

## Rural and Professional Education in Paraíba in the 1930s and 1940s



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### ABSTRACT

This chapter seeks to understand rural and professional education in Paraíba in line with the political and social discussions of the Vargas period. It is the result of the research project Social Representations on Professional Education in the newspaper A União (Paraíba, 1930s) funded by the IFPB's INTERCONECTA public notice. At first, the text presents a small contextualization of Professional Education in Brazil and Paraíba up to our time frame, 1930. Soon after, he discusses, based on some bibliographic references, how, throughout the Vargas period, a rural education focused on work and nationalism became increasingly evident. Next, it presents some examples of rural education in Paraíba, discussing how it was organized and what would be the social and political representations that shaped the practices of this education. As a conclusion, we present a little of the trajectory of Sizenando Costa, a teacher and intellectual who fought for rural education in the period in question. Also, the proposal of the Model Rural Schools that he defended. The chapter dialogues both with studies on the history of rural and professional education in Paraíba and Brazil, as well as with analyses that deal with politics in the 1930s and 1940s.

**Keywords:** Rural Education, Vargas Period, Social Representations, A União newspaper.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Our text is an excerpt from the project *Social Representations about Professional Education in the newspaper A União (Paraíba, 1930s)* that seeks to understand rural education in Paraíba in the Vargas context. This project is funded by the INTERCONECTA-IFPB 07-2023 notice. Partial results and excerpts have already been presented at the following scientific congresses: **IX National Congress of Education** in October 2023 we presented the poster abstract: *Reflections on Professional Education*



in the *Paraíba newspaper A União (1930s)* later transformed into an expanded abstract and published in the annals of the event. At **the 5th IFPB Research, Innovation and Graduate Symposium (SIMPIF)** in November 2023, we presented the banner entitled *Social Representations about Professional Education in the newspaper A União (Paraíba, (1930s))*. And, finally, we presented at **the I Science and Technology Week** of the IFPB-Picuí campus in December 2023 the poster *Social Representations on Professional Education in the newspaper A União (Paraíba, (1930s))* awarded first place in the Human Sciences category. Before entering into the excerpt proposed here, we would like to develop some general considerations about the history of professional education in Paraíba. Our project, as mentioned above, focuses on professional education and seeks to understand what kind of changes there were in the conceptions about it with the arrival of the labor discourse in the 1930s. The proposals for rural education are part of a larger project of Vocational Education, therefore, we consider that this historical contextualization that follows is necessary.

In 1809, for example, the "Colégio das Fábricas" (Colégio das Fábricas) emerged in Rio de Janeiro, the first established school created by the government with the objective of training "artists and apprentices" to work in artisanal and manufacturing trades (CANDEIA, 2013, p. 45). It should be noted that the creation of the College of Factories dialogues with the charter of April 1, 1808, which authorized the establishment of factories and manufactures in Brazil, repealing the legislation of 1785 that prohibited the carrying out of such activities in the colony (CABRAL, 2016). In the aforementioned charter, the then Prince Regent, D. João, determines that

[...] desiring to promote and advance the national wealth, and one of the sources of it being manufactures and industry, which multiply and improve, and give more value to the goods and products of agriculture and the arts, and increase the population, giving to many hands to do, and furnishing means of subsistence to many of my vassals, who for want of them would indulge in the vices of idleness; and it is expedient to remove all obstacles that may render useless and frustrate such advantageous benefits: I am pleased to abolish and revoke any and all prohibitions that exist in this regard in the State of Brazil and in my Overseas Dominions (BRASIL, 01 abri. 1808)

Such practices and discourses – raised in the context of Brazil's transformation into the seat of the Portuguese Empire – already revealed the link between education for work and economic development.

In Paraíba, Candeia (2013, p. 45-56) identified some milestones in the history of professional education. In 1854, a *School of Theoretical and Practical Agriculture* was created. In 1859, the Legislative Assembly authorized the creation of a School for apprentice craftsmen in the capital. However, it was only in October 1866 that the government of the then province was able to implement such a project, thus emerging the *Colégio de Educandos Artífices da Paraíba*, which would operate until 1874. In 1871, another institution with a professional profile was created in the capital of Paraíba: the *School of Apprentice Sailors*. At the time, the rulers on duty understood professional education as



an "antidote" capable of solving two problems at the same time – the social control of poor children and the formation of the free labor market:

The creation of these schools signified the willingness of the Brazilian State to face the problem of underprivileged children who are not accustomed to work. It had to be solved, even more so when, in addition to the social problem (children in the streets and squares), the State's concern with the training of labor to meet a labor market that would indicate its demands, pointing to the need for minimally qualified workers, began to be announced, timidly at first, but increasingly with the passage of time. Thus, taking children off the streets was the objective pursued by the State, which, in addition to pure and simple repression, gradually sought to improve actions and assimilate other ideas, including the pedagogical resource of qualification for work (CANDEIA, 2013, p. 47).

