

**DOSSIER**

*Childhood(s), social movements and the city: curriculum(s) and teacher training*

**The child in the cultural, socio-political, and educational constitution of agrarian reform settlements: denials and achievements*****A criança na constituição cultural, sociopolítica e educativa dos assentamentos de reforma agrária: negações e conquistas***

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**ABSTRACT**

If childhood cannot be thought of as confined to the chronological dimension, even more so, rural childhood cannot be conceived in a reduced form. Children in settlements grow up surrounded by the uncertainty of land ownership, are educated in struggle, and learn early on that collective organization is a path to victory and, at the same time, a means of resistance. The aim of this study was to analyze, through oral narratives, the processes of constitution of rural childhoods, in a school in the Agrarian Reform settlement, in Santaluz, BA. Visual ethnography was the methodology that guided the investigation, allowing for the varied use of techniques to construct the analyses. We also chose an interactive activity, named Poteca, which initiates oral narratives from children, families, and teachers. From the theoretical-conceptual movement, we broaden our perspective on the constitution of children in social, educational, cultural, and political realms. It is also necessary to understand that the context of daily struggle against prejudice and criminalization creates a dynamic of production and self-production in which these children establish themselves, experience their childhoods, and affirm themselves as a culturally organized and productive collective. These perceptions were based on the stories narrated during the investigation, through the interactions provided by Poteca. Oral experiences, once they are recorded, systematized, and analyzed, can support pedagogical practices and the development of curricula that take into account the conceptions, knowledge, cultures, and values that originate from social movements.

*Keywords:* Childhoods. Oral Narratives. Settlement. School.

**RESUMO**

Se a infância não pode ser pensada enclausurada na dimensão cronológica, mais ainda a infância campestre não pode ser concebida reduzidamente. As crianças de assentamentos crescem envoltas na incerteza da posse da terra, se educam na luta, cedo aprendem que a organização coletiva é um caminho para vitória e, ao mesmo tempo, é meio de resistência. O objetivo, para este trabalho, foi o de analisar, através das narrativas orais, os processos de constituição das infâncias campestres, numa escola no assentamento de Reforma Agrária, em Santaluz, BA. A etnografia visual foi a metodologia que conduziu a investigação, possibilitando o uso variado de técnicas para a construção das análises. Elegemos ainda uma ação interativa, denominada Poteca, desencadeadora das narrativas orais das crianças, famílias e professora. A partir do movimento teórico-conceitual, ampliamos o olhar para a constituição das crianças nos planos sociais, educativos,

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culturais e políticos. É preciso também perceber que o contexto de luta cotidiana contra o preconceito e a criminalização faz surgir uma dinâmica de produção e autoprodução em que essas crianças se constituem, vivem suas infâncias e afirmam-se como um coletivo culturalmente organizado e produtivo. Essas percepções basearam-se nas histórias narradas durante a investigação, por meio das interações proporcionadas pela Poteca. As experiências orais, após serem registradas, sistematizadas e analisadas, poderão subsidiar as práticas pedagógicas e a construção de currículos que considerem as concepções, os conhecimentos, as culturas e os valores oriundos dos movimentos sociais.

*Palavras-chave:* Infâncias. Narrativas Oraís. Assentamento. Escola.

## Introduction

*The real is not in the departure or the arrival: it presents itself to us in the middle of the journey. (Guimarães Rosa, 1994, p. 52).*

The journey that allowed us to meet children and adults from an Agrarian Reform settlement, not everything we discovered was visible to our eyes or within reach of our hands. The investigation<sup>1</sup> was conducted in the Rose settlement, in the sisal-producing region of Bahia, in the city of Santaluz, which chose education as a means to combat the high rates of child labor and, consequently, school dropouts.

The children's narratives about their childhoods, dreams, and moments lived in the occupation of a land so longed for, and so difficult to conquer, revealed themselves at each meeting. The investigation highlighted the need to face the challenge of thinking about the relationships between social movements, childhood, teacher training and curriculum.

Knowing that children from Agrarian Reform settlements live in a space of collective organization, where social, political and economic dynamics are differentiated, the investigation was conducted by the following problematization: How does the reality of settled children connect with approaches in the cultural, social, political, and educational fields?

The narratives of children and adults allowed us to perceive issues that are invisible to the eyes and out of reach for many who are unfamiliar with the context of a settlement. By choosing an action-reflection-action approach, from our initial interactions with the settlers, we make ourselves available to accompany these individuals who are suffering from segregation and prejudice.

