellectual current, multiculturalism, that precisely pretends to the contrary, in a strange kind of paradoxical *homage du vice*

2 *Hymne à la forme du Sans-forme Dakshinamurtistotra*, Paul Dubois, trad., 2014.

culturaliste à la vertu constructioniste. Macagno's notion of a "post-cultural" intellectual moment is also noteworthy.

For Anglophone readers, the main reason to read this book is this: Macagno delivers here possibly the first global anthropology of multiculturalism, comparing situations and intellectual histories (public policies are not the main focus) in a wide range of societies that include Canada, the United States, France, Brazil, Lusophone Africa, Mexico, Australia, West Africa, Latin America in general, Québec, Scandinavian countries, and India. (Maybe Macagno is more multicultural than he is aware of.) The reader will thus discover that several colonial administrators in Portugal's African colonies not only coined and used the word by mid-20th century but that they devised policies aimed at cultural cohabitation even under colonial rule. To my knowledge, the inclusion of multiculturalist intellectual currents within the Lusophone world have never before been included in vast historical comparisons with more predictable cases, such as the United States, Québec and Europe. In addition, Macagno's knowledge of South African anthropology and history is yet another of the book's assets –too often neglected or underestimated, South African anthropology, Macagno shows, has made considerable contributions to the discipline. This book is possibly the first global study of the intellectual history of multiculturalism.

Review

Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. 2015. *Metafísicas Canibais*. São Paulo: Cosac Naify. 280 p.

Ananya Chakravarti

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It is fitting that a historian should review a work of philosophy written self-consciously by an anthropologist. For the project Eduardo Viveiros de Castro outlines in his introduction to a Borgesian book as yet unwritten sounds a call to a new effort to decolonize knowledge across disciplines. He names this project- for which the present book serves as “a synopsis, almost a press-release” (19)- Anti-Narcissus, an attempt to tear down “Narcissus from the role of patron saint or tutelary spirit of anthropology” (25). For those dismayed by the quietist, even nihilistic turn that the social sciences took in the throes of acknowledging their own implication in colonial projects, this alone is invigorating. (History faced its own version of this challenge: witness the case of Subaltern Studies, where the attack from postcolonial theory on the idea that the subaltern could be represented proved nearly fatal to a fecund historiographical project.) Anti-Narcissus offers us freedom from the debilitating (and Euro-centric) conclusion that in the study of the Other, the anthropologist is doomed to see Self: instead, anthropological theory consists in “versions of indigenous practices of knowledge” (24). More radical is the premise that such indigenous practices, as anthropological theory, is the ground of philosophy, thus far the preserve of Western epistemology, or, put another way, “the Occidental soul” (23).

The book demonstrates this through Amerindian perspectivism, the notion that all beings possess an undifferentiable soul, such that difference, the particularity of point of view, is in the body. For those who have followed the author’s ground-breaking work on the Araweté, much of what follows is familiar. He then shows the challenge Amerindian multinaturalism poses to Western assumptions regarding the duality of nature (unmarked, universal) and culture (particular) and the ontological order between human and

non-human. Moreover, Amerindian notions of affinity as predation, most clearly expressed in the enemy-centric ritual of cannibalism, upends Western intuitions of the split between Self and Other.

If *Anti-Narcissus* recalls Deleuze and Guattari's landmark 1972 text, *Anti-Oedipus*, Viveiros de Castro unpacks the allusion explicitly in the following section. To the rhizomatic epistemologies through which Deleuze and Guattari sought to escape the oppressive binaries of Western thought, he counters the philosophical possibilities afforded by multinaturalism as "a new image of thought" (112). Here, his interest is not only in their philosophy of multiplicity, but in the role becoming plays in shifting the terms of filiation and alliance in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. If *Anti-Oedipus* marked filiation as intensive and alliance as extensive, by the tenth plateau on *Becoming-Animal*, alliance is not social reproduction but transformation, perhaps best exemplified in the ways sorcery refuses the identification of man with nature but instead transforms both. Moreover, in the shift in emphasis from capitalism to the state in the work, the relative emphasis of filiation and alliance shifts too: "All filiation is imaginary, say the authors of *A Thousand Plateaus*. To which we may add: and all filiation projects a State, is a filiation of the State. Amazonian intensive alliance is an alliance against the State (...in homage to Pierre Clastres)" (206). What Amazonian thought reveals is a possibility that Deleuze and Guattari miss in their shift from filiation/production to alliance/becoming: the simultaneity of both intensive and extensive alliances and filiations. In his reading, Viveiros de Castro (re)turns in the last section to Claude Lévi-Strauss, noting that Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming exists between his "logics of serial-sacrificial and totemic-structural: the imaginary identification between human and animal, on the one hand, a symbolic correlation between social and natural differences on the other" (184). In doing so, he fulfills the promise of his introductory chapters of rescuing from his later works the post-structuralist gestures that would come to undo Lévi-Strauss own structuralist project.

