

Education and work: settlers' perceptions at the time of the CANG

ARTICLE

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the Colônia Agrícola Nacional de Goiás (CANG) from the settlers' perspective, relating their experiences to the political regime of the time, the lack of public and social policies in education, and the political formation of youth and adults, emphasizing generational impacts. It highlights social resistance movements and the political alienation of vulnerable groups, often deprived of basic education and dignity, and excluded from social policies. The study also discusses how the discourse of progress and technology contributed to this marginalization. This is a qualitative study with historiographic elements, based on documentary and bibliographic research, including texts written by former settlers who became literate through youth and adult education (EJA). The analysis draws on works by Sayão (1985) and Dutra e Silva (2002, 2017), as well as interviews and historical documents about CANG.

Keywords: Colônia Agrícola Nacional de Goiás. Education. Social exclusion. Resistance. Politics.

Educação e trabalho: percepção dos colonos na época da CANG

Resumo

O artigo analisa a Colônia Agrícola Nacional de Goiás (CANG) sob a perspectiva dos colonos, relacionando suas experiências ao regime político da época, à ausência de políticas públicas e sociais na educação, e à formação política de jovens e adultos, com ênfase nos impactos geracionais. Evidenciam-se os movimentos sociais de resistência e a alienação política das camadas mais vulneráveis, que, privadas do acesso à educação básica, permanecem à margem da dignidade e das políticas sociais. Aborda-se ainda a forma como o discurso do progresso e da tecnologia contribuiu para essa exclusão. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, com traços historiográficos, fundamentada em fontes documentais e bibliográficas, incluindo textos de ex-colonos alfabetizados pela EJA. A análise dialoga com obras de Sayão (1985) e Dutra e Silva (2002, 2017), além de entrevistas e documentos históricos sobre a CANG.

Palavras-chave: Colônia Agrícola Nacional de Goiás. Educação. Exclusão social. Resistência. Política.

1 Introduction

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This study originated in the reflections developed in the course Society, Work and Education, offered by the Postgraduate Program in Education at the Faculty of Education of UFG (PPGE/FE-UFG). The readings and discussions carried out during the course contributed significantly to deepening the object of study that motivated my entry into the master's program: Youth and Adult Education (EJA).

The discussions made it possible to analyze various texts and books, with the aim of bringing the history of CANG¹ (National Agricultural Colony of Goiás), through the eyes of the settlers through the stories they tell, relating their experiences with the political regime of the time, the difficulties, the lack of public and social policies that reach the citizen, in the education and political training of young people and adults and how this affects present and future generations.

It also seeks to highlight the social movements of resistance and the role of capital interests as the driving force behind the political dynamics that promote the alienation of the most vulnerable sections of the population - especially those who have not completed basic schooling and lack access to fundamental rights such as health, education and social guidance. In the name of progress and technological advancement, these groups end up being marginalized from social policies, having their needs relegated to the background and their fundamental rights compromised.

This paper proposes a reflection on how the past, in dialog with the present, can produce new forms of social cohesion and coercion. It analyzes how failures in public policies and the absence of cohesive social movements have an impact not only on the present, but also on future generations. These reflections led me to revisit the

¹ Created in 1941 in the context of the March to the West, the National Agricultural Colony of Goiás became a hub for migration and colonization in the Midwest and North of the country, symbolizing government projects to occupy the Matas de São Patrício, an area with great agricultural potential (Silva, 2017).

past – my childhood and youth – and, at the same time, allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of historical and family aspects that have always aroused concern.

2 Methodology

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This study will be based on a qualitative discussion, of a historical nature, with historiographical traits based on reports, articles and books that discuss the subject and with directions that seek to dialogue with the context analyzed. Documentary research will be carried out, using methods and techniques to apprehend, understand and analyze documents of various types (Sá-Silva; Almeida; Guindani, 2009). Barros (2019) states that historical sources are at the heart of history methodology. In the case of this article, various writings related to the topic and authors such as Sayão (1985), Silva (2002, 2017) will be analyzed.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 History through the eyes of descent

I was born and brought up in the countryside, close to the home of my paternal grandparents, whom I admired. Excellent storytellers, she would tell her grandchildren about the spinners, lace-makers and laundresses of the Bahian hinterland and pamper them with delicious delicacies. He told their life stories; one was special, about how they arrived in the lands of Goiás. I always wondered why my grandmother didn't read or write, my grandfather and my parents only signed their names. I was also intrigued: what was CANG? And who was Bernardo Sayão?

