

## Between the countryside and the city: struggles for the right to an eminently peasant education

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**ABSTRACT.** From a theoretical and interpretive perspective, the present article aims to discuss the socio-political context of the proposal for training teachers for Rural Education from the pressures of rural movements and the involvement of institutional partnerships. Thus, we chose as the study's guiding problem: how did the socio-political process for the involvement of the state and institutions to promote the training of rural teachers? For this, are presented the differences between the educational realities offered in the rural areas and in the city in Brazil; to discuss the emergence of the demand for a specific peasant education as a process of resistance to agribusiness interests in the 20th century; and to present the insertion of the social demands of the rural areas in the guidelines of the state through Pronera and adhesion of the Public Universities in the formation of rural teachers. This research uses the method explanatory and bibliographic having as the theoretical basis the Rural Education as a space for social struggle. As a result, it became evident that the political and institutional actions aimed at training teachers in the countryside took place as a product of the pressures of social movements, with due emphasis on the MST, along with the state and public institutions, which met the demands through articulation between Pronera and Public universities. From this scenario, from the decade of the 1990s, Licenciatura do Campo courses emerged in response to the demands for teachers of specific training in rural schools, representing the increase in the representativeness of peasant wishes in the midst of debates on educational policies in Brazil. Advances that, due to the actions created during the first term of the Lula government (2003 a 2006), were established, giving continuity to new offers of vacancies in LeDocs courses in Brazil in the last decade.

**Keywords:** rural education, teacher training, pronera.

## Entre o campo e a cidade: as lutas pelo direito a uma educação eminentemente camponesa

**RESUMO.** A partir de uma perspectiva teórica e interpretativa, o presente artigo tem como intuito discutir o contexto sociopolítico da proposta de formação de professores para Educação do Campo a partir das pressões dos movimentos do campo e do envolvimento das parcerias institucionais. Dessa forma, como se deu o processo sociopolítico para o envolvimento do estado e das instituições para promover a formação de professores do campo? Para isso, busca-se apresentar as diferenças entre as realidades educacionais oferecidas no campo e na cidade no Brasil; discutir o surgimento da exigência por uma educação específica camponesa como processo de resistência aos interesses do agronegócio no século XX; e apresentar a inserção das demandas sociais do campo nas pautas do estado por meio do Pronera e adesão das Universidades públicas na formação de professores do campo. O estudo bibliográfico e explicativo tendo como base teórica a Educação do Campo como espaço de luta social. Como resultado, evidenciou-se que as ações políticas e institucionais destinadas à formação de professores do campo se deram como produto das pressões dos movimentos sociais, com o devido destaque ao MST, junto ao estado e às instituições públicas, que atenderam às demandas por meio da articulação entre Pronera e as universidades públicas. Desse cenário, a partir da década dos anos 1990, os cursos de Licenciatura do Campo surgiram como resposta às demandas por docentes de formação específica nas escolas do campo, representando a elevação da representatividade dos anseios camponeses em meio aos debates sobre as políticas educacionais no Brasil. Avanços esses que, devido às ações criadas durante o primeiro mandato do governo Lula, firmaram-se, dando continuidade a novas ofertas de vagas nos cursos de LeDocs pelo Brasil na última década.

**Palavras-chave:** educação do campo, formação de professores, proner.

## Entre el campo y la ciudad: las luchas por el derecho a una educación eminentemente campesina

**RESUMEN.** Desde una perspectiva teórica e interpretativa, este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir el contexto sociopolítico de la propuesta de formación de profesores para la Educación del Campo a partir de las presiones de los movimientos del campo y la participación de las asociaciones institucionales. Así, ¿cómo fue el proceso sociopolítico para la participación del Estado y las instituciones para promover la formación de los profesores en el campo? De este modo, busca presentar las diferencias entre las realidades educativas que se ofrecen en el campo y en la ciudad de Brasil; discutir el surgimiento de la demanda de una educación campesina específica como un proceso de resistencia a los intereses agroindustriales en el siglo XX; y presentar la inserción de las demandas sociales del campo en las directrices estatales a través de la Pronera y la adopción de universidades públicas en la formación de profesores en el campo. El estudio es cualitativo, explicativo y bibliográfico basado en la educación del país como espacio para la lucha social. Como resultado, se evidenció que las acciones políticas e institucionales encaminadas a la formación de docentes en el campo se dieron como resultado de las presiones de los movimientos sociales, con el debido énfasis en el MST, junto con el Estado y las instituciones públicas, que cumplieron con las exigencias de los movimientos sociales demandas a través de la articulación entre Pronera y las universidades públicas. A partir de este escenario, desde la década de 1990 hasta la década de 1990, los Cursos del Campo surgieron como respuesta a las demandas de maestros de capacitación específica en las escuelas del campo, lo que representa el aumento de la representatividad de las expectativas campesinas en medio de debates sobre políticas educativas en Brasil. Avances que, debido a las acciones creadas durante el primer mandato del gobierno de Lula, se han firmado, continuando ofreciendo nuevas vacantes en cursos de LeDocs en todo Brasil en la última década.

**Palabras clave:** educación del campo, formación del profesorado, pronerá.

## Introduction

The right to quality education, throughout the historical process, was withdrawn from a large portion of the Brazilian rural population. For the wealthy classes had been reserved access to formal education, making it useful for the feedback of their hegemony in society. And the lack of qualified teachers to work in the rural areas has become one of the mechanisms for denying peasants schooling.

