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Education in Latin America. Exclusion or participation

*Germán W. Rama**

This study looks at education in Latin America from the angle of the counterpoint between social participation and elitist exclusiveness. It alludes first to the educational model proper to the colonial system and to its perpetuation as reflected in an exclusion from culture and knowledge which is described as a distinguishing feature of the situation in Latin America up to the middle of the present century. The author then goes on to deal with the existing contradictions between social practice and expositions of principle, analysing characteristics proper to the region in terms of educational supply and demand. In this connection he refers to the limitation of educational supply as a form of social control, and to the contradictions produced within educational systems by the divergence between the demands of the various social groups, inasmuch as they are given consideration on a plane more closely linked to educational policy than to the specifically technical aspects of education. Next he analyses the form taken by the development of education in the region during the last three decades, posing the question of the contradiction between the expectations focused on education and the real possibilities of upward social mobility that society affords. In addition, he singles out some features of the region's process of structural change in recent decades, examining the role of education as a social adjustment variable—in the field of socialization, training, upward mobility, etc.—and also as a social conflict variable, by reason of the incongruity between the expectations of participation pivoting on education and the exclusiveness prevalent in many societies. Lastly, on the basis of the interaction of three variables, he propounds four socio-educational models—exclusive, classist, segmentary and universalist—with the aim of encompassing the diversity of historical situations actually existing in the region.

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I

The options: exclusion and participation

A study of education as a social process inevitably involves referring to it as one of the significant dimensions of social participation. This concept can, in the last analysis, be reduced to a very elementary category: to the opposition between élites and masses, and therefore to democratization. That is, democratization understood as a process of organization of a society whose members are considered—from the human standpoint—as equal, with the right to intervene, to reap the benefit of the material and non-material goods created by society, to participate in their development and to decide upon the orientation of the social system through the political mechanisms, which presuppose that everyone is capable of explicitly enunciating a concept with regard to collective organization.

In a contrary sense, the various forms of elitism rest on equally simple notions. According to these, a section of society sees itself as a superior group, destined in consequence to be the society's ruling—and exclusive—minority. The remainder are disqualified in the light of ideological constructs formulated by that same minority, on different bases, depending upon the stage reached by the social structure. They may invoke a metasocial warrant for exclusion (like the justification of authority in the Divine Plan or in the ideological plan exalted to the category of dogma); they may be based on classifications ranking human beings by racial criteria, where the emergence of a few genetic traits out of their whole vast aggregate is used to establish an arbitrary division between the superior and the inferior; they may resort to the tautological argument that the acquisition of material possessions and of power is a manifestation of the innate superiority of the group in question (a view for which religious grounds have been provided by certain currents of Protestant thought; as Max Weber remarked in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, the badge of God's elected was social success); or, lastly, they may find support in cultural differentiation, and mark the boundary line between minorities and masses with a *límite* which separates the barbarian from the civilized world,

thereby rendering the bulk of society ineligible for participation as being incapable of understanding complex social and technical processes.¹

To this justification criteria has been added the notion of historical destiny, the bearer of which is to be a minority as regards the attainments of a specific social order; whence springs the implicit idea that only a few are in a position to interpret the collective good and to justify the imposition of their views on others, even if it has to be done by coercive and violent means. The old inquisitorial criterion of power that determines and enforces the behaviour acceptable in the members of society has come to be a justification very frequently invoked, which invariably dissembles the privilege of a minority.

II

Exclusion: its history

In the history of Latin America the concepts of participation and exclusion find expression not only in an oppositional counterpoint, but in contradictory relations deriving from the lack of coherence and social articulation between the forms taken by social structures in the past and the role of the ideologies that were disseminated by political élites with the aim of creating, for the societies of the New World, qualitative bases different from those prevailing in Europe's *Ancien Régime*.

Latin America was one of the regions of the world where the colonial model of social organization remained in force longest, with an overlapping of conquered populations, African slaves and a dominant white minority. In the course of three centuries, this model, which

In this case the quality with which domination is invested is that of *absolute truth*, denying society the use of reason and the condition of liberty, and so harking back to the struggle for the assertion of human ability to make a choice and to the idea of freedom *vis-à-vis* power, which John Stuart Mill epitomised when he said "that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right".²

combined exclusion, exploitation and domination, established a set of referents for relations between minorities and masses which were retained beyond the formal termination of the power of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, and have been projected into our own times. In some cases, the institutions on which the model was based —such as slavery, which lasted in Brazil until 1888— persisted long enough to establish seigneurial relations and an internalization of racial inferiority which still linger in the collective memory. In countries with a strong indigenous basis, the economic disintegration following upon the close of the cycle of production of precious metals embodied the domination patterns in a type of hacienda-indigenous community relation which, in countries like Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, survived until after the Second World War. In other countries, like Chile, the long-drawn-out warfare against the indigenes dragged on until

¹See François Jacob, *Le jeu des possibles. Essai sur la diversité du vivant*, Paris, Fayard, 1981; Juan Francisco Marsal, "La ideología de la derecha", in J.F. Marsal (compiler), *Argentina conflictiva*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Paidós, 1972; C. Wright Mills, *La imaginación sociológica*, translated by Florentino M. Torner, Mexico City, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961.

²John Stuart Mill, *On liberty*, any reprint, e.g., London, Oxford University Press, *The World's Classic series*, 1942, p. 15. (First published 1859.)

the end of the nineteenth century and established mechanisms of personalized dependence, if not of adscription to the land, for a mass of indigenous or mestizo population which is integrated in the relations of dependence and exclusion that in everyday speech are summed up in the term '*patrón de fundo*' ('the master').

In the structural model of colonial times, a key element in domination consisted in ensuring the exclusion of the descendants of the conquered races, of the slave population and of the barely differentiated human aggregate that can be described as 'the people', by invoking criteria relating to station in life and to culture which gave congruency to social and economic exclusion. In the first place, a complex juridical organization was constructed under which racial conditions were ranked as whites, negroes, indians, mestizos, mulattos, *cuarterones*, *quinterones*, *cholos* and countless other denominations with which an attempt was made to fit the mestization process into a framework of any kind. To each category corresponded a system of rights which, in relation to education and culture, had specific status. The statutes of the Universidad de San Jerónimo specified the non-admittance of negroes, mulattos and slaves of any sort, and in Mexico, negroes, mulattos and indians were excluded from the possibility of becoming teachers, as a precaution lest any of them should have acquired an education inconsistent with his place in the social order. Exclusion was also based on the need for political control over the broad masses of the socially inferior. Thus, in 1785 the "Royal Order of the Viceroy of Peru respecting the college of caciques (chiefs) and noble Indians of Lima" issued a warning that "the establishment of village schools may have very harmful consequences, and that Indians must be given instruction only in the Christian doctrine, since any other teaching is highly dangerous; considering that since the conquest there seems to have been no revolution on the part of these natives which was not stirred up by one with rather more education".³

³Quoted in Gregorio Weinberg, *Modelos educativos en el desarrollo histórico de América Latina*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/5, Rev.1, Buenos Aires, February 1981.

One of the most obvious manifestations of the segmentary character distinguishing the colonial model is the want of interest in getting the whole population to unite in speaking the same standard language. If nearly five centuries after the discovery of America it can be estimated that approximately one-tenth of the region's population still preserves a mother tongue other than the official language, one can imagine what the size of this sector of society must have been until such recent times as the early decades of the present century. This absence of linguistic integration was by no means the result of respect for the cultural identities of the conquered or enslaved groups, but reflected the lack of a unifying process in the production and circulation of economic and cultural goods, besides betraying a domination strategy which denied 'entitlement to speak' to vast social groups because they were excluded from the official language, which *ipso facto* was imposed on all inhabitants as the only one legitimate and compulsory for all official and market transactions. "Les locuteurs dépourvus de la compétence légitime se trouvent exclus en fait des univers sociaux ou elle est exigée, ou condamnés au silence"..., which implies their exclusion from the nation, a "...groupe tout a fait abstrait et fondé sur le droit", in which "deviennent indispensables la langue standard, impersonnelle et anonyme comme les usages officiels qu'elle doit servir, et, du même coup, le travail de normalisation des produits des habitus linguistiques".⁴

Even in the countries where the influences of African and indigenous tongues were very limited (or eradicated at an early stage in consequence of evangelization), in the course of rural history—which was 'the' history of Latin America until far into the present century—a

⁴Those who are without legitimate qualification to speak are in actual fact excluded from the social universes where it is required, or are condemned to silence", which implies their exclusion from the nation, "a group that is entirely abstract and founded upon law", in which "the standard language, impersonal and anonymous as the official uses which it has to serve, becomes indispensable, and so, by the same token, does the work of standardization of the products of linguistic habits." Pierre Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire*, Paris, Fayard, 1982, pp. 42 and 31.

popular language grew up which became established as a legitimate tongue owing to the limited communication between the rural world and the urban 'islands'. These forms of language had validity and relative power as long as the men who used them succeeded in exercising political and military capacity to confront the central and urban powers; they were subsumed into the category of vulgar colloquial language once urban and bourgeois power became dominant. Accordingly, attempts at nation-building on the basis of popular cultural patterns were systematically crushed in favour of the construction of a State which regarded itself as representing the material and cultural power groups. In the case of the River Plate, rural culture was given expression in poetic oral forms, and perhaps first made itself heard at the time of the struggle for independence through Bartolomé Hidalgo's *Cielitos*; in written form, it culminated in the epic by José Hernández, *Martín Fierro*, a nostalgic literary evocation of the cultural voice of the conquered group. Both writers belong to the line of educated poets who adopted the party and the language of the people, with one special characteristic: the reformulation of popular language—which many authors had attempted in an effort to satisfy the European taste for the exotic—was restored to the people from which it came, and was understood as their own, in the exceptional case of *Martín Fierro*.

Education was not an indispensable good for the execution of productive activities; in a rural world with little technology, occupational skills were acquired through direct apprenticeship, so that the most significant concern for education revolved around the universities.