In this immersion into the past, I intend to reflect on the settlers' point of view, focusing on the accounts written by my father. How did CANG, the National Agricultural Colony of Ceres, despite its efforts and pretensions, leave behind part of its population

under-served in various areas? We will focus on the education of the population in the period, the movements and work today.

The time was the Estado Novo² and the March to the West was underway. In 1945, my father was born in Pompéia-SP, the fifth child of João and Ana. The young couple left the state of Bahia with four Bahian children and pregnant with Dad, with the promise that in São Paulo they would have a better life and work. There, together with other migrants fleeing poverty in search of work on the coffee plantations, they settled in Pompéia. Then they moved to Florida Paulista, where they had a baby girl. Grandpa worked in the fields and Grandma wove and made bobbin lace.

Experiencing the dilemmas of poverty and the precariousness of working in the countryside, they were offered a job on a farm in the state of Goiás. Before they left, their fourth child died. Still saddened by the loss of the boy, they sold the few possessions they had and set off for the capital of São Paulo. When they arrived at Avenida Paulista, the place indicated for the meeting, there was no one waiting, my grandfather, determined as he was, declared: "If the destination is Goiás, that's where we're going". He bought a train ticket and set off for Anápolis.

When they arrived, they heard about the National Agricultural Colony of Goiás (CANG) and that they were donating land to anyone who had the aptitude for rural work and wanted to settle down. They joined up with others, set off for Barranca and registered with CANG. They lived in a corral for seven days and on a farm for a year until, in 1948, they were settled as colonists; the plot was located 36 km from the CANG headquarters. Castilho (2009) says that CANG, the National Agricultural Colony of Goiás, was founded on February 19, 1941, by Federal Decree-Law No. 6,882. The rural plots, according to the criteria of Decree 3.059, ranged from 26 to 32 hectares depending on the soil and water conditions.

² Estado Novo (1937-1945) was the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas, marked by a strong fascist influence, including in the Constitution, nicknamed the Polish Constitution because it was inspired by the laws of Poland and Italy. Available at: <https://brasilecola.uol.com.br/historiab/vargas.htm>. Accessed on 05 Dec. 2024.

The author recalls that during the economic expansion policy known as the "March to the West", promoted by then president Getúlio Vargas, important initiatives such as the creation of Goiânia and the Brasil Central Foundation had a major influence on the territorial configuration of the central region of Goiás, at the time called Mato Grosso Goiano. According to Silva (2017), it was in this context of exclusion that the town of Barranca, now known as the city of Rialma, emerged.

The expansion of the road network was probably the best moment of Juscelino's Target Plan. He paved 6,000 kilometers of new highways between 1956 and 1960, in a country that until then had only 4,000 kilometers of roads, and made possible a territorial integration network capable of guaranteeing the movement of goods between rural areas and the main industrialized centers, as well as creating new markets. With the price of oil relatively low and the automobile industry entering the country, Juscelino decided that the challenge of opening up new red earth and asphalt highways was worthwhile: he sent for agronomist Bernardo Sayão, an official at the Ministry of Agriculture, a construction worker with a swagger and the spirit of a pioneer, and proposed cutting through the savannahs of Central Brazil, "breaking into the jungle and uniting the country from north to south" (Schwartz; Starling, p. 570).

When my grandparents arrived, there were already some settlers and small fields. They brought animals and seeds from the farm where they worked to get started. These accounts are confirmed by Sayão (1984). This was the case for several families, who went straight to the office to apply for their plots and the first ones got a small house, but the last ones didn't enjoy the same perks, as they were short of money.

