



The International Scientific Seminar on Resistance to Change (1959): Education as a Factor that May Prevent or Hinder Development in Latin America

O Seminário Científico Internacional Resistências à Mudança (1959): a Educação como fator que pode impedir ou dificultar o desenvolvimento na América Latina

El Seminario Científico Internacional sobre la Resistencia al Cambio (1959): la Educación como factor que puede impedir o dificultar el desarrollo en America Latina

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Abstract

This article draws primarily on the proceedings of the International Scientific Seminar Resistance to Change: Factors that Prevent or Hinder Development, held in 1959 by the Latin American Center for Research in Social Sciences (CLAPCS) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The proceedings of this event document debates surrounding education and public instruction in Latin America, particularly regarding the Latin American school as a conservative force in society. The network of transnational intellectuals involved in the event reflects, on the one hand, a moment of intense interaction between the fields of Social Sciences and Education, both of which were undergoing processes of institutionalization, and, on the other hand, an effort to propose rational solutions to social problems and to better guide the educational policies and planning of the countries involved, structured around international organizations (Sirinelli, 2003).

Keywords: Education and Social Sciences; International Organizations; Network of Transnational Intellectuals.

Resumo

Neste artigo, destacamos como principal fonte de análise os anais do *Seminário Científico Internacional Resistências à Mudança: fatores que impedem ou dificultam o Desenvolvimento*, realizado em 1959 pelo Centro Latino-Americano de Pesquisas em Ciências Sociais (CLAPCS), no Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. Os anais desse evento mostram os debates que tomaram a educação e a instrução pública na América Latina como focos de discussão, entendendo, de forma especial, a escola latino-americana como um fator de conservadorismo da sociedade. A rede de intelectuais transnacionais envolvida nesse evento caracteriza, por um lado, um momento de profundo envolvimento entre os campos das Ciências Sociais e da Educação, em franco processo de institucionalização, e, por outro, um esforço para propor determinadas soluções racionais para a resolução dos problemas sociais e para o melhor encaminhamento das políticas e do planejamento educacional dos países envolvidos, articulados em torno dos organismos internacionais (Sirinelli, 2003).

Palavras-chave: Educação e Ciências Sociais; Organismos Internacionais; Rede de Intelectuais Transnacionais.

Resumen

En este artículo, la principal fuente de análisis son las actas del Seminario Científico Internacional Resistencia al Cambio: factores que impiden o dificultan el desarrollo, celebrado en 1959 por el Centro Latinoamericano de Investigaciones en Ciencias Sociales (CLAPCS) en Río de Janeiro (Brasil). Las actas de este evento muestran debates centrados en la educación y la instrucción pública en América Latina, en particular en torno a la comprensión de la escuela latinoamericana como factor de conservadurismo social. La red de intelectuales transnacionales implicados en este acontecimiento caracteriza, por un lado, un momento de profunda implicación entre los campos de las ciencias sociales y de la educación, que estaban en proceso de institucionalización, y, por otro, un esfuerzo por proponer ciertas soluciones racionales para resolver los problemas sociales y mejorar las políticas y la planificación educativas de los países implicados, articuladas en torno a organizaciones internacionales (Sirinelli, 2003).

Palabras clave: Educación y Ciencias Sociales; Organizaciones internacionales; Red de Intelectuales Transnacionales.

Introduction

The title of this study may appear somewhat unusual to readers, since it presents education as, to a certain extent, a negative element in promoting the social change sought by Latin American society in the second half of the twentieth century. To better understand this assessment, it is essential to examine the perspectives on education that emerged during this period, when education became an object of study within the Social Sciences, as well as how the subject was analyzed through specific theoretical approaches and political contexts in Latin American countries.

In the Latin American context, international organizations played a central role in shaping the relationship between education and the Social Sciences. This close relationship helps explain both the institutionalization of the educational field and the consolidation of Sociology's own theoretical-methodological framework, particularly that of the Sociology of Development, the theoretical perspective underlying the ideas advanced during the 1959 International Scientific Seminar, *Resistance to Change*.

