

Educação do campo e o controverso movimento nacional de educação do campo

Elias Canuto BRANDÃO¹

Resumo

O estudo discute a Educação do Campo e o intitulado e controverso “Movimento Nacional de Educação do Campo”. O objeto de estudo são duas publicações de Antonio Munarim divulgadas em 2008, a primeira na Revista Educação, de Santa Maria-RS, e a segunda no “GT 3: Movimentos sociais e educação”, na 31ª Reunião Anual da ANPEd, em Caxambu-MG. Objetiva analisar se o intitulado “Movimento Nacional de Educação do Campo” existiu, vez que entre 2008 e 2020, artigos, capítulos de livros, monografias, dissertações e teses foram publicadas online tratando do referido “movimento Nacional”, e justifica-se para compreender sua existência ou não. A pesquisa foi bibliográfica, com um olhar crítico analítico e o resultado da pesquisa é de que, do ponto vista histórico, não existiu o intitulado “Movimento Nacional de Educação do Campo”, mas uma série de movimentações sociais em defesa de uma Educação do e no Campo. Conclui-se que as movimentações foram em nível nacional, por meio de encontros, conferências, seminários e fóruns, a exemplo do I Encontro das Educadoras e Educadores da Reforma Agrária e a 1ª Conferência Nacional Por Uma Educação Básica do Campo”, lutando por uma Educação do e no Campo, crítica, participativa, questionadora, conscientizadora e transformadora.

Palavras-chave: Educação do Campo. Movimentações sociais no campo. Movimento Nacional de Educação do Campo.

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Rural education and the controversial National Rural Education Movement

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Abstract

The study discusses Rural Education and the controversial “National Rural Education Movement”. The object of study are two publications by Antonio Munarim published in 2008, the first in *Revista Educação*, from Santa Maria-RS, and the second in “GT 3: Social movements and education”, at the 31st Annual Meeting of ANPED, in Caxambu-MG. It aims to analyze whether the so-called “National Rural Education Movement” existed, since between 2008 and 2020, articles, book chapters, monographs, dissertations and theses were published online dealing with the aforementioned “National movement”, and it is justified to understand its existence or not. The research was bibliographical, with a critical analytical look and the result of the research is that, from a historical point of view, there was no so-called “National Rural Education Movement”, but a series of social movements in defense of rural education in rural areas. It is concluded that the movements were at a national level, through meetings, conferences, seminars and forums, such as the 1st Meeting of Agrarian Reform Educators and the 1st National Conference for Basic Rural Education, fighting for a rural, critical, participatory, questioning, awareness-raising and transformative education in rural areas.

Keywords: Rural education. Rural social movements. Nacional Rural Education Movement.

La educación del campo y el controvertido movimiento nacional de educación del campo

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Resumen

El estudio aborda la Educación del Campo y el titulado y controvertido “Movimiento Nacional de Educación del Campo”. El objeto de estudio son dos publicaciones de Antonio Munarim divulgadas en 2008, la primera en la Revista Educação, de Santa Maria/Rio Grande do Sul, y la segunda en “GT 3: Movimientos sociales y educación”, en la 31ª Reunión Anual de la ANPEd, en Caxambu/Minas Gerais. El objetivo es analizar si existió el denominado “Movimiento Nacional de Educación del Campo”, ya que entre 2008 y 2020 se publicaron artículos, capítulos de libros, monografías, disertaciones y tesis que tratan sobre el referido “Movimiento Nacional”, y se justifica para entender su existencia o no. La investigación fue bibliográfica, con una mirada analítica crítica y el resultado de la investigación es que, desde el punto de vista histórico, no existió el “Movimiento Nacional de Educación del Campo”, sino una serie de movimientos sociales en defensa del y en el Campo. Se concluye que los movimientos fueron a nivel nacional, a través de encuentros, congresos, seminarios y foros, como el 1er Encuentro de Educadoras y Educadores de la Reforma Agraria y el 1er Congreso Nacional por una Educación Básica del Campo”, luchando por una Educación del y en el Campo, crítica, participativa, cuestionadora, consciente y transformadora.

Palabras clave: Educación del Campo. Los movimientos sociales en el campo. Movimiento Nacional de Educación Rural.

Introduction

It is necessary to overcome the trap of considering the EdoC as an entity or even as an organization or social movement in itself, a kind of higher stage that each particular group must reach upon joining it. Even worse, confusing it or trying to convert it into an ideological framework (formal, abstract) that can simply be followed (or sought to combat or change) removes it from its original material meaning of a collective struggle and practice association. This detracts from its main historical novelty by displacing it from the collective subjects of the concrete struggles that constitute it. (CALDART, 2016, p. 351).

Rural Education (Educação do Campo, EdoC) has become a field of study and discussion that spans social movements in rural areas, academia, research groups, and disciplines. As Caldart (2016, p. 351) warns: "It is necessary to overcome [...] the trap of considering EdoC as an entity or [...] organization or social movement in itself [...]".

