

**INCLUSION, HIGHER EDUCATION AND EDUCATION OF/IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE: THE PRONERA IN THE CONTEXT OF CAPITAL**

***INCLUSÃO, EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR E EDUCAÇÃO DO/NO CAMPO: O PRONERA
NO CONTEXTO DO CAPITAL***

***INCLUSIÓN, EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR Y EDUCACIÓN DEL/EN EL CAMPO: EL
PRONERA EN EL CONTEXTO DEL CAPITAL***

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to analyze the National Education Program on Agrarian Reform - PRONERA - as a higher education program that aims at inclusion at this level of education, but that finds resistance in the characteristics of a system that does not allow everyone access to education. This program is identified as State policy that has been maintained for 21 years, through clashes, struggles and demands, in opposition to the logic of plastered rural education, and proposes an emancipating, decolonizing education. The research is of bibliographic and documentary nature and, to subsidize the analyzes made, we resort to authors who reflect on the land struggle and agrarian reform, Rural Education, Alternation Pedagogy, Higher Education, in order to dialogue with Mészáros and Demir on the structural crisis of capital and its implications for rural education, with a focus on PRONERA. It is concluded that the inclusion policies made possible the development of PRONERA, but they maintain the neoliberal logic as structuring of this Program that, having as mentor an ultra-neoliberal government, has its principles shaken by the lack of resources and the prioritization of a privatized and meritocratic.

KEYWORDS: Inclusion. Higher education policies. Rural education.

RESUMO: *O presente artigo tem como objetivo analisar o Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – PRONERA – como programa de educação superior que visa à inclusão nesse nível de educação, mas que encontra resistência nas características de um sistema que não possibilita o acesso de todos à educação. Esse programa é identificado como política de Estado que vem se mantendo há 21 anos, por meio de embates, lutas e reivindicações, contrapondo-se à lógica de educação rural engessada, e propõe uma educação emancipadora, descolonizadora. A pesquisa é de cunho bibliográfico e documental e, para subsidiar as*

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análises tecidas, recorre-se a autores que refletem sobre a luta de terras e reforma agrária, Educação do Campo, Pedagogia Alternância, Educação Superior, a fim de dialogar com Mézaros e Demir sobre a crise estrutural do capital e suas implicações na educação do campo, com recorte no PRONERA. Conclui-se que as políticas de inclusão possibilitaram o desenvolvimento do PRONERA, mas mantêm a lógica neoliberal como estruturante desse Programa que, ao ter como mentor um governo ultra neoliberal, tem seus princípios abalados pela falta de recursos e pela priorização de uma educação privatizada e meritocrática.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Inclusão. Políticas de educação superior. Educação do/no campo.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar el Programa Nacional de Educación sobre Reforma Agraria - PRONERA - como un programa de educación superior que apunta a la inclusión en este nivel educativo, pero que encuentra resistencias en las características de un sistema que no permite a todos el acceso a la educación. Este programa se identifica como política de Estado que se mantiene desde hace 21 años, a través de enfrentamientos, luchas y demandas, en oposición a la lógica de la educación rural enyesada, y propone una educación emancipadora, descolonizadora. La investigación es de carácter bibliográfico y documental y, para subsidiar los análisis realizados, recurrimos a autores que reflexionan sobre la lucha por la tierra y la reforma agraria, Educación Rural, Pedagogía de la Alternación, Educación Superior, para dialogar con Mézaros y Demir. sobre la crisis estructural del capital y sus implicaciones para la educación rural, con foco en PRONERA. Se concluye que las políticas de inclusión posibilitaron el desarrollo de PRONERA, pero mantienen la lógica neoliberal como estructurante de este Programa que, teniendo como mentor un gobierno ultra neoliberal, tiene sus principios sacudidos por la falta de recursos y la priorización de un sistema privatizado y meritocrático.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Inclusión. Políticas de educación superior. Educación en el campo.*

Introduction

This article aims to analyze the National Education Program on Agrarian Reform - PRONERA - as a higher education program that aims at inclusion at this level of education, but that finds resistance in the characteristics of a system that does not allow everyone access to education.

To conjecture under the highlighted delimitation, some concepts need to be defined: Inclusion, Higher Education and Education of/in the countryside. Inclusion is a controversial concept, but it remains in the policies developed in the 1990s; the term inclusion is related to the struggle to guarantee rights, as well as the struggles for access to these rights, including education.

According to Maciel (2020), the inclusion discourse materializes in the capitalist system, minimizing fractures and inequalities, favoring specific groups. Thus, the policies developed in this light seek to mitigate the perverse effects of the capitalist system, favoring

some groups (considered excluded), but without changing the condition that generates such social, political and economic inequalities.

Higher education is one of the instances in which inclusion policies are developed, with a view to being a level of education that does not yet offer access for all, having a selective system that excludes a significant portion of the population, such as the peasants who, for residing in the countryside, they need different access conditions for this level of education.

In the terminologies Education of the Countryside and Rural Education, the terms Countryside and Rural deserve an important clarification as to their different concepts regarding education. According to Souza (2006, p. 51, our translation), the “[...] sense of rural education appears when there is reference to the educational policy of the beginning and the course of the 20th century, whose concern was with actions that could overcome the “delay” present between rural workers and residents”.

For Souza (2009), the sense of Education of the Countryside is a concept that is being constructed, configured from the action of social movements of the countryside, highlighting the educational proposals with the idea of valuing the worker who works in the rural field, who has cultural ties and values related to life on the land and is directly linked to a development model that requires new bases, new paradigms of knowledge.

