

Editorial

Bernard Charlot (ed)

In 2016 the journal *Academia* published, in volume 7, an interview in which George Stamelos asked me about my vision for the universities missions in contemporary society. As an outcome of that interview, the reaction of the readers led him to ask me to organize an edition which would concern higher education in Brazil. For those who do not know me, I am Emeritus Professor of the Sciences of Education at the University of Paris 8 and then “rooted” (according to the expression used by the Brazilians) in Brazil since 2003 and *visiting professor* at the University of Aracaju, on the north-eastern coast of Brazil. The idea for this edition seemed interesting to me. Here you will find the result.

This edition does not present a collection of articles gathered in retrospect by the individual who had the idea, as usually happens. The edition was designed from the outset to cover issues that appeared important to me and the articles were asked for from researchers working systematically on the subject.

The first article was written by me and Veleida Anahi de Silva and presents the fundamental historical, statistical and political data for a first approach to Brazilian higher education.

Cesar Nunes, philosopher and education policy specialist, then proposes a political and historio-critical analysis of higher education.

The third article in the collection comes from Cristina Helena Almeida de Carvalho, economist, and focuses on capital collection and the growth of the financial market in private education in Brazil.

The fourth article was written by Paulo Neves, sociologist. He analyses the positive discrimination measures adopted by the public universities in Brazil for the benefit of the blacks and the poor.

Finally, in the last, fifth, article, I present research regarding *the relationship with knowledge (rapport au savoir)* of Brazilian students, based first and foremost on those of Eloize Dias Neves and Veleida Anahi da Silva, which I supervised. The panorama is not complete, particularly because the original plan anticipated research results on the current growth of distance higher education and the *relationship with knowledge* of this new kind of student, an article which is not yet completed due to a lack of time. Nevertheless, what is presented in this edition appears to me, as far as the subject matter and quality of the articles are concerned, to be a good mix of the main results of contemporary research on Brazilian higher education.

(translation Wendy Shaw)