

Pedagogical neo-ruralism: the training of field workers in the Brazilian neo-developmental project (2001–2016)

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ABSTRACT

To understand the training perspective proposed by the State in the education policies of the neo-developmental period (2001–2016), we analyzed the relationship of these policies with the development project. Based on the theoretical and methodological framework of Dialectical and Historical Materialism, we carry out a document analysis, an investigation of statistical data on the agrarian issue and a literature review. As the main result, we found that the training of field workers, proposed by the State in the neo-developmental period, consisted of what we call “pedagogical neo-ruralism,” a training perspective whose major objective is the adaptation of the rural workforce to the new demands of productive restructuring, in the context of flexible accumulation. To this end, it promotes the reconfiguration of the proposal for psychophysical adaptation of workers, turning it into socio-professional education.

KEYWORDS

pedagogical neo-ruralism; public policy on rural education; neo-development; training of field workers.

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NEORURALISMO PEDAGÓGICO: A FORMAÇÃO DOS TRABALHADORES DO CAMPO NO PROJETO NEODESENVOLVIMENTISTA BRASILEIRO (2001–2016)

RESUMO

Para compreender a perspectiva de formação proposta pelo Estado nas políticas de Educação do Campo do período neodesenvolvimentista (2001–2016), analisamos a relação dessas políticas com o projeto de desenvolvimento. Com base no referencial teórico metodológico do Materialismo Histórico-dialético, realizamos análise documental, investigação de dados estatísticos sobre a questão agrária e revisão de bibliografia. Como principal resultado da pesquisa, constatamos que a formação dos trabalhadores do campo, proposta pelo Estado no período neodesenvolvimentista, configurou o que denominamos de *neoruralismo pedagógico*, uma perspectiva de formação que tem por objetivo central a adequação da força de trabalho do campo às novas demandas da reestruturação produtiva, no contexto da acumulação flexível. Para isso, promove a reconfiguração da proposta de *adaptação psicofísica* dos trabalhadores, transmutando-a para a educação socioprofissional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

neoruralismo pedagógico; política pública de educação do campo; neodesenvolvimentismo; formação dos trabalhadores do campo.

NEORRURALISMO PEDAGÓGICO: LA FORMACIÓN DE LOS TRABAJADORES DEL CAMPO EN EL PROYECTO NEODESARROLLISTA BRASILEÑO (2001–2016)

RESUMEN

Buscando comprender la perspectiva de formación propuesta por el Estado en las políticas de Educación del Campo del período neodesarrollista (2001–2016), analizamos la relación de dichas políticas con el proyecto de desarrollo. Basados en el marco teórico y metodológico del Materialismo Histórico Dialéctico, realizamos análisis documental, investigación de datos estadísticos sobre la cuestión agraria y revisión bibliográfica. Como principal resultado de la investigación, comprobamos que la formación de los trabajadores del campo, propuesta por el Estado en el período neodesarrollista, conformó lo que denominamos *neorruralismo pedagógico*, una perspectiva de formación que tiene por objetivo central la adecuación de la fuerza de trabajo rural a las nuevas demandas de reestructuración productiva, en el contexto de la acumulación flexible. Para ello, promueve la reconfiguración de la propuesta de *adaptación psicofísica* de los trabajadores, transmutándola para la educación socioprofesional.

PALABRAS CLAVE

neorruralismo pedagógico; política pública de educación del campo; neodesarrollismo; formación de los trabajadores del campo.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the Brazilian public educational system, rural workers' training was predominantly connected to the interests of agrarian oligarchies. Until the 1980s, the perspective of pedagogical ruralism or rural education has hegemonically influenced the educational public policies for the countryside.

Associated with a national-developmental project, pedagogical ruralism, in general, established a perspective of training that mainly aimed to adapt rural populations to new configurations of work in the fields and control rural exodus. In this context, rural workers' training was reduced to promote what Gramsci (2001) called *workers' psychophysical adaptation*, a unilateral training aimed only to promote objective and subjective adaptation to the new forms of work.

Contrariwise, in the 1990s, popular social movements consolidated a new perspective of rural workers' training, the Countryside Education (Caldart, 2009). Related to an alternative development project, Countryside Education aims to overcome the limits imposed by agrarian capitalism and, therefore, the rupture with a training project limited to the psychophysical adaptation of workers.

Faced with the increasing organization of popular social movements and the consolidation of a neodevelopmental project in the early 2000s in Brazil, educational public policies for the rural context started to encompass some popular demands for Countryside education.

