

Historical Geography and Geosciences

Drielli Peyerl

The Oil of Brazil

Exploration, Technical Capacity, and
Geosciences Teaching (1864–1968)

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To Jeferson Peyerl

*To Frederico Waldemar Lange (1911–1988) for everything
he afforded, without even knowing, to my life.*

Foreword

The period from 1854 to 1968 was particularly emblematic for the oil exploitation in Brazil. The word petroleum, mentioned for the first time in the decree published on November 1864, started to have an essential role in the country economy in the following decades, when exploratory activities to the search of the “black gold” had begun. In the following decades, decrees had been published, private foreign companies had been established, drilling had been made, and multiple activities for the technical qualification had been developed, which have led to a nationalist politics that culminated in the creation of the National Petroleum Council (Conselho Nacional do Petróleo) and the discovery of the first oil well in the district of Lobato, Salvador City, Bahia State, in 1939. From that moment onwards, a new phase started in the economic politics related to the exploration and petroleum industry, progressing in stride with the creation of Petrobras, in 1953, and its Petroleum Improvement and Research Center and, approximately 13 years later, in 1966, the beginning of the Research and Development Center Leopoldo Américo Miguez de Mello (CENPES), the first one destined to the improvement and specialization of manpower, and the second center, created after the first one was extinguished, as a center in excellency on scientific and technological research for the petroleum industry in Brazil. I was a long path that for over a century, relied on many comings and goings, from the politic and economic point of view. This trajectory of oil in Brazil needed a synthetic approach to the events and main characters related to the history of oil research in Brazil, and it is precisely with a concise and objective approach that the text of the historian Drielli Peyerl rises, written with unmatched mastery.

Holding a Bachelor’s degree in History, with Geography Degree, Master’s Degree in Geography from the State University of Ponta Grossa, in Paraná, and Doctor in Sciences from the University of Campinas, in São Paulo, Drielli focuses on the study of the formation of the petroleum industry in its more intriguing period, in addition to approaching its relation and importance to the education of geosciences in the country.

Drielli started her work a starting point the private documentation of one of the great icons of the petroleum research in the country, the paleontologist Frederico Waldemar Lange, which, added to a wide documentary research in the Petrobras archives and other institutions, including abroad, allowed the elaboration of an instigating text about the several paths followed by the Brazilian petroleum industry.

Aiming at the good understanding of the reader, Drielli starts her piece with an introductory text, in which she lists concisely the main historical aspects that are to be observed by the reader and talks about the same in the three following chapters: in the first, the author approaches the aspects of the initiatives and research, both private and governmental, that had led to the discovery of oil and the creation of the National Petroleum Council, involving all the events between 1938 and 1961; in the second, she talks about the participation and the role of Brazilian and foreign technicians in the formation of the petroleum industry; in the third and last, she focuses on the formation of the improvement and research centers, as well as weaving considerations about the importance of professionalizing courses for the technician staff of Petrobras.

Using unpublished documents, a great bibliography and instigating information, Drielli manages to trace the efforts and initiatives that had led to the enrichment and the improvement of the Brazilian petroleum industry in a work that, without a doubt, will become reference in the historical research in the petroleum and its influence in the education of the geosciences in Brazil.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
July 2016

Antonio Carlos S. Fernandes

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Abbreviations

CAGE	Campaign for Geologists Formation (Campanha de Formação de Geólogos)
CAPES	Coordination of the University Education Improvement Personnel (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior)
CENAP	Center for Improvement and Petroleum Research (Centro de Aperfeiçoamento e Pesquisas de Petróleo)
CENPES	Research and Development Center Leopoldo Américo Miguez de Mello (Centro de Pesquisas e Desenvolvimento Leopoldo Américo Miguez de Mello)
CGB	Brazilian Geological Commission (Comissão Geológica do Brasil)
CGG	Geographical and Geological Commission of São Paulo (Comissão Geográfica e Geológica de São Paulo)
CNP	National Petroleum Council (Conselho Nacional do Petróleo)
CPDOC	Center of Research and Brazilian Contemporary Historical Documentation (Centro de Pesquisas e Documentação de História Contemporânea do Brasil)
DEPEX	Exploration Department from Petrobras (Departamento de Exploração da Petrobras)
DEXPRO	Department of Exploration and Production from Petrobras (Departamento e Exploração e Produção da Petrobras)
DIVEX	Exploration Division Surface Sector (Setor de Superfície da Divisão de Exploração)
DNPM	National Department of Mineral Production (Departamento Nacional de Produção Mineral)
EMOP	School of Mines of Ouro Preto (Escola de Minas de Ouro Preto)
FNFI	National Faculty of Philosophy (Faculdade Nacional de Filosofia)
FRONAPE	National Tanker Fleet (Frota Nacional de Petroleiros)
IPT	Technological Research Institute (Instituto de Pesquisas Tecnológicas)

ITA	Technological Aeronautics Institute (Instituto Tecnológico da Aeronáutica)
PED	Strategic Development Program (Programa Estratégico de Desenvolvimento)
Petrobras	Petróleo Brasileiro S.A.
PIPMOI	Intensive Industrial Labor Preparation Program (Programa Intensivo de Preparação de Mão de Obra Industrial)
SBP	Brazilian Society of Paleontology (Sociedade Brasileira de Paleontologia)
SENAI	National Industrial Learning Service (Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial)
SFPM	Mineral Production Promotion Survey (Serviço de Fomento da Produção Mineral)
SGMB	Geological and Mineralogical Survey of Brazil (Serviço Geológico e Mineralógico do Brasil)
SSAT	Technical Improvement Supervision Sector (Setor de Supervisão do Aperfeiçoamento Técnico)
UB	University of Brazil
UCLA	University of California
UEPG	State University of Ponta Grossa
UFBA	Federal University of Bahia
UFRGS	Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul
UFRJ	Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
UNICAMP	University of Campinas
URGS	University of Rio Grande do Sul
USP	University of São Paulo

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