According to Campos and Pizzeta (2018), the term “in” is understood with a sense of place, being linked to the right to have a school in the place where you live. The term “of”, on the other hand, has a pedagogical and political connotation, as it means that this education starts from the concrete reality of the people of the countryside, of the subjects, taking into account their history, memory, beliefs, among other aspects.

For Molina (2020), Education of the countryside is a set of principles, policies and practices forged by the working class of Brazil, struggling for the knowledge process to build another countryside project, another development project, contemplating minorities, the subjects of the countryside in their specificities.

In order to analyze the relationship between inclusion, higher education and education of/in the countryside, it is urgent to rethink the role that the university can assume in the fight against hegemonic and colonized knowledge, in favor of knowledge that is important for the emancipation of the working class.

Reflecting on the concept of Higher Education, mainly on the role of the university in the life of rural subjects, in the context of contemporary advanced capitalism, the university institution has been losing legitimacy as a locus for the production of scientific knowledge. Reflecting on the effects of these transformations, Boaventura de Souza Santos (2005) analyzes

the pressures that compel the university institution to leave in the background its task of critical reflection on a long-term society project, at the same time it is confronted internally by the presence of new social subjects that demand the construction of a project against a hegemonic society, where there is a predominance of equality and social justice.

The work with formation through PRONERA calls the university to its social responsibility, which must be referenced by itself, preventing it from becoming, more and more, a social organization oriented by companies.

Once the conditions are created, the university must be encouraged to assume more dense forms of social responsibility, it must not be functionalized in that sense. The university's social responsibility must be assumed by the university, accepting to be permeable to social demands, especially those coming from social groups that do not have the power to impose them. University autonomy and academic freedom - which, in the past, were used to make the university socially responsible - now assume a new urgency, since only they can guarantee a committed and creative response to the challenges of social responsibility. Because society is not an abstraction, these challenges are contextual depending on the region or location and, therefore, cannot be faced with general and rigid measures (SANTOS, 2005, p. 91, our translation).

When Santos (2005) invites us to reflect on a university that is socially responsible, it also proposes a question regarding the type of university that exists, its production and, mainly, on the impact of its actions on society. The neoliberal context expresses its logic through guidelines and policies, and the clash arises against this, seeking through inclusion policies, including PRONERA, to favor access to groups that do not fit the traditional meritocratic and hegemonic standards.

In this way, the transformation of the university implies resuming its participation in the construction of a project of society, qualifying this construction in the dimension in which the dispute for a new social order is placed. In this case, it is not enough to perceive the knowledge accumulated historically, but to recreate it, reinvent it in favor of a conception of countryside and social development differentiated from a merely economic conception.

Providing access to higher education for the beneficiaries of agrarian reform, it appears that it would be a way to promote public education policies in the countryside as a way of inserting young and adults peasants in the process of decolonizing knowledge, promoting education, according to Mészáros (2005), “beyond Capital”.

Molina (2020) argues that Education of the Countryside has two elements: first it is the protagonism of the working class itself and second, the inseparability of the agrarian question, the struggle for land, as it constitutes itself as a movement of the working class for access to knowledge in order to guarantee the material reproduction of their life as a peasantry.

Social movements demanded a proposal for development and rural school that took into account the tendency to overcome the rural-urban, or backward-modern, dichotomy. Aiming to create a school that is not necessarily agricultural but linked to the culture that is produced through social relations measured by work on the land.

To develop the theme presented, the text is organized into three topics: Education and the logic of capital; where the transition of the colonial landowner into industrial capitalists is briefly discussed, and the connection of this history with the struggle for education of the countryside; in the second topic, Neoliberalism and capitalism: education as a market, characteristics of the capitalist system are presented, through authors who indicate neoliberal elements and analyze the components of that system and, finally, O PRONERA and Higher Education are presented, which analyzes this higher education program that aims at inclusion at this level of education, but which finds resistance in the characteristics of a system that does not allow everyone access to education.

Education and the logic of capital

Understanding the struggle for education of the countryside involves understanding the struggle for agrarian reform, as it is understood that there is no agrarian reform without education, and there is no education of the countryside without agrarian reform (SOUZA, 2009).

At this moment, it is necessary to open parentheses to reflect on what is called agrarian reform in Brazil and how the transition from colonialism to capitalism took place, in order to understand the inseparability of the struggle for land and the struggle for education of the countryside.

According to Navarro (2014) and Martins (1999), in Brazil, the slave and agro-export model gradually became a capitalist model. The exploitation of slave labor, in the view of the economy aimed at serving the foreign market, was an agro-colonial model.

The history of property in Brazil begins in sesmarias, by which the Portuguese state confers large territorial extensions to beneficiaries who could freely explore these lands. Thus, with the economy directed to the foreign market, the enrichment of the landowners, rural slaveholders, was allowed, as well as the collection of taxes to support the oligarchy and colonial power.

This class of landowners gradually became the class of industrial capitalists, due to the accumulation of capital in agriculture, the slavery model, agro-export, resulting from the

enormous concentration of land. The profits obtained from this practice fed the banks and these, in turn, contributed resources for the development of Brazilian industries and an alliance with international capital.

With the end of slavery, slave labor was replaced by immigrants, relations were changed to sharecroppers, rural hires, but the agro-export model, based on the exploitation of labor with the objective of reducing costs and increasing profit, remained.