Considering the possible alignment of these policies with the neodevelopmental project, the proposal of workers' training presented by the Brazilian State in its documents was investigated regarding the policies of Countryside Education in the neodevelopmental period (2001–2016). Aiming to contribute to the critical evaluation of this process, grounded in the theoretical-methodological perspective of Dialectical Historical Materialism (Paludo and Vitória, 2014), we conducted an analysis of a set of official documents on the policy of Countryside Education (2001–2016) and the main developmental programs for the rural area in this period.¹ Besides this, statistical data about the Brazilian land issue and a bibliographical review of the research theme were used.

To explain the characterization of the training perspective we have called *pedagogical neoruralism*, in the first part of the article, we present the main fundamentals of the policy for Countryside Education (2001–2016) and its connection with the demands of a neodevelopmental project in the context of flexible accumulation. After, we summarize the main fundamentals of the

1 We analyzed 47 documents about the programs *Escola Ativa*, *PRONERA*, and *PRO-NACAMPO*, including: *PNLD Campo*, *PNBE Temático*, *Mais Educação Campo*, *Escola da Terra*, *PROCAMPO*, *PRONATEC*, *EJA Saberes da Terra*. About the development programs in the period, we analyzed the documents of *Plano Safra*, *Planos Plurianuais de Desenvolvimento* (PPA), and *Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar* (PRONAF), totalizing 81 documents.

formative perspective present in the studied policies we call *pedagogical neoruralism*. Finally, we make some considerations on the indications of the research for the consolidation of a public policy grounded on the original perspective of Countryside Education.

THE PUBLIC POLICY OF COUNTRYSIDE EDUCATION AND THE FUNDAMENTS FOR RURAL WORKERS TRAINING IN THE NEODEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, FAMILY AGRICULTURE, AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

The intrinsic relationship between educational public policies and the developmental project adopted by the State in each historical period is a key element to understand the different proposals for workers' training. As shown by Gramsci (2007), when continuously transforming the production processes to guarantee expansion and accumulation, the capitalist mode of production always establishes on new grounds the issue of hegemony and, thus, demands constant technical, objective, and subjective adaptation of workers to the new configurations of production processes and the forms of sociability emerged from these processes. In this context, educational public policies tend to be guided toward contributing to widening the process to extract surplus value and a greater value to capital. Therefore, it is key to analyze the training of workers proposed by the State, from its relation to the hegemonic developmental process.

It is important to highlight that the original concept of Countryside Education was consolidated in the scope of popular social movements, in their fights to access land, and it is a training conception opposed to the perspective of *pedagogical ruralism*, as it proposes training that aims to contribute to overcoming the limits of agrarian capitalism. In the 2000s, with the hegemony of a neodevelopmental project and the increasing organization of rural popular social movements, educational public policies aimed at the rural context started to be called *Countryside Education* and incorporated some demands of social movements on their programs and legal guidelines.

Besides the influence of popular social movement, the intention of the State to adjust the training of workers to the needs of productive restructuring and the concern of international bodies, such as the UN, with a proposal of sustainable development (Hidalgo and Mikolaiczuk, 2012), corroborate to the emergence of policies in Countryside education.

The analysis carried out in the official documents of Countryside Education allowed us to see that, as expected, these proposals are aligned to a neodevelopmental project, which aimed to establish a false pact among social movements, State, and international bodies. Thus, the project of rural workers' training proposed by the

policies of Countryside Education has key differences from those hegemonically defended by popular social movements.²

As an intermediate project of development between national-developmental and neoliberalism, the neodevelopmental project aimed to promote economic growth from the stimulus to industrial production and family agriculture, without breaking with the agro-export standard and commodified production, which mainly favors agribusiness (Santos, 2019). By combining strategies toward the internationalization of economic strategies with those of reconstructing territories and local development (Pires, 2016) in Brazilian rural areas, this process was expressed through the State's support for agribusiness and family agriculture.

Thus, it was possible for the neodevelopmental project to contemplate some important demands from popular social movements, though aiming to promote the necessary adjustments to better converge local agrarian, industrial, and services faced by the new demands of the international market established by productive restructure.

Regarding the policy of Countryside Education, this process resulted in an ambiguous project of training rural workers proposed by the State, as can be perceived from the analysis of official documents of the Countryside Education public policy. The perspective of sustainable development and the affirmation of family structure and the experiences of solidarity economy incentivized by international bodies and incorporated into the neodevelopmental project was combined with the proposals of popular social movements and grounded the policies of Countryside Education, inducing the false possibility of blending antagonist perspectives in the same project of development and workers' training.