The first necessary step for anyone who wishes to contribute to the fight against the oppression suffered by rural communities is to understand the central role of education in the struggle for land rights and the desired social transformation in the face of adversity. We highlight that, in this process of struggle, the first tent erected is that of the school; from the camping phase to the settlement on the property, the school serves as a space for extensive education, where children receive their formal instruction, as well as participate with all campers in a process of human and political development.

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Because we believe in the teachings and contributions arising from the social, political and educational organization of a settlement, we developed an interactive action in the Rose community that allowed us to investigate educational processes and organizational actions. The stories narrated present situations that range from the first steps of the conquest, on July 10, 1989, and continue to this day in the struggle to remain on the land.

The mystique of the collective was already present during the first visit to Rose. We believed that to enter the settlement, permission should be granted by adults. However, from the start, where there were adults, there were also children; if the intention was to work with children's narratives, we found a conducive environment for research.

This direct involvement was crucial. After all, the goal of the investigative action indicated this increased participation. It aimed to analyze how the educational processes of the settlements contribute to the identity, cultural, and political constitution of children. This was based on pedagogical practices that use cultural experience as a means to broaden human experience.

One challenge was: how to preserve the horizontal structure and the perspective of collective organization in an academic activity? To begin addressing this, we needed a methodological approach that would enable us to comprehend the narratives of the rural population. Something simple had to emerge to record, as Guimarães Rosa tells us, the "knowledge" and "experiences" of these people. The construction work of Professor Clarissa Bittencourt de Pinho e Braga, with whom we shared experiences in teaching, research, and extension, suggested the possibility of these memories being "preserved" in clay pots. The late teacher, Clarissa, named this collection of story-filled pots, "Poteca."

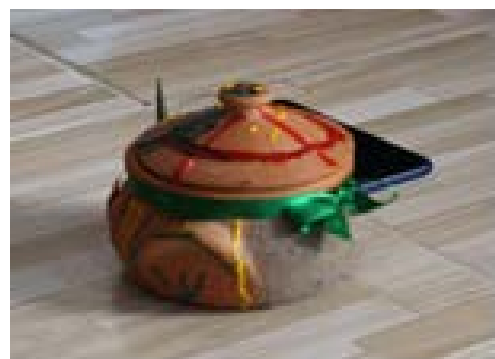
The educational and investigative prowess of Poteca is rooted in the interactivity of the narrated stories, intertwined with the poetics of pot preparation. Before beginning the storytelling, participants decorate the clay pots, as their stories will be "preserved" in them. As mental images are associated with these stories, the "cover" of the "narrative book" is illustrated by the participants using various materials such as paint, sand, stones, ribbons, and scraps. Then, they are instructed to locate an object that will be positioned in the pot (Figures 1 and 2). Such objects will act as catalysts for individual stories. This event occurred in the Rose Settlement.

**Figure 1:** "The Pot and the Bag"



Source: Arquivo pessoal

**Figure 2:** The Pot and the Earth



Source: Arquivo pessoal

Poteca was not considered a methodological procedure, but rather a technique that we refer to as “interactive action”, capable of initiating oral narratives within the scope of the investigation. This action emerged as a significant tool, enabling participants to introspect their stories, cultures, identities, and take the helm in the narration.

The choice of Poteca was backed by the comprehension that other methods and techniques for data collection, which use oral communication, provide a script - occasionally rigid - to shape the narratives. The Poteca, with its creative aspect, offers a platform for orality that facilitates poetic fluidity and also captures details of the participants’ experiences. Thus, the methodological approach used oral narratives; ethnography was the method, and Poteca was the technique for data construction. The integration of these methodological steps not only facilitated data collection, but also emphasized the importance of the subjectivities and voices of the subjects.

The narratives of the participants guided the investigation at all times. When introducing the project with Poteca, even before painting the pots, we suggested they attempt to incorporate into their narratives the spaces that children frequented in the community. Additionally, we recommended exploring the relationship between these spaces and their childhood experiences. Immediately, a child said: “It’s better to go to these places than just talk” (João, 2019. Verbal Information). Statements like these highlighted the children’s connection with the settlement. The process of “becoming a subject” in one’s own narrative (and also in the investigation) proved effective, as the stance of cooperation was observed in both adults and children. Considering the child’s valuable input, we agreed to the suggestion and adjusted the plan. So, we initiated a discussion and enumerated these potential sites on the board.

By raising their voices in the present study, the participants carried out critical discussions based on the stories of denials and achievements related to the condition of children settled in the community. The elaborations encompassed the cultural, social, political, and educational aspects of the settlements, particularly for the children of Rose. However, adults, in order to connect with their land, also emphasized the importance of retaining their childlike side: “I also arrived here as a child,” (laughs), “at 21 years old.” (Zicks Musical, 2019) Verbal Information).