Among the initiatives aimed at institutionalizing studies in education and the Social Sciences in Brazil, particular emphasis should be placed on the Brazilian Center for Educational Research (CBPE), conceived by Anísio Teixeira with the decisive support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). During the 1950s, especially within UNESCO itself, tensions emerged over attempts to admit new member states, differing conceptions of race, and controversies over projects aimed at defining new cultural values between East and West, among other debates (Beigel, 2009).

Likewise, in 1948, the Pan American Union created the Division of Social Sciences, whose primary purpose was to foster the development of the Social Sciences in Latin America by promoting, among other objectives, exchanges among social scientists in the region. The creation of the Pan American Union took place within a broader process of U.S. intervention in the policies of Latin American countries.

The creation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) in 1947, a United Nations (UN) organization headquartered in Santiago, Chile, marked the emergence of development as a central theme within the Social Sciences in Latin America, establishing intrinsic links between economics and social development (Blanco, 2007). From that point onward, the Social Sciences began to engage more directly with economics, directly influencing debates surrounding education and contributing to a process of "Latin Americanization" within organizations such as UNESCO and the OAS (Organization of American States), among others (Beigel, 2009).

By the late 1950s, the Latin American Center for Research in Social Sciences (CLAPCS) had been established to conduct studies on problems specific to Latin America. According to Bringel et al. (2015), CLAPCS represented an important moment in the development of Latin American sociology in Brazil, one that "was part of a new post-World War II geopolitical imaginary that contributed to consolidating 'Latin' America as a region through new institutional frameworks and the policies of both internal and external actors" (p. 10).¹

¹ The discussion surrounding the meaning of "Latin America" will not be the focus of analysis in this work. Nevertheless, we share the understanding that the concept is both controversial and multifaceted, rooted in interpretations constructed by Europeans as well as by North Americans, especially in the post-World War II period and within the context of the Cold War (Pamplona, 2003; Bethell, 2009). In this regard, "the designation Latin America is part of our everyday vocabulary. Yet its historicity must be remembered. The term was coined in the nineteenth century and, from its origins, carried political and ideological disputes. The meanings attributed to it are linked to the controversies involving, on the one hand, the French and the English (nineteenth century) and, on the other, Latin Americans and North Americans (nineteenth and twentieth centuries)" (Prado; Pellegrino, 2022, p. 8, authors' emphasis).

It was during the 2nd Regional Conference on Social Sciences for Latin America, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1957, that UNESCO was established as the principal sponsor of CLAPCS and the city of Rio de Janeiro was chosen as its headquarters, alongside the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), headquartered in Santiago, Chile.

The Center's first director was the Bahian sociologist Luiz Aguiar de Costa Pinto (1920–2002), a professor at the School of Economic Sciences of the University of Brazil who had already conducted important studies in collaboration with UNESCO (Daniel, 2019). It was during his tenure as director of the Center, from 1957 to 1961, that “the activities, articles, and research conducted by the Center, given the transnational nature of these collaborations, converged toward the definition of a common methodology to be adopted in analyses of issues treated as obstacles to Latin American development” (Bringel et al., 2015, p. 15).

The aim, therefore, is to demonstrate that, since the 1940s, sociology in Latin America has undergone increasing institutionalization and has been conceived as a guiding discipline grounded in the belief in the transformative role of the State. In this sense, the institutionalization of sociology contributed to the expansion of spaces for intellectual exchange among Latin American scholars.

Within the field of Social Sciences, education and development came to be regarded as central themes of analysis, forming part of the Center's research agenda alongside topics such as the state of the Social Sciences in Latin America, urbanization, social stratification, and social mobility.

In this sense, the main source for this study is the proceedings of the International Scientific Seminar *Resistance to Change: Factors that Prevent or Hinder Development*, published in 1960. This congress played an important role in expanding and defining the public spaces where intellectuals could engage in debates on the development of Latin American countries. The network of intellectuals and the forms of intellectual sociability fostered by the Center largely shaped the research agenda on education within international organizations, which, at that moment, was guided by the Sociology of Development and served as a framework for formulating national policies from transnational perspectives (Sirinelli, 2003). Treated as a central element of social change, education came to be problematized as a factor hindering development in Latin America.²

With this in mind, we first present the event's objectives and the network of intellectuals involved. We then draw on the discussions of education in the proceedings to analyze education and economic development in Latin America, based on the principal theses advanced during the seminar.