The broad concept of development frequently used as a reference for Countryside Education policies was one of the elements that corroborated this process. In the documents analyzed, we recurrently found the statement that development cannot be understood only through economic aspects, but also through its political, social, environmental, and cultural dimensions, considered as important elements of its implementation. With this, the policies of the period highlight the need to control and coordinate human relations beyond the market, encompassing other aspects of social life and the broad territorial diversity, as can be seen in the citation of the document that defines the developmental project to the rural context:

2 It is important to highlight that this research evidenced a fundamental distinction between the process of institutionalization and implementation of PRONERA and the other policies of Countryside Education. PRONERA was enacted by the active participation of rural social movements, which discussed and decided about its management, financial and pedagogical aspects of the proposals developed, indicating a greater rigor to the formative principles of Countryside Education and a certain guarantee of the protagonism of rural workers. Decree 10.252/2020, which extinguished the General-Coordination of Countryside Education and Citizenship, responsible for the management of PRONERA, ended this possibility.

Since 2003, the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MAD) has opted to plan rural development based on territories, aiming to overcome the excessive centralization of national policies formulation, which considers the country as homogenous, as well as to eliminate the pulverization of public policies implementation, which reduce their efficiency. Therefore, MAD defined priority 'territories' for sustainable rural development aiming to (i) Strengthen Social Management; (ii) Strengthen Social Networks of Cooperation; (iii) Economically stimulate the territories; (iv) Promote the articulation of public policies (BRASIL, MDA). [...] This territorial approach of MAD aimed to guarantee the sustainability of development through 4 dimensions: (i) Sociocultural; (ii) Environmental; (iii) Economic (iv) Political-Institutional. This is a good example of the idea that the territories are multidimensional, *i.e.*, have social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects. (Brasil, 2010e, p. 30-31)

Thus, it was possible for the neodevelopmental project to contemplate the demand of popular social movements for specific policies of Countryside Education, as this education is understood as a strategy to develop and value the territories, as we can see in an excerpt from a document referring to *Programa Saberes da Terra*:

The education for development considers environmental, agricultural, agrarian, economic, social, political, cultural, gender equity, racial, ethnic, and intergenerational sustainability. Enacting an education with sustainable development is considering that the local and the territory can be reinvented through their potentialities. (Brasil, 2009a, p. 35)

As can be seen, the demands of rural popular social movement, referring to “environmental, agricultural, agrarian, economic, social, political, cultural, gender equity, racial, ethnic, and intergenerational sustainability” (Brasil, 2009a, p. 35), did not represent a direct opposition to the central objectives of the neodevelopmental project. Furthermore, as they contribute to better use of local resources, promoting their potentialities with minimum waste, they can be considered useful to this project (Santos, 2019).

It was in this sense that the neodevelopmental project adopted territorial and sustainable development as one of its goals, justifying the emphasis on the documents of policies of Countryside Education to value alternative initiatives implemented by social movements. As evidenced in the analysis of the documents, the focus on *sustainable territorial development* reveals a significant optimism toward endogenous perspectives of development, on the part of these policies. It also shows a relative disdain for the global impact of the capitalist system on local territories, which, in the rural area, has been mainly expressed by the expansion of agribusiness over rural workers' territories, hindering one of the key objectives of Countryside Education policy under the capitalist system: sustainable development (Santos, 2019). Disregarding the impossibility of sustainable development under the capitalist mode of production, in at least one of the reference documents of

each program analyzed, we found the objective of developing and consolidating a program of sustainable development.

The documents of PRONERA analyzed define sustainable development as “social development, economically fair, and environmentally sustainable, articulated with the job market” (Brasil, 2016, p. 14). As can be seen, while not opposing the proposal defended by the rural popular social movements, it is a developmental perspective that also does not confront the objectives of a neodevelopmental project, as it can contribute to promoting productivity by paying attention to the preservation of natural resources at risk of extinction and that is key to expand and accumulate capital.³

Therefore, we can say that the perspective of *sustainable development* was an important element to conform a consensus around the neodevelopmental project, since, as observed in the literature review, in the last decades the advocacy of a minimally sustainable development combined with economic growth has also become a fundamental issue for the survival of the capitalist mode of production. (Almeida, 1997; Vargas, 1997; Lowy, 2014; Vitória, 2016). Even though some of documents analyzed point out criticisms against the progressive exploitation of natural resources in the capitalist mode of production, this aspect is not perceived as a limiting factor that makes sustainable development unfeasible in this system.

Regarding access to land, considered a key element for sustainable development, we can also affirm a formal sense used by these policies as, though pointed out in some documents, during the neodevelopmental period, the redistribution of land was not as significant as the advancement of the agricultural limits by agribusiness, as can be seen through statistical data.

Data from *Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária* (INCRA), released on the website *Reforma Agrária em Dados* show that the average number of families settled between 1995 and 2012 was approximately 65 thousand and, between 2011 and 2012, we had the lowest number of settled families since 1995, 22 thousand and 23.1 thousand, respectively. These data show that, though the neodevelopmental project had some advances for rural workers, mainly through the incentive for small-scale production, it did not promote structural changes that allowed the autonomous development of rural workers, and a new equalitarian project of rural development.