The results obtained enabled us to assert that the formative aspect of collective organization, steered by social movements in the field, can suggest the potential for ongoing teacher training and, consequently, a curricular, dynamic, diverse, and contextualized perspective.

## **Children and Childhoods: The Plurality that Shapes Them**

We understand the necessity to broaden our understanding of children and childhood, as the diversity of cultures present in childhood necessitates the use of the term in plural. Examining plurality necessitates a teacher training process that supports the active role of children in settlement spaces, where collective and dialogical organization directs social relations. After listening to the Rose children, we realized that memories and childhood experiences in the settlements are shaped by certain specificities of this social environment.

Children, regardless of their involvement in urban or rural social life, establish a direct relationship with history and the reality that surrounds them. Thus, childhood experiences are

shaped by inter and intra-generational *societal* relationships, gender, ethnicity, among other factors. Sarmento (2008) advocates for the creative capacity of children, viewing them as creators of cultures and not simply replicators of adult cultures. The sociologist of childhood also informs us that the creative cultural dimension of children employs mechanisms such as: interactivity, playfulness, reality fantasy, and repetition. Through these mechanisms, children do not passively accept information from adults. Instead, they interact with the adult world, exchange information and meanings with their peers, and create their own interpretations.

We realized that the educational, social, and political organization of a settlement that values children, individuals who from a very early age deal with changes, achievements, and difficulties arising from agrarian issues, allows to establish a continuous exploration for the appreciation of children's cultures and identities.

From a social perspective of childhood, we assert that the modern conception of children, which positions them as *infans* (those who do not speak), strongly suggests a clear concealment of children's participation in social contexts and, consequently, in research. In this line of argument, Arenhart (2007, p. 3) states: "Modernity establishes the concept of childhood as a category distinct from adulthood. This conception has positioned children as irrational and lesser beings in comparison to adults." However, we found when listening to the children, that the confinement and restriction of the possibilities of experiencing their childhoods are disrupted by the political and social significance that adults attribute to children in the Rose settlement.

To avoid getting caught in the simplistic view of children in modernity, we need to expand our perspective by considering the sociological, historical, anthropological, and social aspects of childhood. Thus, potentially, the analysis of peasant children's childhoods may also benefit from this plural and expanded perspective. While considering childhoods in a specific context necessitates a theoretical approach that transcends temporal and spatial barriers, it is also crucial to underscore the unique characteristics observed in peasant childhoods.

The confinement of children led to an increase in virtual dialogue, where computers, video games, and smartphones became mediums of interaction for children across all age groups. This type of virtual relationship is not exclusive to children living in urban areas. Children in rural areas, albeit to a lesser extent, are also connected. The social relationships that city and countryside children engage in exhibit notable differences in their childhood experiences.

In the lives of children residing in urban areas, besides the daily use of technology, there exists – contingent on their social class – a packed schedule of extracurricular activities: foreign language classes, sports, music classes, etc. Those living in rural areas often find themselves integrated, directly or indirectly, into the world of work from a very early age. Rural children are recognized as future inheritors of land and property. Through their labor, they maintain the hope of one day acquiring land that could elevate them from the status of farmhands or tenants.

There is a fundamental difference when we discuss spatial and temporal limitations. Children in rural areas spend their time immersed in the realities of labor and family life. To secure their livelihood, they engage directly with the land, or are situated in places and circumstances where adults rely not only on agricultural production, but primarily on production.

In their daily interactions with the land, rural children, particularly those who have endured the challenges of the camp phase until they were settled, undergo moments of organization. These moments demonstrate that these spaces aspire to foster a human formation rooted in collective life and respect. This organization is structured around the essential objective of advocating for land democratization as a survival strategy and for the sustenance of rural workers. It is through these actions that the collective consciousness of those advocating for land rights is formed.

From a young age, children are taught that the struggle extends beyond the mere acquisition of land. The struggle is for a society where men, women, and children can forge new ways of living, with unrestricted respect for the human condition. In this context of struggle for (and on) land, children are not merely passive observers of history: they are active participants in the struggle itself. This sentence is as plausible as it is factual, involving the entire family that has been dispossessed of their land. It aims to ensure the basic survival conditions for the community residing there.

Children living in collective organizational spaces, like certain settlements, directly engage with the mystique, struggle, and work inherent in these environments. Thus, there is an educational purpose in the actions directed towards all individuals who reside and interact there. Based on educational principles and the emergence of values related to the settler's condition, individuals mutually educate each other, collectively and individually producing identities.