In pursuit of this goal, the study aims to discuss the so-called "*National Movement of Rural Education*," seeking to understand whether it actually existed, without delving into public policies for Rural Education, which are the subject of subsequent research. The specific objectives are: a) to understand Rural Education and its terminology, highlighting that it is the result of accumulated knowledge from educators in the Agrarian Reform, and that this terminology should not be manipulated by municipal, state, or federal governments; and b) to analyze two publications by Antonio Munarim from 2008, the first in the *Revista Educação* of Santa Maria-RS, and the second in "GT 3: Social Movements and Education" at the 31st Annual Meeting of ANPED in Caxambu, MG.

The study was qualitative and bibliographic in nature, grounded in literature on the topic "*National Movement of Rural Education*" published in 2008 through two articles by Antonio Munarim, titled "*Trajectory of the National Movement of Rural Education in Brazil*" and "*National Movement of Rural Education: A Trajectory Under Construction*".

Since that year, more than 40 works articles, book chapters, monographs, dissertations, and theses have used the term "*National Movement of Rural Education*" or referred to it directly or indirectly as a "movement," with Munarim (2008a and b) recognized as a key figure. To understand the purported "movement," a review of approximately 20 such works was conducted to identify and discuss what has been presented as the "*National Movement of Rural Education*".

A Educação do Campo e sua terminologia

Today, the term "Rural Education" has been adopted for various municipal and state schools throughout Brazil, as well as for the National Articulation for Rural Education, State Articulations, the National Forum, and the widely discussed and controversial "*National Movement of Rural Education*".

The term "Rural Education" is relatively recent, dating back to the late 1990s, and represents a historical development that began in the late 1970s during the military regime. To better understand the historical context, we must look back to 1500 when Brazil was invaded by the Portuguese on April 22. At that time, what is now known as Brazil was divided into hereditary Captaincies and later into Sesmarias, with the weaker, poorer, indigenous, and Black populations excluded from land distribution systems, thereby being denied access and rights. The centuries that followed in Colonial Brazil, the Empire, and the Republic were marked by social, political, economic, and cultural exclusion. Frei Betto, in the introduction to his book "*Construindo o Caminho – Movimento Sem Terra*" (Building the Path - Movement Without Earth), highlighted that the struggle.

[...] began when the Portuguese arrived in Brazil in 1500. Initially, the attempt was to enslave the indigenous people so that they could serve as labor to extract, by force and fire, the very essence of nature its hair, eyes, mouth, limbs, and heart.
[...] Later, the Africans arrived. Like animals, they were brought from Africa to plant and harvest. Three and a half million of them arrived. They fertilized our soil with their blood. From the womb of the earth, they extracted golden metal, which Portugal delivered to England (MST, 1986, p. 6).

It is this Brazil that, in 1979, the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) began to reclaim. A Brazil marked by large land concentrations and an economic and agricultural policy that strangled small landowners in the countryside. Foweraker (1981, p. 43) states that "The large landowners and big companies assert their 'rights' over the land against the claims of the peasants, attempting to appropriate the lands already occupied by them."

It is worth remembering that these strangling economic policies were consolidated with the military-civil coup on March 31, 1964, impoverishing Brazil and indebteding it to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, favoring large landowners, major businesspeople, and bankers.

During this period of strangulation, impoverishment, and indebtedness affecting millions of workers who were expelled from their lands and pushed to the peripheries of disorganized cities, the landless began their first occupations in Rio Grande do Sul and Paraná in 1979.

It is noteworthy that before the first occupation, there were various movements: the struggle in Canudos-BA (1870-1897), Contestado-PR (1912-1916), Cangaço in the Brazilian Northeast (1917-1938), the Posseiros in Teófilo Otoni-MG (1945-1948), Porecatu-PR (1946-1950), the Peasant Leagues in the Brazilian Northeast (1945-1964), among others in Maranhão, Goiás, Paraná, São Paulo (MST, 1986), culminating in the drastic military-civil coup of 1964.

Historically, struggles do not cease. Sometimes they are suppressed, but they reorganize, as happened during the military-civil regime, in 1979, with the occupation in Rio Grande do Sul of “Fazendas Macali and Brilhante,” and in Paraná, with “the struggle of farmers who lost their land with the construction of the Itaipu Dam” (MST, 1986, p. 42), gaining strength in 1980 with occupations in Santa Catarina, São Paulo, and Mato Grosso do Sul. The movements and occupations culminated in the “National Meeting of the Landless, where the Movement was consolidated and its principles were established” (MST, 1986, p. 43).

The field education being studied, discussed, and analyzed is a product of these historical land occupations and the needs of children in camps and settlements to have an education. It stems from the accumulated knowledge of educators from the Agrarian Reform and their methods of teaching children, youth, and adults, taking into account the social, political, and cultural context, using available materials in the camp area, such as hands, speech, gestures, face, courage, and Freirean wisdom, under a tarpaulin or tree, without a built school, notebook or pencil, chairs or desks, without social, political, and economic structures, but with a desire to learn and understand.