Amid the hardships experienced by rural people and rural school professionals, a mechanism created by political elites to contain rural labor in the flow of rural exodus, from the first decades of the 20th century onwards, the struggles for agrarian reform advanced through social movements such as the Landless Workers Movement – MST.

The struggles in the rural area started to demand not only the right to land, but access to basic social rights, such as of an education that was adequate to their way of life in the agrarian reform settlements. The voices of the peasants, for centuries muted, echoed in the national political field to the point of generating the formation of public policies capable of meeting these old social demands. As a result, the proposal for a Rural Education emerged, adequate to the peasants' reality, since it should have in its

curricular base the articulation between content and daily activities, in the 1980s.

From the 2000s onwards, peasant educational demands gained ground in Brazilian public universities, through the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (Incra), with the creation of the National Program for Education in Agrarian Reform (Pronea). Lay teachers<sup>i</sup>, who worked in rural communities and agrarian reform settlements, became the target audience of courses and actions for the professionalization and training of specific teachers to work in rural schools.

Brandão (1986, p. 14) “In good measure, the lay teacher is, among us, the rural teacher. As occur in other professional sectors, the rural area is forced to accept for a longer period of time unqualified agents whose practice is no longer accepted in the city, in its state”. In this case, this teacher serves as a threshold already determined in Brazil, existing in several regions, without official training, acting under conditions of lack. Considered career laymen, for never having reached the same level of being a trained teacher, they remained in the classroom for a good part of their lives, even if under occasional conditions they never got to work in their own localities.

From this path, it emerged the basic problem of this study: how was the sociopolitical process for the involvement of the state and institutions to promote the training of teachers to work in rural education? In order to answer this question, the present article undertakes a historical digression in order to bring to the surface of the analysis the historical precedents of institutional actions aimed at training rural teachers in Brazil.

To discuss on the Brazilian educational context, which entails the training of rural teachers, as well as the existing discrepancy between urban and rural education, we used the teachings of authors such as Arroyo (2007, 2008, 2012), Saviani (2009, 2016); to deal with educational policies linked to the demands of social movements<sup>ii</sup> for the land, were used the notes of Caldart (2012) ; Molina (2005, 2012); Fernandes (2000); and Molina and Sá (2012) to discuss about teaching programs for the continuing education of rural teachers..

The structure of the study is arranged in four sections, in addition to the introduction and final considerations. In the first section, are presented the discussions on the Brazilian educational reality under the paradoxical logic between that offered in rural and urban schools throughout the historical process. In the

second section, the influences of agribusiness in the Brazilian economic and political context for the formation of the basis of what would become the Rural Education proposal are presented. In the third section, the articulations made by the Landless Movement from the recognition of the social struggle through the rural education are discussed. Finally, in the fourth section, the emergence of institutional actions for the promotion of rural education in Brazil through Incra is pointed out, as was the case of Pronera with articulations made by public universities from the 2000s onwards.

### **The Brazilian educational reality and the abyss of opportunities**

In the case of this study, the relationship between rural area and city, returning to the Brazilian agrarian reality, as stated by Octavio Ianni (2004), makes to evoke a problem in the rural area: the difference between rural education<sup>iii</sup> offered to peasants and that of the city, or even, the type of school that was formed in these two spaces throughout the formation of Brazilian society. Despite the elementary claim of the peasants being the possession and use of land, the main and basic object of work and life, reacting to the expulsion from the place where they build their lives and resisting proletarianization.

Arroyo (2007) considers that pointing out the law in its generalist aspect, as a collective right valid for all groups without distinction, is a Brazilian tradition. This, on the other hand, despite signifying a social advance, does not increase the recognition of the specificities of policies aimed at the diversity of collectives that are part of our social and cultural formation. Therefore, is established a tension about the very definition of the subjects encompassed and their own gains. Education could be taken as a universal right, as long as the policies aimed at training rural teachers are recognized in a concrete way, since the formulation of principles and norms do not guarantee specific actions that in fact take cultural characteristics into account essential for the formulation of a curriculum for the education of the peasant.

Thus, given the paradox between rural and urban reality in Brazil, from the point of view of access to education, Arroyo (2007) points to the lack of educational policies for the rural area in relation to other public services offered to the population of the city. That if evidence by the own adaptation of the urban educational model offered to peasants, disregarding their specificities.

To corroborate with this assertion about the neglect of the right to schooling

of rural men and women, the right to regular education specific to their reality, it is enough to resort to Brazilian constitutional texts. Despite the first legislation of 1824 having positivized the right to education by part of free men, obviously excluding enslaved blacks, it did not create real conditions for the organization of school education for rural residents. Only with the first republican Constitution, of 1891, was mentioned, for the first time, the right of peasants to have access to rural school, but without taking into account any notion of specific right to the population of the rural area.

The rural school, according to Ribeiro (2012, p. 296), is that intended for rural men and women, workers who make a living from agriculture, encompassing merely elementary knowledge of writing, reading, basic mathematical operations. It would be a school “where it studies, and this study has nothing to do with the work that the peasant develops with the land”.

Souza (2017) makes evident, among other things, the difference in educational practices between groups that explore and those that are explored based on the relationship between parents and children. In the popular classes, which includes the peasants, differently of the dominant social classes that organize themselves to obtain other types of capital, such as cultural,

through the encouragement of parents to children to read to the imagination, poor children grow up without such stimuli causing, throughout the school period, difficulties in concentration, lack of ability and willingness to learn the contents.