Silva (2017) writes that the settlers had to clear their plots and this work, in the early years of colonization, was done using the old method of coivara. In his accounts, Dad wrote that it was all closed forest and that they began the work of clearing and burning, a recommendation made for planting with the observation of preserving 25% of the native forest. Grandpa dug a hole and kept the animals to set fire to the swidden where he would build the ranch out of wattle and daub, saving the animals from the start. All the fruit they received was used to plant their seeds. They also grew rice, beans, corn, sugar cane, manioc and cotton. In just three years, they were producing and selling rapadura, flour, starch and cornmeal.

With the money from the sales, they bought a loom and my grandmother started weaving blankets and cotton fabrics to make clothes for the whole family. They also bought a sewing machine and a neighbor sewed in exchange for fabric. In Goiás, they had four more children. The large family, with six men working in the fields, favored the production of food, the raising of animals and the making of clothing and sewing items, both for their own sustenance and for sale. This scenario contributed to the family's prosperity, allowing my grandfather to buy land from neighbors who were unable to prosper or were attracted by the expansion of urban centers, such as Goiânia and Brasília. This movement is confirmed by Castilho (2009), who points out, among the factors, the dismantling of government support for smallholders in favor of large properties, as well as the growing demand for more advanced agricultural technologies.

Silva (2017) states that the colony's project provided for literacy schools for children, seeking to fulfill Vargas' motto of "populate, sanitize and educate", but this provision appears only as a reminder. The focus was not on theoretical training, but on labor training. Although the period coincided with the Inaugural Baptism of the new capital, which hosted the 8th National Education Congress - the central theme of which was "Basic primary education" - the regime emphasized agricultural and industrial professionalization as a strategy to keep people in the countryside and consolidate the desired agricultural frontier, in the context of the so-called "Pedagogical Ruralism".

According to Dad's writings³, corroborated by Silva (2017), although some schools were built, the outcome did not reach those who received land far from the colony's headquarters, nor the adults settled or working on road construction and other works planned in the CANG project. The precariousness in school construction and educational services was also worsened by the scarcity of supplies and products due to World War II. Dad writes that, at this time, they lived through difficult times because

³ The manuscripts cited were written by my father, Joaquim Batista dos Santos (in memoriam), in 2002, after completing the 5th grade of primary school in an Adult Education (EJA) project in Ipiranga de Goiás.

food items like sugar and salt, as well as supplies such as fertilizers, building materials, and tools needed for production, became increasingly scarce. There was no effective communication, people had to walk long distances to find these products, and often they could not find them.

Silva (2017) reports that several schools were built, both in urban and rural areas. However, with the emancipation of the colony in 1953, especially from 1955 onwards, the situation only worsened. With the election of the first mayor, education became the responsibility of the municipality, which faced many difficulties in maintaining the structure left by the federal government. As a result, children grew up forged by work, and with schools far from home and difficult to access, they ended up learning only to write their names or had access to little reading.

According to Sayão (1984), even at the beginning of the CANG implementation, education was facing challenges. She reports that, while visiting her father, Bernardo Sayão, at the CANG headquarters, she collaborated with her sister Laiz in the educational area. Both⁴ served as the first teachers in the camps and schools at the Agricultural Colony headquarters.

At this time, Law 5.692/1971 had already been enacted, which mentioned the Adult Education (EJA, in Portuguese) in Brazilian legislation, but the new legal framework did not offer evening education for the large mass of illiterate adults in the region. Germano (1993) states that the first reform of this modality in Brazil changed its organization, making the second grade focus primarily on professionalization. Even though Youth and Adult Education reached the colony's residents, it was not guided by emancipation but by professionalization. The author also points out that in this 1971 document, the primary education completion was set at eight years, and the terms "first" and "second" grade were adopted. However, in this second phase of schooling, a more technical character was introduced, as preferred by the military government.

⁴ Léa and Laiz are daughters of Bernardo Sayão and Lygia Mendes Pimentel Carvalho Araújo, his first wife (Sayão, 1985).