These were taken to be primarily centres of theological and legal training; that is their function was to recruit the two intellectual groups which, through the spiritual order and the juridical order, generated the ideology and the organization necessary for the domination system. In contradistinction to what happened with Anglo-Saxon colonization, which, on establishing settlements, created first and foremost primary schools of a communal or religious type, in Latin America the universities were the most important institutions in the educational system.

In educational terms, all this was reflected in the fact that exclusion from culture and knowledge was one of Latin America's most distinguishing features up to about the mid-twentieth century. The few census data available (taking into consideration, moreover, that the deterioration is more serious than the figures show, because of incomplete enumeration of the scattered rural population) reveal that the illiteracy rate among the population aged 14 years or over was as much as 53% in Argentina in 1895; in the same year, it reached 68% in Chile, and in Cuba it was 43% for the population over 10 years of age. Lastly, in Brazil, in the second decade of the twentieth century, while in the district of Rio de Janeiro the rate was 41%, it rose to about 80% for the national population as a whole. In 1950, with the exception of Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba and Uruguay, the illiteracy rate of the populations over 15 years of age exceeded 30% in all the Latin American countries, 50% being recorded in Brazil and even higher percentages in Central America.⁵

⁵Cf. the data given in Gino Germani, *Estructura social de la Argentina*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Raigal, 1955; Jorge Nagle, *Educação e sociedades na Primeira República*, Editorial Universidade de São Paulo, 1974; Germán W. Rama, "Educación media y estructura social en América Latina", in

Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, No. 3, Santiago, Chile, 1972; Juan Pablo Terra, *Alfabetismo y educación básica de los jóvenes en América Latina*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/24, Buenos Aires, 1980.

III

Participation: its ideology

From the time of the exploits of the Independence, the ideologists of the foundational process took as their negative referent the social and power structures in force under the colonial order and in the absolutist countries of Europe; the Enlightenment thinking of the eighteenth century and the social organization of the United States were the groundwork for the establishment of free republics and societies. Alongside the repudiation of Spanish colonial power the idea took root that a 'new world' was being created which would not be governed by either the aristocratic distinctions or those based on race and station in life that had characterized the colonial order.

In some society the call to liberty had unexpected effects in the shape of spontaneous participation by rural masses and races regarded as inferior, so that the nation-building period was characterized by an ambivalence which left its mark on subsequent history: on the one hand, some territories knew nothing of the challenges issued by popular mobilization to the heirs of colonial power; on the other, the process of constituting the State took up almost the whole of the nineteenth century and ended with the self-assertion of the urban bourgeoisies, whether those that owned the means of production which linked them with the external market, or those others that by virtue of control of the State, negotiated with foreign powers the concession of natural resources. In every case, however, enshrined in the Constitutions and in official expositions of policy was the theoretical principle that sovereignty was vested in the people; that power had its origin in suffrage, in some instances theoretically unrestricted and in others limited by censitorial distinctions; that there were no differences but those of merit and virtue; and that education would be defined as the sacred responsibility of governments to educate the 'sovereign' for the full exercise of his rights.

This kind of statement —theoretical and masking the real state of affairs— was to be developed by the great reformers of the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in an endeavour to convert these abstract principles into concrete practice.

In Mexico, Benito Juárez, in a speech reflecting manifest leanings towards popular and nationalist power, was to assert that what prevented children's attendance at school was public poverty. "The man who has not enough to feed his family sees his children's education as a very far-off good, or as an obstacle to the winning of their daily bread. Instead of sending them to school, he makes use of them to look after the house or to hire out what little personal work capacity they have, as a means of slightly alleviating the crushing burden of poverty. If that man had some facilities; if his daily toil earned him some profit, he would take care to see that his children were educated and received solid instruction in any of the branches of human knowledge. The desire for learning and enlightenment is innate in the heart of man. Remove the obstacles that poverty and despotism place in his way, and he will seek knowledge by the light of nature, even if no direct protection is accorded him. All too well known are the causes that produce this poverty among us."⁶

At the other end of the continent, on the River Plate, the challenge issued was that of constituting a national society which would do away with rural-urban dualism, described by Sarmiento as "civilization and barbarism"; which would integrate European immigrants of peasant origin from the less developed parts of Europe, bearers of local cultural patterns manifested in the importance attached to their own dialects; and which, lastly, would simultaneously found the nation and the State,

⁶"Exposición al soberano congreso de Oaxaca al abrir sus sesiones" (Inaugural address to the sovereign congress of Oaxaca) (22 July 1848), in Benito Juárez, *Documentos, Discursos y Correspondencia, Selección y Notas de Jorge L. Tamayo*, Ministry of National Wealth, Mexico, 1971, vol. I, pp. 561-562, quoted in Gregorio Weinberg, *op. cit.*

establishing as a bridge between the two a political democracy which would make the State the mouthpiece of the nation.

The theoretical basis for the functioning of society drew its nourishment from positivism, which also contributed the application of scientific methodology in education, instead of dogmatism and verbalism; the forward strides in education made by the Swiss and the Germans, and, above all, the experience of the United States of America, constituted the paradigms. A propos of the United States, it was remarked that "by allying the school with democracy, the two major principles of modern society, they have been able to grow, in a hundred years of independent life, into the greatest, richest and happiest of modern nations".

Hence, in the view of the Uruguayan reformer José Pedro Varela, education establishes the basis of a republican democracy, so that it was regarded above all as the cornerstone of the organization of civic society. "The extension of the vote to all citizens entails, as an inevitable consequence, the diffusion of education to all: since without it man has not the awareness of what he is doing that is necessary for rational action. In a parody of what happened in France, we, the Spanish-speaking peoples of South America, have believe that the issue of a decree is enough to institute a republic, and that the *élan* of certain revolutionary movements, which change men without changing things, without bringing about genuine revolutions, suffices to alter institutions and pour the life of society into new moulds. The task is impossible: the dream a chimaera. To establish a republic, the first step is to form the republicans; to create a government of the people, the first step is to rouse up, summon to active life, the people themselves; to ensure that public opinion has sovereign authority, the first step is to form public opinion; and all the great necessities of democracy, all the requirements of a republic, have only one possible means of fulfilment: to educate, to educate, and still to educate."⁷

⁷José Pedro Varela, *Obras Pedagógicas, La educación del pueblo*, vol. I, Montevideo, Biblioteca Artigas, 1964, p. 71; this text is a reprint of the original edition published in 1874.

Proposals for the development of education were initially of limited scope. In most countries, the forms of domination described above did not create the requisite social space for their implementation; and popular education first began to spread in societies whose model of outward-directed economic expansion, on the basis of national control of the means of production, necessitated a new global social order. It was the large landowners of Uruguay themselves, producers for the export market, who were to support educational reform, because they saw in it the conditions for the pacification of the gauchos en masse and their transformation into wage-earning peons. But the process of diffusion of popular education was to be associated with the existence of manpower requirements that encouraged international immigration and were accompanied from the outset by the relative power of the wage-earning masses and the early development of urban centres for marketing and elementary industrial production, which were the springboard for significant processes of upward social mobility leading towards the formation of urban middle classes.

These middle classes, with the backing of proletarian sectors, were to play a part as members or supporters of the ruling alliance, receiving by way of reward, in the political market, the allocation of educational services which were favourable to the urban sectors and, within these, essentially to themselves; as will presently be seen, however, the services concerned came to constitute a universalist educational system, destined to confer a right upon the groups which, lacking capital and tradition, were to build around culture and education the groundwork of a meritocracy.

A similar process took place in Costa Rican society, as from the end of the nineteenth century, as a consequence of the formation of a middle class of independent farmers on the basis of population settlements (transplanted not subjugated) for coffee-growing, which calls for family work. These rural middle classes took part, in association with financial and marketing groups, in a power alliance through which the constitution of a nation qualitatively different from Central American conditions was achieved by means of a system of social participation which

found expression in the homogeneity of popular education —not particularly necessary, in

instrumental terms, for agriculture— and in a system of democratic participation.⁸

IV

The foundational ideology and the European situation

The foundational ideology to which reference has been made, and the nature of the process of change initiated in Latin American societies around 1950, inspired the peoples of the region to try to put into real effect the theoretical principles enunciated with regard to the functioning of societies.

As societies —and within them their different social groups— approached the threshold of participation and integration in the national community, demand for education flared up. Only in a few cases does the great metamorphosis of education witnessed by the region during the last three or four decades stem from a power decision which, in combination with a sustained long-term policy, has imposed the extension of educational coverage at the various levels of education. Far from it: a review of plans and their quantitative projections shows that in almost every instance they have been left behind by events, in a process instrumented more by the linkage of the population with the bureaucracy than through the formulation of coherent political programmes with ideological backing.

For the purpose of interpreting the nature of demands and movements in favour of education, a digression on the way it evolved in European societies may be of use. As has been

analysed in another study,⁹ in Europe the spread of literacy began with the Reformation, which introduced the culturally revolutionary concept that communication between mankind and God is effected through the written word. Consequently, the diffusion of literacy was at first associated with the expansion of Protestantism, and was then propagated to the more developed areas, so that in the course of the cycle of social struggles inaugurated by the French Revolution, the more modern section of societies was qualified to receive written messages, inasmuch as it had already become literate. The establishment of national educational systems at the end of the nineteenth century signified the culmination, not the start of the pursuit of literacy. All the political groups supported the existence of schools because cultural exclusion was of little use for keeping the broad masses out of political affairs, and the object now was to integrate them in accordance with a socializing message. Consequently, discussion was not focused on whether to educate or not to educate, but on the content of teaching, and the contestants in the debate were the conservative-religious, republican-lay and socialist-lay currents of thought. For the proletarian masses, education was a battle-flag; through it they could gain the right to vote from which they were excluded by illiteracy, could

⁸See Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina*, Mexico City, Editorial Siglo XXI, 1969; Lucio Geller, "El crecimiento industrial argentino hasta 1914 y la teoría del bien primario exportable", in *El Trimestre Económico*, Mexico City, October-December 1970, in which it is shown that industrial wages were higher in Buenos Aires than in England; Germán W. Rama, "Dependencias y segmentación en el Uruguay del siglo XIX", in *Revista Paraguaya de Sociología*, No. 44, Asunción, January-April 1979; "Desarrollo comparativo de Uruguay y Nueva Zelanda durante el siglo XIX", in John Fogarty,

Ezequiel Gallo and Héctor Diéguez (compilers), *Argentina y Australia*, Buenos Aires, Instituto Torcuato Di Tella, 1979; Juan Carlos Tedesco, *Educación y sociedad en la Argentina (1880-1900)*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Pannedille, 1970; José Fernando García, *Educación y desarrollo en Costa Rica*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/2, Rev. I, Buenos Aires, 1978.