When we observe how children interact within a settlement context, we discover that: "changes in the perception and treatment of children are closely linked to alterations in the structure of the social organization model" (Arenhart, 2012, p. 18). If children are viewed as social, political, and collective entities, the actions planned in their living environment should also acknowledge their presence and significance. An example includes the City Council and the City Hall of Mirim do Rose. The democratic process is experienced by children as they register, campaign, and are voted for. The child who receives the most votes becomes the President of the Chamber and assumes the role of Junior Mayor. The activities are not solely confined to children and young individuals, as those selected partake in events both within and beyond the community, interacting with peers and adults alike.

We conducted local meetings to discuss the issues and challenges that the community was facing. And what we could do. We also visited other communities. In this case, there were six Junior City Halls in the Municipality when I served as a Junior Councilor. There has always been an exchange between these groups; we communicated and met with various individuals. Hence its social importance, because it engaged us in the political movement (Levinho, 2019. Verbal Information).

This method of child conception contradicts the principles of an education system designed to nurture and develop an immature, pure, and naive being, as Rousseau proposed in the 18th century. This participatory perspective, when combined with a school that values the diversity of childhood, can enhance the social significance of this stage of life (Kramer, 1992). Conversely, environments and concepts that fail to recognize the potential of children can result in limiting, standardizing, and even negating their childhood experiences. Children and their childhoods are tangible realities and, therefore, cannot be made invisible or curtailed.

When confronted with the reality of raising settled children, we strongly oppose theories that suggest the end of childhood. Postman (2005), for example, asserts that children are subjected to a process of premature and irreversible adultification, making it nearly impossible to believe in the continued existence of childhood. Regarding this concept, we believe that what has indeed been fading is the mythologized notion of childhood, which views children in an ahistorical manner (Kramer, 2002). Today, it is no longer feasible to consider children outside of their environments, let alone as passive individuals. Thus, given the expansion of the perception of childhood, Sarmiento (2005, p.10) says that:

(...) this conception of the death of childhood negates the active nature of children as social subjects, rather than mere passive recipients of mass culture. It obscures the fact that children, living in complex and adverse social conditions, experience life in the specificity of their generation.

Children, due to their active nature and status as social subjects, differ from adults. Similarly, they also vary from one another, as they are the product of interactions in various sociocultural contexts. The sociocultural experiences, along with factors such as social class, ethnicity, culture, and gender, contribute to the creation of diverse childhood worlds (Sarmiento, 2002).

Refocusing on the unique sociocultural experiences of the settled children, the reality that they are in close proximity to their work and are involved in the entire process of organizing their space, fosters a sense of collective identity and sets them apart from other children. Due to their engagement with their surroundings, these children dream and believe that they share responsibility in creating a better world. They aim to challenge the degrading conditions that deny individuals their fundamental rights such as food, housing, health, education, and citizenship. In turn, even as children, they learn to reject the manner in which they are consigned to “no place”, to silence, to waiting. The relationships they establish within their environment enable them to identify as social agents and active participants in creating a new narrative for themselves, their peers, and society. The prominence of this character is undeniable in another narrative.

Considering political issues and community enhancements from an early age is a seed planted. Today, I often contemplate the concept of collectivism and I genuinely enjoy working in a collective environment, as it reminds me that we are not isolated in this world. We must become agents of transformation, particularly since politics is a part of our daily lives (Levinho, 2019. Verbal Information)

We witnessed this child protagonism in the Rose settlement. When it was necessary to engage in discussions with adults in the settlement – teachers and leaders – the children were included. After all, everything that was to be discussed pertained to their lives. Similarly, when the activity was designed for children, parents observed the events unfold. Still on the topic of how settled children perceive the world, as well as their social role, Arenhart (2003, p. 29) presents a report that highlights the social dimension of rural childhood:

I am a product of the Agrarian Reform and I desire a Brazil with free individuals, where I can express my emotions, my rebellions, my dreams. A country where I can continue living in the countryside. And from it I can make my living, taking advantage of the riches that nature offers, and preserving the greenery of hope. A Brazil with education, where we children, not

only learn to read and write, but also learn how to work the land, plant, and preserve. We also want to play, dream, express what we feel, engage in sports, and participate in educational decisions (Cleonir, 9 years old).

The poetic essence found in this childlike perspective of the world is articulated by Friar Sérgio Görger<sup>2</sup>. He delves into his memories to recall images of children from the years he spent working with the Landless Rural Workers Movement. He narrates an episode involving a child, in 1981, at the time when the National Army and the Federal Police invaded a settlement in Rio Grande do Sul. The place was taken over in such a way that no one could show solidarity with the settlers, bring food or even celebrate masses. The Friar, upon managing to enter the settlement, encountered a desolate situation. However, in this place where the fear of dictatorship reigned and the expressions were of hopelessness, a child made the adult realize that the fight would be worth it.