Germano (1993) notes that the period of the creation of Law 5.692/1971 coincided with the military authoritarianism period, and education was directed based on military politics and external economic relations. From this perspective, Brazil reaffirmed its dualistic spirit in education: secondary schools for the elites and vocational schools for the masses.

Gadotti (1996) analyzes that the period from 1945 to 1964 was marked by a growing interest in youth and adult education in Brazil. This was a period marked by the emergence of Paulo Freire's pedagogical thought and the spread of Popular Education, which was a key milestone because the need to alphabetize the population and promote social inclusion led to various initiatives to promote popular education during this time. The author asserts that the ideas promoted by Paulo Freire were fundamental for the construction of a more critical, reflective, and liberating education.

According to Gadotti (1996), although the military coup interrupted this process, Freire's legacy continues to inspire the struggle for quality education for all, since his literacy method shed light on the dialogue between educator and learner, starting from "generative words" chosen by the students themselves. Freire proposed an education grounded in the learners' reality, problematizing their experiences and promoting critical awareness.

Freire (1983) argues that the normal position of human beings in the world must be understood not merely as being in the world, but being with the world, thus not reducing their existence to mere passivity. Still according to Freire (1983),

Not reducing man only to one of the dimensions in which he participates — the natural and the cultural — the first, through his biological aspect, the second, through his creative power, man can be eminently interfering. His intervention, unless distorted and accidentally, does not allow him to be a mere spectator, to whom it would not be lawful to interfere with reality in order to change it. Inheriting acquired experience, creating and recreating, interacting with the conditions of his context, responding to its challenges, objectifying himself, discerning, transcending — man launches himself into a domain that is exclusively his: the domain of history and culture (Freire, 1983, p. 41).

An Adult and Youth Education (EJA – *Educação de Jovens e Adultos*) program was only structured in that region of the colony to serve the adults interested in returning to or beginning their studies after President Lula took office. My father completed the first stage of Elementary Education in that program. Upon finishing Elementary Education through EJA, my father wrote the story of his life and his family in an autobiography.

Freire (1983) reflects that:

From the relations of man with reality, resulting from being with it and being in it, through the acts of creation, re-creation, and decision, he goes on dynamizing his world. He goes on dominating reality. He goes on humanizing it. He goes on adding to it something of which he himself is the maker. He temporalizes geographic spaces. He makes culture (Freire, 1983, p. 43).

My father recounts, in his writings, that life at that time was very hard: there were no roads, no transport, not even an animal to carry things, and that my grandfather would go for supplies in Barranca. He would carry up to 30 kg on his back over 32 km. And that a masonry school would only be built around the year 1983, when the second generation of settlers began to study, still in a multigrade classroom.

Reading these accounts and recalling the struggle through the eyes of the settlers reveals the story of a simple man who dreamed of writing his own life story but was limited by the absence of public policies capable of reaching all citizens within a single community.

According to Martins (2016), the sociological study of ignorance refers to the way contemporary society perceives itself, being structurally characterized by hidden factors that are essential to its reproduction as a society shaped by capital. It is an involuntary cost that society bears due to the capitalist mode of production, life, and thought. This lack of opportunity causes social stagnation and contributes to the perpetuation of class inequalities in the country.

From my father's writings and the stories told over time, it is possible to perceive that the settlers faced intense labor with little support concerning basic rights.

Furthermore, they did not have a structure of social organization to assist them in the struggle for such rights, as organized social movements only arrived late in the region.

Freire (1970), in his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, demonstrates the contradiction between the oppressor and the oppressed and points out that education cannot be liberating if it exercises a pedagogical practice that, consciously, has been a practice of domination. He also affirms that the methods of domination cannot at the same time serve for the domination and liberation of the oppressed. For Freire (1970), the oppressed, who hosts the oppressor within himself, cannot participate in the pedagogy of his own liberation. First, the oppressed must free himself from the oppressor imprinted in him by lived experiences that shape the structure of his thinking, transform him into a thing, and dehumanize him.