⁹Germán W. Rama, Introduction to UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP, *Educación y sociedad en América Latina y el Caribe*, Santiago, Chile, UNICEF, 1980.

keep their children out of work and could acquire knowledge with which to build up a proletarian culture or fit themselves to dispute the power of the bourgeoisie. Accordingly, it was precisely in the countries with the most rigid class structure, such as England, where the struggles for education were most closely associated with the proletarian movement. The primary school once consolidated and widespread, secondary and higher education were jealously defended by respectable academic barriers, established by the very people who regarded themselves as destined for a higher culture, while at the same time the idea was instilled into the inferior groups that only the outstandingly excellent, in individual terms, could be 'sponsored' by the educational system itself for the pursuit of higher studies and the attainment of social promotion. This model, prevalent throughout Europe during the first half of the present century, had a very high degree of legitimacy

and was accepted as a social order resulting from the stratification of culture. Accordingly, when the expansion of post-primary education began in the 1850s, it was effected on the basis of a clear-cut academic and bureaucratic design which assigned to each social group an education congruent with its social background and intellectual development, classifying the latter according to linguistic abilities and capacity for abstract discourse, or the skills proper to manual and technical work. As a result, there were no educational explosions but gradual openings-up correlated with increasing urbanization, the development of science and technology, occupational differentiation and controlled social mobility. Up to a point, the social groups of lower social rank received more benefits in terms of consumption and participation than in terms of culture and education, nor did they press for the latter by attempting to override the canons of academic selection.¹⁰

V

The foundational ideology and the Latin American process

In Latin America the process is different, and the following aspects of it can be singled out:

a) In the past the option—in terms of domination—was between educating or not educating; the latter criterion was predominant, i.e., concern for social control took precedence over an orientation favourable to national integration. In view of this attitude on the part of the State, the churches and middle-level organizations can hardly be found to have fulfilled the same role in Latin America as in Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon countries with respect to the development of primary education. The societal characteristics previously described account for the very limited development of these middle-level organizations, and for the fact that little was done by the municipal authorities, which could have combined their work of local administration and regulation with the development of the primary school. The result was that

in the mid-twentieth century except in the countries that had made an early start on the process of modernizing education (Argentina, Uruguay and Costa Rica and, to a lesser extent, Chile and Cuba), the primary school remained the prerogative of the upper and middle urban strata; for the urban proletarian and popular sectors the supply was limited, and for the population living in rural areas, which was then half the total population, it was virtually nil.

¹⁰François Furet and Jacques Ozouf, *Lire et écrire. L'alphabétisation des français de Calvin à Jules Ferry*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1977; Carlos Cipolla, *Educación y desarrollo en Occidente*, Barcelona, Ariel, 1970; François Bourricaud, *Le bricolage idéologique. Essai sur les intellectuels et les passions démocratiques*, Paris, P.U.F., 1980; Brian Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1974; Antoine Prost, *L'École et la famille dans une société en mutation*, in Vol. IV, *De l'enseignement et de l'Éducation en France, Histoire générale*, Paris, Nouvelle Librairie de France, 1981.

b) The cycle of change in Latin American societies subsequent to the Second World War was accompanied by major developments in the shape of urbanization, the emergence in some cases and in others the intensification of industrial production, and the differentiation of worker groups as well as of various sectors of the middle strata, while in the meantime great political changes were taking place, ranging from the various forms of populism, through different types of reformist movements, to national and popular revolutions; and alongside all this, a demand for education sprang up which simultaneously affected every level, primary, secondary and higher education alike.

The development of the educational system stemmed from a body of demands which, as they had their origin in different social groups with different degrees of participation, pursued not only diverse but even contradictory objectives. In the 1950s and 1960s demands were fundamentally urban, and paramount among them were those originating in the capital cities, while in the 1970s, in addition, sections of the rural population, either on account of the penetration of capitalist patterns in the rural environment, or through communication with urban areas, or as the effect of a predisposition to migration —accompanied by 'anticipatory' socialization, particularly marked in the case of women— began to demand schools and, in some instances, integral educational cycles comprising part of the domain of secondary education.

The middle and lower middle urban groups were quick to call for an extension of secondary education which, in the 1950s, occurred essentially in the countries that had already made considerable progress in respect of education; these were joined by other countries, such as Venezuela and Panama, which rapidly expanded the educational supply. Elsewhere, very notable rates of increase were observable, but starting from extremely low levels of secondary education coverage. By the 1970s, only in six countries were gross rates of secondary school enrolment lower than 15%, and in more than half the Latin American countries they exceeded 30%, while in some they were as high as over 50% of the theoretically educable population.

In countries where primary education was less developed, demand for it was sustained by the intermediate groups; in the remaining countries, on the other hand, as from the 1950s, this demand spread to the urban popular sectors. The inertia of the rural population in this respect and the greater possibilities of controlling their potential demand explain why not until 1980 were gross enrolment rates of more than 90% attained in most of the Latin American countries.

Concurrently, the social groups which were in a better position to realize the importance of education and to catch the ear of power secured the diffusion of higher education at whirlwind speed. The results was that the gross enrolment rate at this level shot up from a modest 1.9% in 1950 to 16.7% in 1980, or, in other words, whereas there had formerly been two university students in every 100 young people aged 20 to 24 years, by 1980 the ratio became 1 to 6.

As no integrated primary education system had existed prior to this process, and as its expansion was, above all, the result of demands which stemmed from groups with unequal social power, a strange educational system has been created in the region at whose upper extreme gross rates of university enrolment are comparable in some countries to those current in Europe at the same date, while in others they correspond to those recorded by the European countries in 1970; as for the more backward Latin American countries, their situation is similar to that observed in Europe in 1960. In contrast, at the bottom of the educational system, the average figure for Latin America, to determine which completion of a six-year school cycle is used as an indicator, is a mere 50% of the school-age population, and is comparable only to the position in the European countries during the first two decades of the century. In other words, the levels of education or school enrolment at the earliest stage (first to third grade) call to mind the Third World, whereas the coverage of higher education evokes the image of the existing situation in the First World.

The only exceptions to this disparate structure are the countries which embarked upon the development of primary education in the nineteenth or early twentieth century. The inequality is most striking in those others, which, during the last two decades, have attempted to

achieve a great leap forward in education within the framework of social structures highly polarized in terms of social stratification, if not segmentation, the latter being determined by the superimposition of racial, regional or rural-urban barriers.¹¹

c) The expansion of education was eminently a political process. The population urged its demands for a highly appreciated good, but it lacked an image of the complexity of the learning process, and formed a conception of education as something almost magical, implicit in which was an eagerness to get to school as if mere access to it were sufficient to bring about a personal metamorphosis.

The power group, for its part, in expanding the supply, aspired to meet these demands and to gain legitimacy. It is very important to stress that whatever the type of power and the way in which it enforced its domination of society, the social demand for education was never rejected outright.

As will be seen later, the relation between supply and demand is one of the issues in this social struggle for participation in a society where at least on the plane of official declarations, the population cannot be denied the right to education, even at those levels which most developed societies consider élitist, whether for academic or for social reasons, or for a mixture of both.

This attitude was doubtless influenced by other development requirements and specific conceptions of the role of education in social change, among which the following may be noted:

i) The necessity of training human resources in societies undergoing a whirlwind process of change, which meant that in the course of a few years voluminous manpower contingents were required for an expanding industry, and later for the modern tertiary activities;

ii) The need to establish new socialization patterns when the traditional rural patterns were already useless *vis-à-vis* the big urban concentrations;

iii) Requirements of skilled personnel for complex activities; to meet these requirements at the highest level, a very broad base was screened for talent. Generally speaking, such conceptions were linked to expectations regarding the contribution of human capital to the attainment of greater efficiency in production and social organization. Some of these ideas were put forward by ECLA itself, and frequently appear in the so-called 'book plans' of governments in the region, on which social policy as a whole is based. It must be noted, however, that similar results could have been achieved by recourse to other ways of designing the educational system, and that the influence of this body of ideas was very uneven in Latin America, a fact which did not prevent the forms assumed by educational expansion from depending more upon social conditions than upon theoretical and ideological projects. The influence of international organizations and of the paradigm constituted by the developed countries was mainly exercised through expository analyses which aimed at *ex post* rationalization of the social process, or introduced as an element of irrationality specific paradigms of educational reform applied on similar lines in countries with different social and educational structures, and with diametrically opposed requirements in respect of culture and training of human resources.¹²

d) Both social demands and State policies assume that education is one of the ways of distributing social goods, but neither the one nor the other have taken it into consideration that education constitutes a social subsystem responsible for the creation and transmission of knowledge. This explains why both the expansion and the restriction of education have been effected without regard to the quality of the knowledge distributed, or to the effects that the

¹¹UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP, *Desarrollo y Educación en América Latina. Síntesis General*, Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, *Informes Finales 4*, Vol. 2, part IV, "Descripción de las principales tendencias del sistema educativo entre 1950 y 1980"; part V, "Caracterización de la estructura del sistema educativo latinoamericano"; Vol. 3, part VII, "El desarrollo de la educación media"; part VIII, "El desarrollo de la educación superior", Buenos Aires, 1981.