The abolition of slavery in 1888 accentuated the debates and government actions in shaping the labor market. As Chalhoub (2012, p. 47-50) has shown, the end of the slave regime placed work as a problem to be solved by the dominant classes. In this context, it has become urgent for the owners of capital to create new mechanisms of domination of the labor market. It was necessary to "compel the "free man" to sell his labor power under conditions that were interesting to capital. Moreover, it would not be enough to expropriate labor power. It was also necessary to "redeem" work, socially devalued by centuries of slavery, building a new ideology capable of representing work as a factor of civilization. Moreover, the new policy of domination practiced by the republican state was also based on the constant surveillance of the various spheres of life of the working classes, and <sup>1</sup>was also aided by the police and judicial repression of habits considered "unwanted", with "vagrancy" being one of the main concerns of the owners of capital. Now, when analyzing the governmental actions in the field of professional education, it can be seen that it was also practiced with the objective of (con)forming the subalternized classes, from childhood, to the demands of the capitalist market. Historically constituted in Brazil in the midst of these injunctions, professional education was initially conceived and implemented based on a dichotomy of projects and ideas:

These initiatives, by the State and private individuals, were legitimized by discourses that, at the same time that they justified such actions, constructed the idea of a type of education for certain workers, thus affirming the duality of Brazilian education, in the sense of the existence of a school for workers and another for the elite, supposedly with different and predetermined missions. Therefore, it was necessary to stimulate the less favored classes to work and, thus, hinder the development of ideas that challenged the political order (CANDEIA; CURY, 2022, p. 69)

Later on, we will see how this dichotomy crossed the projects and representations of rural education.

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<sup>1</sup> Singer (2012, p. 191) characterizes this segment of capitalist societies by its dependence on wage labor as a form of subsistence. Thus, it is the need to work in order to survive, and not the type of occupation, that confers some degree of integration between the characters we consider as "working classes" in the research as a whole, whether they were inserted in the labor market or not.



In the historical context of the "new" republican order, public education would occupy more and more space in the debate and in government actions. Together with the urban reforms and sanitation policies of the period, it would be one of the pillars of a technical-scientific administration<sup>2</sup> of society that intended to produce the "orderly progress" (PATTO, 1999, p. 170) desired by the leaders of the Republic. But when we analyze the sources that deal with professional and rural education, we can see that alongside the concern with the economic development of the Nation there were concerns of a welfare order in relation to impoverished children, or, to use a term of the time, to the "unfortunate ones". Thus, professional education was initially constituted in Brazil as a response of the dominant groups to demands such as the training of workers, assistance to the poorest and the social control of the subalternized classes. Now, when we analyze the case of Paraíba, the welfare and repressive elements seem to have played an even more decisive role in the conformation of professional education, since

[...] in states where the industry was incipient and the need for qualified personnel to work in the factories was very small (as in the case of Paraíba), social control seemed to guide such actions, thus signifying the presence of the State and its effort at affirmation, unification and civilization. Thus, vocational education in republican Paraíba seems to be born with this accentuated bias, with this "historical mission" of serving the unfortunate, the poor in general. Even in 1909 (with the EAAPB) [School of Apprentice Craftsmen of Paraíba], this trend was accentuated (CANDEIA, 2013, p. 56)

It was in the midst of these practices and representations that 19 Apprentice Craftsman Schools were created in 1909 in the different Brazilian states. These institutions began to function between January and October 1910 (CANDEIA, 2013, p. 58). In *the Recitals* of the Decree of Creation, signed by the then President Nilo Peçanha (1909-1910), it is possible to find a synthesis of the thinking that founded the project:

The President of the Republic of the United States of Brazil, [...] Recital:  
That the constant increase in the population of the cities requires that the proletarian classes be provided with the means of overcoming the ever-increasing difficulties of the struggle for existence;  
That for this it is necessary, not only to equip the children of the disadvantaged of fortune with the indispensable technical and intellectual training, but also to make them acquire habits of fruitful work, which will keep them away from ignorant idleness, the school of vice and crime;  
That it is one of the first duties of the Government of the Republic to form citizens useful to the Nation:  
Decreases:  
Article 1 – In each of the capitals of the States of the Republic, the Federal Government shall maintain, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, a School of Apprentice Craftsmen, intended for free primary professional education (BRASIL, September 23, 1909, emphasis added).

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<sup>2</sup> According to Chalhoub (2017, p. 23), between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the idea of a public administration based solely on technical or scientific criteria was constituted in Brazil: "it is the belief that there would be an extrinsic rationality to urban social inequalities, and that it should then guide non-political, 'competent' conduct, 'efficient', of public policies". However, as the same author argues, "The most tragic thing about this whole story is that the claim of 'scientificity', of neutrality in administrative decisions, always has violence against citizenship at its core" (CHALHOUB, 2017, p. 67).