On the other hand, despite pressure from elites to maintain the status quo and their privileges arising from the slave system, Arroyo (2007) considers that there are an exclusion of rural people in front of the imposed social structure. And, despite all the symbolic ties that perpetuate misery among the excluded throughout the history of the own constitution of Brazilian society, rural social movements rose up in defense of specific interests, such as a public education that valued land, school and place as symbols of identity and culture.

This perspective of education “adapted” to the rural school was founded without commitment to daily rural practices, incapable of subsidizing peasants in the defense of schools suited to their culture. The product of this was the continuing disadvantage of rural education compared to urban education, leaving it, among other things, abandonment, age-grade gap, the lower levels of schooling and high failure rates, since the concern was to train workers for the new order of work in the rural areas (Arroyo, 2007).

What happened in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century in Brazil was the same as what happened in Europe in a previous period. A reality marked by the inclusion of technologies in the rural area through the mechanization of agricultural production, which ended up changing the peasant social reality. The mechanization of the means of production in the rural area caused a quantitative and qualitative change in the production process, requiring the expansion of production areas, the transport and communication system (Sevcenko, 1998).

Observing the historical context of the 20th century, more broadly, after the end of slavery in Brazil in 1888 and the beginning of the urbanization process, Vendramini (2015) argues that the right of peasants to rural school emerged through a strategy created by the ruling classes. Behind the project of the school for the peasants, there was the containment of the migratory flow to the cities.

And, in this case, in addition to trying to contain the city's insertion with rural migrants, intensified mainly from the 1930s onwards, the educational policy aimed at peasants began to receive attention because of the interests of large US companies in expansion of agricultural frontiers in Brazil. These projects had a strong need for technological adaptation on

the part of rural workers, making that education became an important instrument for the formation of permanent salaried labor in rural areas (Ribeiro, 2012).

With the advance of the industrial process in Brazil, the peasant reality continued with the pressure of the interests of capital. The practice of agriculture was being modified with the advances of agribusiness and the financial sector in rural areas, triggering a process of land purchases and leases, what increased its value and natural resources of products and land through speculation. To the state had the role of enabling the use of land by national and foreign capital, promoting occupation with the agriculture, as well as developing industry, resource extraction and infrastructure (Vendramini, 2015).

For Ianni (1984), the capitalist involved in this context remained the beneficiary of the subjugation of the rural area to the city in various ways, both through the support of the state in regulating prices on some inputs, credits, guaranteeing the supply of raw materials; by favoring the exports of these products. Lastly, the supply of the large reserve of labor for work in the countryside, essential for the expansion of the industry.

In this way, both the city's poor worker and the peasants, in a way, expanded the right to regular education

through social pressure. However, even guaranteed, highlights Vendramini (2015), for a long period, the right to education of rural people's remained marked by illiteracy and a low level of schooling. And, even after having achieved this right, they began to experience the precariousness and low quality of the education they were offered.

### **Rural Education and the aspirations of agribusiness in Brazil**

Peasants who resisted the temptations of the city and submitted to the new order of capital in the rural area ended up transforming themselves. It emerged of this process of intensification of exploration and concentration of land and income a new type of peasant, a product of destruction and, at the same time, a recreation of forms of work organization, articulated with market production (Ianni, 1984).

This adaptation of part of the peasant peoples who persisted in living in the rural area can be explained through the dependence they started to have on bank credit. Peasant families were involved by capital with the circulation of goods of agricultural origin. This, presumably, caused the dependence of rural workers on the banks, which began to increasing



pledge their properties in order to guarantee the financings (Martins, 1986).

Martins (1986) highlights that the peasants ended up inserted in a social relationship in which land came to be mediated by market interests. As a result, the Brazilian rural reality started to configure the concentration of income and the poverty of producers.

However, this unstable social scenario created circumstances capable of increasing social tensions, which consequently, it gave rise and persist the oligarchic and authoritarian governments. In the view of Ianni (1984), it was exactly this exploration of work in the rural areas that gave impetus to the emergence of the authoritarian State in Brazil during part of the 20th century.

The population increase in Brazil, both in the rural area and in the city, favored the flexibilization of the internal movement of the population masses, creating areas of social tension. Supported by the idea of social order, authoritarianism starts to serve against the formation of problem areas. Among these possible areas in which the masses could cross borders were farms and the latifundia (Ianni, 1984, p. 144).

According to Delgado (2001), in the 1930s, groups of intellectuals began to study the agrarian question in Brazil.

Permeated by liberal thinking in economy, the debates focused on the rural economy from the hegemonic political scenario that was inaugurated from the revolution that ascended Getúlio Vargas to federal power.

After World War II, liberal political and intellectual groups, from the point of view of industrialization and the results achieved by the adoption of the import substitution policy, began to discuss the importance of the rural sector in the Brazilian economy and society (Delgado, 2001).

At the turn of the 1920s to 1930s, emerged as the center of debates in the most popular classes the issue of literacy and the maintenance of peasants in the rural areas. To this end, the so-called pedagogical ruralism was presented as an answer, idealized through the articulation of a group of intellectuals, pedagogues who helped to formulate a pedagogical proposal capable of maintaining or hindering the exit from the rural area. This proposal sought to serve peasant populations far from urban centers with no conditions of access to school, however, without teachers from the rural area, the concern was that those came from the city would carry out urbanist advertisement in the teaching-learning process in these locations (Bezerra Neto, 2015).

