The pedagogical significance of the Landless Movement:
The formation of historical subjects

By Sandra Luciana Dalmagro

Member of the MST Education Branch; Professor in the Faculty of Education, Universidad Federal de Santa Catarina.

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Translated by Katherine Brasch and Daniel Schugurensky

Abstract

This article explores some aspects of the struggle carried out by one of the most important popular social movements in Brazil today, the Movement of Landless Workers (Movimento Sem Terra, or MST). The first part outlines this struggle, focusing on its pedagogical dimension and significance. Then, it describes several educational initiatives developed by the Movement, and the pedagogical assumptions behind them. This will show that the MST's educational project supports its project of social transformation. As such, in its role as educator, the MST seeks—not only through the mediation of the school, but also through the struggle undertaken by the Movement itself and by the dynamic created within—the active participation of the individual in the construction of history.

Key words
Landless Workers Movement; Pedagogy of the MST; Social transformation.

Introduction

Social Movements are growing in Brazil and around the world, developing important spaces of humanization and struggle for dignified living conditions. In the countries of the so-called “Third World”, characterized by high rates of poverty, exploitation of workers, social exclusion, and concentration of wealth and power in a minority, these movements are class-related, bringing together millions of people in search of survival and better life conditions. In this process, the popular social movements play an effective educational role. In the Brazilian political culture, it is possible to observe the impact of colonialism, 'coronelism', paternalism and repression, all of which function as great barriers to popular participation. Therefore, the
social movements become fertile spaces of politicization, social participation and popular empowerment\(^1\) as they create individuals.

In the history of struggle for land in Brazil, a country with one of the highest rates of concentrated land ownership in the world, there have been many separate movements intended to democratize access to land. With the founding of the Movement of Landless Workers (MST) this struggle has become more radical and has re-ignited the debate surrounding Agrarian Reform and a just nation. The MST presents itself as an important movement in the struggle for land, articulating the defense of citizenship, of sovereignty, of human values, of popular participation, of ecology, of education, of health, and of gender equality, combining them all in a struggle for a new society.

Founded in 1984, the MST has organized in practically all of the national territory and, over the past 20 years, the struggle for land has enabled around 300,000 families to settle\(^2\) on more than 16 million hectares. In its trajectory, the MST has managed to consolidate itself as a strongly organized movement, gaining important political space, support and popular sympathy in Brazilian society. The MST as an organization has a double dynamic: on the one hand, it creates the living and working conditions of the families that are settled and camped; on the other, it formulates policies and strategies on a variety of areas including agricultural production, education and health.

This text seeks to provide a brief analysis of certain aspects of the education and the pedagogical character of the MST, within the context of the struggle undertaken in its trajectory. Following Caldart (2000), we argue that it is in the soul of the actual struggle undertaken by the Movement that we must analyze its pedagogical dimension and significance. The MST is the educator of

\(^1\) The term here indicates a process through which the people attain power through social struggles.

\(^2\) The occupation of large estates is the principle form of struggle of the MST. From this occupation extends the camps/encampments, when the ownership of the land is disputed. These have, as an identifying mark, black canvas tents that indicate the temporary nature of the particular situation – that can remain/last some years, once the families still can’t plant and organize the space in an improvised format during the struggle for the dispossession of the area. The settlements are characterized by the defined ownership of the land by the families that were camped there, from which they extracted their subsistence, organized a salary, the work and all aspects of their lives.
the landless that calls them to action, creating historical subjects. There is also a specific concern within the movement for political and technical education that is directed at our specific interests. In this respect, this social movement develops a conception and an educational practice that is innovative and profoundly connected to its own dynamic and objectives.