Assistance, control and "rehabilitation"<sup>3</sup> of the "dangerous classes": this was the logic that underpinned the constitution and functioning of Brazilian professional education in the first decades of the twentieth century. Thus, in the midst of the political, social and economic changes accentuated from the 1930s onwards – notably the rise of Getúlio Vargas to power and the urban-industrial growth – the demand for technical staff for the industrializing project led by the state initiative grew. In this new historical context, professional education has undergone changes in its semantics and pedagogical function, since

With the industrializing project, the vision of a professional education aimed at the underprivileged was abandoned. Between 1930 and 1945, the demand for skilled workers and technical staff grew, given the implantation of national industrial capitalism. The Constitution of 1937 established the obligation of the organization of vocational schools by companies and unions. In 1942, the National Learning Service (Senai) was created and the Organic Law of Industrial Education was enacted, which organizes this type of education, no longer exclusive to companies and unions, in addition to equating it to propaedeutic high school (WINCKLE; SANTAGADA, 2012, p. 98).

As nothing in history is so simple, we will see how at the same time that the government and part of society are organizing this professional education for the industry, the debates about the improvement and expansion of agriculture were also taking over the country. And within these debates, the organization of a rural professional education will be of fundamental importance.

Converging with this new guideline, which we can call labor, in 1942, in the context of the education reform implemented during the administration of Gustavo Capanema, then Minister of Education and Public Health in the Vargas government, professional education began to be designed and practiced on other bases, structured around the notion of "industrial education" (CANDEIA, 2013, p. 19). That same year, *the School of Apprentice Craftsmen of Paraíba* was transformed into an Industrial School, explaining the new perspective that the Brazilian State sought to give to professional education.

It is on this "time of changes", between ruptures and continuities, that our project and this text turn its attention. To do this, we will turn to the official journal *The Union*<sup>4</sup>. The main media outlet in Paraíba at the time, its pages allow access to the worldviews and social projects of the then dominant

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<sup>3</sup> Chalhoub (2017, p. 26-34) has shown that since the end of the nineteenth century, the discourse of national political elites has helped to build an association between "poor classes, dangerous classes", as defined by their supposed "potential threat" to the organization of work, the maintenance of public order, and collective health.

<sup>4</sup> Created in 1893 by the then president of Paraíba, Álvaro Machado, and maintained since then by the state government, A União was published in the capital and had a government editorial line (MARTINS, 1977, p. 16). In this sense, it defended and propagated the projects of society, the actions and the worldview of hegemonic groups. The editions of A União published in the 1930s have been digitized and released to the public on the newspaper's own website, which facilitated research. This collection is available in [https://auniao.pb.gov.br/servicos/copy\\_of\\_jornal-a-uniao#gsc.tab=0](https://auniao.pb.gov.br/servicos/copy_of_jornal-a-uniao#gsc.tab=0) Accessed on 13-10-2023.



classes, since it was a government body, maintained and produced by the local elites<sup>5</sup>. Now, we know that the press is not only a vehicle of information, much less an impartial propagator of events; in modern societies, it functions as a "social practice that constitutes social reality, which shapes ways of thinking and acting, defines social roles, generalizes positions and interpretations that are intended to be shared and universal" (MACIEL, 2004, p. 15). To reinforce the importance of choosing our source, we bring below a quote from another work that shows how the press in general helps to understand education, especially rural education, but not only:

"We gave significant importance to the sources found in the periodicals, especially the newspaper *A União*, because they share the ideas developed by Campos (2012, p. 49), when he states that the "non-pedagogical newspapers" play a crucial role in the daily education of people, or, at least, of a certain social segment, that is, the readers. Thus, considering that the issue of rural education was debated, primarily, by the literate public, namely, intellectuals, teachers, public administrators, we think that the publication of news related to rural education had the role of mobilizing the opinions of these social subjects, and could even interfere in the actions of the federal, state and municipal governments" (PINHEIRO: 2020, p. 97).

In search of what some social segments think about professional and rural education in the period, the newspaper *A União* and other periodicals are powerful windows for discordant or agreeing voices on this issue. Concluding this brief contextualization of professional education, we present our questions: that is, what interests us in rural education.

We want to develop two basic points: how what was called Agricultural Education at the time is structured, what are its objectives, what are its difficulties and what are the political-institutional disputes that cross it. After understanding this issue, dive into some examples of rural school practices in Paraíba and describe the performance of one of its strongest advocates: Sizenando Costa. It must be said that this text is a *work in progress*, we have not finished the research. So, at times there will be hypotheses launched, at times we will have to grudgingly end the argument. In the narrative of the text, we wanted to make these incompleteness clear.

One more small but important comment before we get into our two questions stated above. We know that since the end of the 1990s there has been a process of semantic resignification of the notion of rural education for education of and in the countryside. Such a change is very significant in the struggle of rural peoples in favor of an education that is methodologically thought of from the countryside and not about the countryside. All this discussion is very interesting and touches directly on our themes, but we will not elaborate on it here, as it is a time frame far from ours<sup>6</sup>. But it is necessary

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<sup>5</sup> Due to the limits of the project and this text, it will not be our intention, at least not for the time being, to investigate the social representations elaborated by the working classes about professional education. Even though we have a clear notion of the relevance of this goal, our intention is to develop it in future projects.