In this perspective, it would be up to the teachers included in the rural pedagogical proposal the mission of creating an ideology that would enable the peasant to remain in the rural area, recognizing their way of life through an education that understood a curriculum supported by useful knowledge in agriculture, livestock and others everyday activities. The defense of this proposal was not confined only to pedagogues, and soon became part of the agenda of state governments that started to establish rural schools and to meet some initial demands, mainly in relation to the lack of teachers interested in working in the rural areas. (Bezerra Neto, 2015).

However, as a background to the intention to create a pedagogy useful to rural people, there was the most important factor that could enhance the attempts to contain the rural exodus, the economic factor. It was a lack, in Brazil, a land and agricultural policy in order to grant benefits to small rural landowners. In addition to no discussions on objective improvements for the permanence of peasants on the land, such as policies to regularize land tenure, were not created, we can say, mechanisms to organize the process of modernization of the rural area, which reflected in the expulsion of the rural worker (Bezerra Neto, 2015).

However, in the legal area it advanced, even if at a slow pace, but with some gains for the rural population, achievements in relation to the right to education. In 1934, the promulgation of the Constitution brought in articles 5, 148 to 158 the idea of education as a subjective public right. It was universalized the right to education for all, in a broad and unrestricted way, encompassing both native Brazilians and foreigners domiciled in the country, and it was believed that schooling would enable the efficient development of moral values and citizenship (Azevedo, 2010).

Under North American influence, the Brazilian government, in 1956, became a signatory of an agreement to institute the Brazilian-American Assistance Program for Elementary Education (Pabae). According to Azevedo (2010), this policy gave rise to technicality in Brazilian schools, just as it would have achieved success in American schools, in order to create the bases for the continuation of industrial growth. On the other hand, in relation to the rural school, it is not clear what was done in this set of actions.

In this context, the despoiled people of the rural area were viewed with caution, as they could add to the thinking coming from Eastern Europe and initiate a revolutionary process. The imminent risk

gave ballast for carrying out pacts and agreements between the American and Brazilian government from the 1950s onwards, forming programs in the rural area of the education such as the National Campaign for Rural Education, as had already been done in Central American countries such as Mexico, Guatemala, and Venezuela (Delgado, 2001).

In the 1960s, as far as the political debate is concerned, with the urgency to carry out Agrarian Reform in Brazil, it was that the agrarian issue actually integrated the intellectual and political agenda of left-wing parties. The first groups involved in this adhesion were the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), having as one of its components Florestan Fernandes; the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), and progressive wings linked to the Catholic Church (Delgado, 2001).

In this context of left agitation in the Brazilian political scenario, it was instituted, in 1961, Law nº 4.024/1961 – Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education. As a result of the exacerbation of the debate on public and private education, the aforementioned sought to regulate all levels of education in the country, as well as organizing the national curriculum (Azevedo, 2010).

In Saviani's (1996) reasoning, the Law of Guidelines and Bases, Law nº

9394/1996 contributed very little to the education of peasant men. What little has been done is positivized in its articles 31 and 32, referring to the change of responsibility for guaranteeing rural primary education to the private power. At the time, the legislator understood that would remain to agricultural companies and rural landowners the obligation to provide primary education to employees' children and workers themselves.

From this set of labor exploitation and poverty generated in the rural area, Martins (1986) considers that organized social struggles in favor of land emerged in a complicated way. This is because with the military coup of 1964, political parties opposed to the regime went underground, and those who remained in conditions in favor of the government did not integrate the agrarian causes related to the peasant struggle for land on their agendas.

During the Military Dictatorship period, one of the groups that remained engaged in the peasant cause was the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), which, being of an ecumenical character, was directly related to the Catholic Church and other Christian segments, such as the Protestant churches in Brazil (Canuto, 2012).

In 1971, new education guidelines were created through Law 5.692, giving

weight to actions for the organization of primary and secondary education. However, due to the scarcity of resources to profoundly change the rural education, the government ended up yielding conditions for private higher education to expand, which ended up increasing the demand for the teaching modality (Canuto, 2012).

With specific regard to rural education, the new guidelines brought, for the first time, the idea of adapting the calendar of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade rural schools to the activities of rural people. In its article 11, in paragraph 2, it determines that "In the rural area, the establishment may organize school periods, with vacation prescription at the times of planting and harvesting of crops, according to the plan approved by the competent teaching authority" (Brasil, 1971).

In this same decade of 1970, began violent conflicts in Brazil against organized movements in favor of the land. Because of this, in 1975, the National Confederation of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB) summoned the bishops of the dioceses of the Amazon and soon from all other regions of Brazil to support family farmers, quilombola groups, riverside dwellers, extractivists, small landowners, farmers landless, as well as salaried rural

workers in the cause for land (Canuto, 2012).

However, from the end of the military dictatorship in Brazil, which lasted from 1964 to 1985, there was a return of unions and social movements. In the cities reappeared with the end of illegality those who had actions articulated with the groups of metal workers, which gave rise to the Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT) and the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT). In the rural area, in the same way, movements organized in the struggle for agrarian reform gain strength with the large wave of peasant migrants expropriated of their lands by agricultural companies adept at extensive monocultures (Vendramini, 2015).

According to Delgado (2001), it was established at the turn of the 1980s to 1990s, the transition from the conservative-modernizing model adopted until then to one of a more liberal character in relation to the agrarian cause. There was a return to the issue in the political and economic debate within a new political-social scenario of an economic-liberal nature occasioned by the Constitution of the Federative Republic of 1988.