This allows us to say that the conceptions of development and sustainability adopted by the neodevelopmental project in the policies of Countryside Education presuppose the possibility of *reformed capitalism*, as the *unsustainability* of the capitalist mode of production, grounded on the progressive exploitation of natural resources, is hidden (Santos, 2019).

3 Despite what we have analyzed, the characteristics of PRONERA, highlighted in the previous note, allowed the program to promote more than the technical training needed to consolidate the areas of agrarian reform. It also strengthened the strategies of popular social movements to face the hegemonic project of development.

In this sense, it is possible to see that family agriculture highlighted in the policy of Countryside Education as an effective form of a sustainable development project is also incorporated into the strategy of neodevelopmental project of adjustment to the production in a small scale of the roles that should be played in the global market. As the documents affirm,

Family agriculture aims to optimize the work of families to guarantee, the best possible, fulfillment of their needs. [...] The family tends to organize and distribute the productive tasks to better use the potentialities of all its members and minimize their efforts. Therefore, there is a tendency of family agriculture to diversify productive activities, to better distribute the family's work throughout the year. Thus, it also can be more sustainable from an ecological point of view. (Brasil, 2008, p. 47)

Thus, family agriculture, in the scope of capitalist production and mainly in the neodevelopmental project, in addition to promoting better preservation of natural resources, has the advantage of guaranteeing greater involvement of the subjects to increase productivity and solve the possible contingencies arising from the instabilities of the market, as workers themselves are more interested in intensifying their work and that of their families.

Furthermore, the non-rupture with the agro-exporting model by the public policies of the neodevelopmental project and the objective to better converge the different productive sectors, which characterized the process of productive restructure, are aspects that allow us to affirm that the highlight given to family agriculture by public policies in the period expressed the intention to adjust the production of this sector to the demands of capitalist expansion (Santos, 2019).

Even though the policies to increase credit and the programs of institutional purchase, such as *Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos* (PAA) and *Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar* (PNAE), had favored family agriculture production, we need to consider that the stimulus to this sector can be favorable for the expansion of agribusiness, not only for the possibility of supplying domestic food demands and primary products that reduce the need of imports and stimulate the internal market, but also contribute to cheapening the costs with the reproduction of labor force.⁴

Together with Family agriculture, the Solidarity Economy is pointed out by the analyzed programs as a strategy to guarantee a greater involvement of the subjects with the project of sustainable development, as we can see mainly in the documents of *Projovem — Saberes da Terra*:

Thus, we understand that work and Solidarity Economy gain centrality in the training of young rural workers in Brazil because they are powerful instruments

4 It is important to highlight that these programs resulted mainly from the incentive of popular social movements for the production of food and the defense of "Food Sovereign," since the 1990s.

to guarantee the fundamental conditions to emancipate and the alternatives to face the successive crises of capitalist society. Both present a viable alternative to create jobs and income through actions of cooperation, associativism, and community credit, among other collective forms to act and produce solidary values in production relations. (Brasil, 2009b, p. 32)

The citation indicates that Solidarity Economy is understood as an important resource to face the successive crises of the capitalist system and as an alternative to work and income. The document also emphasizes the role of subjects themselves when seeking solutions and the need to produce new relations of solidarity and cooperation that can contribute to it. Besides highlighting the aspects that represent important strategies for the process of productive restructure, it is noteworthy that, in the proposal of solidarity economy in the policies of Countryside Education, the documents also approach the concept of solidary economy understood as an element of resistance and transition for another mode of production, as defended by popular social movements. A document from *Programa Saberes da Terra* brings the following statement:

Solidarity Economy became important in this formative process because it originates from fights and agendas defended by the working class, organized in social movements. It presents itself as an alternative to the current economic model, that is, the capitalist model which produces wealth while creating inequality for most people and destroying the natural environment. [...] Apart from being an alternative to the capitalist system, Solidarity Economy is a field in formation and a space to confront knowledge, a process in which popular needs are transformed into social demands (economic-ideological) and start to establish themselves into emerging and historical projects. The locus of popular education, Solidarity Economy can allow important reflections on the education subjects, in the sense of their humanization. (Brasil, 2010f, p. 16-17)

Thus, the documents try to blend the perspective of Solidarity Economy, defended by popular social movements, with that established as functional to the process of productive restructure. The programs affirm the importance of a solidarity economy, mainly as a space for forming new relations of solidarity among different segments of the working class, by connecting them to the neodevelopmental project. However, their proposals meld with the aims to form the solidarity and cooperation needed for the adjustments to the capitalist mode of production, promoting the decentralization of responsibilities as a way to consolidate governance, as it was possible to perceive in our analyses.