¹²ECLA, *Education, human resources and development in Latin America*, New York, United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.II.P.7, 1968; Rodrigo Vera, *Disyuntivas de la educación media en América Latina*, Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC 19, Buenos Aires, 1979.

policies in question may have on the generation or on the disarticulation of scientific knowledge. What is more, many educational policies formulate objectives clearly incompatible with the real availability of human resources in the least degree qualified to attain them. Because education is at the very heart of social conflict and distribution, its specifically technical aspects have been overborne by this dimension. Theoretically, a modern educational system is structured around the value and hierarchy of knowledge, and it is in transmitting this knowledge that its functional specialization consists. This implies that the groups forming the educational system have, as the referent for their activity, the generation of knowledge plus technical and effective ways of transmitting it so as to promote the socialization of the new generations in the culture prevalent in the society of the time, as well as the attainment of personal development, understood as the internalization of values and the acquisition of the ability to learn. Under an educational system grounded on these values, policies for social broadening of enrolment will be regarded as an opportunity to generalize knowledge throughout society, but their implementation will be deemed possible on condition that the educational system itself really does continue to embody a scientific and cultural content; and, conversely, policies which militate against the specific objectives of education will be repudiated. Setting up such a system presupposes a process of differentiation of education from political systems and social class systems. The priorities of these latter would be acceptable only in so far as they were compatible with the knowledge objectives stated above.

The weak academic tradition of the teaching body, in view of its recent and defective pedagogical formation, prevented it from fulfilling a technical role: a warning, this, as to the time required for a cultural change, and the risks implied in radically altering the educational system without first evaluating the system that already exists. In addition, educational expansion ensured for those already educated the most dynamic of the accessible employment markets, and the power groups also found in that expansion ways of meeting the demands of the

middle-income sectors and making sure of certain clientele.

The technical sector's weak participation in educational reforms was not offset by the intervention of other sectors of society. In the first place, in most countries the scientific community was but little developed, and those who took part in debates on education did so in the capacity of political intellectuals; secondly, in most countries the technical and entrepreneurial sectors, public or private, required of the more skilled manpower relatively little in respect of scientific knowledge, and, in general, did not trouble about the qualifications of school learners, because the abundance of educated personnel allowed them to raise the level of formal requisites for work contracts. Entrepreneurs in most countries had more concern for the ideological background than for the scientific and technical training of the future labour force.

The most obvious consequence of all this was the ease with which the political authorities introduced changes in education in Latin America. Some countries witnessed reforms which abolished secondary education, and even the idea of such a thing; whereas in others, while university enrolment increased fifteenfold in little over ten years, authorization for opening universities was virtually unlimited, with the result that the number of faculties and universities exceeded a thousand. In every case, the axes of the reforms were social, not academic. In some, the main objective was to ensure free access to schooling and the continuity of studies, whatever the academic level, as a means of demonstrating the openness of the social system; in others, the goal was to direct the pressure for education into terminal channels or forms of training that would lead to the employment market and would have no direct repercussion on higher education; in this latter the most controversial questions were the system of access or the generation of courses for intermediate careers—in other words, problems of social engineering, not of education.¹³

¹³Germán W. Rama, "Les changements en éducation en Amérique Latine", in Association Francophone d'Éducation Comparée, *L'évaluation des changements en éducation*, Sèvres, No. 28, October 1982.

VI

Contradictions between discourse and practice

For the purpose of seeking to understand what form was taken by the development of education in the region during recent decades, special emphasis must be placed on two points. First, the transition from a historical situation of exclusion of the broad masses from education to one of intensive expansion of educational opportunities in which there was contradiction in kind between the vigorous demand and the supply that accompanied it: a process to which may be applied, in general terms, the words of José Medina Echavarría, according to whom "progress as an illusion has become progress as a fatality".¹⁴ Official declarations, which in the early years of the region's social and educational transition expounded the hopes pinned on the effects of educational expansion on development and society, nowadays tend to describe it as a problem of resources, of overeducation in relation to manpower requirements, of incongruity between social realities and inordinate aspirations to upward mobility through education. The second aspect to be stressed is the magnitude of the demands for education, the reason why they are so strongly felt throughout the social body, and why expectations respecting education are inconsistent with the social position of the homes from which they spring.

There can be no doubt that demands for education link up with the structural changes that have taken place in Latin American societies in recent years. As will shortly be discussed, education became the indispensable 'passport' enabling the new generations to take their place in urban life and in the increasing number of industrial occupations or modern services that necessitate education, if not as a specific requirement for the performance of the activities involved, certainly as a cultural requisite for integration into complex organizations.

But neither does this explanation cover the

whole problem, for it does not tell us the why and wherefore either of demand for education for cultural purposes, or the sizeable 'investment' that families place in education with ever-diminishing returns, nor, lastly, does it explain how aspirations to the attainment of higher studies are cherished in homes that barely reach subsistence levels.

It is difficult to base the quest for other explanations on empirical research —among other reasons, because Latin American social sciences have taken this situation for granted— since it is seldom grounded on research and more often, it depends on personal dialogue with members of such diverse categories as peasants, urban settlers or Ministers, or else on testimonies from educators or literary sources.¹⁵

What is certain is that education has expanded more intensively than any other social good, and its development is inconsistent with the opportunities afforded by the social order in respect of access to income and participation in power.

In urban popular groups, educational aspirations are infinite; in contrast, the level of satisfaction with regard to occupation, income, housing and even health betrays the recognition of a ceiling which generally speaking corresponds with the self-identification of these groups in the social system and with the perception of the possible and the impossible where access to goods is concerned given the prevailing order. And conversely, in these modest households, with their precarious housing and work conditions, the parents, themselves illiterate or with only the earliest grades of primary education, dream of their

¹⁴José Medina Echavarría, *Filosofía, educación y desarrollo*, Part One: *La reflexión crítica*; chapter 1, "El desarrollo y su filosofía", Mexico City, Editorial Siglo XXI, 1967, p. 71.

¹⁵Stella Vecino *et al.*, *Proceso pedagógico y heterogeneidad cultural en el Ecuador*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/22, Buenos Aires, 1979; José Matos Mar *et al.*, *Educación, lengua y marginalidad rural en el Perú*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/10, Buenos Aires, 1978; Julián Ripa, *Recuerdos de un maestro patagónico*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Marymar, 1980.

children's gaining university degrees. The aspiration is apparently untenable, in view of the fact that such homes have no cultural capital or educational instruments, such as books, and that they will need the economic effort, from an early age, of the very children whom, on the other hand, they destine to so culturally lofty a future. This discrepancy has customarily been interpreted as a manifestation of the existing maladjustment between social condition and aspirations, but it might also be reinterpreted to the effect that these educational aspirations reflect the contradiction between discourse and practice in the exercise of power in Latin America.

In the terrain of declarations, it has been asserted that upward social mobility is desirable and possible for all social groups, that culture is the most valuable good offered by society, that possession of it is what confers entitlement to collective esteem, and, lastly, that integration in the nation must be the main objective of individual and group behaviour, because the nation is the collective entity that gives meaning to individual identity; and this collective identity overrides any other consideration of social differentiation and stratification.

In the disquisitions in which the originality of the New World societies is asserted, equality is represented as the norm, and the status of individuals depends upon their merits and virtues. This concept, notwithstanding the evidence of stern reality to the contrary, was repeatedly alleged as the foundation for the legitimacy of the political system and was assimilated by society, which believed and still does believe it valid; consequently, education was regarded as the means of converting discourse into reality. The same argument accounts in turn for the fact that meager social attainments are imputed to individual responsibility; it often happens that in surveys the persons interviewed attribute their lack of social success to their low level of education—for want of supply, or by their own fault in not taking advantage of the supply that existed—which undoubtedly establishes the bases for social conformity with the patterns of social distribution.¹⁶ As the converse of this

self-blame must be viewed the demand for educational services to enable their children to bring the foundational political discourse to life; this seems ratified by the value which the social system has set on educational capital, and which is measureable by the notable income differences between the educated and the uneducated, and the assignment of prestigious social positions to those whose levels of education are high. In the past, when exclusion from education was predominant in Latin America, the élite made education their exclusive prerogative and legitimized their power through academic degrees; this was 'internalized' to such a degree that in some Latin America societies persons in an inferior social position, when speaking to someone they assume to be their social superior, address him as 'Doctor', 'Licenciado', etc.

The hierarchy of the cultural dimension must also be taken into consideration. In European societies, culture was associated with the condition of a superior social group and established an inter-group distinction which was transmitted by family channels; one manifestation of this was the importance attached to differences in the pattern or style and art of consumption, as evidence of the social background of individuals.¹⁷ In Latin America, the long-drawn-out cycle of conflicts over the constitution of the State and the succession of political and economic changes, with the consequent partial or total renewal of the upper groups, prevented the establishment of a higher culture handed down through family channels. On the contrary, culture was a creation of the educational system, and therefore theoretically accessible to all. Education was the means of acquiring a new personal dimension, which in terms of prestige equalled or exceeded the accumulation of goods.

What is more, in Latin America recognition is only just beginning to be accorded to the relation which has been established in the developed

¹⁶Germán W. Rama, *Grupos sociales y educación secundaria*, Montevideo, Editorial Arca, 1964; Juan Carlos Tedesco

and Rodrigo Parra, *Marginalidad urbana y educación formal. Planteo del problema y perspectivas de análisis*. UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, *Fichas/15*, Buenos Aires, 1980.

¹⁷Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction. Critique sociale du jugement*, Paris, Les Editions de Minuit, 1979.

countries between culture and school culture—with pejorative implications for the latter—or between autonomous cultural groups and the educational institutions of which they are independent, and their relation to which is reinterpretable in Weberian terms of prophetism and priesthood. It very often happens that some countries, with university enrolments of tens or even hundreds of thousands of students, are lacking in periodicals, cenacles and 'sophisticated' forms of cultural consumption in the field of the cinema, theatre and art in general. Another patent phenomenon is the political regression which has taken place in some societies, and which is characterized by rigid ideological control of universities and the consequent disappearance of their former channels of self-expression; this has caused what has been termed the 'cultural blackout', partly explicable by the want of an autonomous cultural ambit, independent of educational institutions.¹⁸

The superimposition of culture and institutionalized education, and still more the recognition that the latter generates the former, has influenced the fact that demands for culture, whether pursuing it as an objective in itself or merely status-seeking, have concentrated on the educational system and have been invested with a prestige that has spread even to relatively low social groups, which have come to consider culture as a good theoretically accessible to all.

