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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: MAPPING OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACTIONS IN THE JIQUIRIÇÁ VALLEY, BAHIA

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Abstract: This article discusses the results of a study conducted at the Teacher Training Center of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia, UFRB, which aims to survey the actions of social movements, associations, unions, settlements, traditional communities, NGOs, and cooperatives for the preservation and protection of the environment in the 20 municipalities that make up the territory of Vale do Jiquiriçá-Ba. The survey identified 100 entities and a variety of actions aimed at protecting the territories and discussing sustainability in local development. The qualitative research was based on searches on websites, blogs, social networks, and scientific articles to map each of the municipalities and their respective actions. The objective is to provide material for studies of the Vale do Jiquiriçá community, in particular the Teacher Training Center at the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia.

Keywords: Social movements, Environment, Education, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

I am a beautiful tree. Come water me, mother. (Édson Gomes)

I often say, based on what I have read in my academic life, that “nature and culture are not opposites, they dialogue.” In this way, I interpret the relationship between man/woman, cultures, and living nature that constitute the so-called Environment. Since man is the great benefactor and/or destroyer of the environment, it is to be expected that public policies and collective actions will lead to interventions and awareness-raising for the permanence

of humans and humanities on the planet through educational means. Article 225 of the 1988 Constitution states: “laws must serve as public policies for the preservation of the environment.” This is an important instrument for ensuring compliance with the Environmental Crimes Law. The National System of Nature Conservation Units (9.985 2000) states: “Among its objectives are the conservation of biological species and genetic resources, the preservation and restoration of the diversity of natural ecosystems, and the promotion of sustainable development based on the conservation of natural resources.” In 1999, Law 9.795 was enacted, providing for Environmental Education and establishing the National Policy on Environmental Education. The objective of environmental education is “to enable people to realize the importance of their participation in building a society in which man is in balance with the environment.” This will take place through ongoing political dialogue to build public policies and collective actions that converge towards practical positions for protecting the environment. Since humans are cultural beings, understanding for this construction is to be expected. A popular university should, among other things, foster links between the academic world and communities, establishing responsibilities for projects and interventions aimed at strengthening and creating public policies and sustainability for these purposes. We understand “public policies” to be sets of popular positions and projects constituted through dialogue between powers. The people are power. Thus, we understand that the university, its faculty, and its students should provoke debates and promote projects with these purposes. In this sense, this article aims to highlight some of the results of the research project

“Social movements: mapping their role and involvement in environmental protection in the Vale do Jiquiriçá identity territory,” developed at the Teacher Training Center of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB), located in the city of Amargosa.

JUSTIFICATIONS AND THEORETICAL REFERENCE

This research project is justified by the need for knowledge about socio-environmental practices in the Jiquiriçá Valley, the potential for developing public policies for the sector based on the union between science and the community. A project like this means immersing oneself in the responsibility for quality public education, from early childhood education to higher education and, in the case of human development, throughout life. I understand education as a mediator of a specific social context that relates to and reflects its time, making explicit the interests in the project of society that it shapes, or to become one of the instruments of its transformation. Environmental education is one of the ways to promote public policies for the sector. This is done through laws and educational actions, via schools, universities, social movements, and communities. Universities such as the Federal University of Bahia (, UFRB) are in a position to promote this dialogue due to their location in one of the most natural and preserved regions, the Jiquiriçá Valley. The city of Amargosa is home to one of the most important educational centers in the region university. The Teacher Training Center (CFP) was created to implement initial and continuing training for educators in this territory of identity and the Recôncavo da Bahia. In this regard, the CFP commu-

nity can question, propose, and participate in actions and initiatives with surrounding entities. It is a union between formal education and education derived from the work and practices of movements and communities. “We criticize education that, intentionally or not, reproduces and ratifies the social relations of industry and capitalist production, and we believe that pedagogical theory can and should be revolutionary, but for this, a theory is needed that guides practice toward another orientation, another logic in dealing with knowledge, that is, another theory of knowledge.” (DOMINGUES, 2005. p. 82). Brito, 2012, investigated the environment and education in the Bahian community of Diogo, on the north coast of the capital Salvador, and made an intriguing connection between education and Environmental Education: From this perspective, Education and Environmental Education go hand in hand, without false fragmentation, being at the same time health and education, being “body” and “mind,” being man and nature, seeking to encompass the totality and complexity that surrounds human beings in the world. (BRITO, 2012, p.52). 4.1 0.

Image of the UFRB Teacher Training Center in the city of Amargosa, Vale do Jiquiriçá identity territory Source: UFRB website.