Even this brief summary must suggest the richness and pleasures of Viveiros de Castro's engagement with Western theory. But herein lies the disquiet: a sense of the creeping capitulation, however unwilling, to Eurocentrism. It seems neither accidental nor incidental that the work was published in French first. The politics of knowledge of the publication and *consumption* of this book suggest the ways in which this remains a press-release,

not yet a blueprint, for Anti-Narcissus. Consider Bruno Latour's recent Gifford Lectures: borrowing not a little from multinaturalism but ostensibly a dialogue with the Scottish James Lovelock, he acknowledges only in passing the anthropological theory of Viveiros de Castro and ignores almost entirely the silent contribution of "the indigenous practices of knowledge" which was its object. Yet again, European thought cannibalizes its Other, (re)producing itSelf upon the erasure of that Other.

This eventuality may have been circumvented by a more radical commitment to Amerindian *ontology*, as opposed to Western *epistemology*. When the author proclaims, "*Por fim, muito se falou do corpo neste livro*" (259), one is surprised: in his focus on mythology, there is in fact rather little exploration of the *embodied* practices of knowledge that might characterize Amerindian experience. Certainly, his relative lack of engagement with this critique from other ethnographers of Amazonian peoples, evident in the selective bibliography, is troubling.

The real problem may be in his incomplete exploration of Roy Wagner's work as a foundation for Anti-Narcissus. The maxim he quotes- "Every understanding of another culture is an experiment with one's own"- is borne out here: his particular (if contested) understanding of Amerindian culture allows him to experiment with Western thought dazzlingly. But, if Anti-Narcissus is to be fulfilled, we must acknowledge in some methodological way the same possibility for the Amerindians in this co-production of knowledge. In his laudable attempt to take Amerindian thought seriously, Viveiros de Castro ends up ignoring how Amerindians, like us, experiment with, invent, stand at ironic distance to their own (and our) culture. Amerindian cosmology, in his version, seems curiously static, with no politics that might (productively) interfere with our use of it to re-invent the terms of our politics of capital and state- though Amerindian experience was and is still shaped by both. What might a philosophy resting not on Amerindian cosmology, but Amerindian cosmopolitics, look like? If Fabian showed us out of the cul-de-sac of the denial of coevalness (22), perhaps the next step to Anti-Narcissus is to recognize our implicit monopoly of the right to historical change through the ethnographic encounter.

Review

Acuña, Mauricio. 2015. *A Ginga da Nação: Intelectuais na Capoeira e Capoeiristas Intelectuais (1930-1969)*. São Paulo: Editora Alameda. 280 p.

