An annotated bibliography is presented in essay form of sources concerning Brazil's literacy program for adults, MOBRAL (Movimento Brasileiro de Alfabetizacao), and its implications for the country's economy. General sources on literacy training are followed by works concerning Brazil's political system. Descriptions of the MOBRAL program, mostly government publications and newspaper articles, are listed. Sources with a sociological approach to education in Latin America are followed by publications concerning the effects of literacy education on the economy. Sources on the political involvements of MOBRAL and its predecessor, Movimento Educacao de Base, are presented. The concluding sections present books and articles by Paulo Freire and published commentary on his work. (KM)
LITERACY TRAINING AND THE BRAZILIAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

AN ESSAY ON SOURCES

BY

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Literacy programs for adults have traditionally been subordinate interests of governments; today this situation is changing somewhat in light of development plans being written in national ministries. There are a number of areas in social and economic development which depend upon whether or not sufficiently large numbers of adults can be educated to respond to development needs. This applies, for example, to the needs of checking over-rapid population growth and to programs of self-help intended to effect a more equitable distribution of wealth in an expanding economy. In a similar development context the present government of Brazil MOBRAL (Movimento Brasileiro de Alfabetização) program comes to light.

Some general but old sources on literacy training are found in various UNESCO documents, such as UNESCO, Education Clearing House, Occasional Papers in Education Series, No. 5 (Paris: UNESCO, 1950) and UNESCO, "Literacy Teaching: A Selected Bibliography," in Educational Studies and Documents, No. 18 (Paris: UNESCO, 1956). A work by Sir Charles Jeffries, Illiteracy: A World Problem (New York: F.A. Praeger, 1967) is more up to date and useful in describing and comparing literacy programs around the world. Of still more recent date is a series published every other year by UNESCO, Progress Achieved in Literacy Throughout the World (Paris: UNESCO, 1968,
1971. These last documents thoroughly treat the development
and administration of literacy programs in UNESCO member states,

enabling a comparison not only of statistics but also of laws
and decrees dealing with literacy programs. A critique of one
of these UNESCO publications is found in John Bowers' "The
Progress of Functional Literacy: Report on a UNESCO Report"
in Community Development Journal, Vol. 5 (July 1970). Literacy
training as part of development strategy is the topic of a
very useful book by the economist H.M. Phillips, Literacy and
Development (Paris: UNESCO, 1970). The case of Brazil is
surveyed in Sergio Guerra Duarte's Por Que Existem Analfabetos
no Brasil? (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira
S.A., 1963). A general study delimiting research on illiteracy
in Latin America is found in Marquardt and Cortright's "Review
of Contemporary Research on Literacy and Adult Education in
Latin America" in Latin American Research Review, Vol. 3,
No. 3 (Summer, 1968), which is at once an informative and
directing study.

Since the developmentalist attitude of the present
Brazilian government is its most frequently articulated ration-
ale, an analysis of MOBRAL must begin within the context of
the political economy. The socialization and institutional
system of the current positivist regime are the main topics
of a recent book written by Ronald M. Schneider, The Political
System of Brazil: Emergence of a "Modernizing" Authoritarian

Descriptions of the MOBRAL program may be found in government documents and press releases; few descriptions have as yet been published in book form. Of importance to the establishment of MOBRAL and the definition of the illiteracy problem are Decree numbers 57,895 (February 1966), 61313 and 63258, and Law number 5379 of December 1967. Brazilian Embassy documents provide the next best source, including such mimeos as "MOBRAL--The Brazilian Adult Literacy Programme"

1Since there do not exist indices to the Brazilian periodicals I have used the Transdex: Bibliography and Index to the United States Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) Translations (New York: C.C. M. Information Corporation) in order to locate important articles dealing in one way or another with MOBRAL. Published every year or so, this index refers to non-classified articles translated by JPRS. The English word titles used by JPRS are those used in our bibliography because we do not have easy access to many of the periodicals cited. Unfortunately the JPRS indices only go back to 1967-68.