(...) that was when a child of about 4 years old caught my attention, sitting on a tree trunk, at the edge of the road, almost in the center of the camp, seemingly oblivious to everything that was happening there, unconcerned with the military presence surrounding her. He sang, at the top of his lungs, the anthem of the landless people at that time: The Great Hope. I paused, overwhelmed with emotion, hearing the innocent voice shattering the silence enforced by the military dictatorship and the elites upon the impoverished peasants who were brave enough to lift their heads and voice their opinions: “The fawmews and the wowkews, anxiously await agwawian wefowm.” The innocent little voice sang, awakening the dampened courage within me (MST, 2005, p. 6).

Children, within a rural setting, are an undeniable part of reality: they are tasked with shaping history and becoming agents of personal, local, and societal transformation. However, the children themselves continue to perceive common characteristics of childhood, while they also understand how to distinguish the social dimension: “What is common among landless children and others is that they are all children. They all have the right to play, study, and aspire for a future. – Volnei, 8 years old” (Arenhart, 2003, p. 31).

Since the organization within the Agrarian Reform settlement operates as a family mission, children play a significant role. Firstly, they are not prohibited from attending meetings; on the contrary, they are encouraged to participate. During the camps, mobilizations, and even moments of conflict, they produce a contagious effect, essentially bringing joy and hope. This emphasis on children in community organization is justified by the perspective of certain rural social movements that view the struggle for land as a present and future project, in other words, a lifelong endeavor. According to Caldart (2000), the gentler aspect of these movements stems from the incorporation of a feminine perspective on the struggle, which is further reinforced by the presence of children.

We therefore emphasize that this social perspective of childhood enables the formation of a collective child identity. According to Caldart (2000), the construction of this identity becomes possible due to the way peasant movements perceive their own childhood condition. In simpler terms, these children, as apprentices, are directly involved in historical events and are part of the natural progression of rural social movements.

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<sup>2</sup> A religious member of the Order of Friars Minor (OFM), and a leader among the peasants in Rio Grande do Sul.



While this childhood condition is often overlooked by the media and scarcely addressed in academic productions, it's undeniable that in Brazil, rural populations bear the brunt of arrests, massacres, and numerous other forms of physical and symbolic violence. Caldart (2000) emphasizes that, even in this context of denial and deprivation, peasant leaders are not solely focused on food production, but also intend to nurture individuals who can contribute to sustaining the dream of dignity.

The perspectives centered on the constitution of children are not limited to a specific chronological phase. May children's ability to learn and teach, and to live with purpose, fill many voids that we adults create. But above all, may children lead us to realize how much they can transform their surroundings. In considering the educational space of the settlement, namely the school - the first establishment during the camp phase, it is crucial to organize it with a fresh approach towards training and curriculum.

### **For a liberating formative and educational action**

In the case of the Rose settlement, three elements are associated when analyzing the organization of pedagogical work at the school: education, culture, and democratic participation. The historical process of the school's conquest within the community, from this perspective, is linked to the struggles for education by the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST). This includes the Pedagogy of the Movement, the Itinerant Schools, the Children's Cirandas, and the community's cultural projects, such as: Expressões Sertanejas, Griôs Sisaleiros, Rosas Vivas and others, makes Rose's educational actions pulse.

To understand the educational possibilities of Rose, we need to understand the liberating educational logic of rural social movements. In this context, we chose a dialogical approach where we introduce the narratives that surfaced with Poteca, linking them to certain reflections on formative action and emancipatory education. The account given by the first teacher from the Rose settlement provides insight into what peasant education entails.

My pot contains sand, sticks, and faith, because that's what I used to help establish the settlement. I was an early teacher. From a very early age, I was called upon to help my brothers read. But I truly felt emotion when I taught my father to read and write (Sol, 2015. Verbal Information).

After experiencing the beauty and depth of Rose's first teacher's narrative, the anticipation for other chapters in that story became apparent. We would like to emphasize that this narrative was conducted during our first activity at Rose, where we presented the research objectives. During that event, when we conducted the Poteca with local leaders, Professor Sol collected some sand and a piece of wood from the pot. Excitedly, he shared not only the aforementioned words but also discussed other challenges faced. The manner in which she confronted adversity shaped her identity as a settler and teacher at the 10 de Julho School.