1) The struggle of the Landless Movement

The political involvement in Brazil during the centuries of Portuguese colonization and the later politics of the republican governments, until those of the “modern democracy”, produced a high concentration of wealth and a large contingent excluded from the land: the landless. This created the conditions under which emerged diverse movements and disenchanted conflicts by the poor people in the countryside over the course of 500 years of the country’s history. All of these movements, however, were strongly repressed and, for diverse reasons, such as their nature and size, they did not result in unleashing a land distribution that would alter the basic Brazilian structure. Therefore, an economic and social problem that has existed for more than 200 years that reappeared a few decades ago in all of its complexity, was never, at any prior time, given political attention in order to find a solution. It is interesting to observe in Brazilian history that the passage from a predominantly agriculturally-based economy to an industrial one occurred without major conflicts. This is especially true in the metamorphosis that transformed the landowners to the owners of industry, that is, it was a change in the economic base that did not alter the dominant elite. The industrial and financial capital, in Brazil, is linked to the large estates. In a broad sense, this also explains why the country did not introduce an Agrarian Reform, as many other capitalist nations did during their period of industrialization.

Therefore, the issues of land concentration continued and its consequences for the rural population, instead of being diminished with the passing of years or decades, acquired

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3 We can cite the conflicts of indigenous lands; the organization of the blacks in quilombos; the Canudo movements; Contestado; The Ligas Camponesas, along with various other more localized and less known.

4 The last Agropecuary Census completed by IBGE (1995/96), indicates that Brazil has more than 4.5 million landless families. The Gine index – which measures the concentration of land – is 0.856, considered very high and has maintained its stability for 20 years. This signifies that the structure of land ownership in Brazil has not been altered in all of this period. The analysis of data during the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso demonstrated the continuation of land concentration. In the last 10 years, 21.2% of small productive units (less than 20 hectares) disappeared. In absolute numbers, this signifies the disappearance of 705 000 small agricultural properties (Christoffoli, 2000).
new dimensions and reappeared with greater force. Resulting from this historical process was the development of the Landless Movement, a realization of the Brazilian agrarian question and the political conscience acquired by the poor in the countryside. For many it would be unimaginable for a movement of peasants to take on the proportions that the MST did, considered by many studies to be the largest movement to confront capital in Brazil and Latin America. This is the sense of the MST struggle that we wish to capture, that is, its direction against capital and the concentration of land, and not simply a confrontation against the large estates. The Agrarian Reform defended by MST is not done through the inclusion of the landless in the capitalist society, but through the actual edification of a society without exploitation and social inequality.

Analyzing the trajectory of the Landless Movement, it is possible to identify its birth with a class character, of struggle against capital, building towards a “new” society, but in the genesis of MST these struggles did not take a central role as many assume. To explain them, it is necessary to amplify the analytical focus, using the Brazilian economic model as a base. Therefore, it becomes evident that in recent years the direction of the national economy is lead by big international capital interests and the imposition of an agrarian model that invalidates small production. Add to this the incompatibility to achieve Agrarian Reform with the patron’s adoption of (under)development. In this form, the focus of struggle becomes directed to the economic and agricultural model and its implications in the greater society. The MST perceives that the lack of interest by the Brazilian elite in Agrarian Reform, and the negation of basic rights of the landless stems from a project that not only involves the elite. It is also a project directed by international organizations to the service of major international capital that leads to the concentration of wealth (of all types) in a form never seen before.\(^5\)

\(^5\) To have an idea of the actual concentration of revenue, compare the fortune of the richest 225 people in the world (close to 1 trillion dollars), with the revenue of the 47% poorest of the world population (2.5 billion people) (Sader, 2000). According to this author, “to have an idea of this wealth concentrated in the hands of such few people, it is good to compare them with the needs of the world at the turn of the century. The estimated necessities to guarantee and maintain universal access to basic learning, the basic attention to health for all, the attention to reproductive health for all women, food sufficient for all and clean water and sanitation for all is close to 44 billion dollars a year. That is, close to 4% of the combined wealth of the 225 richest people in the world” (Sader, 2000: 82).
From this general description it is clear that the Agrarian Reform can only be attained through a different political model and economy. In the neoliberal model, the Agrarian Reform is not necessary. As such, the struggle of the MST, without losing the character of the struggle for the land and against the large estate, is directed centrally to defeat the neo-liberal model and to construct a “popular project for Brazil”. The Movement positions itself in national politics as well in relation to the aspects not strictly pertaining to agriculture. It takes a stand against privatization, solidifying itself in an active form with the struggle of other workers, taking positions in line with its project, acting in conjunction with other entities and organizations that are interested in a discussion about, and formation of, a new model of national development. This model must have at its base the distribution of land and wealth, the recuperation of the national sovereignty, the control over the banks and financial capital and the reorganization of industrial and agricultural production. The state must be placed in the service of the population, resulting in a popular democracy. The communication, the education, the health and the culture must be humanized, actualized and democratized. These, among others, would be the necessary pillars to construct a just and sustainable model (Consulta Popular, Cartilha n. 11, 2001).