Image of the UFRB Teacher Training Center in the city of Amargosa, Vale do Jiquiriçá identity territory

Source: UFRB website.

VALE DO JIQUIRIÇÁ: UFRB UFRB, ENVIRONMENT ENVIRONMENT, TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, NECESSARY MAPPING.

The founding of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB) 20 years ago has leveraged research, teaching, and extension projects in this territory of identity and other areas within its campus jurisdiction. In order to present results and discuss them, it was necessary to take a closer look at the current Institutional Development Plan (PDI/UFRB), noting in its basic purposes a call for pedagogical foundations to be anchored in an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary vision of the curriculum, valuing research and extension activities and non-scientific knowledge in academic logic. We can translate this perspective into a proposal for a meeting of cultures, knowledge,

and educational practices profiled in the subjects assisted and/or participating in the university project that was designed for the creation of UFRB. The current PDI incisively emphasizes the need to recognize subjects excluded from higher education who were considered in the university creation project. Most of them belong to rural and traditional communities and social movements. In this scenario, it is worth highlighting the search for understanding that internalization implies the recognition of the arrival of people from categories historically excluded from university education, requiring the construction of logics of recognition of knowledge other than exclusively academic knowledge. This refers to an action that promotes links with society and social reality, in order to become a reference for academic work, promoting interaction between different types of knowledge and scientific knowledge. "In this understanding, this unit will be able to enhance the regional insertion of UFRB in the Recôncavo

vo da Bahia, to stimulate the development of teaching through research and extension in a participatory manner, which translates into constant exchange with communities, governmental and non-governmental institutions.” (BRAZIL, 2015 p. 21/22). In the historical moment we are facing, the university community must undertake new collective consciousness in defense not only of institutions, but also of our very existence, which we can translate into freedom of expression, autonomy, and political commitment. As a result of the most important of these, we have a record of actions and curricular and pedagogical practices that confirm that UFRB is an inclusive, democratic, and multicultural university. Mapping the actions of social movements in environmental preservation will provide material for academic and community research, demarcating the locations where there are initiatives that allow for the continuity of life and the environment.

JIQUIRIÇÁ VALLEY: HISTORICAL COMPENDIUM

According to historical data, the Jiquiriçá Valley was named after the ethnic origin of the indigenous people who inhabited the territory surrounding the Jiquiriçá River that bathes the region. Through State Law No. 13,214,2014, it became a territory of identity, covering 20 municipalities. The number of inhabitants in the territory exceeds 350,000. Among the cities that make up the Jiquiriçá Valley is Amargosa, home to the Teacher Training Center (CFP) of the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia. The cultural landmark of the Jiquiriçá Valley Identity Territory is the House of Cultu-

re in the city of Mutuípe, administered by the State Secretariat of Culture.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES

I conceptualize social movements from an ideological and militant perspective. They are the ones that graft counter-hegemonic thoughts and actions into power structures. As formers and educators, social movements are forces that move disadvantaged societies, putting their services and socio-cultural and political visions to collective decision-making. They aim at new ways of living and creating. Examples of social movements include the landless, quilombola and traditional African and indigenous territories, LGBTPNQI+ movements, women’s movements, student movements, and community movements. What they have in common are collective struggles and non-governmental organizations, formats that distance them from institutional models. In the Jiquiriçá Valley, there are mixed traditional communities, as well as resistant religious organizations, such as the Candomblé and Umbanda terreiros, in addition to other brotherhoods such as the transit movements of university students, gypsies, etc. There are 20 municipalities comprising the territory: Amargosa, Brejões, Cravolândia, Elísio Medrado, Irajuba, Itaquara, Itiruçu, Jaguaquara, Jiquiriçá, Lafaiete Coutinho, Laje, Lajeado do Tabocal, Maracás, Milagres, Mutuípe, Nova Itarana, Planaltino, Santa Inês, São Miguel das Matas, and Ubaíra. There are also natural spaces such as Timbó Park and Ribeirão, which are places for visitation and research. Initially, I intended to map only social movements and traditional commu-

nities. However, based on the focus of the research, which is actions for the protection and preservation of the environment, I realized that residents' and farmers' associations, unions, cooperatives, and cultural groups also develop actions in this regard, so I decided to move forward with the mapping.