Popular social movements defended the perspectives of sustainable development, family agriculture, and Solidarity Economy as transition strategies for a new project of countryside and society, which could overcome the limits of expropriation and exploitation. Yet, when incorporated into the educational public policies in the neodevelopmental period, these perspectives aimed to

attend to the need to adequate the workforce for the productive restructuring of the capitalist system in the countryside, while guaranteeing the necessary consensus among classes to affirm the hegemonic development project. This way, as will be explained next, social-professional training to promote the necessary sociability for the hegemonic project was established as key to the training of rural workers proposed by the policies of Countryside Education in the neodevelopmental period.

PEDAGOGICAL NEORURALISM: THE NEW CLOTHES OF PSYCHOPHYSICAL ADAPTATION OF RURAL WORKS IN THE NEODEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT

As we have previously tried to show, the neodevelopmental project implied significant changes in the spheres of politics, culture, economy, and training/education. Regarding the specificity of rural workers' training in the educational proposals of the time, we analyzed that there was no rupture with the central proposal of workers' *psychophysical adaptation* (Gramsci, 2007) to the hegemonic mode of production. The training proposed by the State for rural workers implied significant changes in the original concept of Countryside Education proposed by social movements, adapting and transforming it into a socio-professional education.

The ambiguous character of the neodevelopmental project was reflected in the policies of Countryside Education that incorporated the concept of socialist pedagogy, defended by popular social movements, to the assumptions of flexible accumulation.

One of the main aspects that grounded the proposal of *socio-professional qualification* in the policies of Countryside Education was the perspective of inclusion, strongly stressed in the ensemble of educational policies. In the documents analyzed, inclusion is highlighted as an important element in creating new ways of living, values, behaviors, and attitudes toward new sociability, accordant with the perspective of inclusion defended by international bodies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), since the mid-1990s. According to Shiroma, Moraes, and Evangelista (2000), inclusion is an important element to produce new ways of disciplining workers and promoting a greater level of possible consensus and the guarantee of governability.

Thus, the perspective of inclusion in some documents analyzed, such as the Operation Manual of PRONERA version 2010/2011, combined with the principle of equity, shows part of the character of *socio-professional qualification* proposed by the policies of Countryside Education. As affirmed by Vieira (2007), the principle of equity, frequently present in educational policies since the neoliberal period, substitutes the principle of equality by inducing the acceptance of the idea that social inequality is an inevitable result of development. Therefore, instead of a perspective on *overcoming inequalities*, there is the idea of *decreasing inequalities*, as it starts to consider only the possibility of managing this inequality, reaching certain equity

among the different classes. In this context, though educational policies adopt objectives that favor the poorest groups, they are not connected to structural reforms that would allow the effective decrease of inequality. As previously shown, in the case of Countryside Education policies, there is no connection with an effective policy of agrarian reform.

So, it is possible to see the different meanings of inclusion. In social movements, it is understood as an important element for radical social transformation. The documents of the Countryside Education policy, though connected with social transformation, emphasize the intention to adjust the insertion of rural subjects into the new dynamics of world capitalism. Hence, it is not connected to the perspective of overcoming the limits imposed by the explored work and by expropriation.

The perspective of inclusion in the documents analyzed is highlighted as an important element to substitute the specialized worker, typical of Taylorism/Fordism, with the multitask worker who not only executes but also seeks solutions to unforeseen problems, as can be seen in a document from the program *Escola Ativa*:

Its purpose is to stimulate and train individuals capable of analyzing and solving problems seeking to transform the reality of the countryside. The Public Policies of Countryside Education represent real conquests of organized peoples. Education is taken seriously with inclusive projects. (Brasil, 2010c, p. 6)

Thereby, the configuration of the proposal of inclusion that Kuenzer (2005) called *subordinate inclusion*, typical of the period of flexible accumulation, is seen. According to Kuenzer (2005, p. 93-94), *subordinate inclusion* is expressed by standards of schooling quality which do not allow “the formation of intellectual and ethical autonomous identities, able to answer and overcome the demands of capitalism,” but focuses on the training of flexible men and women “able to solve new problems quickly and efficiently, following the changes and permanently educating themselves,” as required by the Toyotist model.

As we analyzed through a literature review (Antunes and Pinto, 2017), the new disciplining of the worker demanded by the flexible accumulation requires a transformation not only of the technical aspects of work training, but also an intellectual, cultural, political, and ethical transformation. In consonance with this idea, the documents analyzed affirmed the aim to promote training toward the creation of new behaviors needed to include different workers in the development project and, with less emphasis, stress the importance of technical and scientific training.