1. The Objectives and the Network of Intellectuals Involved in the Seminar

The Seminar was held in October 1959 at the National Museum of Quinta da Boa Vista and brought together numerous social scientists from more than twenty countries in South America, Central America, North America, and Europe, with a total of forty-three papers presented. Costa Pinto notes that the complete list of participants and their theses, as well as the collaborating institutions, was published in issue no. 2 of the CLAPCS Bulletin in November 1960. Due to the large number of theses presented, the author explains that only the

² In recent years, the field of the History of Education in Brazil has produced a number of studies that seek to engage with decolonial thought. Particular emphasis should be given to the work of Professor Cynthia Greive Veiga, who has discussed the schooling process as a civilizing project (2002), social discrimination and educational inequality (2017), as well as subalternity and socio-racial oppression in Latin America (2022). The work *Subalternidade e opressão sociorracial* has become an important reference in the field insofar as it problematizes elements of a particular civilizing project carried out through schooling in Latin America, drawing especially on the theoretical contributions of Aníbal Quijano, particularly his notions of race and subalternity.

commissioned texts were published in the proceedings, as these participants also served as rapporteurs for the themes and sessions.

Returning to the very nature of the Center, Costa Pinto emphasizes in the introduction to the proceedings that it was an institution devoted “exclusively to social research throughout the Latin American region,” seeking to contribute “to the invention of forms and mechanisms of regional scientific cooperation” and to establish itself as an “active and productive laboratory dedicated to the scientific study of the basic social problems of Latin American populations” (1960, p. 5).

The theme of the Seminar was development in Latin America, with the aim of understanding the factors that generated resistance to the transformations envisioned within the Sociology of Development and that, according to Costa Pinto, compromised “the implementation of policies designed to promote economic and social progress” (1960, p. 7).

It is important to emphasize that the Sociology of Development was the perspective guiding the analyses produced by the sociologists gathered within the Center, who, at this early stage, still relied on established theoretical concepts to analyze the continent's reality. Throughout the 1950s, however, this sociological perspective gave rise to critical sociology, with new theories that adapted the existing theoretical framework to the condition of subalternity imposed on Latin American countries within global capitalism. Latin America would subsequently come to be understood as an incomplete version of European modernity, leading to the search for a particular ethos (Cortés, 2012) capable of questioning the imperative of modernization grounded in the social, political, and cultural relations of the dominant capitalist civilizing project, namely the European and North American one (Ivo, 2014).

At that moment, the Sociology of Development, particularly as it was employed as an analytical framework in Latin America, recognized the State as the principal actor responsible for leading the changes deemed necessary to achieve development. Accordingly, the analyses carried out within the Center and during the Seminar itself were grounded in the view that it was necessary to identify development problems, examine them scientifically, and, based on these studies, provide support for national modernization policies. From the perspective of these sociologists, the modernization process needed to promote the dissemination of values such as rationalization, universalism, achievement, and secularization (Ivo, 2014, p. 21). In this regard, Costa Pinto states that;

the results of analyses and diagnoses increasingly converge in highlighting the fact that, within the social structures of less developed countries, the essential characteristic is not the lack or absence of change, but rather the fact that the different parts of these structures change at different rates, generating asymmetries and distortions, contradictions and resistances (1960, p. 8).

This reflection emerges from the conclusions drawn from the debates on the themes addressed during the Seminar, among them education itself. In this context, the objectives of the Social Sciences were justified as the study of development problems, the promotion of accelerated change, and the advancement of intentional and rational transformation so that, within a short period of time and through economic development planning, societies could overcome conditions of underdevelopment.

Thus, it was considered necessary to accelerate the transformation of the economic system within Latin American societies through the so-called “development policy,” to be implemented by national states and guided by the directives of international organizations.