The field education studied, researched, and analyzed in universities, and which municipal, state, and federal governments attempt to manipulate the terminology to give the impression that it belongs to them, originated from the educational practices of the MST in its first 20 years of organization, in itinerant and emergency schools, in camps and settlements between 1979 and 1998. As Caldart states, “EdoC was born from the grassroots, from the peasants, from a field project that represents the future of humanity: this is non-negotiable!” (CALDART, 2016, pp. 355-356), and as also stated in a previous publication, it is

[...] a form of education that is both in and of the field. In: the people have the right to be educated in the place where they live; Of: the people have the right to an education conceived from their own context and with their participation, linked to their culture and their human and social needs (CALDART, 2008, p. 27).

Before the emergence of Rural Education, there was only conventional education, characterized by its denial, liberalism, capitalism, right-wing tendencies, backwardness, and exclusion. This form of education was an extension of the education provided in cities. From the implementation of the

educational system by the Jesuits in 1549, education was tailored to the interests of the dominant classes, teaching children, youth, and adults not to think, question, or see beyond what was presented. As Nunes (2021, p. 13 – author's emphasis) states, "*Education for the Elites and Catechesis for the People.*"

This exclusionary rural education model persisted from Colonial Brazil through the Empire and the Republic, reaching into the 21st century (2022) with a liberal education focused on controlling knowledge, consciousness, and manipulating historical events and social and political awareness through its teaching methods essentially a "banking" education. This model reproduces pre-determined content dictated by the educational elite and is reflected in both urban and rural schools, offering no room for dialogue or the incorporation of new knowledge, events, facts, and data, effectively turning schools into "military barracks."

Historically, the liberal rural model is a product of the savage capitalism that, since the 18th century, has marginalized the poor and the working class, resulting in millions living below the poverty line, while wealth, land, factories, and knowledge are concentrated in the hands of a few.

The nascent form of Rural Education began with the teaching practices of educators in settlements and camps. These educational practices were dialectically discussed, analyzed, rethought, and replanned during the "I National Meeting of Educators of the Agrarian Reform (I ENERA)" in July 1997 in Brasília-DF. From the challenges identified at I ENERA, the process of organizing the "I National Conference: For a Basic Education in the Field" began. This conference was held the following year, in July 1998. From that year onward, as Caldart noted,

Rural Education emerges from a fundamental contradiction inherent to the class struggle in the countryside: there is an inherent incompatibility between capitalist agriculture and Rural Education. The former thrives on the exclusion and dispossession of peasants, who are the very subjects of the latter. This contradiction is a central point of debate when comparing Rural Education to what is historically known as rural education or education for rural areas. Historically, the latter term has been used by the state to address the education of the rural working population, often masking this contradiction and turning it into an object and instrument for implementing policies and agricultural models designed elsewhere and serving interests other than those of the rural population interests that do not align with their social group, class, or individual needs (CALDART, 2008, p. 24-25).

Much has been published about Rural Education (EdoC). Among the authors are many researchers or activists, some sympathizers, and others who write as part of coursework or research projects. Many of these latter authors lack in-depth knowledge of EdoC and its underlying causes. They come to understand EdoC, the MST, and other social organizations through bibliographic

Rural education and the controversial National Rural Education Movement research, scientific initiation projects, and theses, which often results in work with weaknesses and ambiguities in describing what EdoC truly represents.

In a 2016 publication, Caldart expressed concerns about the disputes surrounding EdoC. Was he calling for peace on earth? Did he anticipate issues with the emerging terminologies related to EdoC?

It seemed that there were underlying conflicts over nomenclature and a fear of internal divisions within EdoC, regarding terms such as "movement," "articulation," or "forum".

The publicized "National Movement of Rural Education"

The publicized "*National Movement of Rural Education*" emerged through two publications by Antonio Munarim in 2008. The first publication, titled "Trajectory of the National Movement of Rural Education in Brazil," appeared in the Revista Educação from Santa Maria-RS (MUNARIM, 2008a). The second, "*National Movement of Rural Education: A Trajectory Under Construction*," was presented at the "GT 3: Social Movements and Education" session during the 31st Annual Meeting of ANPEd, held in Caxambu, MG, in October 2008 (MUNARIM, 2008b). From 2009 onwards, other researchers have cited or affirmed the existence of the so-called "National Movement of Rural Education" or "*Movement of Rural Education*." However, few authors have reproduced the name without also affirming its existence.

Intrigued by the existence of the "*National Movement of Rural Education*," the author of this article raised several questions: Did the so-called "*National Movement of Rural Education*" actually exist? If it did, how was it consolidated?

For this text, a theoretical bibliographic study was methodologically chosen, focusing on analyzing two publications by Munarim, along with a specific examination of approximately 20 publications referencing the controversial "National Movement." The analysis aimed to uncover what lay behind the lines. It was immediately found that the publicized "*National Movement of Rural Education*" or "*Movement of Rural Education*" was not definitively affirmed or confirmed by Munarim or other authors after 2009. Munarim himself (2008a and b) is ambiguous in characterizing what he calls the "National Movement of Rural Education."