Given the above, according to Costa (2010), there is a difficulty in democratizing access to land. Attempts to distribute land in Brazil, in the so-called land reform, are still simple in the face of the existence of large landowners. As long as the capitalist logic of export prevails and does not turn to the domestic market, aiming at food sovereignty, inequalities in the rural environment will persist.

Under these conditions, peasant movements in Brazil play an important role in the struggle for Agrarian Reform, especially the Landless Workers Movement, the MST (Portuguese initials), as they claim an agricultural revolution, according to Martins (1999), not just the distribution of land, but the constitution of a model based on cooperatives and small properties, that allows Brazil to produce everything it needs to eat and, then, the big surpluses turn to food exports.

Therefore, inseparably, the struggle for education in and of the countryside is linked to this trajectory, identifying and elucidating part of the causes of the difficulties in conquering spaces in a patriarchal and exploitative society.

Thus, when reflecting on the history of the struggle for agrarian reform, it is possible to affirm that two situations existed and still persist: a) families/peasants who have always been in search of land, housing, a place that would free them from misery and exploitation and reproduction of life; b) the large landowners, land grabbers, among others, who are in the situation of holders of a large amount of land, always exploring, oppressing and accumulating wealth. According to Feliciano (2006), it is difficult to make a discussion about land concentration in Brazil without returning to the very formation of the territory in the country.

For Caldart (2011, p. 64, our translation), “[...] today in the countryside, as in society as a whole, education predominates that conforms workers to a logic that is their own destruction as a class, as a social and cultural group, as humanity”. The author states that in order to break with the installed logic of subservience to the needs of capital reproduction and the degradation of human life conditions in all dimensions, it is necessary to act to establish a project/education that places “[...] the families of the worker class in a movement of comprehensive alternatives

of work, of life, in a new format of relations between countryside and city, of relations between human beings, between human beings and nature” (CALDART, 2011, p. 64, our translation).

The debate on Education of the Countryside refers to “a phenomenon of the current Brazilian reality” (CALDART, 2012, p. 259), since “Education in Brazil, for many years, disregarded the inherent diversity in the country, leaving aside the formative process all those who diverged from the parameters of the culture of the elites” (CUNHA, 2009, p. 289, our translation). Such a condition lasts for years in Brazil.

When developing strategies to maintain the country's domination and exploitation system, “[...] the watchword in the history of Brazilian school education would be to unify the educational system to achieve greater control over its actions, which directly interfere in social, political and economic relation” (CUNHA, 2009, p. 289-290, our translation). That said, education for the rural population consists in recognizing that in addition to education in the countryside “[...] the people have the right to be educated in the place where they live. [...] the people have the right to an education thought from their place and with their participation, linked to their culture and their human and social needs” (CALDART, 2002, p. 26, our translation).

It is in this sense that the Education of the Countryside has as one of the strategies of access to higher education the PRONERA, which consists of a Program that prioritizes the creation of undergraduate courses for people who live of/in the countryside. The conquest of PRONERA enabled practices and accumulations that led to the conquest of other important programs to serve the rural population:

[...] they are concrete experiences of an occupation that is intended to be consolidated as an effective achievement as a public policy. Thus, the history of its creation and its practices can only be interpreted based on the tensions that involve the relationship of social movements of the countryside, with the State: from the dispute of conceptions and societal project within the State itself (MOLINA; ANTUNES-ROCHA, 2014, p. 228, our translation).

According to the authors, the challenge is to identify the movement, the relationship, the tensions and contradictions determined historically, and which constitute the concrete condition in which these policies are thought and disseminated.

Applying a special focus to Education of the Countryside, it is worth mentioning the suppression of investments, the extinction of courses, the proposals for the restructuring of institutions, the disarticulation of segments of society that represent the minorities served by PRONERA from 2015 to the year present - 2020.

Based on the educational agenda of the Temer (August 2016 to December 2018) and Bolsonaro (2019 to now) governments, it is increasingly difficult to think about quality higher education for all, considering that in a capitalist society, exploitation and accumulation of capital, resulting in a majority exploited materially, socially, intellectually and a minority holding financial, intellectual and social capital is the standard.

In capitalism, whenever a crisis occurs, it has a capacity for overcoming, always innovating the forms of exploitation, but the essence of the need for capital accumulation remains. The Lula (2003 to 2011) and Dilma (2011 to 2016) governments were characterized by the development of inclusion policies (MACIEL, 2020), an aspect discarded by the following governments, already mentioned in the previous paragraph.

In order to identify the developing relationship, characteristics of the capitalist system are presented, by means of authors who indicate neoliberal elements and analyze the components of this system.

Neoliberalism and capitalism: education as a market

Capitalist society has been experiencing economic crises with repercussions on politics, education, economics, in short, on the lives of individuals. Capitalism has sought proposals to overcome these crises, through proposals such as the Welfare State after the Second World War, but this model entered a crisis in the 1970s. Neoliberalism is developed as a more forceful logic of liberalism, through privatization of state-owned companies and the process of dismantling the welfare state.

István Mészáros (2005) states that crises are structural of capitalism. Crisis feeds and sustains this system whose main objective is profit and which is characterized by meritocracy. Crises reinvent the possibilities for the circulation of capital, as well as new ways of maintaining the hegemonic class. One of these reinventions is the Third Way.