For this reason, the following themes were selected for the Seminar: the problems involved in integrating populations considered “backward” into the developing economy and society, such as Indigenous peoples, rural-to-urban migrants, and others; the archaic nature or disorganization of agrarian structures, agricultural systems and techniques, and working conditions in agriculture; and education and public instruction in their relationship to development, this being the Center’s primary research focus. Approximately sixty researchers gathered for the event. Immediately following the introduction to the proceedings, a list of participants appears, which we reproduce below:

Chart 1 – List of Seminar Participants

ABRAHAM MONHK American Jewish Committee – Seção Brasileira	J. Roberto Moreira CENTRO
ACÁCIO FERREIRA Universidade da Bahia	JOSÓ ARTHUR RIOS SAGMAGS – RJ
ALFRED MÉTRAUX Unesco	JUAREZ BRANDÃO LOPES Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo
AURELIUS MONGNER Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo (Fullbright)	LAUDELINO MEDEIROS Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul
CANDIDO PROCÓPIO FERREIRA DE CAMARGO SESI – Seção São Paulo	LUIZ ERASMO MOREIRA Campanha de Erradicação do Analfabetismo – MEC, RJ
CLAUDIO F. ACCURSE Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul	LUIZ LEGAZ Universidade de Santiago de Compostela – Espanha
C. WRIGHT MILLS Universidade de Columbia – USA	MANUEL DIÉGUES JÚNIOR Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro
DARCY RIBEIRO Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais – RJ	MARIA JÚLIA POURCHET Serviço de Antropometria do Instituto de Pesquisa Educacional – RJ
DINAH M. DE SOUZA CAMPOS Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais – RJ	MARIO WAGNER VIEIRA DA CUNHA Faculdade de Ciências Econômicas de São Paulo
DJACIR MENEZES Universidade do Brasil	MICHEL DEBRUN Fundação Getúlio Vargas – RJ
EDUARDO HAMUY Instituto de Sociologia, Universidade do Chile	MILTON SANTOS Faculdade de Filosofia da Universidade da Bahia
ENRIQUE ARBOLEYA Universidade de Madrid	MOYSES ROSENTAL Conselho Nacional de Economia – RJ
FERNANDO HENRIQUE CARDOSO Universidade de São Paulo	OCTAVIO IANNI Universidade de São Paulo
FLORESTAN FERNANDES Universidade de São Paulo	

GINO GERMANI Universidade de Buenos Aires	ORLANDO CARVALHO Universidade de Minas Gerais
GUSTAVO LAGOS MATUS Faculdade Latino-Americana de Ciências Sociais – Santiago-Chile	OSCAR CHAVES ESQUIVEL Universidade de Costa Rica
HELÉNE BRULÉ Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais – RJ	PABLO GONZALEZ CASANOVA Universidade de México
HÉLIO PORTUGAL SILVA Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul	PASCHOAL LEMME Ministério da Educação e Cultura – Brasil
ISAAC GANÓN Universidade da República – Montevideo – Uruguai	ROGER SEGUIN Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais – RJ
J. A. SILVA MICHELENA Universidade Central de Caracas - Venezuela	ROMULO CAVINA Universidade Rural – Brasil
JACQUES LAMBERT Faculdade de Direito de Lyon, França	SEGUNDO V. LINARES QUINTANA Universidade de Buenos Aires
J. CASTRO FARIA Museu Nacional – RJ	SZCZERBA-LIKIERNIK Unesco
JEAN LABBENS Faculdade Católica de Filosofia – Lyon, França	THEMISTOCLES BRANDÃO CAVALCANTI Universidade do Brasil
JOÃO MENDONÇA Universidade da Bahia	THOMAZ POMPEU ACCIOLY BORGES CENTRO
JORGE GRACIARENA Universidade de Buenos Aires	VICTOR NUNES LEAL Universidade do Brasil

Source: Proceedings of the Seminar (1960).