Lastly, consideration should be given to another dimension: that of national integration. In societies originating in international immigration, as well as in those deriving from a fusion of arbitrarily aggregated multiracial inflows with relations of personalized dependence (i.e., the majority), nation-building aspirations are frustrated over and over again by the exclusivist preactivities of the groups in power. In oligarchic régimes, the people were disqualified for intervention in the *res publica* by their ignorance, and this was perpetuated by the absence of educational supply; subsequently, the restrictive pronouncements of political bureaucracies or technocratic groups asserted that the problems

were too complex for any but a few to be capable of adopting decisions. That is, in both cases, the lack of education was put forward as the formal reason for exclusion in a national and, therefore, participative society. Education is linked with citizenship, and in some Latin American societies illiteracy was, until the last decade, a cause of exclusion from the right to vote. Nevertheless, over and above the legal restrictions on citizenship, education was envisaged as the road *par excellence* to participation in political—that is, in the national—society.¹⁹

In the light of this aspect of the question, processes of social change through revolutionary political movements can be connected with mass demands for popular education, accompanied by the expenditure of great efforts in terms of resources, time and willingness of adults in the popular sectors to assume the invariably complex and difficult position of educands. The earliest manifestation of these achievements in Latin America was undoubtedly the popular education process under the Mexican Revolution, the reception accorded to the cultural missions of the 1920s and the Radical attempt to set afoot the so-called 'socialist education' in the 1930s. Later on, the Bolivian nationalist revolution of the 1950s gave rise to a remarkable peasant organization for the diffusion of education; and in more recent years the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions have exhibited—on an international scale—a surprising phenomenon: the first concern of the new authorities was to organize a mass mobilization of society in order to incorporate into education those formerly excluded from it, who made unprecedented efforts to learn, with a view to acquiring a good of no value whatever from the standpoint of its economic profitability.²⁰

¹⁹Germán W. Rama, "Estrutura e movimentos sociais no desenvolvimento da educação popular", in G.W. Rama (coordinator), *Mudanças educacionais na América Latina. Situações e condições*, Fortaleza, Editorial Universidade Federal do Ceará, 1983; Germán W. Rama, *Transición estructural y educación: la situación de la juventud*, paper presented at a seminar held by the CLACSO Education Committee, São Paulo, 20-23 June 1983.

²⁰Sylvain Lourie and Germán W. Rama, *Elaboración de lineamientos para una nueva educación*, Report to the Minister of Education of the Republic of Nicaragua, Managua, mimeographed text, August 1980; Josefina Zoraida Vásquez, "Tres

¹⁸Gregorio Weinberg, "El apagón cultural", in *El descontento y la promesa*, Buenos Aires, Editorial de Belgrano, 1982.

In this way, too, a linkage can be found between socially shared demands for education and democratization processes, such as that recorded in Venezuela (among other countries) barely 25 years ago: the will of the élites to construct a democratic system, and therefore to establish education as a prerequisite for citizenship, met with a generalized predisposition in society, which promoted a rapid institutionalization of education; and this, *inter alia*, entailed mass recruitment of educators from the whole of Latin America, necessary for the satisfaction of the aforesaid demand.

Lastly, reference should be made to the tie between nation and education in the case of the so-called small countries. When national identity began to take definite shape in these, some

apprehension arose, as a counterpart, in view of the intrinsic weakness implicit in the relatively small size of the societies concerned. Existence as a nation is not merely something to be taken for granted, but a permanent challenge, which involves, in the first place, economic viability, and, secondly, a strengthening of cultural integration, in pursuit of a hyperintegration which will afford protection against adverse conditions. It is not by chance that some of the smaller nations of the area, such as Costa Rica and Uruguay, are the countries in which the educational vocation and its achievements are most noteworthy; nor that Paraguay, for instance, with its harrowing historical experience of vulnerability, should also be, at its level, a country where popular demand for education is ardent in the extreme.²¹

VII

Education and structural change in Latin America

Throughout the period beginning around 1950 demands for educational supply and its expansion can be seen to be closely related with the structural changes undergone from that date onwards by Latin American societies.

During that space of time a new society came into being; but in contrast with the accepted tenets of classic sociological theory, it did not stem from an initially integrated structure. In Latin America, on the contrary, the process started from a society which has been described as dual, in an endeavour to explain the coexistence, at the same time and in the same space, of different social stages, the ordering of which was, no doubt, a good deal more diversified than the notion of dualism sought to express.

On the basis of the empirical data available, the following can be noted as the main features of this transition: an explosive rate of population growth (and, in consequence, larger numbers of

young people); a great increase in the proportion of urban population; an economically active population whose growth tended to diminish in the agricultural sector, but to increase in the industrial and above all in the modern tertiary sectors; in agriculture, the liquidation of what is known as the socio-economic model of the *hacienda*, with the ensuing displacement and impoverishment of the rural workers; and, lastly, significant rates of economic growth which did not help to increase social equality, but at all events, by raising the minimum level of income, permitted limited but real effects in the shape of a 'trickle-down' of income to the lowest social groups.

The basic changes described above brought about a whole set of modifications in the social structure which may be defined as a process of change through structural mobility. Obviously,

²¹Carlos Real de Azúa, "Small nations and the 'constrictive' style of development", in *CEPAL Review*, No. 4, Santiago, Chile, second half of 1977; Domingo M. Rivarola, *Educación y desarrollo en el Paraguay*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, DEALC/7, Rev.1, Buenos Aires, 1978.

intentos de cambio social a través de la educación", in Germán W. Rama (coordinator), *Mudanças educacionais na América Latina*, *op. cit.*

the intensity and modalities of this change varied from one country to another, but its effects on social stratification can be summarized, in broad outline, as follows:

a) An increase in the size of the working class, and differentiation between the sectors linked to the industries with more advanced technology and the rest (combined, in some countries, with a significant decrease in industrial employment);

b) Accelerated expansion of non-manual occupations and more and more differentiation between middle-class sectors. In this connection mention should be made of the gaps between, on the one hand, university-educated technicians integrated with the State and with the more dynamic economic sectors, and bearers of a rationale opposed to the inefficiencies and contradictions of the system, and on the other hand, such categories as those of small shopkeepers and artisans, threatened by structural change, and easily seduced by an ideological discourse at variance with the capitalist modernization of societies. It should also be pointed out that educational and generational gaps—the educated and the younger groups were dominant in the emerging sector—came to play a more important part than income levels in the definition of identities, because these tend to be founded on ideological bases, on citizenship. Within these middle classes some groups assumed a key role; among them the technobureaucrats, in whose ideology criteria linked with private enterprise were predominant. Equally susceptible of definition by its educational situation was the group concerned with health and educational activities, the volume of which in some countries was already beginning to equal or exceed that of the agricultural EAP. This group suffered notable losses of income, although not always of status, because the latter was enhanced by virtue of the role assigned to such activities by the 'critical intellectuals', whose development was bound up with lack of power and of possibilities of using their knowledge in the exercise of their occupations;

c) In relation to the entrepreneurial groups, a point that must be borne in mind is the transformation or disappearance of the rural oligarchy and the shaping of a modern entre-

preneurial sector, as well as the close linkage between the financial and industrial sectors, and between these and the State and transnational corporations, while, down below, the lines drawn by structural heterogeneity continued to separate the peasantry and the urban marginal sectors from the groups that were clearly integrated with capitalist development.

The present study is not the place to embark upon an analysis of the changes recorded in social structure and stratification, already carefully examined in a number of texts.²² What is important, on the other hand, is to underline, for the purposes of educational analysis, the concept of societies in process of change. During the period not only did the groups themselves change, but also their position in the system; it was society itself that was moving towards a future model not yet clearly defined. In the course of this process the pre-existing modern section of society was too small to absorb the mass of newcomers and transmit to it patterns of socialization and assimilation (the urbanization problem is a clear case in point). In more dynamic societies, analyses of intra-generational mobility indicate rapid shifts from agricultural to non-agricultural and from manual to non-manual occupations, and, in the aggregate, a succession of replacements which tended, in

²²At an ECLA Seminar on Recent Changes in Social Structures and Stratification in Latin America. Comparative Analysis of Countries and Regional Prospects in the 1980s (Santiago, Chile, 12-15 September 1983), a set of papers containing abundant information was presented, among which mention may be made of the following: Fernando Henrique Cardoso, *Dependencia y Democracia* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.14); Julio Cotler, *La construcción nacional de los países andinos* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.16); Francisco Delich, *Clase obrera, crisis industrial y recomposición social* (Argentina) (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.13); Claudio de Moura Castro, *Novas estruturas sociais e novas formas de organização no Brasil contemporâneo* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.12); John Durston and Guillermo Rosenbuth, *Procesos de cambio en la estructura socio-ocupacional panameña 1960-1980* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.10); Vilmar Faría, *Desenvolvimento, urbanização e mudanças na estrutura do emprego: a experiência brasileira dos últimos trinta anos* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.6); Carlos Filgueira, *Estructura y cambio social: tendencias recientes en Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.8); Rubén Katzman, *Notas sobre las transformaciones sectoriales del empleo en América Latina* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.3); Javier Martínez, *Tendencias de cambio en la estratificación social chilena 1970-1980* (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.4).

the first place, to weaken group identities, and secondly to accentuate expectations of social mobility.

These expectations have been sustained not by equalization processes—limited in their scope—but by structural changes, alongside mechanisms of integration into modern society which have proved extremely contradictory. In some dimensions, such as education and culture, the popular sectors were able to believe that they were succeeding in participating in power and making their influence felt when they obtained educational services. Concurrently, integration into the political community was an experience full of frustrations; in some cases it did not occur at all, while in others participation was symbolic, or was real but was followed by drastic exclusions. Lastly, where income was concerned a sort of 'external proletariat' grew up, formed by *minifundistas* and urban subproletarian groups, whose marginality became more marked as the average income of the population increased and new consumption patterns spread, while the groups integrated in the system met with ambivalent phases of achievements and setbacks in respect of participation in the fruits of economic growth.