<sup>6</sup> For a brief introduction on this issue of education of and in the countryside see: (HENRIQUES et alli, 2007), (RANGEL; CARMO: 2011), (MUNARIM: 2008), (SANTOS: 2010), (CALDART et alli: 2012).



to keep in mind that rural education, both today and in our period, is part of a larger history, the history of rural peoples (MORAES, SOUZA-CHALOPA: 2022).

Another initial comment is necessary: is it about the nomenclature: Rural Education and/or Agricultural Education? In the sources and bibliography of the period, both before and after 1930, both appear. Sizenando Costa, for example, published the book in 1941 *Rural Education*, The federal government creates the *Organic Law on Agricultural Education* in 1946, the first schools in Paraíba in the late 1930s are called *Model Rural School*, technical agreements between the U.S. and Brazil in the context of World War II reshape what they call the *Agricultural Education*. So, we still don't have a way to define which is the best or how to deepen a theoretical-conceptual discussion that would be fruitful. On account of the call *Movement for the Ruralization of Education* which encompasses many individual and institutional initiatives between the 1930s and 1950s, we prefer the term Rural Education (MORAES, 2021). But there remains the question to be thought about in other projects.

In order not to dwell any longer on these initial notes, let's enter into our discussion. First, we agree with some recent studies that have pointed out the error of considering the period of Getúlio Vargas, notably the Estado Novo, as ground zero in educational policies for the rural world.

"Another frequent mistake is to attribute the origin of primary and secondary rural education to the initiatives perpetrated during the Estado Novo when the new bloc in power outlined after the coup of 1930 was consolidated under the aegis of the dictatorship. According to some, it was only there that "schooling programs considered relevant to rural populations were initiated (...), which emerged under the patronage of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Vargas government" (Id., *ibid.*: 16-17, emphasis SRM). There is nothing more misleading than to take 1930 as the inaugural milestone of agricultural educational policies and, even more, to attribute them to the Vargas "Ministry of Agriculture", since the Ministry had already contemplated initiatives aimed at rural elementary education since the 1910s, through institutions such as the Apprenticeships and Patronages and Agricultural (MENDONÇA, 1997: 69), the latter corresponding to the social prophylaxis proposed by urban-industrial groups" (MENDONÇA: 2016, p. 3).

The experiences of Apprenticeships and Agricultural Patronages since the 1910s are important elements in the history of rural education in Brazil as a whole, but they are outside our time frame. We would just like to bring the first example of Rural Education in Paraíba to be developed here: the Presidente João Pessoa Professional School, better known as Pindobal. We bring this example here for a few reasons: first, it looks a lot like the Patronage model. Second, it is a clear example in Paraíba of rural education being thought of as social control, a characteristic that will mark this type of education and also professional education as a whole from the First Republic to the 1930s, as already shown in the initial contextualization. In these years, following the national ideological trends, rural education has appeared with another objective: training and settling rural workers in the countryside. But these two goals are intertwined. The second we know from the history of Brazil that it has not been affected: from the 1930s until today the tendency is for the countryside to expel its inhabitants to the cities.



In the speech of the intervenor Argemiro de Figueiredo – he was at the head of the government from the mid-1930s until its end – this association of education as a way to contain the increase of the population in conditions of poverty is clear. This situation is directly linked to the urban and social transformations associated with the end of slavery and Brazil's entry into mercantile capitalism. The black population – the majority of those who were in a situation of poverty – began to flock en masse to the cities and this became a social problem of great proportions in the first decades of the twentieth century. But let's pay attention to Argemiro de Figueiredo's speech:

"It is painful to see how the wave of the unemployed is increasing every day. Having studied the reasons for the phenomenon, we will conclude that they lie largely in the failures of our teaching processes. There are countless young people, magnificent energies thrown into the dispersion that could produce the best fruits, if the school would root them in the countryside from where they came out, ignorant that the daily work of the peasant contains the unparalleled nobility of an edifying patriotism" (Message of 1935, p.13)" (PINHEIRO, p. 3-4).

Pindobal has had several names: Agricultural Center, Agricultural School and had rural education as a model for the resocialization of juvenile offenders. Its first director was Sizenando Costa, who we will talk about again in this text. It was founded in 1930 and quickly acquired the reputation of a prison because of its austere regime and disciplinary character. Some issues we would like to reinforce with the example of Pindobal: in accordance with the ideological discourse born in the 1930s, which would later be called Laborism (GOMES: 1994), rural education was used as a tool for social training, as a nationalist tool for the use of those considered marginal in the midst of rural work.