Everything is a blend in a unique movement of sand, wood, faith, emotion, education, culture, and organicity. These indivisible elements outline the unique story of individuals referred to as the

“landless” of Rose. This narrative suggests the potential for constructing an education system that challenges the dominant ideology. The process of utilizing unproductive land, led by ordinary people who have consistently been denied numerous basic rights, has much to teach. The educational, cultural, and political foundations of an occupation, such as Rose’s, can demonstrate a method of resistance capable of instructing social movements that it is not only necessary to resist, but more importantly, to persist.

The social, political, and educational structures of the investigated location reveal that the narratives built in Rose have unique characteristics. These are directly linked to the formation of identity and culture of individuals in these spaces, including children. Examining the history of a specific social movement – the MST – will likely reveal more similarities than differences. One of these convergences pertains to how schools and formal education processes extend to occupations and settlements.

If there are noticeable discrepancies in Rose’s fight compared to the actions of MST, on the other hand, similarities are easily discernible. One of these converging points is that the organization of the struggle, in both instances, prioritized the conquest of land. The text also suggests that as these struggles unfolded, it became necessary to address other challenges such as education, cultural training, health, production, the environment, sustainability, etc. The consolidation and enhancement of this struggle, both for the MST and the peasants of Rose, has always been guided by two fundamental and inseparable principles: organicity and collectivity (Stédile; Fernandes, 2005).

The term “Organicity” refers to “the capacity of a movement to facilitate the circulation and articulation of common ideas, discussions, and guidelines throughout the organization on a consistent basis” (Peloso, 2012, p. 54). The concept of organicity necessitates a harmony between thought and action, upholding the independence of those involved in decision-making. This is crucial for collective, democratic, and participatory work. This is evident in the battles that took place at Rose.

Bernardo Mançano Fernandes (2000), in his discussion on the formation of the MST, highlights some needs that emerged beyond the struggle for land. He emphasizes that education and school are as important as aspects related to production. According to Fernandes (2000, p. 27), in the early years of the MST, the objectives included: “understanding the educational reality of the Movement; ensuring access, quality, and retention of children in schools; developing an educational proposal and pedagogical principles; promoting cooperative work; facilitating teacher training; and providing literacy for young people and adults, among others”. In the settlements, the harvest is abundant but there are limited workers. This necessitates the formation of committees to advocate for and organize schools within the community.

At Rose, the initial concern was with the construction of the school as a physical space. According to Sandra Dalmagro (2010), in any occupation scenario, two perceptions of school can always be discerned: the necessity of school and the school as a necessity for struggle. According to the author, “the first is understood as a condition of access to culturally produced social goods, while the second expresses the need for a different political perspective, namely, social transformation and changes in the school” (Dalmagro, 2010, p. 165). The initial concept is an immediate necessity; the latter should be adopted by the group, ensuring a unique contribution to local education.

The initial efforts by the school in the Rose settlement not only addressed the requirement for physical space, but also considered safety concerns. The location where they first set up camp was not the same as the future village site, causing significant distress for everyone camped there. The Professor Sol (2019) emotionally recalls this period.

We were taking risks due to the ignorance of these people. They thought we were here stealing what belonged to others, that we were a bunch of idle people, when, in reality, we were seeking our rights to just want a piece of land to provide a more dignified life for our families (Sol, 2019. Verbal Information).

The training of the first teacher was undertaken with great effort and courage. Gradually, she witnessed the emergence of a new world. This world had the touch of the hand of a farmer-teacher: "At the time, I only had a teaching degree. Later, I studied Pedagogy." I completed a postgraduate degree in Management and also studied Biological Sciences. Everything was achieved with a lot of sacrifice. We look back and see that it was all worth it." (Sol, 2019, Verbal Information).

We acknowledge that the progress already made in MST education is a pre-existing experience that should be taken into account and recognized in discussions about peasant education. Examining the unique aspects of the so-called Pedagogy of Movement can provide valuable insights for enhancing educational processes at Rose.

The initial step in considering a differentiated education process is to comprehend that children are not mere replicators of adult norms, contrary to previous beliefs. Thus, an emancipatory educational process necessarily involves the creation of strategies that place dialogical actions at the center of the educational process. These actions enable children to express their opinions, which is the underlying meaning of the phrase "we need to give our voice". We often hear and use this phrase, but if we consider the power to "give our voice", we can be seen as the initiators of dialogical action. Wouldn't we run the risk of being perceived as responsible for determining when the other person will speak? Doesn't "giving someone a voice" imply that they don't have a voice?

What is most consistent with the breadth of Freire's dialogic approach is to assume an active and elaborative listening/speaking movement. There is a need to pay attention to the subtle nuances of this "voicing" movement. Consider revising the sentence to: "Imagine an illiterate farmer arriving at an educational facility, waiting for someone to empower him with a voice." They have plenty of knowledge and voice. In a dialogical relationship, if we consciously help the individual understand that they have an active voice and that their knowledge is crucial to the dialogical circle, they will not feel inhibited and will not be silenced. In the context of children, the educational process necessitates strategies that empower them to express themselves when they feel the need. The school may associate these children with the aforementioned situations.