The constitution of a new national and societal model was coincident with the crisis of the power of the oligarchy, and with the generalization of an economic organization which represented capitalism on the upgrade and an accelerated accumulation process (in some cases, accumulation which despoiled the popular sectors). It seems important to emphasize that this generalization of capitalist patterns came about in the absence of a ruling group capable of developing a power system and a legitimizing ideology consistent with the economic accumulation which this form of capitalism demands. With the exception of a single country, in Latin America there has been no instance of continuity, during a period of significant length, of dominant social groups that have exercised power without being subject to violent impugments, or without needing contradictory alliances in order to keep the power in their hands. What is more, it is precisely during these three decades of diffusion and imposition of the capitalist economic model that the most intensive social movements have been recorded,

the most vital revolutionary processes, and the deepest internal social cleavages, together with attempts to create new modes of social organization not based on capitalism, or at least not on the pure forms of capitalist concentration which were exactly what its implantation in the region implied. The very fact of the State's resorting to violence as a form of social control indicates the enormous difficulties the authorities have had in convincing society of the acceptability of the economic and social model, while at the same time it points to the immense mobilization capacity of social forces, which, for diverse motives and on a different scale, oppose the social and political, if not the cultural, corollaries deriving from the capitalist accumulation model.²³

In this changing society, education became an adjustment variable and an arena for the various social group's conflicting interests and ideologies with regard to the ideas of participation and exclusion.

As an adjustment variable education may be said to have performed the following functions:

a) It contributed the cultural elements necessary for effecting this rapid transition and for bringing about changes in occupational social positions;

b) It made the socialization of the new generations possible when the traditional mechanisms lost their efficacy and families in the lower population strata could hardly perform this task, given the gap between the educational levels of parents and children, and the fact that the life experience of one generation was no longer valid in relation to that of the next;

c) It afforded basic training of a generic cultural type, which was linked not so much with knowledge as with the capacity for adaptation to changing situations, which proved very important in a process of social transformation whose final destiny was and still is indiscernible, and which in many countries has undergone

²³Enzo Faletto and Germán W. Rama, *Algunas reflexiones sobre los procesos de cambio social en América Latina*, paper presented at the above-mentioned Seminar on Recent Changes in Social Structures and Stratification in Latin America.

profound modifications stemming from capricious propositions which, in the name of ideologies, attempted or successfully managed to bring about radical changes in social structures;

d) In the case of women, when the first two levels of education were generalized for both sexes alike, and feminine participation in higher education was also extended (although in a slightly lower proportion), the democratization of sexual relations became possible;

e) It established the minimal educational background required for youth to be incorporated in the expansion of the tertiary sector employment market. In Latin America, this sector contributed about 60% of the new jobs created between 1950 and 1980; even if personal services, whose educational requirements are more modest, are eliminated from the category, it still doubles the contribution of manufacturing to the employment supply.²⁴ (Official policies tenaciously strove to orient the new generations towards terminal technical training for their future entrance into industry; with still greater tenacity society repudiated this orientation and, in the light of better knowledge of market trends, called for general secondary education, which came to account for about 70% of enrolment at that level);

f) The articulation of educational expansion with the change in social structures seemed to provide real grounds for expectations of upward social mobility. Thus the social system gained legitimacy, because with the expansion of education the collective aspirations to mobility, access to culture and integration into national society appeared to take on reality; while the linkage between structural change and educational opportunities gave an apparently genuine ring to the values declared by the power system. The dynamism shown made more impression on the various social groups than did the goals attained; although certain groups received only a few school grades of an education whose low quality they were not in a position to assess, on observing the access of

other contiguous groups to higher educational levels they believed that reaching these themselves would be only a matter of time. All felt themselves to be on the same conveyor belt which, albeit a little later but without doubt infallibly, would carry them to the higher educational levels after which they hankered; if they never reached them, the blame was not to be laid on the social system but on themselves;

g) In view of the very great significance of education in Latin American society, its conversion into an accessible value made it possible to defer the questioning of the social system as expressed through its concentration of income and power. Many studies—in this same issue of the *CEPAL Review* that of Carlos Filgueira—have drawn attention to the greater elasticity of education, and how it became a field for social bargaining, while rigidity with respect to other variables remained unaltered. This contradiction was not total, since education became a system of upward social mobility within the framework of structural change, and even in the more unfavourable cases an indispensable 'passport' to competition in the employment market which afforded status and income. Nevertheless, it established bases for social consensus, mitigating the conflictive tendencies that were bound to arise in a process of structural transition which was accompanied by marked income concentration, and during which repressive forms of power all too frequently made their appearance. Like consumption, education became a social recompense which tempered the strong tendencies towards conflict existing during this period. The adult generation appeared more inclined to accept the injustice and irrationality of the system because education seemed to promise their children's participation later on.

Education can be a social adjustment variable if other social variables, for their part, make educational conquests meaningful. The first of these variables is the dynamism of structural change, whose maintenance implies the existence of a sizeable rural population in a position to enter urban life, as well as a steady increase in industrial occupations in the sector with advanced technology, and, in greater measure, the development of the modern tertiary occupations associated with the

²⁴UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, *La educación y los problemas del empleo, Informes Finales*, No. 3, Buenos Aires, 1981.

improvement of the population's living conditions, i.e., with income distribution through social channels. The second is a rate of economic growth sufficiently high to sustain the simultaneous betterment of all groups and an upward movement both in the occupational scale and in the scale of consumption. The third is an improvement in income distribution—which may or may not be consistent with the preceding variable—such that the mass diffusion of education is accompanied by equally mass access to forms of consumption correlative with the level of aspirations generated by culture itself. The generation that was the first to succeed in overleaping the barriers, once so significant, between manual and non-manual activities may feel content with this symbolic change; for the next generation, on the other hand, this will no longer be a conquest and their aspirations will be centred on the improvement of living conditions. The fourth variable is the population's ability to make use as citizens of the education received. If the educational system effectively creates capacities for reasoning and analysis, these capacities are not circumscribed to the occupational sphere, but are applied to the observations of society and promote the aspiration to participate in order to steer society towards images of future organization which are regarded as viable and to be desired.

The foregoing remarks open up two new dimensions of the analysis. The first relates to those social groups which were excluded from education, or those which received it in a form so incipient as to be barely equivalent to literacy teaching, and even those others which did not succeed in completing a six-year primary education (categories which in all amount to almost 50% of the school-age population). Their relative position in the social stratification system seriously deteriorates on account of the gap between their education and that received by the—now massive—sectors with advanced educational levels, and their expectations of incorporation into society may turn into deep-seated frustration, in view of their few completed years of study. Without breaking new ground in the analysis of a dual society, it must be pointed out that, as noted by Fernando H. Cardoso, the society engendered by the associate-dependent type of development

contradictorily synthesizes characteristic effects of 'mass societies' with aspects of the type society formerly called 'dual', marked on the one hand by the poverty and relative non-differentiation of the masses, formed by the 'subaltern classes', and on the other hand by the more integrated and more pronouncedly classist structure of the incorporated sectors.²⁵ While education has tended to reproduce this pattern, it has done so on a smaller scale, and the educational lines of demarcation not only do not coincide with the rest but represent a dynamic factor of access for subordinate social groups. An outstanding case in point is the situation of the marginal sectors in big cities, which are much better supplied with educational services than the rural population, whatever its social level. Perhaps this same ambivalence might be regarded as the cause of the very recent demands for educational services on the part of subproletarian and rural groups hitherto totally or partially excluded from education.

The second dimension relates to the way in which an adjustment variable can turn into a conflict variable. Given the great expectations pinned on education and the use made of it as a means of legitimizing the social system, when educational results do not come up to expectations social frustrations are generated which may become an important basis for movements in opposition to the *statu quo*. Particularly sensitive in this respect are the middle-income social sectors, which, taking the former oligarchy as their referent, continue to hope that advanced education will be synonymous with high income levels. But beyond this problem the generic question arises of the congruency between educational attainments and the use that can be made of them. In those societies where structural change has been very slow and, in contrast, educational expansion considerable, this incongruity has served as a basis for political 'contestation'. As Schumpeter has pointed out, when there is no room in the social structure for the technical cadres the identity of the technician slides into that of the intellectual, by which is meant that of

²⁵Fernando Henrique Cardoso, *Dependencia y democracia*, *op. cit.*

an intellectual critical of the system. At that stage expectations of individual mobility come to an end, and awareness grows up that a change in the social system is the only road to individual self-fulfilment, which can therefore be achieved solely through collective change.

In these circumstances the contradiction between the declarations formulated and the values professed by the power groups becomes obvious, all the more so when the latter have not been capable of generating an ideology to justify the capitalist development process carried out. Moreover, they have resorted—in association

with sectors originating in the one-time oligarchy or with religious or military groups that are the bearers of obsolescent conceptions—to old-style ideologies, contradictorily fusing the modernizing element in capitalist development with the archaic content of an anti-nation language, a language of anti-rationalism and of repudiation of the differentiation of social groups and of social change, which are the motive forces behind the dynamism of the cycle of permanent innovation that the functioning of capitalism requires.