"Agricultural Education has the intention of training the underprivileged male childhood and adolescence of Paraíba for redemptive agricultural professional work, capable of transforming their lives, making them productive citizens and, consequently, resocialized. Brazil's concern in the first decades of the twentieth century was with the reduction of crimes committed by these subjects, and, mainly, with the fight against idleness and vagrancy, seen as the main evils of the lack of progress in a Brazil that needed to modernize and moralize itself. In the last years of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century, the pedagogical action of the dominant sectors, along with other more directly repressive practices, will be focused on "national reconstruction", the conformation of citizenship, and the question of the organization of work. Numerous strategies and devices are developed aimed at moralizing and adjusting workers to the new social order. (Moraes, 2000, p.70)" (NASCIMENTO, MACHADO: 2021, p. 4).

Pindobal reinforces an educational dualism that came from the First Republic and was already mentioned in the initial contextualization: the so-called School Groups in the big cities to train the children of the elite and sponsored by the federal government and the rural and/or isolated schools to form the children of the working classes and financed in a very precarious way by the municipal and state governments. This is a characteristic that the reforms of the Vargas period perpetuated and will mark the entire trajectory of education in the twentieth century.

"Agricultural technical education is gradually implemented in Brazil, through policies developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education and Health, in the mid-





1930s, If it is a fact that, throughout the twentieth century, Brazilian education underwent major reformulations, becoming more complex in proportion to the changes in the pattern of capitalist accumulation, On the other hand, its dual character remained as a basic characteristic. In the midst of this scenario, the reflection on Agricultural Education acquires relevance, one of the most complete expressions of this dualism, especially because it has been, at least until 1961, crossed [...] not only by the duality that antagonizes manual work versus "intellectual" work, but also by the one that polarized two agencies of the Political Society in charge of it: the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education and Health, particularly in the 1930s to 1950s. (Mendonça, 2007, p.244). The sinuous conflicts of the twentieth century, especially in the 1930s, are present in education based on this duality, between education for the children of the working poor and education for the children of the ruling elite. Agricultural Education becomes the mantra of Paraíba capitalist society, as one of the main instruments of resocialization of internal subjects in Pindobal, this tactic of the State takes shape with the policies implemented by the education ministry here in Paraíba and the debate held by the press is an important field of observation of what was being implemented by the state government" (NASCIMENTO, MACHADO: 2021, p. 7).

Other examples of rural education in Paraíba will be: *The School of Agronomy of the Northeast*, founded in Areia in 1936, focused both on agricultural education and on the dynamization of techniques and rural producers in the state, and with a focus on the training of agrarian elites. The *Rural School on the Simões Lopes Farm*, the Model Rural Schools, a project defended by Sizenando Costa that became law in 1938, but only implemented in the 1940s. The rural school at *Fazenda São Rafael*. The *Rural Normal Schools* from the 1940s onwards, which had the intention of settling teachers in the hinterlands of Paraíba and will be important in the *Movement for the Ruralization of Education*.

About the São Rafael Farm, we present an excerpt from the newspaper A União that demonstrates a little of the dynamics of this education. Primary school students are taken to these farms to take hands-on farming lessons. From what we can see from the source and the bibliography, this is a persistent method that comes from the First Republic.

"... In obedience to the agricultural education program outlined by the Argemiro de Figueirêdo government, a program that includes rudimentary practical teaching of rational agriculture, gardening, horticulture, pomiculture, poultry farming, beekeeping, sericulture and dairy products, given by the technicians of the Secretariat of Agriculture in the demonstration fields, the students and teachers of the Isabel Maria das Neves School Group were at the S. Rafael farm. From this capital [...] Starting from the park where the brooders and brooders are placed and passing through the housing of chicks of different ages to the houses of breeders of various breeds, the agronomists João Henriques da Silva, Director of Production Promotion, and Gabriel Barbosa de Farias, Inspector in Charge of the Service, went, in simple and practical lectures, teaching the rational processes of breeding, in its various phases [...] Thus, he found the best will on the part of all and Decree No. 1339 of March 6 of this year, in which the Argemiro de Figueirêdo government established measures aimed at bringing the precious fruits of rural education to primary schools" (A UNIÃO: 1939, p. 9)

We'll come back to discuss some of these examples. Now let's talk about the ruralization of education.

It is possible to encompass all the initiatives presented here and the problematic of this text within what the historiography of Education has called *Movement for the Ruralization of Education*. First, this movement is quite complex, has many actors and even a long duration: it goes from the



discussions of the early 1930s for the professionalization of Education to the approval of the Basic Guidelines Law (LDB) of 1961, going through several inflections and changes. We do not want to go into more detail here, but we refer to the important work of Moraes *Ruralization of education: ideas in motion and the movement of ideas (1930-1950)* of 2021. Let's raise the working hypothesis that needs to be deepened: are our examples, and particularly Sizenando Costa, part of this movement? We believe so, but only more research into the sources will confirm it.