It was in this transitional period that the movements of poor and landless peasants questioned about the need to build policies aimed at an education that was

adequate to the new reality of poor and without their lands peasants. In this context, socioeconomic changes occurred with the deepening of the fall in industrial rates and external demand, which caused an increase in unemployment (Delgado, 2001).

From that point on, the state began to be pressured by social movements to formulate education projects other than those offered to rural schools, marked by their temporary and experimental aspects. Mere palliative actions that in no way represented actual social policies (Arroyo, 2007).

The transformations that took place in the rural area due to the expansion of capital established severe consequences on Brazilian social relations. It instituted the mobilization of peasant families to cities and other national borders following the movement of capital. This resulted in changes in the conception of peasant schooling (Vendramini, 2015).

The peasant struggle fought for the non-closure of the school that until then had been reserved for them through various strategies: grouping schools, sharing programs and resources, reducing expenses, opening to instrumental programs for professionalization and short-term education, among others (Vendramini, 2015).

The situation of the Brazilian agrarian question took place, above all, from the organization of social movements fighting for land. Fernandes and Santos (2015) understand that the choice of the Brazilian State to modify social policies for the rural area arose from a set of collection instruments that made with men and women become active subjects in policy proposals, including those aimed at the more adequate education of the rural people.

The proposal of Rural Education as a public policy, therefore, emerged in 1990, through the action of social movements in the search for recognition of the culture, knowledge and work related to rural men and women, being that these are not just specific to production agricultural, but the production of own knowledge (Fernandes, 2011).

Thus, as a result of this advance, the National Program for Education in Agrarian Reform (Pronera) emerged in 1997; a public policy for Rural Education developed in the settlement areas of the Agrarian Reform. Its initial milestone was the 1<sup>st</sup> National Meeting of Agrarian Reform Educators and Educators women – ENERA in 1997. According to the Pronera Operations Manual (2011, p. 13), the program sought to strengthen the rural environment as a living area in all its

dimensions: economic, social, political, cultural and ethical.

### **From Rural School to Rural Education: the struggle for the right to a contextualized learning**

The Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), according to Caldart (2001), emerged as a result of agrarian issues that are structural and historical in Brazil, bringing together the categories of organizations such as squatters, sharecroppers, salaried rural workers called landless, among several other categories and social organizations that started to struggle for Agrarian Reform and also for changes in Brazilian agriculture. The movement emerged as an active piece in the struggle for land. According to Fernandes (2012, p. 496) “in each state that started its organization, the fact that registered its beginning was the occupation”.

As highlight by Saviani (2016), initially, the issue of education was not part of the struggle agenda in the MST. However, with the concretization of settlements and the presence of settled children, the need for schools to meet local demands began to be discussed, which also occurred in other movements, such as the National Union of Agricultural Families Schools of Brazil. Fernandes (2012, p. 496) describes that “the struggle is dimensioned in various sectors of activity

of the movement, such as production, education, culture, health, agricultural policies and social infrastructure”. These struggles contributed to the emergence of MST settlements with well-defined common strategies, as well as policies to the development. They started to have as their purpose the production destined to food security, with the objective of obtaining income and raising the organization in cooperatives, integrating themselves to the predominant productive chains in the reformed area (Fernandes & Santos, 2008).

In the social and environmental sphere, the settlements had still as goal to establish safe and dignified housing conditions, these projects, based on the idea of environmental sustainability. The issue was to carry out the integral development of families through the creation of spaces for community coexistence and expression of local and universal culture.

With regard to the cultural and rural education, the settlements aimed to train subjects who recognize their rights. For this, it generated, through education, the recognition of peasants as tributaries engaged in the struggle for land and in economic, political and cultural production, linked to the peasant reality itself. Thus, there was an appreciation of

the family nucleus until regular schooling (Fernandes & Santos, 2008).

Leite (2012), however, draws attention to two central issues regarding the organization of settlements in agrarian reforms in Brazil. One is that it cannot be said that the settlements arose from a single “model” and that the reasons that gave rise to the claims for land are the same. In this case, it would have to be thought of as a space that captures various causes, spaces that comprise various activities and various conceptions of the world. The second is the very diversity of struggles they have in demand and access to land, which lead to the construction of settlements, as there are different struggles around Agrarian Reform, in the same space (Leite, 2012).

Therefore, the issue of rural education also became part of the agenda of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), as an important dimension of the struggle. Fernandes (2000, p. 223) points out that “in the second half of the 1980s, the Landless began to build the Education Sector, starting the collaboration of a pedagogy of the Movement”. Education thought for childhood, as a basic mechanism for organizing its ideological framework, even though knowledge, skills and values were under universal aspects.

Kolling, Vargas and Caldart (2012, p.501) highlight that the MST, moved by historical circumstances, was taking political decisions that made up its form of struggle and collective organization. These organizations proposed to articulate the work of education within the movement.

In this sense, the type of education intended by social movements was that linked to the reality of rural men and women, a contextualized education. Not that disconnected from the peasants' wishes and desires, nor colonizing, but a school education resized for the subject in training in order to answer their questions (Tavares, 2009).

From this positioning, it remains to understand the importance of educational organization linked to the reality of peasant subjects, who seek resistance in the education, to maintain their way of life and work in the rural area. Fernandes (2000, p. 224) highlights that, from the 1990s onwards, the issue of Literacy for Youth and Adults was emerging with force in social movements:

In the mid-1990s, the education sector managed to increase the number of Literacy courses for young people and adults in settlements and camps. It also implemented teacher training courses and held local and national meetings, specializing and territorializing the Movement's pedagogy. These educational experiences were reinforced in the early 1990s with the creation of the

Teaching Course and the Technical Course in Administration of Cooperative (TAC).