We may observe the presence of several prominent groups among the participants: intellectuals from Latin American universities, in the Brazilian case concentrated mainly in the fields of economics, sociology, and philosophy; representatives of UNESCO; researchers affiliated with CBPE and CLAPCS; and intellectuals from foreign universities, particularly North American and European institutions. This markedly transnational network of intellectuals from different institutional affiliations became involved in the research and discussions surrounding the event. It helped shape the intellectual environment of the period, especially in Latin America. We do not intend to conduct an exhaustive analysis of the relationships among those who participated in the event here, as we understand that such questions may be the subject of future studies.

We should also highlight the presence of social scientists who would later become important references in the institutionalization of the Social Sciences in the region. This was the case of Florestan Fernandes, Gino Germani, and Pablo Casanova, intellectuals who “between the 1950s and 1960s led, almost simultaneously, in Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico,

processes of disciplinary modernization within the Social Sciences” (Blanco; Jackson, 2017, p. 1, our translation)³.

Finally, particular attention should be given to the intellectuals involved in the discussions surrounding the theme “A educação, a Instrução e as Mudanças sociais” [Education, Instruction, and Social Change], which included two conferences and one session devoted to presentations and debates. The conferences were led by the intellectual João Roberto Moreira, who worked at CBPE and was responsible for education research at CLAPCS (Moreira’s assistants were Professors Maria Lêda Rodrigues and Olga de Oliveira e Silva), and by Héléne Brulé, who served as a UNESCO specialist attached to CBPE (Daniel, 2019). Both conferences were published in the proceedings, Moreira’s in Portuguese and Brulé’s in French. The conferences had been commissioned and served as the basis for the debates held during the event. The proceedings also include summaries of the presentations and debates, namely:

- a. – **Classes Sociais e Aprendizagem** – o problema da educação escolar das classes inferiores [Social Classes and Learning: The Problem of School Education among the Lower Classes], by Dinah de Souza Campos, researcher at the Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais;
- b. – **Recherches sur La Promotion Et L’Apprentissage Scolaires Dans L’Enseignement Primaire Au Brésil** by Roger Seguin, affiliated with the Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais and the Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro;
- c. – **Educação e Habitação como Condição ou Fatores do Planejamento de Mudança Social** [Education and Housing as Conditions or Factors in Planning Social Change], by Luiz Erasmo de Moreira, architect and head of the Works Division of the Pilot Plan for the Eradication of Illiteracy of the Ministério da Educação e Cultura;
- d. – **Educação para o desenvolvimento** [Education for Development], by Cândido Procópio Ferreira de Camargo, member of the expert staff of the Serviço Social da Indústria in São Paulo;
- e. – **Uma Política Educacional para a industrialização** [An Educational Policy for Industrialization], by the Regional Department of the Serviço Social da Indústria in São Paulo (1960, p. 335, emphasis in the original).

From this list, we may observe a significant presence of Brazilian researchers affiliated with the CBPE, which maintained a close relationship with the CLAPCS, particularly through the work of João Roberto Moreira, who, as previously noted, conducted research on education at the Center. It is also worth noting that Moreira’s book *Educação e desenvolvimento no Brasil* [Education and Development in Brazil] was published by the Center in 1960. In addition, one may observe a concern with technical education through the presence of representatives from SENAI (Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial) and Sesi (Serviço Social da Indústria).

Following the presentations, debates were held with the participation of Cândido Procópio de Ferreira Camargo (Sesi-SP), Luiz Erasmo de Moreira (MEC-RJ), Dinah de Souza Campos (CBPE-RJ), Roger Seguin (CBPE-RJ), Eduardo Hamuy (Instituto de Sociologia–Universidade do Chile), Pascoal Leme (MEC-Brasil), Darcy Ribeiro (CBPE-RJ), Artur Rios, Wagner Vieira da Cunha, Henrique Cardoso (Universidade de São Paulo), João Mendonça (Universidade da Bahia), Laudelino Medeiros (Universidade do Rio Grande do Sul), Otávio

³ In the original: “entre las décadas de 1950 y 1960 lideraron casi simultáneamente, en Brasil, Argentina y México, procesos de modernización disciplinaria en el interior de las ciencias sociales”.