The movement is part of the so-called Brazilian Ruralism that emerged in the 1930s in the face of what was called the *Agriculture Crisis*. Faced with an increasingly industrial and urban project, agrarian groups pressured governments, especially the federal government of Getúlio Vargas, to guarantee fiscal protection and incentives for the agrarian economy. The government itself was divided between agrarians and industrialists. (MENDONÇA, 1997). It is also not the objective here to deepen the connection of the Campaign for Ruralization with Ruralism as a whole, but I could not fail to mention it. What I would like to mention are some general aspects of the Movement and its implications in Paraíba

"The need to put ruralist ideas into practice was recurrent in the discourse of the Movement for the Ruralization of Education; In this sense, several actions were implemented, such as the organization of events, publication of printed materials, creation or performance in school educational institutions, as well as in societies and institutes, with emphasis on lectures, conferences, speeches, congresses and ruralist weeks. In fact, Sud Mennucci's speeches, given on some of these occasions, were published as books and/or articles in periodicals, such as, for example, in the *Revista do Professor*, published by the Centro do Professorado Paulista. The ruralization of education influenced educational institutions, such as the Rural Normal Schools — a topic dear to the ruralists — and the Typical Rural Schools (SOUZA; MORAES, 2015). Other expressions of this movement were the agricultural clubs adopted in several primary schools in different states of the country, with the purpose of forging a ruralist mentality in children. It is also worth mentioning the relevance of some associations, such as the Society of Friends of Alberto Torres, the Luiz Pereira Barreto Society, and the National Institute of Studies and Research (Inep)" (MORAES, SOUZA-CHALOPA: 2022, p. 69).

An important achievement of *the Movement* were the sections of the 1934 Constitution that guaranteed for the first time rural education as a right, as well as a specific budget. It also guaranteed, in line with the government's discourse at the time, manual rural work as an element of eugenics, control, and social prophylaxis, as it was said at the time. The 1937 Constitution perpetuated this notion (MORAES, SOUZA-CHALOPA: 2022, p. 71). In the case of Paraíba, we would like to further develop the work of Sizenando Costa and the example of the *Model Rural Schools*.

Continuing the hypothesis raised above, we want to understand the performance of Sizenando Costa. We are still beginning to explore the paths of rural education in Paraíba in these years and his name appears a few times in the little bibliography that exists on the subject. What do we know about him? First director of Pindobal, we have already mentioned. Author of the book *Rural Education*, which seems to be part of his campaign for the professionalization of rural education that he had been advocating since the 1930s. Unfortunately, at this stage we have not been able to deepen the reading



and analysis of this work. It will be part of the unfolding of this work. Proponent and defender of the Model Rural Schools that would be transformed into law in 1938, but which only a few years later began to get off the ground. During this period, we know that Sizenando, in some lectures, charged the governments of the intervenors Argemiro de Figueiredo and Ruy Carneiro with the implementation of the Law. He was Director of Primary Education in the State. When we talk about rural education, we are always talking about what was understood at the time as primary education. For his defense of an education that is closer to the reality of the students, we can include him as a defender of the New School movement. This needs to be further researched. The following is a quote that contains Sizenando's speech in which he makes clear the school he intends to attend and how it would be an instrument of regenerating nationalism through the valorization of work, very close to what was defended by the federal government at the time:

"The State and society are in need of the school directing its action more relatively, more coherent with the needs of life, processing everything in accordance with the moral interests of the environment in which it operates. The school of letters only, hieratic, dogmatic; school, something of a cloister, something of a barracks, must give way to another that is perhaps less wordy, less bookish and more dynamic, more appropriate to the environment and to the supreme collective needs (...) It is urgent and absolutely necessary to ensure that the school becomes, as a whole, a laboratory where regional activities that ensure the maintenance of the people and institutions are developed, accentuated and perfected. Guided in this way, the school is better accommodated to the collective interests and will prepare a nationality in correspondence with the interests of the people and the State, creating a new mentality with a very noble concept of work and capable of immediately influencing all the manifestations of life, from the humble home of our rural worker" (Id. Ibid: p.15). (PINHEIRO, p. 7).

In another part of his speech, more related to the rural issue, one can perceive several recurrent images of Brazilian ruralism at the time. That is why we advocate for its inclusion as part of this national and international movement called *Ruralization of Education*:

"rural activities should be developed largely in the school, and that the land of Brazil should undergo a reforming influence in order to make our housewife more apt, more efficient, less dispersive, less disinterested in economic questions, and parallel to this work, we should also value man, offering him the means to produce abundantly, to settle on the soil, stimulating a deep love for its generous glebe, an udder source of wealth and happiness" (PINHEIRO, p. 4-5).