As a priority feature of the MST's educational work, the training of Agrarian Reform educators became necessary for an education *in* and *in the* countryside with its own characteristics, with a pedagogy that meets the Movement's wishes and the training needs of peasant people's. For Kolling, Vargas and Caldart (2012, p. 503), "In the MST's educational work has been a priority the training of Agrarian Reform teachers", the preparation of people from the community itself who would work in the public schools that were being conquered.

This teacher training process designed by the MST sought to meet the so-called "lay teachers", who worked in the teaching exercise without having the minimum required qualifications. Therefore, the lack of qualification did not make it impossible for them to participate in the collective production process of the political pedagogical project, which came to be defended by the MST (Kolling, Vargas & Caldart, 2012).

On this situation of lay teachers, Brandão (1986, p. 14) considers:

To a good extent, the lay teacher is, among us, the rural teacher. As in other professional sectors, the rural area is forced to accept for a longer period of time unqualified agents

whose practice is no longer accepted in the city.

The construction of a specific pedagogical proposal, with well-defined characteristics and the search for the training of lay teachers, required from the MST a more collective discussion on the organization of the school. For Kolling, Vargas and Caldart (2012, p. 503), some weaknesses should be highlighted about the conceptions of school and the involvement itself, such as the training of educators, often disputing information with state agencies.

As such, the MST put itself in a struggle for an education that was precise to its values and social objectives. This involvement unfolded in schooling and specific training initiatives for teachers who work in rural schools. Thus, took place in this process the development of teacher training courses at secondary level, former magisterium, and, from 1990, at higher level such as Pedagogy of the Earth, among other various graduations in rural education, in federal universities, based on the alternation pedagogy (Kolling, Vargas & Caldart, 2012).

Contextualized education, in this way, was related to the appreciation of the local reality of the subjects inserted in the teaching-learning process. Knowing the way of life of their own reality, with a view to overcoming structural problems



and weaknesses, both material and symbolic, became a mission of the curriculum in the imagination of Rural Education, according to the MST.

In this way, Rural Education is the one that makes the peasant subjects integrants of the construction of the educational process that is not intended for the formation of the working mass, which is convenient to the aspirations of monoculture capital and extensive cattle. It would be an education for the formation of the subject capable of having knowledge of their struggles and developing new frames of questions and demands (Caldart, 2012).

From this perspective of education, the agrarian reform settlements started to demand the implantation of rural schools which, according to Molina and Sá (2012, p. 146), is the one that “[...] places itself in a relationship of antagonism to the hegemonic school conceptions and to the education project proposed for the working class by the capital system”.

For Molina and Sá (2012), the rural school emerged within the conception of Unitary School<sup>iv</sup>, which was based on the development of pedagogical and epistemological practices for the materialization of humanist training based on the articulation among work, science and culture for formation of the intellect of the working class.

These initiatives of teacher training led to recognition by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) in 1995. According to Kolling; Vargas; Caldart, (2012, p. 501), with the impetus for this recognition, the 1<sup>st</sup> National Meeting of Agrarian Reform educators (Enera) was held in June 1997, which served as a public presentation of the work that had been developed in schools of settlements, in Youth and Adult Education, in early childhood education and in teacher training.

Fernandes (2000, p. 224) highlights that in the 1990s, the issue of Literacy for Youth and Adults was emerging with force in the movements. However, for Caldart, Frigotto and Pereira (2012), the experiences obtained by the MST in discussions on rural education were fundamental for the engendering of the National Program for Education in Agrarian Reform. From this position, it remains to understand the importance of educational organization linked to the reality of peasant subjects who sought resistance through education, to maintain the way of life and work of the rural area.

Therefore, although the proposal for a rural school to be planned since the first decades of the 20th century, it must be understood that the action of the MST, among other social movements involved in

the rural area of struggle for land, reinforced the need to promote the human formation of those without access to land. Despite not being the only one responsible for the educational gains for the rural people, it was the movement that sang in the settlements the need to debate actions aimed at shaping the identity of the landless, who still remained dependent on a primordial issue: teacher training to work in the Rural Education proposal (Caldart, 2012).

### **PRONERA: a policy for training rural teachers**

“The conception and policy for training rural teachers are being built in the conformation of rural education”, considers Arroyo (2012, p. 364) when he understands that the new scenario involving teacher training in Brazil is the result of the articulation of social movements. Along this path, the diversities of groups involved in the rural area of struggle for land were understood, involving the training of teachers to work in peasant, indigenous and quilombola communities.

On this treadmill, it is important to evidence the subjects involved in the construction of this concept of teacher training, as well as their contributions to the political debate and the construction of curriculum of the teacher and pedagogical

training for these rural teachers According to Arroyo (2012), two fundamental subjects in this process can be highlighted: Pronera and social movements of the rural area.

At the time of the emergence of Pronera, Brazil had a rural educational framework with a very high rate of illiteracy, very low levels of education and a low offer of schooling in the settlements and even in schools close to them. Therefore, April 16, 1998 marks the day of the creation of Pronera by the Extraordinary Ministry of Land Policy<sup>v</sup>. It is still noteworthy the incorporation of this program to INCRA in 2001, prioritizing the participation of young people and adults from Agrarian Reform settlements. The aforementioned program corresponds to a Public Education Policy that involves farmers in the Agrarian Reform areas and whose main objective is to strengthen education in the settlements, encouraging training for young people and adults in addition to training for school teachers from rural areas.