In Britain, for most of the 20th century, there were two major parties: Labor and Conservative. From 1989 to 1990, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was in power, with “iron fists”, representing a privatization policy, with minimum state, tax collection, poll tax (community charge) imposed by person and not on property or income. In this scenario her popularity fell and a fertile ground for the Labor Party emerged.

With Tony Blair taking over the Labor Party, in the crisis scenario of the Conservative party, through the actions of the Prime Minister, comes the possibility of creating a new Party, the New Labor. According to Giddens:

After coming to power, New Labor began an ambitious path of reform and political modernization. New Labor wanted to go beyond the limits of traditional left and right political categories and inaugurate a new type of center-left policy called the Third Way (GIDDENS, 2005, p. 355).

It is noteworthy that Antony Giddens was an advisor to Prime Minister Tony Blair and, supported by the Prime Minister, begins his process of contributing to the restructuring of the policy in force at the time. Thus, the Third Way comes to propose a readjustment in the organizations of capitalism, in the lives of individuals, at work, but it does not propose to break with the accelerated market logic of capitalism.

Seeking to understand Giddens' proposal, what he presents as six main dimensions for Third Way policy is provided below, which are fully cited:

1 - *Reconstruction of the government* - An active government is a requirement to tend to the needs of a rapidly changing world, however this government must not be exclusively associated with bureaucracies that act from the top down and with national policies. Dynamic forms of management and administration, such as those that are eventually found in the business sector, can work together with the government to defend and revitalize the public sphere.

2 - *The development of civil society* - Alone, the government and the market are not enough to solve the diverse challenges of recent modern societies. It is necessary to strengthen civil society - the domain external to the State and the market - and join them with government and business. Groups of volunteers, families and civic associations can play vital roles in dealing with community-related issues, from crime to education.

3 - *Reconstruction of the economy* - The third way provides for a new mixed economy that is characterized by a balance between government regulation and deregulation. It rejects the neoliberal view that deregulation is the only way to ensure freedom and growth.

4 - *The Reform of the Assistance State* - While it is essential to protect vulnerable individuals through the provision of effective assistance services, the Assistance State needs to undergo reform to gain efficiency. Third way policy is aimed at a "care society" while recognizing that old forms of social assistance have often been unsuccessful in reducing inequalities and have controlled the poor rather than empowered them.

5 - *Ecological modernization* - The third way policy rejects that environmental protection and economic growth are incompatible. There are many ways to make a commitment to protect the environment generate jobs and stimulate economic development.

6 - *Reform of the global system* - In an era of globalization, third way politics depends on new forms of global governance. Transnational associations can free a democracy that surpasses the level of the nation-state, enabling greater governance of the volatile international economy (GIDDENS, 2005, p. 355-356, our translation).

For Giddens (2005), the government needs to be active, attentive to the dynamic forms of globalization, drawing attention to the business sector; it also invites civil society for its responsibility to exercise community actions to fight crime and provide education, thus

suggesting a strengthening of civil society. In the economy, it advocates a mixed economy. In assistance, it claims that they are effective, but it is necessary to transform them into efficient ones, seeking to empower the poor. It also argues that there is economic growth and environmental protection. And, finally, it defends the globalization of the market, the international expansion, the association (domain) of the market in other nations.

It can be noted the concern to maintain, with the active participation of society, the capitalist market of accelerated exploitation, in a scenario that is not positioned with the left and not even with the right, but center-left, passing a vision of reform, of new. However, there is no innovation, because:

Since the late 1990s, the Third Way has been the main political-ideological discourse to endorse the hegemonic praxis of the dominant elites and leaders of global capitalism. It is a renewed discourse that eases some of the dogmas of neoliberalism prevalent until then, which allows us to call it “Third Way neoliberalism” (GROPPO; MARTINS, 2008, p. 216, our translation).

The innovations, supposedly proposed by the Third Way, indicate that the British government's discourse remains the same, the actions of exploitation of the working class and defense of the dominant elites prevail. Indeed, Giddens' Third Way is far from a resumption of the welfare state. What he proposes is a relative “humanization” of the neoliberal state and the free market society (GROPPO; MARTINS, 2008, p. 222).

The Third Way is an expression of the necessary (re)adjustment of the forms of life, work, institutions and organizations of capitalism, but which wishes to maintain the fundamental principles of this system, without breaking even its most striking characteristics in times of accelerated globalization and commercialization. It also expresses the obvious truth that the free market alone did not solve the social problems of capitalism, nor did it combat them (and it only made them worse). To this end, the Third Way proclaims, among other points, that it is necessary to mobilize social forces to combat these problems. At the same time, this movement makes “everyone” complicit in the current capitalism, considered, although problematic and unpredictable, as absolute and imponderable (GROPPO; MARTINS, 2008, p. 226, our translation).

The emphasis on the performance of social movements, suggests changes that do not materialize through practices, but that justify the outsourcing of services to reduce bureaucracy, but that assign the responsibility for state actions to non-state sectors. The proposal to call on social movements to combat problems spells out a strategy to restrain union forces and mobilizations.

Aware of the power of mobilization and intervention that social movements have, in the representativeness of their sectors, it is essential to placate this strength, being the best way,

strategically, to invite them to “*work together*” in favor of society. Thus, for Giddens, the most common type of unorthodox political activity occurs through social movements, collective attempts to promote a common interest or to secure a common goal through action outside the sphere of established institutions (GIDDENS, 2005, p. 357).