Few authors have asserted the existence of the "National Movement of Rural Education," and when they do, it is based on Munarim's (2008a and b) publications rather than from firsthand knowledge or from studies and analyses of documents from the Landless Workers' Movement (MST)

or the National Articulation for Rural Education. Thus, the texts will be analyzed in light of what Caldart anticipated in 2005 and reprinted in 2008:

The initial movement of Rural Education was one of political articulation among organizations and entities aimed at advocating for public education policies in rural areas and mobilizing popular support for an alternative development project (CALDART, 2008, p. 25).

It seems like you're exploring how the concept of the "Movimento Nacional de Educação do Campo" (National Rural Education Movement) has evolved and how it's framed by different authors. Munarim (2008a) suggests a nuanced view, noting that while a fully-fledged, organic movement might not exist yet, there are emerging signs of a nascent movement with political and pedagogical content being constructed by collective actors involved in agrarian issues.

Munarim acknowledges the risk in claiming the existence of such a movement but also recognizes the early stages of a movement formed by collective entities addressing agrarian concerns. This approach highlights the ongoing evolution of rural education advocacy and the need to maintain a focus on public policies and mobilization rather than splintering into separate factions (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 58).

"If subsequent authors had read, re-read, analyzed, and interpreted the first paragraph of Munarim's (2008a) first text, they would certainly not have reported or asserted the existence of the so-called '*National Movement of Rural Education*,' as the author himself does not affirm this, making it clear in the fourth line that 'it certainly does not yet exist.'"

From the statements in the opening lines of the two publications (MUNARIM, 2008a and b), the author was aware of the non-existence of a 'National Movement of Rural Education' (MUNARIM, 2008a and b), yet he published two articles. One question that arises is whether he published due to pressure from funding agencies that require scientific production, as academic value is often measured by production and publication, especially for those in Graduate Programs.

With this provocative addition in mind, we return to the so-called '*national movement*.' In the early part of the first text, the author refers to the subjects of 'organizations and popular social movements in the field' (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 58) who were moving nationally, analyzing this movement as a possible '*National Movement of Rural Education in Brazil*,' noting that it is 'a social movement beginning to take on a national contour, aiming at public policies' (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 58), and suggests that he is conducting a 'theoretical reflection' rather than making an assertion.

He says: "I propose, for certainly not uninterested political purposes, but primarily for theoretical reflection, to perceive the existence, albeit initial, of a '*National Movement of Rural*

Rural education and the controversial National Rural Education Movement *Education' in Brazil*" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 58 – emphasis added). To this end, the author outlines “elements” to support what he calls a “plot” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 58) and notes that “the mid-1990s” was “the historical moment when what I am calling the Movement of Rural Education in Brazil began to emerge” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 59 – emphasis added), referring to the movements of the 1990s to support the discussion in his publications (MUNARIM, 2008a, 2008b). I agree with Munarim (2008a, p. 59) when he says that “A set of reasons can be invoked to justify this demarcation of the beginning of the period for rural education.

In this direction, Leineker and Abreu (2012, p. 4) highlight that “the 1990s were responsible for bringing to the forefront the policy concerning the provision of education ‘for all’,” and as education was “for all,” the people of the countryside were among these “all” who moved at a national level (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 60) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 3). Leineker and Abreu assert that,

[...] Leineker and Abreu assert that the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra led a national movement for the struggle for *Education in the Countryside*, with the main milestone being the I National Meeting of Educators of Agrarian Reform (I ENERA) held in 1997 at the University of Brasília (UnB) (LEINEKER; ABREU, 2012, pp. 4 e 5 – Our emphasis).

Leineker and Abreu (2012, p. 4) found that there was a “*national movement for the struggle for Education in the Countryside*”, and not a “*National Movement of Education in the Countryside*”, as the struggles in the countryside for land and education have been ongoing since the late 1970s.

So, what would be the “*national movement for the struggle*”? It would be the mobilization of social movements, rural people, and non-governmental organizations in support of rural populations to achieve, at that time, educational public policies for rural communities – such as countryside education – without the intention of creating a new “movement”. In the context of struggles and pressures of the 1980s and 1990s, it can be affirmed that this is indeed the case.

The 1980s and 1990s were rich in struggles and pressures, and Article 28 of the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB) compiled that movement by establishing the “provision of basic education for the *rural population*” (BRAZIL, 1996, art. 28 – emphasis ours). It was a conservative and liberal law and article, but it is in the Law, and the guarantee of provision can be demanded. The LDB, with Article 28, opened up possibilities for educators in the countryside to hold the First National Meeting of Educators of Agrarian Reform (I ENERA) in 1997, and the following year (1998), in partnership with the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the University of Brasília (UnB), the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO), to hold the National Conference for Basic Education in the Countryside (KOLLING; NERY; MOLINA, 1999).