The break with Rural Education is one of the main priorities of *rural education* defended by the MST and by the Pronera proposal. Fernandes and Molina (2005) define the rural area as a space of particularities and cultural matrices. And, therefore, this rural area creates political

possibilities, identities, histories and production of social existence. And in this context of struggles for education that meets the diversity of the peasant people that the program presents itself, starting from the need for initial training for rural educators, meeting rural concerns with a commitment to building a critical awareness of the peasants.

In the view of Arroyo (2007), what happened in this context was the strategic occupation of spaces for teacher training, such as the Ministry of Education, state and municipal Education Secretariats, by social movements, which launched their demands in order to that the specificities of the education of rural peoples be equated. This put pressure on institutions to design and apply training policies and programs, in addition to those set up under the urban and generalist mold.

Following the events that determined this public policy, Mello (2017) highlights the involvement, since 2004, of the National Union of Agricultural Families Schools of Brazil, the Federation of Family Farming Workers, the Pastoral Land Commission, Community Organization Movement and the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops – CNBB.

The realization of the I and II CNEC was a historic landmark of the national articulation within the process of affirming

the rights of rural peoples to a fair education training, by struggling for rural education that is assumed as a concrete and effective public policy, giving the equal opportunity for all (Mello, 2017).

As a result of the advance of rural people's demands for an education that made sense to the peasant reality, the Universities were integrated as partners in this democratization process, with their spaces for research and reflection in turn of the strengthening of rural education. The Universities stood out as partners of the National Program of Education in Agrarian Reform, effectively participating in the discussion and elaboration of the projects proposed by Pronera, being one of these important projects of "Literacy and Schooling for Youth and Adults in Elementary and High School; Initial and Continuing Education of High School Teachers, in the Normal Modality or in Higher Education through a Licentiate Degree" (Brasil, 2011).

Antunes-Rocha and Martins (2009) consider that Brazilian universities have started to exercise the educational function for the training of teachers from an inclusive and democratic point of view, articulating the construction of new knowledge with social groups. They related training practices to life in the rural area, from the base of the knowledge

acquired by peasants in contact with their own reality. The ways of organization of peasant society and the struggles for access to guaranteed rights were part of the debates between the training courses, gaining legitimacy in the academic discourse.

However, Saviani (2009), despite understanding that Brazilian universities did not seek to be interested in teacher training of the rural area, states that there is no omission on the part of these institutions, and that it would not even be the case to debate on the merits. What happened, in fact, was the clash between specific training models from the point of view of pedagogical-didactic preparation. One focused on the general culture and on the specific domains of the contents of the knowledge area and disciplines; another understanding that teacher training should become effective only through pedagogical-didactic development. Despite this, it was established a policy for teacher training within universities with deliberate actions linked to the curriculum organization.

Regarding the training of teachers to work in rural schools, Fernandes (2012) points out that its incorporation as an educational policy was due to pressure from the MST through the strengthening of occupations and confrontations to the

State, demanding answers to the problems of the Brazilian peasant people. The struggles of social movements and unions were also intensified for the quality of education in the rural area, demanding an education model that was in line with the real life of the peasants.

Despite having started in the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the first signs of social movements and legal contributions to the promotion of rural education occurred in the first triennium of the Lula government (2003-2005), which contributed to the advances in the elaboration of formal instruments to promote the National Plan for Education and Strategic Alignment of the Ministry of Education (MEC). This course of action subsidized the creation of the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education (FUNDEB) (Fagnani, 2011). From this process, through the partnership with Higher Education Institutions, emerged the programs for teacher training in the rural area, such as the Support Program for Higher Education in a Licentiate Degree in Rural Education - PROCAMPO, in compliance with CNE/CEB resolution n° 1, dated 3/4/2002 and the National Rural Education Program – PRONACAMPO, through Decree N°. 7352/2010.

According to Oliveira (2009, p. 197) "President Lula's first term was marked, in the rural education, much more by permanence than ruptures in relation to the previous government." In fact, it continued in the midst of the proposal for an educational reform that encompassed all educational levels, from basic to higher. Despite recognizing that there were ruptures in these policies, especially in the second term, as a whole, they pointed to the recovery of the rights achieved and guaranteed by the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Within the scope of the Ministry of Education, in 2004, it was still emerged the Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity – SECADI, housing the General Coordination of Rural Education. From this, partnerships with public universities to offer teacher training courses were established, which ended up offering vacancies in undergraduate courses to qualify teachers suitable for multidisciplinary curricula, organized in broad axes and articulated to the proposal of Pedagogical Alternation, between school time and community time.

In Arroyo's (2009) reasoning, this political-institutional framework created for the training of rural teachers served as an example for teacher training for basic education, because it recognized social

collective actions to legitimize knowledge as theoretical components of curricula. According to Molina (2014), from the meetings of the working group designated for the formulation of new proposals to ensure teacher training for the rural area, the version presented to the Ministry of Education was instituted, shaping the Licentiate Degrees in Rural Education. Through a project still in the pilot format, four courses were created based on indications from Higher Education Institutions by the social movements themselves. In the process, they were involved Universidade de Brasília, Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Universidade Federal da Bahia and Universidade Federal de Sergipe.

From the experiences obtained from these pilots, the MEC organized public notices, between the years 2008 and 2009, so that Brazilian institutions could offer Licentiate degree courses for training rural teachers in the Rural Education proposal, after the experiences achieved.