It also emphasizes the need for the oppressed to free themselves from the duality they carry within, so that, as a new man, they may develop class consciousness and, as a member of an oppressed class, fight for the transformation of the world, for their own liberation, and also for the liberation of the oppressor. Otherwise, as a being not yet freed, they tend to reproduce the mechanisms of oppression, assuming themselves the role of the oppressor. In this context, the absence of a cohesive social movement prevented my family members and their neighbors from achieving social emancipation, as they remained bound by relationships marked by gratitude and cordiality toward those who, in practice, contributed to keeping them in a state of subordination.

According to Freire (1983),

In truth, in adjustment, man does not dialogue. He does not participate. On the contrary, he accommodates himself to determinations that are superimposed upon him. The mental dispositions that we create in these circumstances were thus rigidly authoritarian mental dispositions. Uncritical. (Freire, 1983, p. 74).

According to Freire (1970), only when the oppressed clearly identify the oppressor can they fight for their liberation, thus believing in themselves and

overcoming what has been internalized by the oppressor. However, it is also necessary to move from intellectual activism to practice; otherwise, it becomes mere activism. According to the author, the conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift from revolutionary leadership, but the result of their own conscientization.

However, this will not occur as long as the oppressed receive a banking education, in which they are treated as passive recipients, since what the oppressors intend is to transform the mentality of the oppressed, keeping them in a situation of adaptation and adjustment, rather than changing the situation that oppresses them. In this sense, Saviani (1999) defends the need for a pedagogy committed to popular interests, based on dialogue between teachers and students and the appreciation of historically accumulated culture. The author highlights that it is precisely the popular classes that assign the greatest value to education, precisely because they have not yet fully benefited from it.

3.2 The Church and its role in community formation

With the Theology of the People and the biblical circle movement led by Bishop Dom Tomás Balduino, the community was perceived and guided to organize itself. The stories and memories also dialogue with the moments of learning during this period. These accounts are also reflected in an interview given by Dom Tomás Balduino about Liberation Theology.

Reis (2022) tells us that Dom Tomás Balduino was a Catholic bishop from Goiás, who, through his choices and lines of action, aligned himself with the defense of human rights and the openness of the Roman Catholic Church to those on the social margins, such as women, indigenous peoples, Black people, homeless individuals, squatters, and peasants.

Although it was time to promote community organization, by then, most of the settlers' children had already migrated to major urban centers in search of work. During

this period, cities like Goiânia, Brasília, and other urban hubs established along the Belém-Brasília highway prompted the movement and arrival of many workers to Goiás. The migratory movement of people during times of crisis and instability continues to happen, just as it did in the period referenced at the beginning of this study.

In an interview, Dom Tomás states that the main period of formation of the Brazilian peasantry was during the Military Dictatorship, which promoted public and private colonization projects, particularly in the North and Midwest regions of the country. He points out that the State's action during the dictatorship created a landowning peasantry, but at the same time intensified land conflicts between landless peasants and large estate owners using forged land deeds. He also states that the Church and the Communist Party became, from the mid-20th century onward, important intermediaries between rural workers and the State, fighting to improve living conditions in the countryside and beginning an ideological dispute to attract and mobilize the peasantry. Silva (2017) states that it was within this context of exclusion that Barranca, today the city of Rialma, emerged.

Ghirardelli (1987) discusses the popular education and union initiatives that marked the Brazilian labor movement and shows how this movement, in seeking the emancipation of the working class, adopted education as a means of achieving its objectives. The author analyzes the various pedagogical conceptions present in the movement and the challenges it faced. He also highlights that among the achievements gained through the awareness and organization of the working class were the fight for adult literacy, the creation of workers' schools, and the formation of union leadership.

Still according to Ghirardelli (1987), education is a valuable tool for emancipation and social transformation, but to be effective, it must connect theory and practice, preparing workers to understand the relations of production and to act as historical agents in the transformation of society. For the author, education as a tool of emancipation should not be limited to the transmission of technical knowledge, but must promote autonomy and critical capacity among individuals, especially workers,

thus making education a fundamental instrument for building a more just, democratic, and egalitarian society. According to Ghirardelli (1987), education can be used as a tool of resistance against oppression and exploitation.