Based on the origin of the term Third Way, one of the main neoliberal characteristics, a situation developed in England, it is highlighted that the use of social movements as a justification for the outsourcing of services to non-state institutions was apprehended by national policies in Brazil, having as exponent Bresser Pereira and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. In the 1990s, it was indicated that higher education should be maintained through the Third Way, a situation that destined public investments in private Higher Education Institutions - HEIs in that period (SGUISSARDI; SILVA, 1999).

Taking advantage of this scenario, we highlight the rural education movement, which will be presented later through one of the various education programs that has resisted the arduous journey. To provoke changes, it is suggested to restructure the current power, which results in struggle, opposition and calls for resistance. And Giddens recognizes this response to countermovements:

Social movements generally arise with the aim of bringing about changes in a public issue, such as the expansion of civil rights to a segment of the population. In response to social movements, countermovements sometimes appear in defense of the status quo (GIDDENS, 2005, p. 357).

Given the above, the third way presents a way of maintaining capitalism, calling on society, social movements, subjects, to be accomplices in the renewing proposal. Invites them to act in education, in the repression of crime, in assistance, but without autonomy and, yes, replicating the current patterns. It seeks to convince the possibility of business development and environmental protection. However, the priority is the market, productivity, capital expansion.

Presenting a criticism of the Third Way, the contributions of István Mészáros and Felipe Demier are pointed out, they who defend the existence of a structural crisis of capitalism and the democracy that presents itself, an armored democracy.

Under the belief of the defenders of Neoliberalism and the Third Way that there is no crisis of capitalism, but a crisis of the State, at this moment, there is a criticism of this vision and the repercussion of this crisis in education, with a focus on Education of the Countryside for higher education.

For Mészáros (2015), the period that has settled down is no longer fleeting, as there is a structural crisis in capitalism. This unbridled form of capital exploitation and accumulation is

not sustainable and natural assets are finite. At some point the crisis worsens and that moment is now.

The State, structured in a capitalist system, develops a discourse of overcoming and facing crises to justify the problems that arise as a result of this logic, where profit is the main guideline, but which also needs social investment to keep the working class consuming. Thus, Mészáros explains two major factors for the occurrence of the current crisis:

- 1) The radical critique of the formation of the State in capital in our time is directly related to its - increasingly dangerous - historical failure to fulfill its vital corrective functions that are required by the antagonistic material reproductive process itself. As a result, the now bankrupt state (the painful reality of our time, despite how many indebted trillions are poured into the bottomless pit of capital) can only endanger the general social metabolic process, rather than solving the crisis. This is because the State is an integral part of the structural determinations of the capital system, and its necessary corrective/resolving functions can only be internal to it. Thus, the State cannot escape the structural crisis unfolding the capital system as a whole.
- 2) The relative primacy in this inextricable interrelation between the material reproductive structures of capital and its state formations - which at a certain point in history becomes a vicious circle - belongs to the former. It is, therefore, impossible to envision the necessary demise of the State without, simultaneously, also confronting the critical problems of radically altering the process of global material reproduction. The painful historical failure to achieve any progress so far in the direction of the state's demise, as envisioned by Marx, acquires its intelligibility on this foundation. And the same consideration applies not only to the assessment of the past in relation to the forces that prevented the realization of original expectations, but also to prospects for the future (MÉSZÁROS, 2005, p. 81, our translation).

For Mészáros (2015), there is a structural crisis of capitalism, due to the state of bankruptcy (trillion debts) and the historical failure to restructure capitalism. With each crisis, capitalism reinvents itself in the quest to maintain the market. Thus, the crisis is no longer temporary, but structural, since it is what sustains the economy, society and education; it is also the one that deepens social and economic inequalities.

The basis for understanding this scenario is in the historical events of the search for capitalism to maintain itself, its consequent falls and starts and its metabolic partner's capacity for reinvention.

For Mészáros (2015), this crisis is not recent and has been building since 1971, its long duration being one of the elements that defines it as a structural and not a short-term crisis (momentary crisis). The configuration of a society marked by waste and, contradictorily, by stark inequality was building this current phenomenon. In this context, education is understood as a commodity.

Excessive production is established to serve the capitalist market, creating unnecessary demands, consuming natural goods disproportionately, and these actions are reflected in the current scenario.

However, once the prospect of total destruction of humanity enters the historical horizon through nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, the military solution to the fundamental problems of interstate antagonisms - with their roots deeply embedded in the centrifugal material base of the capital - becomes impossible on the required scale. Wars can be targeted, and indeed are, on a more limited scale, but not a total war, which in the past was able to successfully subdue the opponent, later extracting its resources for the benefit of the winner. Furthermore, the inevitable destructiveness of everything around, inseparable from total war with the use of weapons of mass destruction, would be so immense that no rational sense could be attributed to the notion of "winner". For under such conditions there could be no more winners. There would be only universally defeated (MÉSZÁROS, 2005, p. 91, our translation).

The evolution of this chaos scenario is reflected in the growth of social inequality, in the continued exploitation of the working class, in wars financed to maintain the military power and economic power of countries that already have hegemonic power. And the explored subjects reproduce this logic of consumption. And, in this sense, a change that is not ephemeral is urgent, but that shakes the structures and, thus, entering the educational field, because the logic that defends an emancipatory education does not benefit capital. If it does not serve the interests of hegemonic power, it does not apply or, at least, creates conditions for its overthrow.

According to Mézáros (2015), overcoming structural crises can be thought of only by changing these structures, that is, by changing the system. In view of this precept, any other action (political, social or educational) would simply temporarily mitigate the effects of this barbarism.