The struggle to replace capital production seeks the construction of another society. It is not enough to negate capital; it is also necessary to affirm other parameters of social organization in its place. This challenge is addressed by the MST through pedagogical efforts for consciousness raising. The struggle for the land does not separate the landless of the organization from those who are settled because they all continue as part of the movement. This creates a new demand along side the struggle for land. It is necessary

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6 For Fernandes (2000), the incorporation of the settled in the struggle of the MST stems from the actual logic of the development of the Movement. “The conquest for the land is not the end of the struggle, it is always a part of the party. The landless will be learning along the path that those who only struggle for the land have in the land, its end. To lose the entailment with the organization of the workers is to fall into isolation. It is exactly the organization that opens the path for the advancement of the struggle. Only by having a strong movement, the landless will transform the struggle for land in a struggle for agrarian reform” (:85).
to organize the production, commercialization, housing, school, health, human relations and the overall life in the settlements. This raises two issues. The first is that many of these conditions are not available in rural settings in a decent form, especially for the poor population. The second issue is the way the MST orients the communal life in the settlements, or in other words, the way the landless do not claim just any form of organization upon arrival on the land, but bring a desire to organize their life in a new way. In the economic front, the MST seeks to consolidate an ecologically sound production, with the advantage of natural resources, privileging popular markets and ensuring the good quality of the products. In respect to education, the concrete necessities of the settlers and the population in the countryside must be taken into consideration along with the scientific advances and the complexity of human life. It is also necessary to develop a differentiated health project, nurture increased female participation, and promote a greater exchange between people who live in rural settings, avoiding the typical isolation of those who live in the countryside. Finally, life in the encampments is organized in a way that gives potential to human capacity and equal relations between man and nature. It seeks to elevate the level of social consciousness of the settlers, constructing alternatives of acquaintanceship between human beings and new parameters of development for the rural setting.

In order to organize the life of the families, the MST created sectors: education, health, production, gender relations, political development, communication, among others. According to Caldart, it is after acquiring the land that the Landless identity emerges. Even with the land (or also because of it), the settlers continue to identify themselves as Landless. They do not consider themselves individuals who have no land, but who, in the clash for it, make themselves historical subjects, acquire identity in the struggle, revisit the ethical question and, with a perspective of the future, continue the march.

*Landless is an identity that, rooted in its own cultural traditions of land worker, recreated their identity because of the link with a social struggle, as a class, and as a project of the future (Caldart, 2000:25).*

*... to be Landless in Brazil today, is more than a social condition to be overcome (to not have land); it is an identity constructed through the historical*
accumulation of many social struggles, it is an identity to be cultivated and left as a legacy (idem:258)

The articulation of these dimensions of MST’s struggle, in other words the struggle for the land, for Agrarian Reform, for the overtaking of capitalism is allied with the concrete necessity to organize the life of millions of families in the settlements. This indicates the expansion of the aspects that MST is linked to and the complexity of the implications of its struggle. The Agrarian Reform Program of the Movement reflects this dynamic. Here we will trace some of its fundamental pillars:

- modify the structure of land ownership;
- to subordinate the ownership of land to people’s needs;
- to guarantee food security and the elimination of hunger;
- to develop fair policies of agricultural prices, credit and security;
- to industrialize the rural areas of the country, creating jobs and promoting regional development;
- to develop a self-sustaining agricultural model;
- to develop the rural setting in a way that guarantees a dignified life, education, culture and leisure for all;
- to develop a public policy of preservation and control of water;
- to produce healthy food;
- to struggle against genetically modified products as well as the patenting and the commodification of living things;
- to limit the size of agricultural and agropecuary ownership and redistribute large estates;
- to legalize and outline indigenous lands and those of rural workers;
- to eliminate colonial policies; and
- to address the crimes committed against the rural workers in land conflicts;

(MST, Normas Gerais do MST, 2001).

In summary, we can say that the struggle for the land is what motivates the landless. But the experience of this organized collective, the MST, identifies that land distribution alone will not solve the problems of poor peasants. It is necessary to achieve wide Agrarian Reform. The election of Lula as President of the Republic was a clear signal that the Brazilian population is anxious for profound changes in the direction of the country. This created a favourable atmosphere for achieving Agrarian Reform for elaborating a meaningful National Development Plan, which focuses on important advancements in this area. Nevertheless, as we have already mentioned, the realization of an effective Agrarian Reform could provoke strong ruptures in the power structure of the country and in the overall economy. Therefore, the government has encountered much resistance to this solidification. For now, the implementation of reform, articulated with a reduction in social inequality and the return to national sovereignty, is the fundamental condition that the Lula government associates with the longing of the people that elected it.

2) The educational significance of the MST
We understand education, in its general and broadest sense, as the process to form human beings, the mediations through which people learn to live in a specific society, incorporating their rules but also modifying them. It is a process through which people learn to conform as well as to transform. “The supreme ideal of the education process as a whole is to make the individual a member of the society” (Figueira, 1985: 15). Therefore, there is for each period in history “…that which is most appropriate to be learned and to be taught. A specific period doesn’t teach just anything, just any body of knowledge. It teaches that which it can and should teach” (Figueira, 1985: 13). As a result, the teachings emerge “…as real relations of individuals”. Each historic period must form the human subjects necessary for its time. Capitalism is interested in people learning to live under specific conditions: bourgeois social relations.

As always, human relations, and the education that is part of them, are neither homogeneous nor impossible to be changed. Understood as a set of social relations, education is a space of policy dispute between distinct classes that make up a specific society. It is a space of conflict of diverse interests and antagonisms: a maintenance of order or its transformation to create a new society and new social relations. The human development occurs within this clash between distinct forces. The struggle between classes, their diverse interests, and these conflicts alter society, modifying ways of life. Human beings need to adapt themselves to the new forms that rise, that is, the forms that are collectively created. They need to learn to live in this “new” way. In this manner, education fundamentally develops from change, contradictions, and clashes and not just from stable and safe situations, or that which is conceived by the status quo as “correct” or perfect. The actual act to educate presupposes change, as well as incorporation of new elements and actions.

Today, the Landless Movement is an important movement in the confrontation of capitalism and the construction of new forms of organization and social relations. It is a space where new relations between people are being constructed and practiced and therefore, where a process of education/human formation is becoming developed in the path against capital, due to this collision.

The MST focuses its actions on social transformation: the overtaking of bourgeois society and the construction of socialism. The struggle for land is characteristic of the MST, for agrarian reform and against capital. Because of this, “to be Landless is not to accept being “squeezed”7, it is to be alert and constantly in the struggle. The actions and the education stemming from participation in the MST are oriented towards social transformation, where subjects learn while being active participants of their histories.8 This educational process is practiced in the present and not something that only drives towards the future. The survival of new values—of new bases in human relations—are

7 “ser Sem Terra é não aceitar ser esmagado”. This speaks of a Landless (person), reflecting on the educational role of the MST, November, 2001.