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In this thorough and thoughtful book, Mauricio Acuña addresses how Bahian capoeira, which is simultaneously a martial art, dance, and folklorized manifestation, became the exemplar of the form and a metonym of Brazilian national identity. Acuña's framework draws from cultural historian Carl Schorske (1990) and sociologist Norbert Elias (1995) in order to contextually situate capoeira as part of a generational artistic and cultural movement that emerged and evolved from the 1930s to the 1960s. In particular, Acuña demonstrates how the 1930 Revolution impacted a generation of Bahians, especially elites who sought to defend their local power and identity against Getúlio Vargas' centralizing and frequently repressive Estado Novo dictatorship. In Salvador, a cohort of intellectuals, in particular the anthropologist, Edison Carneiro, and the famous novelist, Jorge Amado, responded to these changes by attempting to "discover the folk [*descobrer o povo*]." This discovery focused in large part on capoeira which, in turn, became a focal point for a broad community of practice that included capoeira practitioners (*capoeiristas*), domestic and international intellectuals, such as Arthur Ramos and the American anthropologist, Ruth Landes, and artists such as the Argentinian painter, Carybé. By illustrating the social and institutional networks in which capoeira and capoeiristas circulated, Acuña parallels Hermano Vianna's (1995) discussion of samba as a national emblem that was co-constructed by musicians, intellectuals, and institutions. However, the great strength in *A Ginga da Nação* lies in how it uncovers the multiple, deliberate, and often contradictory strategies which previously marginalized capoeira practitioners employed in order to legitimize and professionalize their activities. Specifically, Chapter Two is especially compelling as it compares how specific *mestres* sought to distance capoeira from its reputation as a violent,

subversive practice and into a more musical, formalized, and folklorized form that could benefit them both financially and socially. This chapter focuses on individuals such as Mestre Pastinha and Mestre Bimba whose stylistic and philosophical approach to capoeira significantly diverged. For example, while Mestre Pastinha presented himself as the guardian and creator of the ostensibly more traditional “*Capoeira Angola*” style, Mestre Bimba incorporated strikes [*golpes*] from other martial arts into his “*Capoeira Regional*.” Nevertheless, both *mestres* were concerned with valorizing capoeira and erasing its prior criminalization and persecution. By detailing several *mestres*’ relationships with intellectuals, writers, the press, and public institutions, Acuña also demonstrates how the nationalization of Bahian capoeira was not an exclusively elite project, but the product of multiple, interested actors. These insights neatly dovetail with Acuña’s adaptation of Manuela Carneiro da Cunha’s (2009) dual formulation of culture as a theoretical concept versus “culture” as a pragmatic resource. Both of these versions of culture converge in the capoeira context since academics *and* capoeiristas transformed capoeira into a folkloric form that came to stand for the African third in Brazil’s triracial, nationalist narrative. However, Acuña also shows how capoeira’s hybrid status as sport/art, Bahian/Brazilian, and folk/elite made it especially appropriate for reinforcing Brazilian *mestiçagem* as a national value. In fact, the contrasts between how various practitioners and enthusiasts characterized and utilized capoeira also demonstrate how specific actors, especially capoeiristas, alternately emphasized specific aspects of capoeira for various purposes. While Acuña’s examination of capoeiristas’ and intellectuals’ practices around capoeira is well-developed, perhaps his contributions could be enhanced by more directly theorizing how race and class (as an ensemble) impacted how these actors developed capoeira into an institutionally legitimized practice. For example, the aforementioned *mestres* were clearly trying to combat their racial and class markedness by transforming capoeira, which suggests that they were well aware of the limits of *mestiçagem*’s valorization even as they were contributing to its creation. This and similar insights could have been foregrounded much more in order to show how analyzing capoeira’s history can help us better understand race and class in Brazil. In part, the organization of the chapters obscures the important ways in which racial and class ideologies impacted the nationalization of Bahian capoeira. Specifically, more of the information from Chapter One on

academic discourses of race and national identity in Brazil could be better integrated with the more “on -the-ground” perspectives Acuña presents in the aforementioned second chapter and Chapter Three, which focuses more on the artists and intellectuals who studied and depicted Bahian capoeira. Meanwhile, Chapter Four, which details how capoeiristas further incorporated music to “civilize” and popularize Bahian capoeira, fits neatly within the overall narrative because it provides a glimpse into how capoeira became part of Brazilian popular culture during and a bit beyond the Vargas era. While the book is a welcome contribution to studies of capoeira, it will also prove productive for Brazilianists interested in learning more about Bahia during the Modernist and Estado Novo periods. This intellectual and cultural history is also appropriate for anthropologists and humanities scholars interested in Brazilian music and other popular culture because it provides some of the historical context for understanding contemporary trends. However, given that this book is addressed to a Brazilian audience, those who are unfamiliar with capoeira and the Vargas Era might have to do some additional background reading.