Thus, a participatory democracy is disseminated, inviting movements, unions, representations from different sectors to dialogue. Offering an opportunity to make a change and meet the demands of minorities, who camouflage the consensus established meeting part of these demands, but without changing the condition that generates these fractures (MACIEL, 2020).

However, if we are going through a structural crisis of capitalism - and the tendency is to explore more, produce more, in order to meet market demands -, it is contradictory to meet the social strata, without aiming to exploit them. Faced with this scenario, a way of "attending" the subjects in a democratic/inclusive way is presented.

Armored Democracy, according to Demier (2017):

Endowed with a hegemonic character - that is, combining elements of consensus and coercion in a balanced way, these democracies present operating structures hermetically closed to popular pressure, preserving their institutional decision-making nuclei as exclusive spaces of the interests of the ruling class. By preventing, through a series of economic, political and cultural devices, that popular demands of a reformist nature may enter the institutional political scene, these new democracies are defined by their essentially counter-reformist content. Adequate to the needs of capitalist accumulation in times of *late capitalism*, *armored democracies* combine withdrawals of social rights with the expansion (greater or lesser, depending on the moment and on duty manager) of compensatory social policies, lacking in universality, in addition to a selective increase in state repression aimed at indomitable sectors. The structure of these *armored democracies* also forms, of course, its impregnable column of media support, which, responsible for providing high consensus-producing ideological dosages (increasingly necessary as rights are attacked), often acts as the main party of the capital (DEMIER, 2017, p. 17-18, our translation).

These are government strategies that are democratic/inclusive and use the mainstream media to spread this idea of democracy/inclusion.

The media controls the information and presents the hegemonic power, covered by the bias of equal opportunities allowed, but which depends on specific policies, not always maintained by subsequent governments. Concepts are distorted and aimed at maintaining the domination mechanisms in place. It would be a fourth power, which uses its capillarity to dominate the masses, releasing biased information, controlling various sectors of society, producing ideologies, shaping behaviors.

Mencari (2018) states that “armored democracies”

[...] it is the governments that present themselves as democratic, but that are closing themselves more and more to the people, to the demands and popular desires, shielding themselves, closing themselves and not making room for these demands to be met, or not even heard by the government. When they are, they soon fall into the “ears of merchants” of politicians who should represent the interests of their respective peoples. Understanding the logic of the bourgeois state is key to understanding Brazil and the dynamics of class struggle in the tropics and possible strategies of resistance. Armored democracies around the world are part of the neoliberal project of bourgeois management of states, in their optimum forms, in order to guarantee counter-reformism, changes and alterations in the functioning of governments, ensuring that extremely unpopular measures are approved and "sold" to the population as the only way to solve problems that capital itself generates continuously, such as policies that benefit international financial and speculative capital (MENCARI, 2018, p. 1, our translation).

Thus, one of the mechanisms used to keep the population under control is the discourse of democracy and inclusion, touted with the help of the manipulative media, which reinforces the belief in the notion that the population lives acting as a democratic rights agent, stating that

the the working class has a voice and that it is heard and, if their demands are not met, they come to believe that there was no solution, thus hampering their ability to reflect and contrast.

In this sense, Mencari (2018), analyzing Demier (2017), highlights the urgency of the reinvention of the working class and its methods of action, suggesting that it recovers its past, trajectory and strategies of struggle, at the same time that it analyzes the situation in currently found.

When drawing the attention of the working class, the author calls for reflection and action. Faced with the need to act against hegemony, the population needs to return to creating ways to discuss the current society, seeking, through reflection, strategies for acting against the authoritarian power, even if camouflaged, of capitalism. Situation increasingly distant, considering the weakening of unions and the community.

One of the forms of reflection and action is in the acquisition of knowledge, but with an emancipatory and non-controlling and plastered education. Thus, Education of the Countryside presents itself in the perspective of creating spaces of knowledge for life and not to meet the demands of the exploiting market.

PRONERA and Higher Education

Providing access to higher education for the beneficiaries of Agrarian Reform is one of the possibilities of promoting public education policies of the countryside as a way of inserting young and adult peasants, beneficiaries of the National Agrarian Reform Program - PNRA, in the process of decolonizing knowledge, promoting an education, according to Mészáros (2005), “beyond Capital”.

For Iasi (2007, p. 350, our translation) “[...] the transformation of consciences is not beyond the political struggle and the materiality in which it is inserted. It is both a product of the material transformation of society and a political means of achieving such transformation”. Knowledge and scientific knowledge make it possible to change meanings and identify logics that are not exposed, but that need certain knowledge to be unveiled.

The creation of programs and projects that made the practice of education of the countryside proposals feasible was one of the possible negotiations of social movements and partners in the struggle for the democratization of education for the rural environment with the federal government, so that it would do justice to that reality and the history of struggle of the working class. Among the programs created, within the scope of the federal government, we highlight the National Education Program on Agrarian Reform - PRONERA.

PRONERA had its origin in discussions between teachers, social movements and universities after the First National Meeting of Educators of Agrarian Reform - ENERA, held in Brasília, from 28 to 31 of July of 1997. A Support Working Group was created to the Agrarian Reform of the University of Brasília (GT-RA / UnB), the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), represented by its Education Sector, in addition to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), the United Nations Fund Nations for Science and Culture (Unesco) and CNBB (National Confederation of Bishops of Brazil).