8 The idea of the MST is to construct itself as education, that is, that it possesses a pedagogy and original development (Caldart, 2000).
already being constructed every day in the agreements and encampments, in the cooperatives\(^9\) organized by the MST. The *Landless collectivity* brings new relations to life, albeit still in the form of incipient lessons, turbulence and conflict. The Movement forges human relations that are different from the bourgeois ones. Not only does it want to construct new men and women, but form them with humanist and socialist values in the everyday, in their daily relations. For the MST, the society of the future must begin to be constructed immediately.

The MST’s education principles, which refer more directly to the schools, to the development courses and meetings, are explicit in stating that the main purpose of education is social transformation. Education in the MST is

…a pedagogical process that assumes as its politics, or in other words that organically links itself with the social processes that seek the actual transformation of society, and the immediate construction of a new social order, whose principle pillars are social justice, democratic radicalism and the humanist and socialist values (MST, *Caderno de Educaçao* n. 8, 1997: 6).

It is an educational proposal with a clear class orientation, seeking the critical formation of workers in relation to a different society. It is about a formation around the capacity of the organization’s members and to the construction of a popular national project. In order to strengthen class consciousness, the educational project foresees that everyone should have access to education and learning at many levels, to become technically and politically capable.

As a *pedagogical subject* or educational agent of the landless, the MST “acts intentionally in the process of development of the people that make up the MST” (Caldart, 2000: 199). This pedagogical intention is in “character of the MST” and expresses itself in its “objectives, principles, values, and ways of being”. From this perspective, the Landless educate themselves while they are *being* the MST. In other words, they are part of a collective that at the same time it is being formed by them, therefore they are also the builders. Having this internal dynamic, a *movement* inside the Movement, which is the identity and the *Landless collectivity*, the MST characterizes itself as the educational subject at the same time that this dynamic characterizes the Movement’s way of being.

Caldart outlines five “educational dimensions” that make up the Movement’s way of being, contributing to the formation of the landless: Pedagogy of Social Struggle,
Pedagogy of Collective Organization; Pedagogy of Land, Work and Production; Pedagogy of Culture; and Pedagogy of History. These dimensions constitute the educational content used by the MST uses in its everyday life pedagogical work. They are ingredients that mark a way of being for the Movement. Some of these elements are defined by the very identity of the movement (e.g. the social struggle), while others appear more strongly with its maturity (e.g. its preoccupation with the cultural dimension and the cultivation of history). It is in the existence of their organization that the landless people perceive the educational potential of the actions in which they are involved. It is through them that they are educated, that they put them in motion, that they become more participatory individuals, that they humanize themselves. This self-consciousness permits the movement to give more attention to the practices that create and develop agency, and intentionally take care of the processes that are being developed implicitly. It is possible that, in identifying itself as the educating subject, it has the necessary pedagogical care with the beings that it captivates, with the actions that create it. At the same time, it is necessary to make a permanent practice of auto-criticism permanent, because “the educator must be educated.”

Education in the MST takes a participatory form, active and not passive to the landless individual. This means that members educate themselves through their own actions within the Landless collective: struggling, living together, studying, producing, organizing themselves. The MST can only become the educator if the landless participate, act, and place themselves within the movement. It is a student who is predisposed to study. On the other side, this action also forms its own educator, the MST. For this educational proposal, the MST draws in Paulo Freire as a fundamental pedagogical reference. His pedagogical reflections greatly influence the Movement’s educational approach.

Reflecting on its educational mission, the MST charges itself with the responsibility to “…help landless families to interrupt the process of dehumanization or of human degradation that were experiencing throughout their lives”, “…assuming the Landless identity” and the values and way of being of those within the social struggle (MST, Boletim de Educaçao n. 8, 2001: 211). For the MST, to stop the process of human degradation stemming from capitalism is to create a new social dynamic. The “new” values and the way of being should be cohesive with this social form that seeks to construct it. The base of the MST’s educational process that we can consider as a great work/legacy for humanity, is the ransom/redemption of human dignity, of auto-esteem and of the recuperation of that which is characterized as a species/variety/type: the capacity to think, to be emotional, to act conscientiously and, in doing so, to make history. The order of capital, to be perpetuated, negates/impedes the development of the fundamental characteristics of humanity.


