

CENTRO PARAGUAYO DE ESTUDIOS SOCIOLÓGICOS (CPES)*

The Centro Paraguayo de Estudios Sociológicos (CPES), founded 17 March 1964 in Asunción, is a private institution dedicated to research and teaching. Initiative for the creation of the center came from a group of university professors who felt it was necessary to incorporate new theories and methods into Paraguayan scientific work. On 11 February 1971, Executive Decree No. 24.354 gave the center legal existence, with administration by a committee of directors and an assembly of founding members, and executive responsibility resting with a general director.

The center's main goal has been to promote and develop scientific studies in the social sciences so as to make possible an adequate understanding of the national and Latin American reality. Specific objectives established in accordance with this goal are to: promote and use research techniques to achieve a greater knowledge of the social realities of Paraguay and Latin America; promote the diffusion and use of scientific studies in order to encourage contributions to the process of socio-economic and cultural development; contribute to the consolidation of a professional nucleus of social researchers, as well as to the conditions necessary for the efficient practice of scientific research (institutions, equipment, documentation, etc.); contribute to the preservation and retention of the archival and bibliographic resources of the country, as well as the recovery of material that is now in other countries; systematize, analyze, and make known studies and data useful for the study of Paraguay and Latin America; promote programs of study in the social sciences, on both national and regional levels; establish efficient means of communication regarding contemporary advances and results in social research; give support to those works that will tend to consolidate scientific development in the country; maintain exchanges with other organizations and centers, both local and foreign.

In the early years, the activity of the center was characterized by teaching and outreach programs (conferences, courses, seminars, etc.), as opposed to scientific research. This was partly an attempt to gain more widespread reception for the aims of the center, and partly due to the limited personnel, resources, and infrastructure available for in-

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tensive research programs. With time, CPES has become the chief research center in Paraguay, with the full and constant cooperation of local and foreign organizations. At present, the fields of study given priority are education, rural studies, human resources, sociolinguistics, and demography.

The governing structure of the center consists of a general assembly, a directing committee, and a general director; personnel include researchers, technicians, and administrators. Within the research category there are three types of investigators: the permanent research group of the center, whose responsibilities are to carry out individual research projects and to participate both in group projects and in the special teaching projects organized by the center; part-time researchers; and associate researchers. These last two categories are generally limited to specific projects. Part of the scientific personnel consists of research assistants who are involved in the areas of documentation and publication.

In 1974, CPES acquired its own well-equipped quarters, which has allowed for still greater expansion. In this sense, since its incorporation in the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO), it has participated in various commissions (rural studies, education, migration, urban and regional studies, PISPAL, etc.) and was the organizer and site of the Special Regional Commission for the Social Sciences. CPES also works with the Sociedad Interamericana de Planificación (SIAP); the Programa de Estudios Conjuntos de Integración Latinoamericana (ECIEL); Xerox International, for the microfilming of the *Revista Paraguaya de Sociología*; and the University of Illinois, for the exchange of professors and postgraduate students.

Research is the principal work of CPES. At first, due to the scarcity of financial and human resources, the disorganization of the available data, statistical material, etc., and the need for exchange with centers of more advanced academic development, certain basic goals had to be established, as was indicated earlier. When this was done, the research program concentrated on strengthening and expanding its multidisciplinary focus; priority areas for the development of the country; providing adequate diffusion of the results derived from the studies; and integrating the different projects so that their effect would be cumulative.

Migration studies have an important place in research at CPES. This theme acquires greater relevance today if such factors as economic changes and population movements produced by the construction of hydroelectric dams, and public policies of population redistribution (colonization, regional development programs, etc.) are considered. Another area of concentration has been the study of bilingualism as an historical-cultural phenomenon of exceptional relevance for the country, with special attention to its relationship to education. Other aspects of

education that have received special attention are the development of technical training and its place in the job market, and the curriculum and its suitability in satisfying the nation's demands for professionals. Other themes of the research program have been colonization and rural development (rural productive organization, small farms and agricultural enterprises), structure of the work force (participation of women in the work force), and urban studies (housing and cities, state policies, etc.).