In the same year of 1997, the University of Brasilia (UnB), Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos), Regional University of the Northwest of the State of Rio Grande do Sul (Unijuí) , Federal University of Sergipe (UFS) and São Paulo State University Júlio de Mesquita Filho (Unesp) - met at UnB to discuss the participation of Higher Education institutions in the educational process in the settlements, resulting in the creation of a group to coordinate the production of the process of building an educational project for higher education institutions in the settlements.

In 1998, the Extraordinary Ministry of Land Policies created PRONERA through the publication of Ordinance 10/98. INCRA - National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform - was linked to that Ministry at the time (BRASIL, 1998).

In 2001, PRONERA was incorporated into INCRA through the publication of Ordinance 837/2001, and the Operations Manual was launched, which outlines the program's objectives, guidelines and actions. During this period, the program was a public policy linked to the INCRA Office (BRASIL, 2001).

In 2004, by means of Ordinance 282/2004, the New PRONERA Manual was published, already during the Lula government period, in line with the inclusion policies (BRASIL, 2004).

In 2009, through the publication of Law 11947/09, PRONERA is implemented within the scope of the Ministry of Agrarian Development - MDA - and executed by INCRA (BRASIL, 2009).

In 2010, the Decree 7,352/2010⁴ was published, known as the Education of the Countryside Decree, which provides for Rural Education policy and PRONERA (BRASIL, 2010). According to the most recent PRONERA Manual, published in 2016, the main objective of the program is:

⁴ According to Decree No. 7352, of 4 November 2010, which provides for education of the countryside policy and the National Education Program in Agrarian Reform (PRONERA), rural populations are understood as: “[...] farmers family members, extractivists, artisanal fishermen, riverside dwellers, agrarian reform settlers and campers, rural wage workers, quilombolas, caixaras, forest peoples, caboclos and others who produce material conditions of existence from work in the rural environment” (BRASIL, 2010, Art.1, 1st Item).

Strengthen education in the areas of Agrarian Reform by stimulating, proposing, creating, developing and coordinating educational projects, using methodologies geared to the specificity of the field, with a view to contributing to the promotion of social **inclusion** with sustainable development in Agrarian Reform Settlement Projects (MANUAL PRONERA, 2016, p. 18, authors' highlights, our translation).

PRONERA, being executed within the scope of INCRA, restricts its public to the beneficiaries of Agrarian Reform. The target audience of PRONERA are young people and adults from the settlement projects created and recognized by Incra, quilombolas and camped workers registered with the municipality and beneficiaries of the National Land Credit Program - PNF. However, even in the face of this selection of students, the program serves a significant portion of the rural population, with the objective of strengthening education through methodology, such as the alternation methodology (school time) and (community time), through which the student learns in the academic environment and applies the knowledge learned in his community.

The concept of alternation pedagogy had its origin in France in 1935 and sought to interweave moments of school activity itself with periods of practice in the field. The methodology defends the integral formation of the student through the exchange of experiences in two different environments, one theoretical and the other practical: the school and the rural property (TEIXEIRA; BERNARTT; TRINDADE, 2008).

In this perspective, school-time and community-time are inseparable times, they are unique in relations of theory and practice, there is an inseparability between theory and practice, integral human formation is understood, that is, the formation of human beings who have bond with a given territory, but who will act as educators, professionals in various areas of formation.

In Brazil, alternation pedagogy was first implemented in 1969 in Espírito Santo, where the first three agricultural families schools were built. The student spent two weeks at the school headquarters in a boarding system and another two in the environment in which he lives (TEIXEIRA; BERNARTT; TRINDADE, 2008).

Alternation means the teaching-learning process that takes place in different and alternating spaces and territories. The first is the family space and the community of origin; the second, the school where the student shares the different knowledge he has with other actors, and reflects on them on a scientific basis; and, finally, the student returns to the family and the community in order to continue the praxis either in the community, in the property or in the insertion in certain social movements. Alternation Pedagogy is based on a scientific method.

Observe, see, describe, reflect, analyze, judge and experiment, act or question, seek to answer questions and experiment.

In this logic, the methodology of Pedagogy of alternation comes to meet the need of the reality of Education of the countryside. Therefore, PRONERA requires that the course projects presented are executed within this Regime:

Alternation regime: The projects/proposals will be developed according to the alternation methodology, characterized by two moments: study time in the formative centers (School Time) and time of study in the community (Community Time).

The educators' school time corresponds to the period in which they are being schooled/educated by the Educational Institution. The community time of educators corresponds to the period in which they are teaching classes to students (MANUAL PRONERA, 2016, p. 30).

Note that these are beneficiary students and children of beneficiaries of agrarian reform, who live in the countryside and depend on the countryside. For this reason, the alternation methodology is developed in PRONERA courses, with the objective of developing pedagogical practices enriched through the experiences of peasant students. The students of PRONERA courses are financed by the program, as they stop working a period in their lots to prioritize the study.

The historical scenario presented, of struggles and conquests, is currently threatened, because according to the neoliberal principles, having the Third Way logic as the guideline of this government (Bolsonaro), education is understood as merchandise and technical preparation of workers, strengthening the an Education for the production of goods and attendance to the capitalist market and distancing itself from the understanding of an education that forms the subject who thinks and changes his practices through knowledge.