For the MST it is fundamental that we recuperate the humanism, as well as its continued and broad development. For this, it is vital to transform the social structures.

*The MST educates for life, educates in the sense of liberty, in the sense of exercising citizenship, of the people to be historical subjects and not objects, educates in the sense of cooperation, of solidarity, of senses of justice, for these values that point towards a new type of society, new forms of social living together. It educates so that one day the people assume command of this country, educate for this as well. The majority that is the people, the workers, the exploited, one day will be in command of the country* (Wilson Santim—*Liderança do MST*).12

This desired future will only be realized if the people begin to construct it now. The world does as we do. The landless educate themselves because they want to be educated and, as such, already begin to be. Human history is not predetermined, it is vital to act conscientiously. The human being is the fruit of history to the same extent that it was constructed. Changing the world in this way stops being impossible, unnatural, or inexplicable, and begins stemming from human creations. To relocate the human being as a conscious historical subject is the basis of MST actions. It is the central meaning of the actions of the Movement.

### 3) The Pedagogy of the Landless Movement and School

The preoccupation of the MST with school does not stem from artificial or abstract notions. It comes from within the dynamic of the movement, from the concrete conditions in which it is developed within the struggle for land. In other words, the form of struggle developed by the MST—the occupation of land—occurs with the participation of the entire family. For the settlers whether women, men, children, elderly, youth… All are participants in the struggle for land. Therefore, a collection of their own demands for human life go with these settlers, one of which is the schooling of the children. With the passing of time and the accumulation of experience, school continues to be seen as an important space for the youth and adults as well since exclusion from the land brings with it low levels of schooling or illiteracy for most of the settled people.

But it is not just any schooling that is important to the MST. It does not reproduce a school model that for many members was a space of exclusion, that is, the “education” of immobility, conformity and submission. It is necessary to reform school as an important instrument that rebuilds the dignity of the landless people. This is accomplished through the deep involvement of the settlers, connected to the reality of the rural setting, ransoming human capacities suffocated in the oppressed people. This all contributes to the moment when they raise their heads and can envision the future, discovering themselves as the builders of tomorrow.

12 Interview by Dalmagro (2002).
If the elite sees the school as a space of oppression, of maintaining order and of diminishing human beings, the Landless Movement sees this as a space for the reconstruction of life, an instrument in the formation of individuals. This is the role of the school that MST promotes. The more a school can contribute to the landless people, the more it can be open to the Movement, committed as social subjects that create/are part of it (Caldart, 2000).

For this, the MST is involved in a struggle for the creation of public schools in the settlements and encampments, but without renouncing the pedagogy and methodology developed in the meaning of the Movement. Due to the educational dispute at the various levels and modalities, the MST has used public pressure for the creation of schools and public policies for the education of the countryside. Stemming from this struggle, an educational “network” has grown within the Movement, one that presents data demonstrating relative oscillation in virtues of the discontinuous educational policies of the State and of the pressure created by the struggles and demands of the MST. These figures\(^\text{13}\) referring to 2003 show that there are 1,500 schools with more than 4,500 educators offering basic education in settlement areas. There are 160,000 students calculated to be in these schools, with half located within or near the settlements. In the area of youth and adult education, more than 1,800 teachers in schools are responsible for the literacy of approximately 28,000 settlers. The Movement also has been involved in the training of educators in partnership with universities. Close to 600 educators are taking these courses. There are also a significant number of students in other technical courses at both initial and advanced levels, and on the education of infants from 0 to 6 years. Additionally, there are courses and non-formal seminars about political thought, although this usually takes place through informal sessions.