As an integral part of the settlement's educational landscape, the school serves as a nexus between the narratives of the Rose community and the Landless Rural Workers Movement. The first official school within an MST camp was established in 1986, at Fazenda Anonni, situated in Sarandi, Rio Grande do Sul. One of the farmers who initiated the struggle for the school in the camp was Roseli Celeste Nunes da Silva, also known as Rose. On March 31, 1987, the farmer was tragically killed during a demonstration on the side of a road, after being run over by a truck belonging to an

agricultural company. Approximately 3,000 km away, in a community within the sisal region of Bahia, 'Rose' was the political name assigned to the Lagoa do Boi settlement.

The conditions inherent to a profession also foster additional relationships between the two locations and the educational institution. As Ana Luedke (2013, p. 84) notes regarding the school at Fazenda Anonni, "even before the approval and collection of funds for the school's construction by state bodies, the MST initiated its activities in a black canvas shed". In both occupations, the establishment of the school held significant importance for the peasant struggle: farmers were able to construct and set up their schools in areas of conflict and presumed illegality. These cannot be viewed as mere coincidences: they should be regarded as examples for sustaining the fight for land and the fundamental conditions of territorial permanence.

This school, born from struggle, needs to maintain a unique didactic-pedagogical structure. In this context, the MST, after establishing specific sectors to advance peasant education, provides these subsidies under the name 'Pedagogy of the Landless Movement'.

Roseli Caldart (2003, p. 52) asserts that Movement Pedagogy pertains to "the method through which the Movement has, historically, shaped the social subject known as Sem Terra, and educated the individuals who are part of it on a daily basis". Edgar Kolling, a member of the MST education sector, along with Maria Cristina Vargas and Roseli Caldart, present the general lines that define the Pedagogy of the Movement.

The text is a formative intentionality produced within the dynamics of social struggles such as land, work, and class. It also represents a collective organization of peasant workers, which can be conceptualized as an educational process. Its logic teaches how to conduct human development in various situations, including institutional ones, but it can also assist in directing the actions of the struggle towards broader objectives: contemplating how each action - whether it's an occupation, a march, a method of food production - can contribute to the development of its subjects: as Landless, as a peasant, as a worker, as the working class, as a human being; what values it suggests, denies or reinforces; what attitude it promotes in the face of struggle, society, life; and what overcoming challenges it presents to your humanity (Kolling; Vargas; Caldart, 2012, p. 549).

According to Roseli Caldart (2004, p. 380), besides the general guidelines mentioned earlier, certain factors contribute to the emergence of schools in camps/settlements. These factors would be associated with recognizing the value of the school. This value is emphasized as a key organizational principle of the Movement. It is seen as crucial to the fight for and attainment of human development. Another group of factors relates to the recognition of educational precariousness in Brazil, particularly in rural areas. These include concerns about the low level of education, the initiative of mothers and teachers to address this issue through schooling, their responsibility for educating and organizing educational activities for children, and the organic nature of the Movement that encourages the participation of women and children in its community.

Upon identifying these factors, it became necessary to "concentrate more intensively on this particular struggle, as well as the events that transpired within the conquered schools" (Caldart, 2004, p. 380). This is a concern that no school, particularly those established amidst struggles in contexts of deprivation and exclusion, should disregard. The focus on pedagogical development should be

a guiding principle, not merely a concern. We make this observation because we are aware of the conditions in some settlement schools. We understand that the pedagogical intention, which aims at training students both “in” and “for” collective struggle, has been lost in many of these places. This finding is supported by the fact that, in places where farmers cannot directly influence the pedagogical dimension – whether as teachers, managers, students, or organized community – these guidelines are “outsourced”. Typically, Education Departments assume control of these schools, deploying teachers who lack community engagement, and introducing a curriculum structure that is disconnected from the settlement’s context. Thus, work is alienated. Local leaders, when they least expect it, may see the principles emphasized by Caldart slip away like water through their fingers.