It is noteworthy that for the different actions carried out before and after 1997, there were movements in the field mainly coordinated by the MST. However, it is not possible to assert that these actions resulted in a new movement, such as a "*Movement for Education in the Countryside*" or "*National Movement for Education in the Countryside*" (MUNARIM, 2008a and 2008b). It is also not possible to analyze whether the Manifesto of the Educators of Agrarian Reform, prepared and published at I ENERA, contributed to the notion that "In this context, the MST, without a doubt, can be considered the social movement of vital importance for the beginning of the Movement for Education in the Countryside" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 61 – emphasis ours) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 5). The ENERA does not indicate that it had "vital importance for the beginning of the Movement for Education in the Countryside." Interestingly, after stating that it "can be considered," the author warns that

Perhaps, instead of referring to a "Movement for Education in the Countryside," it would be more appropriate to speak of the existence of movements and social organizations with unprecedented solidity around the issue of the countryside, which advocate for an education tailored to the rural populations. Thus, rather than a movement per se, Education in the Countryside would constitute a content, a common agenda of diverse subjects (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 61).

Analyzing Munarim's (2008a) warning, I agree with him that "[...] instead of talking about a 'Movement for Rural Education', it would be more accurate to speak of the existence of movements and social organizations [...]" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 61) supporting and advocating for Rural Education.

However, on the next page, the author contradicts himself and states "[...] the existence of a '*Movement for Rural Education*'" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 62), noting that ENERA, among "[...] other historically produced moments" was "[...] the first 'moment' of the 'National Movement for Rural Education'" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 62) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 6). Why did Munarim create the expectation of a "National Movement for Rural Education"? Did it exist or not?

In the face of the unknown, Benjamin and Caldart (2000) note that,

In the process of humanizing the landless and constructing their identity, the MST has been developing a way of doing education that can be called the Pedagogy of the Movement. It is characterized by having the landless as the educational subject and the MST as the agent of pedagogical intentionality in this educational task. It is also of the Movement because it challenges itself to perceive the movement of the Movement, transforming itself through transformation (BENJAMIN; CALDART, 2000, p. 30).

What is observed and analyzed? The "movement of the Movement" does not mean a new "movement." Movements include various activities. Movements metamorphose through clashes, conflicts, struggles, marches, occupations, evictions, deaths, achievements, and setbacks. This does not mean a new "Movement." If it were the case, MST would have changed its name after hundreds of settlements over these more than 40 years.

So, why does Munarim sometimes indicate the possible existence of a so-called "*Movement for Rural Education*?" and other times create suspense, doubt, or uncertainty about its existence?

On the middle of page 63 (MUNARIM, 2008a), it says that "the resources mobilized by this 'National Articulation' were of fundamental importance to the Movement for Rural Education," indicating its existence. But on the second-to-last line of the same page, it says, "While highlighting the first steps of a Movement [...]" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 63 – our emphasis) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 7), indicating non-existence. The play on language and words might have confused the reading and understanding of researchers or students involved in scientific initiation and research groups who are unfamiliar with MST and the movements in the countryside.

At the beginning of page 64, it states that the "Movement" "was being forged." But then, two sentences suggest that it already exists: the first affirms that "Everything the PNE proposes regarding the rural is, therefore, rejected by the subjects comprising the Movement for Rural Education" and the second when it states: "In fact, despite the Movement for Rural Education having the explicit support of UNESCO" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 64 – our emphasis) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 7 to 9). When it registered "rejected by the subjects comprising the Movement for Rural Education," was it referring to the National Articulation for Rural Education?

It again suggests the existence of the "Movement for Rural Education" when discussing the "advent of Lula's government" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 65) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 9 and 10), by stating "The change, at the Federal level, from a government explicitly opposed to the demands of the Movement for Rural Education," noting that "in the first moment of Lula's government, at least potentially, the conditions for mobilizing government resources for the implementation of proposals that the agenda of the Movement for Rural Education had already accumulated" were established, and when discussing the "Marcha das Margaridas" and the "Grito da Terra Brasil," registering them as "on the margins of the Movement for Rural Education" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 65 – our emphasis) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 10). It also indicates the existence of the so-called "movement" when stating: "Convinced to join the Movement for Rural Education, CONTAG starts to be part of the 'National Articulation'" (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 66 – our emphasis) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 10).

Was CONTAG misled, given that it was “convinced to join the National Movement” and started to be part of the “National Articulation”?

It seems to have mixed movement with Articulation by registering the National Articulation in quotation marks, even calling it “this ‘Articulation’” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 66) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 10).

In the final part of the publications, Munarim seems convinced that the movement exists when he states that,

Since the election to the Presidency in October 2002 until the holding of this Conference, I identify the existence of a particular “historical moment” of the Movement for Rural Education, marked precisely by the advent of Lula’s government, which constituted a “space” for the strengthening of this Social Movement (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 66 – our emphasis) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 11).

It points to the existence of the so-called “Movement” through the subitem “The Movement for Rural Education after the Second Conference,” noting that it was losing strength. He continues by stating that “[...] to the inverse degree of the implementation of an agenda, by the MEC, an agenda determined by the National Articulation, the Movement for Rural Education begins to show signs of weakening” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 66) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 11 and 12), and adds: “Perhaps, instead of ‘weakening’ or ‘reflux’ of the Movement for Rural Education, it might be more appropriate to speak of a change in the quality of the Movement, with a change in strategies” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 12). He also mentions that “the rural education movement gained effective national reach during two years of a process of building public policy proposals, government programs, etc.” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 12), and that “the National Articulation remained absent from this national conversation process” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 12).