Martins (1984) states that it was within this context that the Peasant Leagues emerged in the 1950s, driven by religious and legalist movements supported by the Communist Party. At that time, the peasants' struggle sought to guarantee their rights, and although they were formally free, labor relations in the countryside were still based on the subjectivity of landowners. The political mediation of peasant struggles in Brazil, beginning in the 1950s, was carried out mainly by the Communist Party. The Party's action mobilized the Catholic Church in a broad program of awareness-raising and union organization of the peasantry, supporting federal programs of economic development and modernization. The Church's pastoral mission began to openly criticize the social and political structure of the time, thereby threatening the interests of major landowners. According to Martins (2016), the 1964 Military Coup was carried out not solely, but primarily, to crush the backbone of rural grassroots organizations.

These historical events are also addressed in the work of Saviani (2011), who offers a brief historical periodization to show how the poor population—those most in need of adult education—has consistently been marginalized and left outside the political frameworks of each historical period. Germano (1993) argues that despite being surrounded by “good intentions,” Brazilian education has, for the most part, been shaped by authoritarian political regimes.

According to Germano (1993), the military regime used education as a tool for political hegemony and failed to fulfill a key function traditionally associated with the capitalist state—namely, ensuring the education of both the active and potential labor force. Thus, the military government played a decisive role in the development of the country's productive forces, while also being chiefly responsible for the severe concentration of income and wealth. Germano emphasizes that the State worked persistently to suppress, dismantle, and annihilate the most advanced sectors of Brazilian civil society. He denounces the practice of a “transformist” political strategy—

one that excludes the popular masses from the historical process. This same exclusion can be seen in the education offered to rural settlers, as reflected in my grandfather's stories and my father's writings.

Saviani (1999) explores the dual role of education in society by presenting two distinct groups of thought regarding the causes of social marginalization. The first consists of non-critical theories that regard education as autonomous and self-contained—that is, as having great independence from social structures and playing a decisive role in ensuring social conformity, equality, and inclusion. Within this perspective, marginalization is seen as an accidental phenomenon.

In contrast, those who understand education through the lens of its objective conditions—namely, the social and economic structures that shape educational phenomena—recognize that society is divided by class, with antagonistic forces expressed in the material conditions of life. In this view, education functions both as a tool of social discrimination and as a key factor in the production of marginalization.

Martins (2016) focuses his research on those left at the margins of society and the social sciences, particularly the fate of rural populations. His work is essential in demonstrating how the process of transformation can liberate people from the ideological alienation that marginalization imposes—an alienation sustained by the false consciousness upon which capitalist society depends for its reproduction. Harvey (2014) argues that the contradictions within capital are not oppositional, but rather represent two simultaneous truths or possibilities. He suggests that crises are central mechanisms for capitalism's survival, functioning as moments of structural reinvention and adaptation. In this context, an organized society becomes a symbol of resistance in the face of popular demands that are systematically suppressed by economic elites.

As Freire (1970) asserts: "If men are beings of praxis and if their ontological vocation is to become more fully human, they can, sooner or later, perceive the contradiction in which the 'banking' concept of education seeks to keep them, and they can then engage themselves in the struggle for their liberation"(Freire, 1970, p. 62).

According to Freire (1970), the more the majority conforms to the goals defined by the dominant majority—lacking awareness of their own objectives and interests—the greater the risk that their true interests will be neglected or prescribed for them.

Barros (2020) refers to the example of the city of Ceres, which had to reinvent itself. Originally created to be the "Goddess of Agriculture," it saw its vocation diverted toward becoming a regional hub for healthcare. This highlights how capital reorganizes itself, abandoning its original purposes, forging its own path while leaving people behind. He emphasizes that a society educated for technicism may be led to defend its oppressors and draws attention to the current Brazilian reality. Barros defines the hatred toward intellectuals by contrasting technical workers with intellectuals: the former cling to an imagined prestige and fail to recognize themselves as belonging to the same class. The intellectual, however, becomes aware of the false universalism practiced in the name of bourgeois particularity and of the commodity-reproducing system that supports it.