Ianni (Universidade de São Paulo), Issac Ganon (Universidade da República–Montevideo–Uruguai), Moisés Rosenthal (Conselho Nacional de Economia-RJ), and Pablo Gonzalez Casanova (Universidade de México).

Once again, the strong presence of Brazilian researchers stood out, especially that of social scientists affiliated with Brazilian universities. It should be remembered that sociology was then undergoing institutionalization in the region, and that the Center was one of the most important initiatives for consolidating this project in Latin America.

In the following section, we discuss the principal theses presented during the event on educational issues in Latin America.

2. “The School as a Factor of Social Conservatism Rather than a Factor of Change.”

The phrase that gives this section its title was the principal conclusion reached by the participants in the debates concerning the situation of the Latin American school. According to these researchers, education fell short of the goals of modernization and development envisioned for the continent, failing to fulfill its primary function: serving as a principal driver of social change.

In his conference, Moreira argues that “school education, institutionalized education, systematic instruction [...] is a late achievement” (1960, p. 303), and that the school “emerged as a specialized institution for specialized purposes” (*ibid.*), responding to specific social demands. Based on this premise, he argues that since education, and even the school itself, result from social conditions, they tend to produce not change but social preservation. In Latin America, according to his explanation, “schools and educational institutions are, in general, less a factor of change than one of preservation of the social order” (p. 308). According to his thesis, it was necessary to overcome the school, which was considered traditional and excessively book-centered, that is, the “old humanistic school” that still predominated in the region.⁴

Likewise, in her text on education, instruction, and resistance to social change, Hélène Brulé seeks to demonstrate how schools have gradually transformed over time in response to social change, albeit not without difficulty. In her discussion, she also argues that schools cannot fall short of their social function of supporting society's technical progress and that, to do so, it is necessary to overcome their “formalism and institutional complexity” (Brulé, 1960).

According to these understandings, schools were failing to meet the objectives of social change and social mobility advocated by the Sociology of Development at that time. Thus, this concern and this diagnosis regarding the dimensions of a “tradition” that needed to be overcome gave sociology a practical dimension aimed at social reform. The idea of planned social change, for the intellectuals of that period, reflected the role of intervening in reality to lay the foundations for new social and economic configurations aimed at progress, modernization, and economic growth (Ivo, 2014).

To arrive at this understanding of the school, as Costa Pinto also pointed out in his text on the Seminar, Moreira argued that there were many challenges inherent to the condition of “underdevelopment” of Latin American countries, marked by profound disparities between regions considered developed and others classified as less developed, as well as between urban and rural areas. According to Moreira,

⁴ We emphasize Moreira’s conference in particular because it had been commissioned for the Seminar and because he was the CLAPCS researcher responsible for studying educational issues in Latin America.

If we compare urban and peri-urban areas, on the one hand, with rural and extractive areas, on the other, in Latin America, we will readily observe that public education develops relatively well in the former. In contrast, in the latter, it is extraordinarily deficient (Moreira, 1960, p. 304).

At that moment, education, in quantitative terms, failed to meet the technical and cultural needs of the more developed sectors of each society. The author further emphasizes that, even where schooling expanded in areas experiencing greater economic and social development, this did not necessarily imply qualitative changes in school education because, in his view, “it is as though such institutions resisted the new, resisted change” (p. 309).

For Moreira, the binomial relationship between “education” and “social and economic development” appeared as intrinsically interconnected, since both factors were understood as mutually constitutive (Daniel, 2013). Within that context, this issue became the subject of considerable debate, reflecting the different interpretations advanced by intellectuals and shaping a particular linguistic context (Pocock, 2003).⁵

In a markedly programmatic manner, Moreira identifies the principal problems affecting public instruction on the continent, namely:

- a) – The problem of the resources to be invested in public instruction: nearly all Latin American countries, committed to development policies and attempting to overcome the multiple obstacles hindering development, such as public health, transportation, storage, basic infrastructure, energy, and so forth, had almost exhausted their capacity to generate financial resources, particularly in light of growing problems in international trade, in which export capacity and foreign exchange earnings were not increasing in parallel with the need to import equipment and means of development. This lack of new, increasingly broad resources prevented the investments necessary to develop public instruction systems.
- b) – Another issue stemmed from the fact that Latin America did not develop harmoniously, with the old and the new, the underdeveloped and the developed, progress and decline existing side by side. Consequently, there were regions in which schools could be successfully established, while in others, schools had little chance of achieving satisfactory results. In other words, there were vast areas not susceptible to schooling.
- c) Even in developing regions, basic contradictions could be observed between the existing school system and the ongoing process of development. For this reason, the traditional public school appeared to be deteriorating, whereas technical and vocational schools had not yet acquired sufficient prestige. This was particularly evident at the secondary and higher levels of public instruction. The result was, at least in Brazil, the emergence of unofficial, semi-artisanal, and semi-technical schools as an improvised means of training specialized labor.

⁵ We share the understanding that “each linguistic context indicates a political, social, or historical context within which language itself is situated. At the same time, however, we are compelled to recognize that every language, to a certain extent, selects and prescribes the context within which it is to be understood” (Pocock, 2003, p. 37).

- d) – The existence and persistence of sociocultural remnants that hindered educational change and prevented public instruction from becoming a factor in social and economic development.
- e) – In light of the factors discussed above, the simplification and distortion of the educational objectives of schools are socially assumed to merely have supplementary or secondary functions of cultural transmission and intellectual and technical training.
- f) – Ideological conflicts in the sphere of defining means and ends concerning reforms of public instruction, generally without consideration for the possible and real objectives of the school as an institution of instruction (Moreira, 1960, p. 304).

Emblematic of his discourse is the dilemma of overcoming the “old,” the “outdated,” the “obsolete,” and the “archaic.” At the conclusion of his conference, Moreira ultimately argues that “if the school in Latin America cannot yet be considered a factor that hinders development, it is still far from being a positive factor” (1960, p. 325).

Given this understanding and the challenges it posed, it became necessary to transform the school and to ground education in new civilizing precepts. For education to play a fundamental role in social change, it itself needed to change, since it did not meet the demands of that historical moment. It therefore became necessary to plan and actively promote such transformations because “to accelerate the development process in Latin America, it would be necessary to expand opportunities for public instruction, extending them to all regions, especially less developed areas. This would amount to a form of planned educational intervention” (Moreira, 1960, p. 307).

Once again, with a markedly programmatic intent, the participants in the discussions on education formulated, at the conclusion of the debates, ten issues that should continue to be discussed, among them the problem of financing public education and the need to understand the obstructive role played by private educational institutions, which they often regarded as reactionary.

The principal thesis, namely that the school functioned more as a factor of social conservatism than of change in the region, was nonetheless presented alongside the argument that “at higher levels, it may become a powerful determinant of technological and social progress” (1960, p. 344). Other discussions concerning education continued to be disseminated by the Center, especially through the *Boletim do Centro Latino-Americano de Pesquisas em Ciências Sociais*, later renamed *América Latina* (Daniel, 2019).

Final Considerations

In this study, by examining the proceedings of the International Scientific Seminar *Resistance to Change: Factors that Prevent or Hinder Development*, we sought to shed light on a period of remarkable intellectual dynamism, marked by the involvement of international organizations in collaboration with national states, especially regarding countries considered “underdeveloped”.

At the beginning of the 1960s, Latin American sociology still appeared to be strongly shaped by European and North American theoretical frameworks. Nevertheless, as this environment of close intellectual collaboration developed alongside the creation and strengthening of university institutions, new theories and analytical concepts began to emerge, enabling an understanding of these countries' conditions from the perspective of the colonized and contributing to the construction of a theory grounded in dependency. Many of the

intellectuals who later developed these theories participated in the Seminar, among them Gino Germani, Costa Pinto, and Florestan Fernandes.

Within this perspective, educational research would also take new directions. However, that is a discussion for another occasion. What seems particularly important here is to highlight the possibility, during this period, of constructing a network of intellectuals from different fields who were engaged in debates concerning national policies, especially those related to education.

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