A sociological analysis of MOBRAL is well introduced by George M Foster's Traditional Cultures: And the Impact of Technological Change (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), where he discusses at length cultural tensions created by directed social change. The tension between community and education in Latin America is the topic of an article "Community and Education" by J.R. Luna in Américas, Vol. 24 (June 1972), pp. 20-4. Thomas J. La Belle's edited Education and Development: Latin America and the Caribbean (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972) is an anthology of thirty-seven articles by prominent Latin Americanists defining the role of

Given the developmentalists orientation of the Brazilian government it would seem apparent that the present regime seeks to achieve economic benefit through their investment in education. The classic study on the rate of return to investment in education is that of Theodore Schultz, in his book The Economic Value of Education (New York: Columbia University

These two authors have also made additional comments on this subject in *Pesquisas e Planejamento*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December 1971), pp. 381-402. Indispensable human conditions for continuous economic development are the topics of P.N. Damemann's "Problèmes de resources humaines au Brésil," in *Revue Internationale du Travail* (December 1966), pp. 639-661. Since most newly educated adults will be expected to find employment in agriculture it is relevant to sight João Bosco Pinto's

Statements are made to the effect that MOBRAL is the only effective way of integrating the formerly illiterate adult into the life of the Brazilian nation. This raises the political dimension of the MOBRAL program in a much more explicit manner. In order to subject this dimension of Brazilian thinking to some kind of analysis, a comparison is necessary, one which would contrast international approaches to illiteracy training and one which would at the same time take into consideration the uniqueness of the Brazilian situation. This can be carried out through comparison: first, a comparison with existing programs in other countries and second, a comparison with predecessor programs in the self-same Brazil. An international comparison of MOBRAL can be made through use of various UNESCO documents already cited. Of particular interest are the three issues of UNESCO, *Progress Achieved in Literacy Throughout the World* (Paris: UNESCO).

To effect a comparison which acknowledges the uniqueness of the Brazilian illiteracy problem, it is necessary to survey the literature of the previous literacy program, Movimento
Educação de Base, a program directed by the Brazilian Catholic Church with federal government financing. For a background on Church activism, see Emanuel de Kadt's *Catholic Radicals in Brazil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); the same author has written an article on the same subject in Claudio Veliz (ed.), *The Politics of Conformity in Latin America* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967). Some commentary on the program can be found in the *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira*, such as Vol. 24 (1964), especially p. 210ff. Also of importance are the Movement's MEB Annual Reports. The program is succinctly appraised in "MEB: Prêmio Reza Pahlavi de Alfabetização," in *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos*, Vol. 51, No. 113 (January-March 1969), pp. 104-110. For background, the peasant union movement is important because it is tied with the Catholic social movement, including Movimento Educação de Base. See for example Mary E. Wilkie's *A Report on Rural Syndicates in Pernambuco* (Rio de Janeiro: Latin American Center for Research in the Social Sciences, 1964) and Cynthia N. Hewitt's essay in Henry A. Landsberger (ed.), *Latin American Peasant Movements* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), and finally the most complete work is that of Joseph Page, *The Revolution That Never Was: Northeast Brazil, 1955-1964* (New York: Grossman, 1972). See also Riordan Roett's *The Politics of Foreign Aid in the Brazilian Northeast* (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1972).
The educational philosophy behind the Movimento Educação de Base is that of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. In 1964 Paulo Freire was stripped of his political rights by the regime that replaced President Goulart; his pedagogy was considered radical and Communist. Paulo Freire eventually went to Chile where he was influential in the literacy program there in progress as part of Chilean agrarian reform. Since then he has taught in the United States and worked as head of the World Council of Church's literacy campaigns throughout the world. His work is particularly important to study if we are to make a comparison with the present MOBRAL program, which in part derives its inspiration from Paulo Freire—although in a very selective manner.

Paulo Freire's first book on adult literacy training is that published in Brazil in 1967: *Educação como prática da liberdade* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1967); translated editions appeared in Caracas ("Nuevo Orden" Ediciones, 1967) and Santiago, Chile (ICIRA, 1969). While in Chile Paulo Freire wrote several important theoretical works as well as a number of descriptions of the literacy program then in progress in Chile. For example, there are the following articles published by ICIRA: *Actividades desarrolladas en el año de 1968* (1969); *Aspectos del desarrollo de la comunidad en Chile* (1968);

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2 Instituto de Capacitación e Investigación en Reforma Agraria, an institution of the Chilean government and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

³These ICIRA documents are available at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

⁴Available at the Stanford Libraries, Stanford University, Stanford, California.
(June 19 1971), p. 54. Other commentary on Paulo Freire's educational methodology may be found in Ernani Maria Fiori's Aprender a decir su palabra: El método de alfabetización del profesor Paulo Freire (translated by Jorge Mellado; Santiago, Chile: ICIRA, 1968) and in Lauro de Oliviera Lima's El método Freire (translated by Jorge Mellado; Santiago, Chile: ICIRA, date of publication unknown). One of Paulo Freire's works carried in a European journal is his article "Éducation, prazis de liberté," in Communautés (January-June 1968), pp. 3-29.


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