Facing a proposal that defends the small rural farmer, defends agroecology and refutes agribusiness⁵, the difficulties arise in an overwhelming way, because providing an education that grants the experience of the countryside and seeks to meet the reality of that place, according to its time and space, contradicts the accelerated logic of the hegemonic market.

When locating the structural base of PRONERA, its composition is evidenced by the tripod Civil Society (Social Movement), Educational Institutions (Federal, State and Municipal) and INCRA, which formed the National Pedagogical Commission (CPN). The latter,

⁵ Agribusiness is a new word created in the 1990s. It is also an ideological construction, precisely to change the latifundist image of capitalist agriculture. It seeks to represent the image of productivity, modernization, the generation of wealth for the country from exports and the generation of commodities (SILVA, 2017, p. 193, our translation).

responsible for analyzing the processes arising from all States of the Federation, was extinguished by Decree 9,759 of 11 April 2019, which establishes guidelines, rules and limitations for federal public administration collegiate bodies. This makes it impossible to create new courses (BRASIL, 2019).

The situation is aggravated by the contingency of financial resources, a situation that severely damaged courses that were in progress. This information is highlighted, as the courses are financed by PRONERA. According to Manual:

The instruments of partnership with the institutions will be based on a student/year cost standard, to be defined by Incri by the Implementation Norm, whose value will be regionalized and must meet expenses with: lodging, meals, transportation, travel, daily fees, didactic material and scholarships for the payment of coordinators, supervisors, monitors, teachers and students, provided that the criteria established in the legislation on scholarship are met (MANUAL PRONERA, 2016, p. 18).

The demands for public education policies are based on the need to create a formative process that far surpasses interests only through certification, but it is based on the formation of people who may be able to assume their destiny, facing through social organization and knowledge, traditional and conservative practices that have so far expelled dozens of men and women from the countryside.

Maintaining Higher Education courses at PRONERA is still a challenge, as there is also resistance within the local authority (INCRA). The resources, investments for the execution of the courses, decreased considerably. According to Feliciano (2020), in the Lula and Dilma government until 2015, 500 million reais were released to PRONERA. This amount has been reduced over the years: in 2016, to R \$ 27 million; in 2017, it reduces to R \$ 14.8 million; increases slightly in 2018 to 19.7 million; it decreased dramatically in 2019 to R \$ 8.3 million and in 2020 it was R \$ 13.3 million. With these values, it was not possible to meet the needs of new courses and, with difficulty, only courses in progress were completed.

When Demier (2017) presents armored democracy, corroborating the concept of inclusion as a way of maintaining dominance of hegemonic power, the current situation of Rural Education is understood, since the policy of the current government obstructs the possibilities of expansion, but continues to keep the Program active, amid threats and contingency.

At the Federation level, PRONERA has already enabled the formation of approximately 5,347 students at higher level in various areas. According to data from INCRA, the program has provided access to education for over 190 thousand students, benefiting from courses ranging from literacy to postgraduate school. It has articulation with more than 100 institutions

involved in offering courses, in more than 1000 municipalities in the country and, therefore, has made it possible to offer more than 529 literacy courses and postgraduate studies so far.

The higher education courses offered by PRONERA are several: Law, Pedagogy of the Land, Agronomic Engineering, Social Science, Geography, among others. The offer of these courses depends on the demand presented by social movements and partner universities, but, mainly, on financing. PRONERA requires formal, certified courses. For this reason, they must be offered by federal, state or municipal public institutions, non-profit institutions or municipal or state education departments.

Resisting and innovating without losing the conviction of opposing capitalist logic are the tiles of the path to follow in the direction of maintaining Education in the Countryside as a fundamental struggle flag in times of neoliberal and neoconservative framing in Brazilian society.

Final considerations

With undergraduate courses in various areas, PRONERA's proposal is to overcome the idea that the subject of the countryside only needs to be prepared for manual labor. The idea is to form professionals who work in the field and help in the development of a Settlement Project according to the needs of the peasant population to maintain the conquered rights and ensure the continuity and strengthening of ongoing formation in line with social movements to think about resistance strategies educational practices in the countryside, whether in basic education or higher education.

One of the objectives of education of/in the countryside is to break with the judgment that the person needs to leave the countryside to study and not return; but to create a new possibility, in which the subjects, beneficiaries of the Agrarian Reform, study and act, after graduating, in the Settlement Projects. And, in this sense, to overcome neoliberal discourses loaded with modernity by inserting education as a mediator for the construction of an emancipatory position crossed by social antagonisms of the class society in which we live.

The direction of the current policy is reflected in the performance and development of PRONERA in Brazil, uncertainties hover under the reliance on the release of financial resources. The government's new proposals to privatize Higher Education are also highlighted, taking into account the logic of the market, which imposes, once again, overcoming the origin of education of the countryside that was born taking a stand against the logic and the model of development of social, political and economic disparities historically constructed in Brazil.

In view of the above, there is an urgent need for a real mobilization that the third way marketing proposals harm the establishment of equity in society, and that the current inclusion is an armored democracy that prevents structural changes, but that sought to serve minorities. Inclusion policies enabled the development of PRONERA, but maintain the neoliberal logic as the structuring of this Program, which, having a mentor of an ultra neoliberal government, has its principles shaken by the lack of resources and the prioritization of a privatized and meritocratic education.

Faced with this observation, in view of the countless changes brought about by the new social order, policies are now reoriented by a controlling and evaluating State in favor of adjusting to capitalism. It is increasingly necessary to strive for quality education and human and scientific formation that goes beyond the limits of capital.

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