Now let's talk about the Model Rural Schools, a project defended by Sizenando. One of the biggest problems faced by Education in Paraíba since the Empire was the difficulty of teachers in the countryside. This problem is shared by practically all states. As soon as a teacher could, he tried to move to the larger cities of Brejo – Campina Grande, Areia – or to the capital, João Pessoa. The conditions of life not only expel the worker from the field, but expel everyone. The idea of the Model School aimed to solve this issue by defending, in its model, the existence of a teacher's house attached to the school and to guarantee some career advantages for those who remained in the countryside. When these schools really started to get off the ground in the late 1940s, we know that this problem



persisted. Another issue that these schools aimed to improve was the teaching methods that included content more related to agricultural techniques. This, in fact, already came from other older experiences, from the Farms and Farms Schools that functioned as places of practical classes for the students of regular primary education, already mentioned above when we talk about the experience of São Rafael.

This issue is also part of a ruralist campaign to expand and improve agrarian technology in Brazil as an alternative to the so-called *Agriculture Crisis*. From the end of World War II, with the rapprochement between Brazil and the USA, several agreements and institutions were created for the implementation of these rural education policies. It is an important moment in this history, as it established once and for all rural education focused on rural work, agrarian development and no longer as a control of rural populations in larger cities (MENDONÇA: 2010) (MORAES, SOUZA-CHALOPA: 2022) (PINHEIRO). We are not going to delve into this period – the 1950s – because it escapes our time frame, but it is the culminating and defining moment of the Ruralization of Education. I bring some quotes from the text *The Era of Rural Primary Schools in Paraíba* to delve deeper into these issues. First, what the author sees as contradictions and problems since the 1938 Law:

"The aforementioned decree, however, presents contradictions in relation to the public to which the school in question was intended and the reasons presented therein for its implementation. While the justification contained in the decree considered that rural education would improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of the countryside, settling them in their land and thus avoiding the exodus to the large urban centers, the second article established that the school was responsible for training an emergency teacher and "providing special rural education to students in the poor neighborhoods of the city" (emphasis added), who had passed the subjects included in the 3rd year of primary education (Id., Ibid., p. 24). It is clear, therefore, that the model rural school, in fact, did not have the purpose of "settling" men/women in the countryside, although it was up to them to train teachers, who would probably be sent to work in the countryside or in cities in the interior. In fact, one of the greatest difficulties faced by public education managers in Paraíba was to settle teachers in the interior of the state – mainly in the sertaneja region – in the interior of the state. Many of them, upon reaching a better level of qualification, often requested transfer to larger cities in the Agreste or Brejo region (Campina Grande, Areia, etc.) and, mainly, to the capital, João Pessoa" (PINHEIRO, p. 5-6).

The schools, as I said above, would function as training camps where teachers from neighboring localities could train more quickly. The decree-law also obliged the municipalities where the schools would be installed to open farm-schools, "that is: all those that, "in addition to the teaching of letters in the official program, [ministered] practically, on land donated by the City Hall or by a private individual, the teaching of horticulture, gardening, forestry, pomiculture, pig farming, rabbit farming, beekeeping, sericulture and cooking" (PINHEIRO, P. 7).

Throughout the 1940s, the number of schools in this model grew, reaching 28 in 1948, according to this study. Both this model and any other example from the Estado Novo faced a serious institutional problem that would shape its destinies: the intra-state dispute between the Ministries of Health and Education and the Ministry of Agriculture. Since the First Republic, the initiatives of rural



education were the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, which followed both a bias of training the worker and of direct encouragement of agriculture through the dissemination of agrarian knowledge. Throughout the 1930s, with the growth of the New School movement and its coming to power in the Vargas Ministry of Education, a new bias began to be thought of for all primary education in the country, which included rural education, which is the issue of ending illiteracy. Divergent interests, different objectives converged in the experiences of Rural Schools from the 1930s onwards. Often the same school was run by the two ministries, often one ministry disputing with the other over questions of methods. (MENDONÇA: 2010) (MENDONÇA: 2000). Our research needed to go deeper to understand this national conflict and its particularities in Paraíba. How has it really affected schools in Paraíba? We don't know yet.

Having mentioned the issue of illiteracy above, we would now like to dwell on it. Perhaps the biggest problem in our education throughout the twentieth century directly affects rural education models, as campaigns in favor of literacy focus on primary school. In the excerpt below we bring an excerpt from an article from our source addressing an aspect that will always appear: the "scourge" of illiteracy, something that shames the country by appealing to the nationalist discourse so much to the taste of the time:

"A Berlin magazine has just published a sensational statistic. Sensational and, above all, depressing for Brazil. By the data exposed to the curiosity of its thousands of readers, we occupy the second place among the countries that vote horror to education. Out of 100 men, we have 70 who can't read. [...] In order to force at least a reduction in the frightening percentage of illiterate people that we have, it is, first of all, indispensable that we facilitate the study of poverty, that the government turns to the whole of it, to concentrate on the solution of the problem that all educated men consider the greatest in Brazil. [...]" (A Strategy That Inferiorizes Us, April 7, 1933, Report from the U.B.I. to The Union). (The Union: 1933, p. 8).

In our source there are mentions of social organizations formed to combat this issue. In addition, the involvement of existing associations on the same topic.