According to Arroyo (2007), the formation of a stable and qualified professional body to work in rural schools would not happen if state public policies were not made permanent, enabling from entry, stability, exams, career of the professional teaching body, making it stable. Advances in this direction have

already taken place. State public policies, both at the municipal and state levels, have been concerned with training faculty to work through public examination. On the other hand, for those who work in the rural area, it remained the logic of political favoritism and its development through projects and training programs.

For Arroyo (2007), this process was marked by the strategic occupation of institutional spaces for rural teacher training by social movements. Articulated, they launched their demands on the Ministry of Education, the state and municipal Education Secretariats, so that actions that meet the specificities of education for rural peoples were guaranteed. They pressured for the elaboration and application of educational policies and programs beyond those organized in the urban and generalist molds, already offered to the Brazilian population.

Finally, according to Molina (2015) there has been, in the last decade, an expansion of the courses of Licentiate Degree in Rural Education, which can be understood as a victory for social movements. In addition to the increase in the number of vacancies, this advance carries with it other potentials, such as the consolidation of Rural Education as an area of knowledge production, not only

academic, but of collective experiences. This means, thus, the maintenance of a space already conquered for carrying out new public policies for the rural area, with new investments and courses in the area of knowledge, such as the Institutional Program for Teaching Initiation Scholarship – PIBID. And, finally, it represents the possibility of expanding the access and use of New Technologies in Rural Schools, incorporated both throughout the training process and in applied researches in rural schools

### **Final considerations**

It seizes, through the analysis of the Brazilian historical process, that access to education by peasants was marked by major social, political and cultural issues that certainly widened the gap between their training and that promoted in the city. The division of labor in the rural area, the expropriation of land and the lack of work opportunities continued in the light of adaptation to the order of capital, disregarding the issue of peasants' access to a school education capable of making them critical of this whole founding reality.

The denial of rural education, a mere reproducer of the capitalist-exploring order, arose from the need to create mechanisms for groups engaged in struggles for land and social rights. The

precision of articulation between the peasants, especially the MST, from the end of the 1980s onwards, triggered public policies to meet the wishes of the rural people. With the need to stiffen the ideology of struggle, in addition to the proposal itself of an appropriate education for young people and children in the settlements, a specific curricular framework and articulated with the values of the rural area, the issue of teacher training has become a key issue.

The struggle for access to land, as well as the valorization of the peasant way of life, integrated an increasingly articulated resistance movement against land concentration. From the very dispossession and expulsion of workers from the land, they generated claims for rights that had been marginalized until then. From this process of struggle for the recognition of the peasant cause through the promotion of an education proper to the rural area, the professionalization of the lay teacher, the one who worked in the rural area without academic training, denied professional valuation, became, without a shadow of a doubt, the central point to the real gain of peasant struggles.

In this sense, it still remains to understand that the recognition about the need to promote an adequate rural education to the needs of the peasants

emerged with the strengthening of the MST and Pronera as historic promoters. It has as historical promoters of its process the MST and Pronera. Through the actions of these, from the 1980s onwards, peasant demands began to make up the government's agendas and galvanized the attention of other groups organized to promote education in the rural area.

Thus, having emerged the first public policies for the promotion of Rural Education in the 1990s, during FHC's government, the first term of the Lula government may represent its continuity. Public universities, through partnerships with Pronera, continued to be essential for the specific training of teachers to work in the rural area, in settlements and in rural communities, by offering higher-level courses, spaces that were unimaginable to peasants until then.

Finally, in the Brazilian sociopolitical context, the policy that favored the training of teachers for the rural area arises not from the mere recognition of the state and public institutions for the old peasant demand, but from social pressure and the articulation of social movements, in particular the MST. Therefore, the offer of higher education courses in public universities, from the 2000s onwards, aimed at training rural teachers, must be understood as one of the

most important results of this historical process.

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<sup>i</sup> For Ferreira Jr and Bittar (2006), the figure of the

“lay” teacher in Brazil is mainly related to educational policies for the Magisterium influenced by the technocratic ideology in force among the years 1964 and 1985. Components of the popular classes started to compose positions previously dominated by the middle class, and the teacher began to suffer with a process of proletarianization of their intellectual functions, creating an identity crisis.

<sup>ii</sup> In addition to the Landless Movement, social movements such as the National Union of Schools for Agricultural Families in Brazil and Associations of Family Training Centers in Alternation joined together in the struggle for land and access to social rights.

<sup>iii</sup> In the case of this study, when referring to the education of rural people, in the way it was restricted and precarious, reference is made to schooling, education under the formal, institutional perspective.

<sup>iv</sup> The concept of the Unitary School arises from the Gramscian denial of the rational division of education into two strands, in classical, aimed at the formation of the intellectual class, which maintains the privileges of the bourgeois order, and professional, trainer of technicians at the service of the demands of capital as labor. In contrast, the Unitary school would promote learning from the spontaneous and autonomous action of the teacher, which would enable the working classes to appropriate historically accumulated knowledge in order to establish the integral formation of individuals, based on the dimensions of doing and knowing, of technician and the politician (Zen, 2016).

<sup>v</sup> Ministry created in the government of João Figueiredo, in 1982, through Decree No. 87,457, in order to deal with the National Land Policy Program and achieve the goals of regularization and implementation of land projects. It lasted until 1990, when it was incorporated into the Ministry of Agriculture.

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##### ABNT

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