Professional training and instructional knowledge are especially highlighted by *PRONATEC Campo* and *ProJovem Campo — Saberes da Terra*. As a measure to integrate rural workers in the project of sustainable and solidary rural development, *PRONATEC Campo* has a general objective “to promote the social inclusion of young people and rural workers” by offering initial and continuing

education courses “according to the productive rural characteristics of each region” (Brasil, 2017, p. 13).

Similarly, the documents of *ProJovem Campo — Saberes da Terra* emphasize the importance of knowledge for inclusion in the productive process and define social and professional qualification as a “(social relation built through the interaction of work social agents around the acquisition, meaning, and use of knowledge built on and through work) is a complex social construct” (Brasil, 2009b, p. 32). The documents also highlight that because *socio-professional qualification* “is closely connected to the production and reproduction of workforce, it has an enormous role in the possibility of individuals to enter, continue, or be excluded from the productive process (though these relations can extrapolate the production sphere)” (Brasil, 2009b, p. 32). In this sense, social and professional training, highlighted in the analyzed documents, considers work in its multidimensional aspect requiring more than a qualification in the technical dimension (professional), but also the social aspect (socio-work).

As can be seen, this proposal aims to substitute rigid and specialized training, strongly marked by the division between intellectual and practical activities with dynamic training that guarantees the ability to creatively act to face the instabilities in the modes of flexible accumulation and pass by the different productive spaces, if necessary.

However, it should be highlighted that, though establishing a broader training than that disseminated by the Fordist and Taylorist models, this training does not overcome the pragmatic and utilitarian character attributed to knowledge. As highlighted in the documents, it is a training that should target the qualification of the workforce to solve possible problems in the immediate context. Therefore, a type of training grounded on a concept of knowledge is restricted to valuing capital.

Thus, the documents propose work training focused on abilities, attitudes, and values that “(re)educate” the ways of “thinking–feeling–acting” (Brasil, 2010a, p. 34) and reinforce a positive view of the rural area.

The appropriation of knowledge and the development of abilities, attitudes, and values aim to improve students’ training with a current and different way of perceiving life in the countryside, valuing it, enriching their experiences, and positively broadening their actions in the communities they live and the social groups they belong. (Brasil, 2010c, p. 16)

We can perceive that the affirmation of an identity grounded by aspects of autonomy, initiative, cooperation, respect for difference, and affirmation of the identity of countryside peoples, among other aspects defended by popular social movements in their proposal of rural workers’ training is combined with principles of the *pedagogy of skills* disseminated by *Relatório Delors* [Delors Report] (Delors, 1999).

By emphasizing the role of school in the consolidation of the identity of rural youth, the document of *Programa Saberes da Terra* questions: “Which questions

should education propose to help a young person in the countryside to overcome the challenges of globalization?” (Brasil, 2010a, p. 59). According to this concern, the training of a flexible workforce is mainly turned toward the promotion of behavioral, practical, and intellectual adaptability. More than training for a technical qualification, as highlighted by Kuenzer (2007, p. 1168), the mode of flexible accumulation demands “the competence to learn and to submit yourself to the new, which supposes disciplined subjectivities that can deal adequately with dynamicity, instability, and fluidity.”

In this sense, the documents highlight the stimulus to participation and cooperation of different subjects, the “revival of the importance of the collective as a method of popular participation, of policy management and the communities they live” (Brasil, 2009b, p. 35) as a way to emerge these potentialities in local territories. Thus, the importance of stimulating the self-organization of students is also stressed in a document of *Programa Escola Ativa*:

The stimulus to students’ self-organization through the insertion in the school curriculum of contents about leadership, groups, and teams, and the use of practical self-organization and participative experiences inside and outside the school allow the formation of leaders and the development of autonomy. Countryside Education is, therefore, an educational strategy that integrates the project of political, cultural, economic, and social emancipation of rural peoples. In Countryside Education, educating is also teaching the importance of participating and thinking about the countryside as part of the unity that establishes the country, and that countryside and city complement and do not exclude each other. (Brasil, 2010b, p. 21)

However, the importance of training focused on the consolidation of collective organizations led by social movements, emphasized in several documents of Countryside Education policy, is combined with the affirmation that the policies for rural youth aim to incentivize “entrepreneurship, technological innovation” and “allow a business spirit, of leadership, associativism, and cooperativism” (Brasil, 2010d, p. 63). Thus, we can see that the category participation, present in the documents of different programs, configures one of the needs of adjustment imposed by the current context of the capitalist system, which aims a work organization in the standards of *New Public Management* implemented in Brazil, as highlighted in the excerpt below:

Models of public management were implemented through the Administrative Reform of the Brazilian State which invested in the local administrative capacity and introduced mechanisms of direct participation of users and workers in instances that design and control public policies. In this perspective, the councils work as instruments of effective popular participation in Public Administration, contributing to participative democracy, as bodies of deliberative, consultative, and supervisory of public policies. (Brasil, 2010d, p. 36)

According to the perspective of a new public management, the documents highlight the councils, committees, managers, agencies, and forums, among others, as the most adequate ways of participation, contributing to the consolidation of social rights. It is possible to see that the forms of participation promoted in these instances establish a change in the forms of political action of different social movements. By substituting the forms of action typical of popular social movements with ways supposedly dialogical, consensual, controlled, and limited to the actions that do not lead to ruptures with the hegemonic project of development, these instances allow the State and great private corporations more predictability of the actions of different social segments, as well as the widening of its control on their actions. Therefore, they contribute to a weakening of the role of social movements and their potential to face different governments. In a radically different sense, participation, autonomy, and self-organization in the perspective of popular social movements, represent key elements to implement the protagonism of the working class in the construction of alternatives toward the overcome of the capitalist system.

The aspects that characterize the *socio-professional qualification* proposed in the analyzed documents allow us to affirm that the training project of rural workers enacted by the State in the neodevelopmental period is part of the strategies to adapt and include rural territories in the process to restructure capitalist accumulation. As stated by Pires (2016), in this context, the awareness of human potential in the local territories is a fundamental element to mobilize the resources toward a new productive and institutional arrangement that frequently requires the solution of brand-new problems.

According to our research, the new process of *psychophysical adaptation* of workers proposed by the policies of Countryside Education in the period studied has established a formative proposal we called *pedagogical neoruralism*. It is a training perspective that should not be confused with the training project defended by popular social movements and does not represent a continuity of the concepts that characterize the so-called *pedagogical ruralism*.

Despite keeping some approximations with *pedagogical ruralism*, mainly due to the aim to adapt the workforce in the countryside to the hegemonic project of development, the *pedagogical neoruralism* differs from it in the factors that have motivated their proposals, the more specific intentions, and the strategies used for the training.

Pedagogical ruralism emerged as a perspective established mainly amidst intellectual elites connected to agrarian oligarchies, even though, since the 1910s, popular social movements tried to dispute the ways of public education. Supported by the broad consensus about the inefficiency of public schools at the time, the pedagogical ruralists emphasized the importance of public education to consolidate a project of development and the need to reform rural education.

In the first moment of the developmental project, which lasted approximately until the 1940/1950s, the educational public policies grounded on the proposals of *pedagogical ruralism* defended the idea of an agrarian vocation of the

country and, therefore, proposed a formation toward maintaining people in the countryside. In a second moment of the national-developmental project, when rural oligarchies tried to consolidate their articulation with the international capital, mainly the United States, *pedagogical ruralism* turned itself to prepare the workforce for new forms of production in the countryside and adapt subjects to the new forms of sociability needed to maintain agro-export as one of the axes of the development project.

Different from pedagogical ruralism, *pedagogical neoruralism* emerges in a period when mainly the popular social movements claimed the attention of the State for the education of rural groups. The increasing organization of popular social movements and the consolidation of a concept of Countryside Education, with a perspective of training connected to the fights for land and toward human emancipation, called the attention of the State to part of the demands of rural workers.

Pedagogical neoruralism emerged in the neodevelopmental State from the incorporation of part of these demands in the educational public policies. Their main objective was to adapt to local territories the new arrangements of the process of productive restructuring by mobilizing the local workforce and resources and consolidating alternatives of sustainable development, with minimal waste of resources; establishing new forms of agreement among different social segments, to conform the consensus needed for the development project toward the competitiveness of the territories (Santos, 2019).

Pedagogical neoruralism, as well as pedagogical ruralism, represented a strategy connected to national development aligned with the demands of a global process of capitalist expansion and accumulation. However, the particularities of the productive restructuring imposed new demands for rural workers' training in the neodevelopmental project. Thus, the training project we are calling *pedagogical neoruralism* tried to combine assumptions of the *pedagogical ruralism* with those of *Countryside Education*, *New Public Management*, and the *pedagogy of skills*.

As demonstrated in our analyses, the approximation in many aspects of the proposal of popular social movements to the neodevelopmental project allowed a false conjunction of their proposals regarding the training of rural workers. However, though the policies at the time have adopted the term Countryside Education, their intentions regarding rural workers' training radically differ from those in the original concept of Countryside Education, as we have shown throughout the text.

In summary, we can say that *pedagogical neoruralism* established a new process of rural workers' *psychophysical adaptation*, aiming to promote socio-professional training.

Pedagogical ruralism proposes a *psychophysical adaptation* toward a more rigid, specialized, and technical training, corresponding to a technical division of work that keeps a rigorous separation between the management and the execution of activities, as well as the rigidity and stability of productive activities and social rules and behaviors.