Educational institutions in settlements/camps and rural educators, regardless of their affiliation with the MST, should acknowledge the historical development of the Movement in the field of education. The Movement Education Sector has made various materials available over the years, resulting from studies and training courses. Among these materials is the “MST and School Dossier”, published in 2005. This collection summarizes the documents and productions of MST from 1990 to 2001. The dossier outlines thirteen pedagogical principles and five philosophical principles that should guide training and educational practice. The principles are as follows:

The philosophical principles indicate: education for social transformation; education for work and cooperation; education focused on the various dimensions of the human person; education with/for humanist and socialist values; and education as a permanent process of human formation and transformation. The pedagogical principles that reinforce the objectives of education in the MST are: the relationship between theory and practice; the methodological combination of teaching and training processes; reality as the basis for knowledge production; socially useful formative knowledge; education for work and through work; the organic link between educational and political processes; the organic link between educational and economic processes; the organic link between education and culture; democratic management; self-organization of students; the creation of pedagogical collectives and continuous training of educators; a research-oriented attitude and ability; and the combination of collective and individual pedagogical processes (MST, 2005).

The subversive aspect is that an education guided by these principles would undermine the prejudiced, class-based, and sexist education that currently dominates in schools. We believe that educators dedicated to social causes would only reject these principles if they are not aware of them. Why is it so challenging to witness a school being constructed and sustained by these principles? Is the concept of re-existence truly essential, alongside pedagogical resistance? Resist to what?

If resistance is associated with the prevalent educational processes, there is nothing to resist, but rather to subvert. We extend this issue to schools that cater to children in situations of exclusion and instability. We recommend the need for rural schools, particularly in camps/settlements, to re-establish and regain control as soon as possible. This is crucial considering the uncertainty and ambiguity of future public policies affecting these schools.

The Movement, with the expanded scope of education and diverse training schedules and venues in mind, has organized and continues to generate a significant amount of materials on the education of rural people at all levels. This also includes defining and guiding the so-called itinerant

schools. The organization also arranges early childhood education through children's circles and advocates for the expansion of higher education courses targeted at rural individuals. There is a wide range of production, not limited to schools in MST camps and settlements. As Caldart (2004, p. 219) states, "it is a synthesis and combination of different pedagogical matrices." Therefore, it offers a broad range of possibilities for educators and communities seeking a differentiated approach to education. In this ongoing endeavor towards a liberating peasant education, we can also mention the Itinerant Schools and the Children's Cirandas, among others.

Given our experiences in the settlement and various productions associated with this liberating school, we can assert that Rose and her school serve as examples of how counter-hegemonic actions can be constructed even in adverse circumstances. Considering the activities conducted with the children and the teacher's final perception, it was evident that memories of resistance and occupation are not as vivid for this generation of children as they were for previous generations at the 10 de Julho School. This is formative. This is a living resume. Therefore, it is crucial to remain vigilant about how the curriculum set by the Education Departments is implemented. If a narrative is dismissed by official manuals, failing to insist on strategies to keep it alive could lead to its eventual oblivion.

### **To conclude, the word is built**

Construction will always be the key when it comes to education. The experiences and learning from the Rose settlement affirm our belief in the necessity of continuing to develop a training process for teachers in rural schools. This process should value the narratives and cultural dimensions of rural communities. The community's achievements and foundational principles should be incorporated as dynamic elements within the curriculum. Thus, the curriculum can be conceived as the product of a concrete, real, historical practice, resulting from social, political, and pedagogical relations. These relations are expressed in the organization of pedagogical work and in the handling of knowledge related to human development, all under the responsibility of the school.

In this context, Miguel Arroyo (2015, p. 48) prompts us to consider certain questions: "What inquiries and contributions have the diversity of social movements, specifically from rural areas, brought to the development of an alternative curriculum in rural schools, indigenous, quilombola, peasant communities, black women, and for the creation of another training curriculum for other teachers?"

The problems raised are real. It is still our responsibility to collectively answer: how can we construct these curricula influenced by the experiences of social movements? We need to understand the positive outcomes these experiences yield and explore their potential. Addressing these issues inevitably requires understanding this Rural Education. Conceive it as Rural Education that: advocates a vision of the countryside as a place for a dignified and meaningful life; advocates a fixation and reconnection with the countryside; advocates the construction of rural citizenship in contrast to the view of backwardness; develops a critical perspective of oneself and the world to reaffirm human dignity; fosters the certainty that rural communities are responsible for providing the city's food;

promotes change in the area of production and distribution. However, most importantly, understand the significance of a “field” that contributes to the construction of a national development project.

Looking at experiences such as Rose’s, it becomes evident that the education for rural communities needs to increasingly take into account the “role of diversity in the conceptions of curriculum, knowledge, and culture” (Arroyo, 2015, p. 56). Experiences such as these suggest the possibility of developing alternative curricula and the need for different types of education, an education that contributes to the dismantling of the monopoly of knowledge in schools, universities, and other places where opportunities can be cultivated, leading to the emergence of new knowledge.

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