Munarim states: “It is equivalent to saying that the National Articulation had disbanded” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 12), and that it “never constituted an organic social force” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) due to “internal differences and disputes among its main components” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67), existing as a “powerful social subject during the period from the National Seminar of 2002 to the Second National Conference on Rural Education,” and after that, it ceased to exert “organized pressure” (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67) on the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) due to the new configuration regarding Rural Education, giving an indication that the National Articulation for Rural Education gradually succumbed after the Second National

Rural education and the controversial National Rural Education Movement Conference on Rural Education during the Lula government. In this regard, a new study could delve deeper into the National Articulation, as it is not the object of this study.

Regarding the announced Movement, Munarim states:

I have tried to demonstrate that the National Movement for Rural Education, which began in the mid-1990s and despite being in possible decline, constitutes, above all, a socio-political movement led primarily by civil society entities. These entities have used and continue to use public spaces for their struggles when facing the state, as well as engaging with the state itself, where, together with allies within the institutions, they develop proposals to be implemented by public institutions (MUNARIM, 2008a, p. 67 and 68) and (MUNARIM, 2008b, p. 12 and 13 – Our emphasis).

The author seeks to “*demonstrate that the Movement*” and the National Articulation are “in possible decline,” succumbing around 2008, when the works are published, and henceforth, without a deeper reading of the words, lines, and reality, various authors have reproduced publications that deserve re-evaluation and consideration.

Given this, it is understood that if researchers had paid attention to the history and dynamics of movements, they would have detected that the so-called “*National Movement for Rural Education*” did not exist. Therefore, it is interesting to delve into what some authors discussed after Munarim, between 2009 and 2020.

At least nine articles and book chapters were produced between 2009 and 2020 by Souza or in partnership, directly or indirectly referencing the so-called “movement,” but none questioned the existence of the so-called “movement,” leading to the saying: “constant dripping wears away the stone.” In other words, even if a “movement” did not exist, by repeatedly stating that it did, its existence is reproduced in the imagination and in writing.

In 2012, a new text by Munarim in partnership with Locks refers to the so-called “National Movement,” where they advance in the summary that “The term rural education, recent in Brazil, has a political-pedagogical connotation developed in the National Movement for Rural Education to distinguish it from the concept of rural education, prevalent in Brazilian education” (MUNARIM; LOCKS, 2012, p. 83). The authors assert in this article that “Beyond the right to universal formal education at all stages, the National Movement for Rural Education seeks to recognize and strengthen the process of resistance and emancipation of rural peoples” (MUNARIM; LOCKS, 2012, p. 86) and that

The last achievement of the National Movement for Rural Education within the scope of Brazilian public policies materialized in Presidential Decree No. 7,352, dated November 4, 2010, which reaffirms the principles of rural education and the commitments of the federative entities (MUNARIM; LOCKS, 2012, p. 86).

The authors affirm the existence of the so-called “movement” in theoretical terms, including that “The last achievement of the National Movement for Rural Education within the scope of Brazilian public policies materialized in Presidential Decree No. 7,352, dated November 4, 2010” (MUNARIM; LOCKS, 2012, p. 86).

On page 87 of the same text, the authors contradict themselves regarding the “National Movement for Rural Education” when they state that “[...] it is not possible to identify real and compelling evidence regarding its existence, other than ‘perceiving the existence of a plot’:

[...] Our studies lead us to perceive the existence of a web of obstacles to the realization of the formal achievements of the National Movement for Rural Education, which go beyond explicit evidence and more apparent reasons, and, as concluded, are difficult to overcome (MUNARIM; LOCKS, 2012, p. 87).

Involved in the “weft,” researchers may have been led to produce articles, chapters, theses, and dissertations. In this direction, some works merely commented on the “movement” pointed out by Munarim, while others relied on the “weft” and reproduced the theories framed in 2008 about the existence of the “movement.”

Among those referencing Munarim (2008a and b) and reproducing the assertion of the existence of the so-called “national movement” are Marcoccia and Polon (2014), Locks, Graupe, and Pereira (2015), Marcoccia, Fontana, Souza, and Pianovski (2012), Rocha (2013), Kuhn (2015), Breitenbach (2011), Silva (2019, 2020), Vieira and Camacho (2020), and Marlière (2018).

Marcoccia and Polon (2014) advance in the summary and the beginning of the text that,

Based on the data obtained from fieldwork, it was possible to verify that there are some similarities between public schools located in rural areas and the National Movement for Rural Education, as both experience the same social, cultural, and economic relationships and contradictions of rural Brazil, such as those related to agribusiness (MARCOCCIA; POLON, 2014, p. 1 e 2).