Gramsci (1971) contributes significantly to this discourse with his concept of "organic intellectuals"—one of his most influential theories regarding society, culture, and politics. It provides a central framework for understanding the relationship between social classes, hegemony, and the formation of a new social order. According to Gramsci, "organic intellectuals" are not limited to those with formal degrees or traditional intellectual professions. Rather, they emerge from specific social classes and act in ways that reflect the values and interests of those classes. These intellectuals play a strategic role in shaping the moral and intellectual consensus necessary to maintain hegemony, offering ideological justifications for domination. Through their intellectual activity, they exert influence over politics, culture, education, and communication, thereby consolidating the power of their respective class.

Gramsci (1971) also stresses the need for oppressed classes to cultivate their own organic intellectuals—individuals capable of producing counter-hegemony and building a new social order.

Bonalume (2020) highlights the consequences of the lack of investment in mass education and the disorganization of civil society throughout Brazilian history, particularly during authoritarian periods. His analysis helps explain how Brazilian society reached its current state, marked by indifference toward the organization of crucial agendas for national development.

This is evident among the descendants of settlers, many of whom have gone through this historical process without recognizing themselves as participants in it. Bonalume's analysis of the history of social movements begins with organized responses to specific demands and class issues and progresses to contemporary movements and counter-movements, which may have specific, multiple, or even unfocused agendas. In the current Brazilian context, he notes that organized civil society has struggled to effectively participate in the power struggle. He observes, for example, the rise of movements that advocate for causes contrary to collective interests.

Montibeller (2021) underscores that in an underdeveloped country like Brazil, economic improvement is vital for society. However, this does not justify the belief that growth must come first and distribution later. He also points out that economic growth often leads to environmental degradation, pollution, and resource depletion. In an economy driven by the pursuit of maximum and immediate profit, capital is pushed to produce massive volumes of goods with extremely fast production cycles.

Graglia and Lazzareschi (2018) note that today's labor market is deeply affected by the use of information, communication, and intelligence technologies. These changes go beyond automation and robotics in production—they redefine how work is performed across all sectors of the economy, now increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence and the aim to meet complex social needs. The social tensions arising from the restructuring of labor markets—driven by the introduction of new technologies and work management techniques—intensify fears of unemployment.

They further explain that at the interface between people and technology, tasks will be distributed based on specific situational strengths. Technology can adjust

priorities and customize tasks for particular applications. Hierarchically separated and fragmented subprocesses that were once performed sequentially are now replaced by integrated, simultaneous, and decentralized procedures. At the interface between human beings and organizations, the challenge of adapting tasks and redistributing roles emerges, creating a sense of global insecurity in the labor world. Previati (2020) has observed transformations in the structure of work and employment, marked by rising unemployment and increasing levels of precarious living conditions for the working class.

It is necessary to resist, it is necessary to contradict. Harvey (2014) observes that the "genie" often returns to the bottle, driven by radical adjustments between opposing forces that emerge from the structural contradictions of the system. For the author, such contradictions should not be viewed solely negatively: although they sometimes carry challenging implications, they can also serve as a rich source of individual and social transformation. Therefore, they are potential moments of overcoming, in which we do not always succumb—on the contrary, we can emerge from them more aware and strengthened.

Cury (1989) organizes this discussion about the perception of contradiction in education as a central element for understanding the dynamics of education in society. For the author, the school significantly reflects the inequalities present in society. In this context, teaching methodologies may favor certain social groups over others, contributing to the reproduction of power relations. Being complex institutions, schools tend to mirror and perpetuate the social class structure, rather than overcoming it. He further emphasizes that teachers often play a role of authority that can limit students' participation and autonomy, which contributes to highlighting differences in race, gender, and geographical origin. These differences manifest both in access and in the quality of education, which is based on the values and knowledge of the dominant classes, further distancing students from their realities and life experiences.