VIII

Demand for education, State action and degree of differentiation of educational systems: analysis model

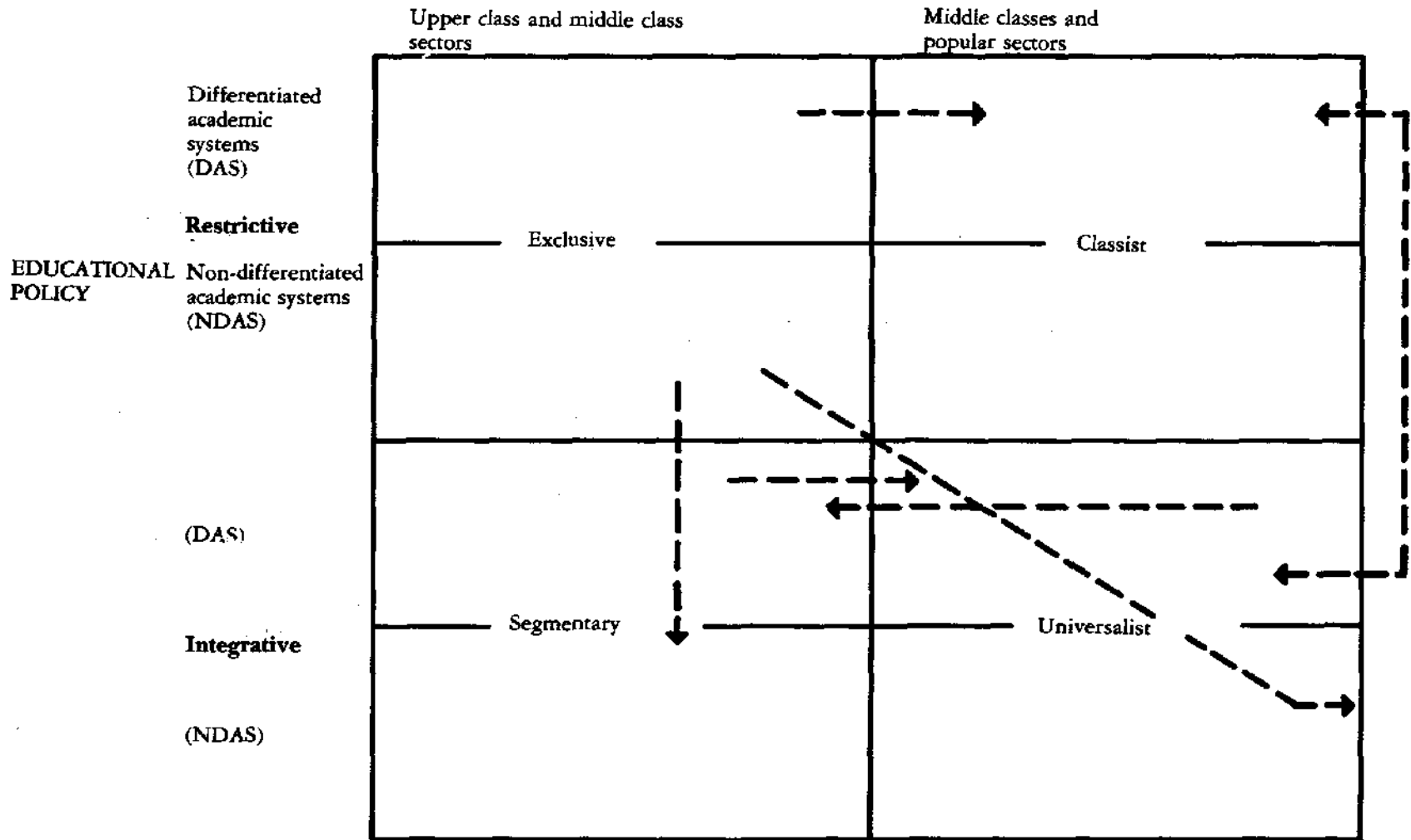
The foregoing analysis has brought out the way in which the development of Latin American society has been patterned by: a counterpoint between exclusion and participation; the role played in the legitimation of social systems by official expositions of principle and a political theory which, far from formally denying participation has made it the apparent prop of the social organization; the contradictory character of social preaching and social practice; the roots of demand for education in Latin America, and the mode of articulation between educational expansion and structural change since the Second World War; and, lastly, the part played by education as a variable of adjustment—and by now, in some cases, of dissension—in this process of structural change. The idea of adjustment, however, arose as an *a posteriori* observation of what the social process was like, telling us nothing of the reasons and the social forces that intervened in educational expansion; hitherto this expansion has been taken for granted, and all that has been said is that it resulted from economic demand, and in some cases from national integration projects which emerged in response to the need to build the

nation and integrate societies when the models of colonial origin, based on exclusion, were leading to social disintegration.

The time has now come to analyse how the different social strata were articulated in their generic demands for participation and specific demands for education; what action was taken by the State on its diverse fronts (as the State of social classes, as the State promoter of change and of national integration); and lastly what role was filled in this process by the educational systems, since these are theoretically subsystems specializing in the production and diffusion of knowledge, and therefore subject to professional values and norms which do not necessarily coincide either with the social groups' objectives of power or participation or with the objectives of exclusion or integration pursued by the State.

For the purposes of the analysis, recourse is had to an interpretation model which is presented below as a figure, constructed on the basis of the interaction of the following variables: dominant articulation in the type of educational demand, educational policy followed by the State and degree of differentiation of educational systems. This last affects the description of the

Figure
DOMINANT ARTICULATION IN THE TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL DEMAND



type of education, but does not determine it. Hence the analysis presents four socio-educational models which seek to encompass, in very general terms, the variety of specific historical situations to be found in the region.²⁶

We have called these four models exclusive, classist, segmentary and universalist. The exclusive educational model is that resulting from the combination of a restrictive State policy with a demand for education in which the upper classes and an associated fraction of the middle classes predominate. If these sectors are dominant in civic society, and in particular in the establishment of educational demand, and are confronted with a State which is trying to implement a policy of social and national integration, the outcome will be a segmentary educational model. The classist educational model emerges when middle classes and popular classes join forces in demanding education as a form of social participation, while the State, which represents the dominant groups, not only restricts the supply of education but attempts to adjust it in quantity and quality to the level of participation and of aspiration to social mobility which it deems appropriate for each social class. Lastly, the universalist educational model comes into being when the middle classes and the popular sectors form in one way or another a power alliance whose objectives include, precisely, an educational policy geared to social and national integration; moreover, in its extreme instances, this policy may propose to offset, at least in part, the unequal distribution of goods—material and non-material—in which social classes originate, and to make education into a meritocratic selection system.

In each of the compartments of the figure a subdivision into two categories has been introduced: in the first appear the differentiated educational systems that have taken a specific shape in which academic and scientific objectives are paramount; those in the second, given their dependence on the power system and on the social classes, have not succeeded in constituting a differentiated subsystem.

In the development of education, the middle classes are the protagonists of a determinant role; as such, they are indissolubly linked to education and to the progressively differentiated sectors of activity which are demanding this education as a prerequisite. But the form taken by the demand for education on the part of the middle classes, and in particular the type of educational system to which they aspire, has different orientations according to whether the class system in which they are inserted is one where the other significant social actor is the organized proletariat, or, on the contrary, is a non-differentiated mass of rural and urban subproletarian population. In the first case social alliances, tacit or explicit, are built up with the main objective of introducing changes in the social system, in opposition to the group which holds the reins of power; here, options as to a national project are politically expressed in populist or social-democrat forms, accompanied in every case by social modernization objectives. In the specifically educational field, they lean towards the constitution of universalist systems, at least as far as conditions of access and social selection are concerned; this interest seldom extends, however, to matters connected with the content and teaching techniques necessary to establish educational universalism in culturally heterogeneous societies.

In the second case, the middle classes see the working class and the popular sector in general as groups whose upward mobility necessarily implies that they themselves move downwards. This perception is reaffirmed when the social relations constructed in the past are of a type based on appointed stations in life, with racial components; when the spaces for insertion of the middle class are limited by a low degree of structural dynamics; and when the power of oligarchic tradition has kept alive ascriptive criteria in social selection, accompanied, for the members of lower groups, by small quotas of 'sponsored' mobility.

In the first case, upward mobility processes starting from the popular classes, where the emergent middle classes had their origin, could have established a degree of communication between social classes which decisively influenced acceptance of the other as a legitimate competitor in an educational system. Countries

²⁶For a first version of this interpretation, see Germán W. Rama, "Articulation sociale et différenciation éducative", in *Revue Amériqne Latine*, No. 14, Paris, April-June 1983.

where modernization began early show differences of timing in the formation of classes, and when the historical memory of the aforesaid connection seemed to be breaking up, the rise of the technical operatives sectors and the relative downward movements of non-manual workers with repetitive activities once again established inter-class liaisons of a different kind. In countries where the transition was effected rapidly, intra- and inter-generational dynamics was so intensive that in the same families proletarian and bureaucratic insertions existed side by side.

In contrast, in those societies whose historical characteristic was the exclusion of the broad masses from education and the radical socio-cultural discontinuity between them and the summit groups, the middle classes attached themselves to the upper class as a means of defending the small spaces at their disposal, and tended to build up educational systems with the same peculiar features of social selectivity and adscription that had characterized the traditional oligarchies. And this may be still more marked in societies whose middle classes had their origin not so much in processes of social upward mobility as in the biological reproduction of the group itself, when its reproduction so far exceeds the expansion of the structure that its members have to live permanently threatened by the spectre of social demotion.

The action of the State, as a major agent of the educational process, does not always necessarily reflect the interests of the upper social groups. The present article does not seem to be the place for an analysis of the relations between the State and civic society, or for consideration of the role of the State as a privileged actor during periods of change, whereas the social classes would play this part during spells of stability. By way of illustration of what has recently happened, suffice it to mention that in some cases the State has been 'privatized' by certain power groups, while in others the groups into whose hands power has circumstantially fallen have proposed deliberately to destroy the bases of the power of the traditional oligarchy in order to create the conditions for a national society capable of superseding the dualisms and heterogeneity inherited from the colonial past. While these are extreme cases, situations are also to be found

in which the State has acquired a relative autonomy in relation to groups holding economic power, through national control of natural resources, the income from which has enabled it to act as an agent of economic development and a promoter of a modern class system, as well as of a democratic political system grounded on a notable expansion of educational supply. In other instances, the State may reflect an articulation or alliance of social groups, the parties to it being middle-class or popular groups which can obtain power and participation provided that a democratic system is in force, and that processes of upward social mobility are based on the generalization of an educational system of relatively homogeneous quality. Lastly, as education is associated with national integration, when the latter is fragile and moreover necessary for the survival of the collectivity, the State may pursue educational policies which, by giving priority to national identity, necessarily generate contradictions with the class system.