As indicated earlier, the creation of schools is not the only educational struggle of the MST. Schooled education must be “organically linked” to the social movement, connected to its principles, struggles and trajectory. It must be part and instrument of the movement that it is linked to, reflecting its dynamic in the pedagogical process. It must break through the concrete problems, whose response must be achieved with its historical time, contemplating the diverse knowledge and cultures produced by humanity. For this, it fractures reality, it is “open to the world”. It relates the immediate with history, the particular with the general. It is open to the changes and the provocation, breaking away from reality. School must help to construct “human and socialist values”, forming a complete human being against the fragmentation that people experience under a capitalist order. Contrary to the logic of the bourgeoisie, the educational project of the MST offers to develop the full potential of other human dimensions besides the capacity to work, particularly the fundamental capacity to think and act as autonomous historical subjects. (MST, Caderno de Educação n. 8, 1997).

For this, the MST continues to promote a broader concept of school and the role attributed to it. The learning of science, first (and many times, exclusive) characteristic of traditional school, is important, but is not the only function. The MST understands

\(^{13}\) This data was collected by the National Association of Cooperative Agriculture and the Educational Sector of the Landless Movement, 2003.
that the school needs to address various dimensions of the human being, and that these dimensions, in permanent interaction, are mutually reinforcing. As such, the interpersonal relations, play, work, technical training, science, spirituality, art, and culture, must be constantly present in the school. Human life must be present in the institutional educational space, privileged for its specific role to reflect on human-constructed culture and to systematize it. With this, if it is correct that “the world” needs to go to school, school cannot only reproduce the world. It is the role of the school to reflect on the diverse knowledge accumulated. However, an effective reflection should also translate itself into action. To reflect upon the world must be complemented with the capacity and the inclination to intervene in it and to modify it. In this way, the school is a privileged space for the realization of praxis.

Last but not least, it is important to consider a key aspect in the schooling experience of the MST: the articulation of individuals involved in its construction. Far from being an idealized form and closed organization, the participation in the “community schooling” is a consequence of this way of seeing school and in itself making itself profoundly educational. The MST understands that community/settlement, educators and educated must be involved in the gathering of political processes, pedagogies and management of the educational institution. The political decisions, the educational content, the organization of the school, the creation of the process, among others, cannot be individual decisions made by a small group with concentrated power. Those decisions need to be developed collectively, grounded in the knowledge of reality, in accumulated knowledge, in the commitment with our social, political and educational conceptions. The main objective is that the whole community becomes involved in the school and, as a result, continues to gather knowledge and interests. The specific functions of the school, particularly in relation to the responsibilities of educators and students, are not left unconsidered, but they take on a new dimension.

In this way, in the same way that community ‘enters’ into the school and owns it, the school reaches into community processes and actively engages with them. The school needs to give back to the community what it took from it, but in an elaborated and organized way. The MST calls this “community-school-community relation”. This model of school demands an interdisciplinary approach and not fragmentation; the reflection and not only a fixation; the search for truth and not impositions; educators and not teachers. It needs to give sense and direction between them to the diverse spaces of the school. It must, finally, create a positive “educational environment”. If the educational process is integrated, the educator cannot longer work in isolation. The dimension of collectivity must be present between the educators, who should seek to harmonize the collective of the educational schooling process. In turn, the students are not understood as purely the recipients of messages in this process. They are also builders and agents and must participate and help in the decisions of the diverse aspects of school life.

For this to happen, community, students and educators must have spaces of self-organization and autonomous development at the same time as which they collectively construct the school. The MST considers that this process is already constructing active
subjects. School is not only to form people for the future. The space itself must be a constant experiment in that which proposes to be created.

In closing, for the MST education only directs itself towards tomorrow if it is capable to form people who make history, who intervene in reality and not individuals who repeat like machines, pre-established orders and laws. It is the right of human beings to think and act consciously in the world, capable of negating the actual society daily and progressively. For this, we understand that a key educational mission of the MST is humanizing work and forming critical, autonomous, active and caring individuals because this puts the landless people in movement, in action, making them agents of struggle, of history. Collectively they remake their lives, take history in their own hands and regain the possibility to intervene in the world, remaking society on new grounds. This is the meaning of the MST: rescue the human beings —the Landless— as builders of their own emancipation.

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