The question is: What are the “data obtained in fieldwork”? What “field”? Which “field”? Besides the published scientific works, what other documents from MST, the Articulation, and the National Forum were accessed, researched, and analyzed to support the “data obtained in fieldwork”? What do the “data” say about the existence of the mentioned “movement”? What are the evidences from the “data”?

Marcoccia and Polon (2014) state in the summary and introductory part that,

The National Movement for Rural Education has gained space in the national sociopolitical scene through social movements and other institutions linked to these movements. These groups have been triggering strategies for mobilization and struggles for the realization of the right to education. This movement has made various denunciations regarding the closure of public schools located in rural areas,

Rural education and the controversial National Rural Education Movement the inadequacy of school transportation and infrastructure, as well as the weak training of teachers and the lack of material and pedagogical resources (MARCOCCIA; POLON, 2014, p. 2).

It was not possible to bibliographically confirm Marcoccia and Polon's claim that "This movement has made various denunciations regarding the closure of public schools located in rural areas," not even through Munarim's texts (2008a and b) or through documents from the Articulação Nacional, Fórum Nacional, or MST.

Marcoccia, Fontana, Souza, and Pianovski (2012) state that "In education, these processes of struggle and confrontation emerge from the *National Movement for Rural Education*, as discussed by Munarim (2008)" (MARCOCCIA; FONTANA; SOUZA; PIANOVSKI, 2012, p. 2), reproducing Munarim's writings (2008a or 2008b).

Similarly, Locks, Graupe, and Pereira (2015, p. 134) describe "that from the mid-1990s, a counter-hegemonic educational policy was constructed by a group of collective actors, constituting the *National Movement for Rural Education*, referred to as Education of the Field." They base their discussion on Munarim's publication (2011), not on official documents addressing Education of the Field, such as the volumes from the "*Por uma Educação Básica do Campo*" (For a Rural Basic Education) collection and the conference foundational texts.

In her master's thesis, Marlière (2018, p. 26) reproduces Munarim (2008a and b) by stating that the "I Encontro Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – ENERA, held in 1997" was the "baptismal date of what has been called the *National Movement for Rural Education*." Without substantial evidence other than Munarim's publications, she claimed that "Within these contradictions, other movements emerged and organized in opposition to the capitalist logic of production in Brazil, such as the *National Movement for Rural Education* (MARLIÉRI, 2018, p. 104:

It is possible to assert that one of the most fundamental processes for integrating Rural Education into the Brazilian state is related to the creation of what has become known as the *National Movement for Rural Education*. This Movement seeks to articulate social movements, organizations, and groups connected to the countryside, as well as public institutions, with the aim of bringing visibility to the issue of education in rural areas (KUHN, 2015, p. 45).

In the middle of the thesis, the author appeared confused about what had been previously stated and recorded that it is 'a movement still difficult to understand theoretically.

What is currently being called the *National Movement for Rural Education* is, in fact, the result of a trajectory of organizing groups, movements, and entities around the defense of Rural Education. It is a movement still difficult to understand theoretically, due to its relatively recent organization and establishment (KUHN, 2015, p. 126).

Breitenbach (2011), without delving into the nuances of Munarim's writings (2008a and b), describes the "Movement" as a result of social movements. The author stated: "This struggle for an education of and in the field, and not just for the field, born from and within the social movements of the field, took on national proportions and generated what Munarim (2008) named the National Movement for Rural Education," which does not align with reality.

Other authors, uncertain about the existence of the controversial "National Movement," cited but did not defend or reproduce the controversial "national movement" or Munarim, such as Souza (2009, 2009a, 2015, 2020), Beltrame and Souza (2009), Sousa and Souza (2013), Menezes (2013), França (2016), Mendes (2017), Oliveira (2019), Bezerra and Silva (2018).

Souza (2009), when referring to a national movement, treats it in the sense of national mobilization:

It will be a *National Movement for Rural Education*, by the end of the 20th century, that will challenge the paradigm of agrarian capitalism and the education model within it. The rural people themselves, organized, think about the education they want and demand genuinely public policies, stemming from the participation of those concerned, the workers. (SOUZA, 2009, p. 2).

In another publication from the same year, Souza (2009a, p. 41) makes it clear that "Rural Education is understood here as the result of a national movement." He adds that "In this national movement, it is important to include institutions such as federal and state universities that, through the participation and interest of researchers in social movements of workers and popular education, have collaborated in the implementation of projects and partnerships [...]"

Similarly, Bezerra and Silva (2018) do not affirm the existence of a "National Movement" but rather discuss a "movement" in the sense of movement, even using lowercase letters: "The movement for Rural Education only began to be on the country's political agenda with the realization, in 1997, of ENERA," highlighting that "The movement 'For a Basic Rural Education' emerged at the end of the 1990s and was constituted by social and trade union movements from the field and by university researchers" (BEZERRA; SILVA, 2018, p. 468).

Sanches (2016), in his doctoral thesis, treats the "National Movement for Rural Education" as a national mobilization, advocating for public policies for Rural Education, and not as a prominent "National Movement" with all the other social actors. To better avoid emphasizing it as a "National Movement," he could have written it in lowercase.