"We are asked to publish the following: "In view of the urgent need to combat illiteracy, which is one of the greatest moral scourges in Brazil, some spirits dedicated to the most noble cause of education wish to gather elements that are in solidarity in this patriotic attempt and develop a completely practical action, together with the popular masses, in order to encourage the learning of the first letters, Starting with this capital. [...] If the seed succeeds in germinating, as everything predicts, the first meetings and démarches necessary for the organization of a sodalitiium of love and sacrifice for the literacy of a large number of children and adults living in the metropolis of a state such as ours, where the apostolate of popular instruction should already be more intense and more intelligent. [...]" (Popular Instruction League, Feb. 10, 1933) (The Union: 1933, p. 5)

It can be seen that it was not only organizations and clubs that were afflicted with the "scourge" of illiteracy, but also that in the general population there was a growing awareness that education was the key to the progress and development of the country, as reported by the writer Narciso Berlese, in



which he published an article portraying the urgency of governmental and collective actions to reverse this situation.

"The national issue that deserves the greatest affection and our greatest attention is literacy in Brazil. Currently, there is no cultured and common-sense Brazilian who does not understand it and knows that illiteracy is the maximum problem of our nationality. [...] All the governments of our country, therefore, like every Brazilian citizen, should commit themselves to the immediate, non-transferable solution of this great problem [...] Let us save Brazil from the enormous moral damage that is the thirty million illiterate people in a country of forty million inhabitants. 75% illiterate is a shame that belittles and slaughters us. Only 25% of our population can read. [...] To eliminate collective ignorance is to fortify the power of nationality. Brazil's prosperity depends fundamentally on the extinction of illiteracy, on national education, on the awakening of the conscious energies of our people." (Fight against Illiteracy, 25 Oct. 1933) (The Union: 1933, p. 8).

Vocational and rural education are thus presented as a way to eradicate illiteracy. However, many people had a vision that such education could not only be a simple solution to the scourge of illiteracy, but also a powerful and effective tool for the transformation of society, mainly directed to the less favored classes, as stated by M. Florentino da Silva in his message to Monsignor Pedro Anísio, talking about a normal education project.

"[...] When I refer to professional education, I do not have my eyes turned to the sea, to France or to North America, points of maximum attraction for our pedagogues, but rather to our poor neighborhoods, to the hinterland, and I do not want to make Paraíba an industrial land, in the sense of a land of large industries, but a homeland of industrious people. capable of mitigating and compensating with his work the evils caused by the uncertainty of time, the evil effects of a hostile nature. [...]" (Normal Schools, March 3, 1934) (The Union: 1934, p. 3)

The interesting thing about this excerpt is that in the same block in which professional education is gradually turning to the issue of industry, there are projects and representations in which it is thought of in other ways. And this is where the issue of rural education comes in. In states where the economy is predominantly rural – such as Paraíba – we are still far from industrialization. Education is more important to think about the rural world and everything that surrounds it.

In the political sphere, the deputies made incisive speeches about professional education, emphasizing how crucial this education was to solve social problems. Thus, the educational challenge needed to be overcome for the country's ascension, as elucidated by state deputy Heretiano Zenaide in his speech at the March 31, 1934 session.

"[...] Illiteracy is a scourge that shames us in the South American scenario, where we are, in this regard, behind the other contemporary nations in political majority. If we want to get out of this situation which is so humiliating to us, we must now face the problem with the necessary energy, fixing in a positive way the powers of the Union, the States and the municipalities, making them capable of dealing with the great problem of literacy and further education in a profitable and efficient way. [...]" (The Problem of Education in the Constituent Assembly - The Speech of Deputy Heretiano Zenaide, in the March 31 session, studying the important subject, April 14, 1934) (The Union: 1934, p. 1)



Zenaide proposes a structured approach, calling for a clear definition of responsibilities for the Union, States and municipalities. His proposal suggests responsible decentralization, in which each level of government plays a specific role in building a comprehensive education system. This whole discussion about illiteracy became important here in this text, because the sources show a concern of various social groups with this issue. We know that it was not resolved on that court or afterwards. It remains a social and educational problem. This is a problem that particularly afflicts rural peoples.

Synthesizing our work. It is part of a project that began this year, but needs developments to advance its problem. We hope to be able to do so. We first show a short history of vocational education up to the end of the 1930s. Soon after, developing examples of rural education in Paraíba, we draw attention to a dialectic between two models: one aimed at controlling populations with unfavorable social conditions and the other, also at control, but focused on work. The first, the oldest, dates to the nineteenth century, with the idea of isolated schools. The second is more linked to the nationalist context of the Vargas period and associated with Labour. One does not replace the other completely, they coexist, converge, and diverge. Then we go a little into the trajectory of Sizenando Costa, an important defender in rural education in our time frame. It is necessary to delve deeper into this trajectory, to place it in relation to others. Finally, we draw attention in our source to the issue of illiteracy because we consider it a burning issue at the time and today.



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