In the opposite sense, *pedagogical neoruralism* turned itself toward the training of a flexible workforce that, in a way, proposes to overcome the rigid division between technical processes and work management and promote more mobility through the different paths of production. In this sense, *pedagogical neoruralism* is primarily guided toward the formation of behaviors and attitudes adequate to the flexibility of the rural workforce. Therefore, it prioritizes training focused on the capacity to adapt to unstable and complex situations that involve the process of productive restructure in the countryside, which demanded the formation of abilities and skills, such as autonomy, initiative, originality, dynamism, and others. Though it is a less restricted training than the one defended by pedagogical ruralism, articulating practical dimensions with a more intellectual one, we need to emphasize its radical difference from the integral formation proposed by the Marxist perspective, proposed by Countryside Education in its original conception. The flexible training, proposed by the *pedagogical neoruralism*, does not surpass the duality of knowledge in the capitalist society, which is not restricted to the technical division of work but is mainly defined by the social division of it, grounded on the private property of the means of production and, consequently, by the unequal social distribution of wealth and knowledge.

Regarding the education for the rural context, this duality is expressed in the division between a basic education for those who live out of their work and more specific, scientific, and technological education for few people focused on the necessary knowledge for productive innovation of agribusiness and the operationalization and repair of highly technological machinery. We have to consider that, in the neodevelopmental context, more advanced and strategic knowledge is still private and becomes even more centralized.

Thus, differently from what the popular social movements wanted when defending the conception of Countryside Education, *pedagogical neoruralism* does not aim to promote a new training that contributes to the emancipation of the working class. It establishes a new form of workers' *psychophysical adaptation* focused on the disciplining of the workforce and limited to the valuing of capital, reinforcing the different forms of work subordination to capital (Santos, 2019).

FINAL REMARKS

As we could see in our analysis, *pedagogical neoruralism* is a project of worker's training that radically differs from the one proposed by popular social movements understood as Countryside Education. The configuration of its training proposal reproduces a series of obstacles to training in the perspective of human emancipation defended by rural popular social movements.

In this sense, the first difficulty we observed is that *pedagogical neoruralism* tries to promote a process of configuration of rural subjects to the neoliberal ideal. According to the documental analysis, its educational proposals substitute the idea of social equality with the category of equity, accepting that the minimal conquests in public policies are the possible limits and that structural reforms,

which would in fact promote a better distribution of economic resources and political power, are not possible. The concentration of private land ownership amplified in the neodevelopmental period illustrates our finding and shows the radical distinction between *pedagogical neoruralism* and the Countryside Education perspective.

Aligned with the meritocratic ideal, *pedagogical neoruralism* disseminates the idea that territorial development depends mainly on the gathering of efforts from local subjects, thus denying the impacts of capitalist development over the development of local territories. In addition, it spreads the false idea that the effective forms of workers' struggle are those limited to spaces of agreement between the State and different social classes.

The process of placing the responsibility and the blame on the subjects for possible barriers to their inclusion in the development project, resulting in the acceptance of this ideal, produces a second obstacle for training in the human formation perspective, which is the endless search for workers for an adequate qualification for their insertion in the capitalist mode of production, disregarding the possibilities to overcome this system.

A third obstacle is the dissemination of a false idea that this training proposal and the Toyotist processes of production would be recovering the union of intellectual and manual labor, which contributes to confusing the defense by the working class for a truly integral education, in the perspective of omnilaterality.

Finally, another obstacle established by *pedagogical neoruralism* for training in the perspective of human emancipation is the induction of the idea that school education is the only engine of social transformation, as defended by pedagogical ruralism in the last century. This aspect grounds the acceptance of the idea of the *lack of need* to articulate educational reform and the other fundamental structural reforms to a radical social transformation.

It is important to highlight that when characterizing *pedagogical neoruralism* in the policies of Countryside Education in the neodevelopmental period, we did not intend to minimize the importance of social movements' fights for the expansion and qualification of public education to attend the countryside population, mainly, for the achievement reached by the understanding that Countryside Education is a right of the population from the countryside and State duty. We intended to contribute to distinguishing the workers' training in the original perspective of Countryside education from the neodevelopmental proposals toward the public education in the countryside that establish the *pedagogical neoruralism*.

By unveiling the main aspects that place these different perspectives in opposite senses, we intend to show the possibilities to overcome the *pedagogical neoruralism* and the implementation of training in the perspective of Countryside Education. With this, we do not intend to disregard the importance of public policies to consolidate rights, but rather to help to indicate the need for alternatives of *active resistance* (Martins, 2017), which can guarantee the protagonism of popular social movements in the training that is of workers' interest.

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