The struggle for public policies on Rural Education in Brazil has become stronger since the beginning of the 21st century, when the rural populace initiated the

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National Movement for Rural Education, led by rural organizations and social movements that fight for educational sovereignty and land rights.

What is observed is a demand for an education tailored to the rural population, contrasting with urban education. They fight for the right to an educational project suited to their everyday life, which values their political, economic, and social activities, acknowledging them as effective subjects and recognizing their specific culture, which has been developed in defiance of government policies (SANCHES, 2016, p. 67).

What was found in this study is the absence of evidence for the existence of a "*National Movement for Rural Education*," and that this term only began to be circulated due to the narratives presented by Munarim (2008a and b). This led to publications that reproduced Munarim's controversial "national movement."

Thus, it is understood that the so-called "*National Movement for Rural Education*" did not exist as a cohesive entity. Instead, there was a collection of rural social movements actively engaging in activities such as meetings, conferences, congresses, and seminars, striving for an education in and for the rural areas that is critical, participatory, questioning, liberating, and problematizing,

[...] the problematizing educator constantly redoes their cognitive act in relation to the cognizability of the learners. Instead of being passive recipients of deposits, the learners are now critical investigators, engaging in dialogue with the educator, who is also a critical investigator [...] (FREIRE, 1981, p. 80).

This problematizing education was and is Rural Education, with an approach opposite to rural, liberal, manipulative, knowledge-reproducing, urban, and banking education. As Freire (1981) states, this education,

[...] is the act of depositing, transferring, and transmitting values and knowledge. This overcoming is neither observed nor can it be observed. On the contrary, reflecting the oppressive society and being a dimension of the "culture of silence," "banking" education maintains and stimulates contradiction.

Therefore, in it:

- a) the educator is the one who educates; the learners, those who are educated;
- b) the educator is the one who knows; the learners, those who do not know;
- c) the educator is the one who thinks; the learners, those who are thought about;
- d) the educator is the one who speaks the word; the learners, those who listen passively;
- e) the educator is the one who disciplines; the learners, those who are disciplined;
- f) the educator is the one who chooses and prescribes their choice; the learners, those who follow the prescription;
- g) the educator is the one who acts; the learners, those who have the illusion of acting, within the educator's actions;

h) the educator selects the curriculum content; the learners, who are never consulted in this choice, conform to it;

i) the educator identifies the authority of knowledge with their own functional authority, which stands in opposition to the learners' freedom; the learners must conform to the educator's directives;

j) the educator, ultimately, is the subject of the process; the learners are merely objects (FREIRE, 1981, 67-68).

May the social movements in rural areas continue to mobilize and grow, driving public policies that transform the countryside, fighting against agribusiness, advocating for pesticide-free food, for rural roads in excellent condition to transport the production from settlements and small farms, for agroecology and environmental protection, for the prevention of school closures and the reopening of rural schools, and for quality education, for education in and of the countryside.

Final considerations

The study aimed to understand the existence of the so-called "*National Movement for Rural Education*" or "*Movement for Rural Education*," but the existence was not confirmed.

What was observed was the existence of a set of rural social movements that fought for a critical, participatory, questioning, awareness-raising, and transformative Education in and of the Countryside.

To achieve this objective, over 40 scientific works were selected; however, a focus was made on approximately 20 of them, analyzing whether the controversial "*National Movement for Rural Education*" actually existed.

To this end, the aim was to understand Rural Education and its terminology, highlighting that it is the result of the accumulated knowledge of educators from the Agrarian Reform. The study was qualitative and bibliographic, relying on existing literature published in online sources.

It is important to emphasize that the pedagogical practices that accompanied the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) since its inception in 1979 were crucial. By the late 1990s, a set of entities, rural social movements, universities, and organizations from the United Nations (UN) joined forces with the MST in the fight for Rural Education in rural areas where children, youth, and adults live. This was represented by two historical moments: The I ENERA (1997) and the I National Conference for Basic Rural Education (1998).

The pressures exerted by rural social movements on the Brazilian state, the National Education Council, and state and federal governments gradually, throughout the 21st century, questioned the dominant rural education model, which was banking, content-reproducing, and manipulative of knowledge. Social movements have fought and continue to fight for a Rural Education where learning is rooted in the land, struggles, difficulties navigating rural roads, and the establishment of rural school transportation without consulting peasant communities, as well as in production, commercialization, living with dignity in the countryside, and social relations that are undermined by this perverse and savage neoliberal capitalist model.

Finally, the study highlights that every researcher from undergraduate students to postgraduates needs to be attentive to the investigated product, whether it be an article, book, book chapter, final project, monograph, dissertation, or thesis. Such attentiveness allows for critical and analytical perspectives on what is being investigated, resulting in reliable production.

In the context of Rural Education, where the researcher, by moving beyond bibliographic references and aligning theoretical study with the social and political reality of schools in rural areas, settlements, small villages, indigenous communities, quilombola communities, forests, rubber-tapping communities, or islands, ensures that the research outcome takes on significance beyond the realm of ideas and theories.

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