The Revista Paraguaya de Sociología

This publication was one of the first projects undertaken by CPES and its first issue appeared in September 1964. From that time, the publication has had two central objectives: to act as a medium for the dissemination of information on work done in the social sciences in all parts of the world; and to publicize the most relevant Paraguayan scientific work. During its more than seventeen years of existence, the review has maintained an interdisciplinary focus, and, although it has enjoyed the collaboration of some of the best known Latin American social scientists, it has also paid attention to publicizing the studies done by young researchers. The review has been an important means of sharing the work of a new generation of social scientists; it has also made an effort to publish works from Latin American countries which, for various reasons, have limited possibilities for the dissemination of their scientific production. The review is now microfilmed and included in the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI). The materials usually presented are articles on Latin America or on social theory or methodology, which permit the diffusion of the level and type of work that is being carried out in more advanced centers, and original articles resulting from research on Paraguayan society. Also included are methodological notes, Paraguayan documentation, book reviews, statistics, and information on scientific activities and events.

The Centro de Documentación Social

This was created in 1971, as an associate center, to carry out activities relating to preserving Paraguayan documentary material, in order to prevent the dispersion or destruction of valuable collections existing in the country; collecting dispersed material; indexing and cataloging available material; publishing bibliographies, in order to publicize the richness of the national bibliography; forming methods of treating documentary materials; publishing indexes to promote greater use of the available documents; and promoting contact and exchange with similar organizations, both national and foreign. The center, which has about

fifteen thousand documents as well as an important periodical collection, was organized exclusively with domestic sources of support, public and private. This service is open to the public and has been of great help to researchers in the field. It contains documentary material for the period 1950 to the present; about 90 percent of the material is indexed by the EDU system.

The Centro Paraguayo de Documentación Social (CPDS)

The CPDS regularly publishes a bulletin as well as an index of documents, in the *Revista Paraguaya de Sociología*. It has also edited bibliographic indexes on education, sociolinguistic studies, ethnological and anthropological studies, economic studies, demographic studies and data, census and tax lists, historical studies, migrations (CLACS/CPES), technical education (CPES/CEPADES/IJK), and housing (CPES/SIAP). CPDS belongs to two subregional organizations for documentation: the Red Latinoamericana de Información y Documentación en Educación (REDUC), which is a cooperative documentation service whose member centers are dedicated to research in education in Latin America; and the Centro de Documentación del Cono Sur (CEDOSUR), which was formed by centers in Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay and which serves for the interchange of bibliographical and documentary material.

Regional Courses

Within a few years of its formation, the center developed a policy of active cooperation with foreign academic groups, particularly those in Latin America. Its incorporation in, and support of, the activities of CLACSO was a decisive move, as were its direct relations with other institutions. In cooperation with the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) it promoted the first subregional postgraduate course in the social sciences in Asunción in 1971, with the participation of graduate students from various countries and with a teaching staff composed of FLACSO members as well as other well-known Latin American social scientists. In 1972 the center began a program to support the development of sociological studies in countries characterized by low levels of scientific development. This program was presented to the general assembly of CLACSO in Mexico in 1972. As its starting point, the program recognized rural studies as its fundamental priority. In March 1973, as the center had proposed, the directive committee of CLACSO formed the Special Regional Program for Social Sciences, in Asunción, with the following goals: the organization of traveling courses in rural sociology for the formation of professionals in this field in predominantly rural countries; and the implementation of a research

program in this area and the formation of a journal devoted to rural studies. In 1979, in San José, Costa Rica, the course was developed by CSUCA, and in 1981, the fourth term took place at the Universidad Nacional de Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

Publications

In addition to publishing reprints of individual articles from the *Revista*, the center also publishes accounts of the work and research done at the center, both as internal documents and as books. A sample of recent publications includes: *Población, urbanización y recursos humanos en el Paraguay*, D. Rivarola and G. Heisecke (eds.); *La población del Paraguay*, D. Rivarola et al.; *Obra y aportes femeninos a la literatura nacional*, Josefina Pla; *Paraguay: nación bilingüe*, Graziella Corváln; *Capas rurales y cooperativas en el Paraguay*, Luis Galeano and Ramon Fogel; *La vivienda en el Paraguay*, Perla Baade. Some recent bibliographic studies include *Datos y estudios educativos*, Oscar Ferraro; *Las generaciones en la cultura paraguaya*, Raúl Amaral; *Bibliografía sobre estudios económicos*, Sofia Marecki and Oscar Ferraro; *Bibliografía sobre estudios antropológicos*, Sofia Marecki and Oscar Ferraro; *Bibliografía sobre la educación técnica y agropecuaria en el Paraguay*, Oscar Ferraro.