The specificity of the education system is easier to achieve when the State has a conception of development which includes scientific knowledge, and when it interprets democracy as a system in which the citizen has had to have an education that will enable him to choose between values and strategies. The economic system, for its part, will have a decisive influence on the ranking of knowledge in the educational system when its development requires, at all levels, human resources trained in scientific rationality. When external demands are weak, the specificity of the function of the education system can be established only if educators have been differentiated and formed into a group whose professional definition is superior to its bureaucratic non-differentiation. This is a complex process, in which references to the international scientific community intervene, and which is based on the existence of intellectual groups who assume responsibility for the development of national culture. A complementary part is played by ideological commitments with national development goals which include the will to see to it that the society acquires an international position or that the people's cultural conditions are improved. But without technical self-identification these

commitments determine a type of discourse, not of pedagogical action. And conversely, professional identity-consciousness may govern educational action directed towards the formation of summit groups, while in relationship educands of popular origin, social gaps may give support to bureaucratic behaviour patterns based on the alleged 'uselessness' of educating the masses.

In any of these cases, values can only be established as from the time when units concerned with the creation of knowledge are developed in the education system itself, i.e., when a scientific system evolves, in relation to which the different roles of the members of the education system are defined. In other words, the primary teacher's referent becomes the university researcher who is creating knowledge in the scientific or cultural areas or in educational sciences; and the objective of the educator's task will be to ensure that educands acquire, in accordance with the stage of formation that they have reached in the school cycle, the knowledge indispensable for understanding higher scientific studies at subsequent stages in their education. In conjunction with these values is developed the professionalization of the role; this implies that even the rural educator in the remotest of areas thinks of himself as different from a public official, and that his image of himself is formed in accordance with the image held of him by the whole group of professionals engaged in the creation and transmission of knowledge. Consequently, for educators their personal sense of achievement will depend upon their technical performance and on the extent to which this approximates to the theoretical models; so that success and skill in transmitting knowledge and teaching educands to think will become a key dimension of their own personal self-esteem.

An educational system with these characteristics is what we have termed a differentiated academic system, which may be constituted for the whole of the education system or only for its upper sectors. In the former case it will be linked with the universalization of the education system; in the second, with the said system's restrictive character, so that only that part of the educational system which is concerned with the socialization of the upper groups can become this type

of differentiated academic system of education with scientific bases.

In the exclusive educational model, education is expanded in accordance with the dominant demands of the upper and middle classes, while education for the popular sectors manifestly lags behind, as is evidenced by the high percentages of illiteracy and lack of basic education among youth, as well as by the deterioration of educational service conditions in the respective country's most underdeveloped areas; and this situation coexists with a high-quality closed circuit at the university level. This latter receives the biggest financial allocations, while primary education, which in some cases depends upon the financial capacity of the municipal units, reflects in the quality of the knowledge imparted the stratified income and socio-cultural levels of the population in the different areas. The rural population and the marginal population of the least developed areas are regarded as a manpower reserve, which for the moment has no chance of being offered occupation, and whose education might not only affect labour costs but also promote social mobilization processes which in due course could even undermine the stability of this exclusionist model.

In predominantly rural countries, where national integration is incipient and the middle classes and popular sectors are lacking in organization, the system adds to its characteristic of exclusiveness that of non-differentiation from the academic standpoint.

The segmentary model is observable in those countries where State educational policy sets up integration objectives and is confronted with a society whose dominant groups are still the upper and upper middle classes. These reject integration policy and try to reconstruct the educational system in accordance with the lines of segmentation characteristic of the society. Owing to the State's weak implementation capacity, combined with the chronic shortage of material and human resources, educational expansion at the lower levels becomes mainly symbolic, while the upper groups further the creation of a higher-quality academic circuit, entry to which is normally obtained through pre-school or primary establishments of a private and selective nature. The availability of State resources for

private universities is guaranteed, however, or the non-fee-paying character of those official establishments whose entrance examinations ensure the exclusive admittance of youth from the upper sectors. Both in this model and in the classist model, the discontinuity between the units forming the university system is remarkable; while some impart knowledge and aptitudes necessary for filling higher positions, others reflect the different levels of the social market and receive students who, because of their social background and origin, can only assimilate a travesty of knowledge, and are thus destined for low-status positions incongruous with a university degree.

In the classist model strong pressure is exerted by the varied range of middle-class and popular sectors to gain access to education and continue it; the State, on its part, withstands this pressure by invoking all sorts of expedients. The first of these is the allocation of education by social groups, which is exemplified in the persistence of an education supply for the rural population that fails to offer the complete primary cycle, as well as in the notable differences of equipment among schools according to their social context; this establishes an informal scale by way of which the best educators try to obtain posts in the best-equipped schools with the most favourable socio-cultural environment. The second expedient is to create a bottleneck in the official supply of non-fee-paying general secondary education when social pressure proves impossible to contain, a system parallel to secondary education is set up, which is slanted towards technico-manual activities, and whose graduates have only limited access to higher education. Lastly, the university system represents a rigidly classist structure of prior curriculum and fees; this permits the organization of closed circuits whose level of academic activity creates a stratified linkage between social background and position on entry into the employment market.

In the three models discussed, academic differentiation processes, when they occur at all, do so only in the upper circuit. Educational centres at the tertiary level are so completely cut off from the preceding educational levels that there is no spill-over of scientific knowledge and the highest forms of culture from the centres of ex-

cellence to the system in its entirety. Moreover, training centres for primary and secondary school teachers tend to be set up outside the university system, and when they are integrated with it operate in watertight compartments, i.e., without communication with those units where research is conducted and higher knowledge disseminated. Noteworthy in this connection is the situation of a country which deliberately, with the aim of restructuring class relations, promoted a switch-over from a universalist education system to another of the classist type, including among the measures taken the separation of teacher training centres from the university proper; while, in addition, it divorced secondary education from technical education at the secondary level, derogating the latter to a mere training function; and furthermore, it atomized a universalist primary education system, which was making for cultural homogenization and was entrusted to the responsibility of the national State, turning it into a municipal system which, by virtue of the disparate spatial location of social classes, could not do other than reflect them.

The universalist model presupposes a high degree of socio-cultural homogeneity of the population, on which the model itself exerts a cumulative and decisive influence. It implies not only consistency between policies and demands, but a great deal of social communication between the various classes, which in turn calls for a relatively progressive income distribution pattern. In this instance the middle classes play an essential role: the mere fact of having imposed the model indicates that they have succeeded in including the remaining classes in their social promotion patterns, i.e., in a meritocracy. As the middle classes lack the economic power and social rank of the traditional group, they make knowledge the prop and stay of the system of power and social organization which they aspire to construct in relation to the upper social class, and for the smooth operation of the model it is important that the educational tribunal should be accepted as the tribunal of social selection and that promotion criteria on adscriptive bases should not be applied; as regards the lower classes, the model offers channels of social mobility regulated to a great extent by the

correspondence between family culture and school culture, which is precisely very high in the middle classes, so that the openness of the system is not indiscriminate. All groups are induced to compete in a market system where benefits and rewards are allocated by a tribunal relatively independent of power and classes, i.e., the educators' tribunal. Competition is imperfect because educational attainment is statistically associated with socio-cultural background; but among possible worlds this is the best, since it takes into account the diversity of the distribution of intelligence, which does not depend upon social classes.

A system with these characteristics entails a number of requisites, among which the following may be mentioned: a marked predominance of the public sector, which monitors the private sector so as to standardize norms for programmes, selection of teachers, etc.; the non-fee-paying character of the entire educational system; strict academic requirements, applied by well-trained and socially-respected teaching personnel, capable of irrefragable action in the formation and selection system; a measure of homogeneity in educational equipment and in the quality of teachers, which can be secured by means of an academic-bureaucratic system of training for the teaching profession; a high degree of integration among the various academic levels with regard to scientific creation and diffusion criteria, and, lastly, the presence of cultural groups independent of the system, in a position to stimulate with their expressions of opinion an educational system whose differentiation calls for autonomy in relation to the State and neutrality with respect to classes and ideologies²⁷.

The scheme of analysis presented here, in so far as it considers education as a result of the interaction of values and social forces, has a dynamic character appropriate to the analysis of

Latin American society as a society in course of processing, whose structures are not yet crystallized. This implies that countries can pass from one category to another without their displacements necessarily making for the implantation of the universalist model. By virtue of the region's political and social contradictions, power constellations occur which try to introduce new patterns of social organization with or without the support of the dominant articulations of the social classes: an attempt involving changes in the national education, which in cases of political and social regression are brought about in a framework of severe social coercion.

The scheme of analysis adopted has also made it possible to identify education as one of the social arenas in which conflicts and aspirations as to alternative development styles are fought out. The interplay of exclusion and participation has given rise, in the special circumstances of Latin America's structural transition, to an enormous expansion of education, with undeniable effects not only on human resources but also on the capacity of the various social groups to participate in national society. Education has been a field for social conflict and bargaining, and the form assumed by the systems has depended not only upon their point of departure, but also on the strength of the social protagonists and on the role of societal organization projects. Education contains in embryo a principle of social homogenization and meritocratic selection, provided that it is itself effectively homogeneous, of scientific quality and capable of developing personalities with independent criteria. In this sense education would seem to constitute, if it is compared with prevailing social conditions, a revolutionary force. If to all this is added the fact that its expansion, especially at the secondary and higher levels, has exceeded the increase in hierarchic posts afforded by the organization of society, it is easily understandable that group conflicts over power (which means over cultural power as well) have been transferred to the education sector, perverting the democratic effect of more extensive coverage with the stratification of the educational system itself in closed circuits of unequal quality, where the newcomers to education are given, in some cases, only the merest semblance of knowledge.

²⁷The empirical bases of the analysis presented in the course of section VII are to be found in the body of studies relating to the Project on Development and Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. Some of these are particularly informative, especially the series of *Final Reports* comprising 1. *Sociedad rural, educación y escuela*; 2. *El cambio educativo. Situación y condiciones*. 3. *La educación y los problemas del empleo*. 4. *Desarrollo y educación en América Latina. Síntesis general*, UNESCO/ECLA/UNDP, Buenos Aires, 1980.