4 Final considerations

The past, as seen through the eyes of the settlers depicted here, constitutes a set of memories and accounts of experiences lived over the years. Reflecting on the delay in the implementation of education in a community, even when it was included in the appendix of a project of great national relevance, such as the CANG project, reveals a reality marked by negligence. One could argue that an entire generation of children and adults was neglected in their right to schooling and literacy, being relegated to marginal work, in a context where even access to the most basic rights was extremely difficult.

Just like in the CANG project, the Education of Young and Adult workers has not always been prioritized in the country. The reflections made indicate that, in capitalist society, people depend on work to survive and need to fight for fairer work relations and for an education system that transforms individuals into builders and validators of their productive power. In this context, organized social movements are an essential tool in society, playing a crucial role in opening paths for the underprivileged and minorities. It is essential that society is assisted in its individual and collective agendas to build successful experiences, and this must be our path, reinvigorating our hopes for the Nation. The current Brazilian scenario demands organization around common political goals, primarily from civil society. And, in this journey, we must resist.

According to Freire (1983), education must first and foremost be a constant pursuit of changing attitudes, where democratic mechanisms are created to replace old cultural habits of passivity with new habits of participation, thus highlighting things that should be obvious. For him, in our historical past, important aspects of educational action were missing, such as solidaristic habits that would make us less inauthentic in our perception of the democracy of a government, leaving us to seek education as a means of incorporating those habits that other peoples have incorporated.

The exclusive overcoming of illiteracy would not lead the popular rebellion to inclusion. Purely mechanical literacy. The problem for us continued and transcended the overcoming of illiteracy and lay in the need to also overcome our democratic experience (Freire, 1983, p. 94).

If the state does not invest in liberating education for the people, as defended by Freire (1983), they become subjected to any work to survive, alienated by the system, and begin to live and think about capital as if they were capitalists, living under the illusion of their own autonomy, minimal state, and self-entrepreneurship. And capital takes advantage of this to expand its tentacles.

According to Freire (1983), education is intrinsically linked to social transformations, and it is possible to suppose that new "marches" are formed daily in the relations between man and work, driving a continuous movement of struggle by the oppressed classes for survival. That we, as a society, scholars, and researchers, remain attentive to the dynamics of capital, to the actions of governments, and, above all, to our role in social movements. And that, even in a world often hostile to the poorest, we are able to resist and fight for transformations that are truly meaningful and lasting.

On the contrary, men, by becoming aware of their activity and the world in which they live, by acting in pursuit of the goals they propose and set for themselves, by having the decision point of their search within themselves and in their relationships with the world and others, by imprinting the world with their creative presence through the transformation they carry out in it, inasmuch as they can separate from it and, by separating, can stay with it, men, unlike animals, do not only live, but exist, and their existence is historical (Freire, 1970, p. 89).

We conclude that communities struggle to transform their environment, even against public policies aimed at education and social development, and although they are almost always swallowed by the disorganization of these policies, it is the Brazilian state as an organizing agent that reinforces the rationality of capital and causes an immeasurable human delay for the country.

The more critical a human group is, the more democratic and permeable it generally is. The more democratic, the more connected to the conditions of its circumstance. The fewer democratic experiences that require from them critical knowledge of their reality, through participation in it, through their intimacy with it, the more superimposed to this reality and inclined to naïve ways of facing it. Naïve ways of perceiving it. Naïve ways of representing it. The less criticality in us, the more naïvely we treat problems and superficially discuss issues (Freire, 1983, p. 95).

The question that remains is: which societal project will the working class bet on and build? For capital tramples relationships, leaving the population in the condition of eternal "dependents and beggars" of migratory policies. Building a nation is very difficult!

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Responsible publisher: Genifer Andrade

Ad hoc specialist: Maria Luiza Ferreira Duques and Lucicleide de Souza Barcelar

How to cite this article (ABNT):

SANTOS, Neusa Maria dos. Educação e Trabalho: percepção dos colonos na Época da CANG. **Rev. Pemo**, Fortaleza, v. 7, e13996, 2025. Available: <https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/revpemo/article/view/13996>

Received on September 5, 2024.

Accepted on March 6, 2025.

Published on June 6, 2025.