METHODOLOGY

The proposal to discuss and promote socio-environmental practices in regions occupied by social movements in the Jiquiriçá Valley involves producing/creating reading material for UFRB interventions based on research and outreach activities. In parallel with this, a documentary survey of the history of interventions by social movements and traditional communities will be conducted, which can be incorporated into university education and communities. The mapping was done through documentary research on websites, social networks, and blogs, as well as bibliographies, with a view to producing literature and structuring actions and initiatives in each locality in the 20 municipalities covered by the Vale do Jiquiriçá identity territory. At the end, we present a table with the names of the municipalities, the movements and communities found, and the respective actions and initiatives in favor of the environment. We traced the origins and forms of these actions in detail. The research required extensive searching of these movements' websites and documents in order to collect scientific and reliable data. As the table is very extensive, we have left it out of this article, choosing instead to locate only the actions. Based on this proposal, we observed a range of possible interventions by the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia in the environment, heritage preservation, and public policies in

this area. In this regard, social movements must be called to account for their actions and policy proposals due to their presence in the territory. Based on this partnership, propose socio-environmental programs. With regard to cultures as practices of meaning, experience socio-environmental actions in regions occupied by social movements and traditional communities, such as Quilombo communities and religious spaces. In this way, contribute to debates between the university and surrounding populations, collaborating in the exercise of institutional and community functions.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

I encountered difficulties in mapping social movements and traditional communities, as many of them are not part of the digital world. Blogs are insufficient and web pages offer little information. We resorted to records on Facebook, but interaction was also difficult. In addition, we searched for random videos or videos from educational entities for more information. I knew that this digital limitation would cause losses in the final mapping, with gaps that could be filled later in other works. As it is a large territory with 20 municipalities, I did not make any incursions.

FINAL REPORT

During my research using digital and bibliographic material, I found numerous entities that are not classified as social movements or traditional communities, but which deal with environmental protection in the Jiquiriçá Valley. Most of them are associations, cooperatives, and unions, as

well as cultural entities, such as capoeira and samba de roda groups. As the main objective of the project was to map environmental protection actions, I found it interesting to include such entities in the mapping. This required a new definition of what social movements and traditional communities are and how other entities join them to protect the environment. It also implied a change in the project's field of research. The inclusion of traditional communities is due to the presence of this segment in areas that need preservation for sustainability purposes. Traditional communities are, therefore, territories inhabited by indigenous peoples, quilombolas, caçaras, and riverine communities that survive through self-organization and community farming. The inclusion of African-based religions, such as Candomblé, is due to these peoples' relationship with the natural environment, contributing to its sustainability. Cooperative entities organize actions to environmental protection while promoting a solidarity economy. This action extends to rural workers' unions.

MOBILIZATION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES AND ASSOCIATIVE ENTITIES

Throughout my digital research, I learned about social movements, their objectives and political purposes, as well as traditional communities and associative entities, such as rural workers' unions. Social movements are constituted as a set of actions in favor of social, cultural, and humanistic causes. Social movements differ from collective actions, which are rapid episodes that occur in everyday life for the purpose of protest or change, such as protests by students, drivers,

etc. We observed some conclusions in the course of our research. The first is an example of a classification of social movements:

a) Conservatives, such as gaucho culture; b) Reformists, such as feminist movements, the Black Movement, the Landless Movement (MST), LGBT-QIPN+, and revolutionaries who preach radical action.

b) It was necessary to quantify the quilombola territories in Brazil, finding through videos that there are an average of 5,000 territories and 178 communities. This number may be underestimated due to the invisibility of these territories, which are denied an official map.

c) In the Vele do Jiquiriçá region, there is no exact number of quilombola territories, but we emphasize that most are already certified and have access to institutional resources and services, including education, health, and the environment.

d) There is no agreement on how to implement public policies in quilombola settlements and territories. Workers' associations have more advanced coordination thanks to the presence of political parties that are involved in decision-making.

e) Due to the proximity of COP 30 in Brazil in October 2025, when the research data was compiled, we noticed more posts and videos on digital media about sustainability, environmental impacts, and environmental preservation. Despite this, it was not possible to map specific actions with the aim of presenting results. The main concerns are focused on the use of renewable

energy, wind energy, recycling, food security, and reforestation, which depend on human action through localized micro-actions. Another concern that has arisen on the internet refers to agribusiness as a threat to quilombola and indigenous populations and attempts to find a less demonized place for the sector. One concern that has arisen with the advent of COP 30 is education for sustainable development and climate. Almost as a demand, indigenous and quilombola populations have heated up debates on land regularization, basic infrastructure, and government aid for the survival of their communities.

Based on these considerations, I set out to map the actions and initiatives of these social groups in protecting and preserving the environment. In general, the actions are uniform, with some differences. One of these refers to the preservation of plant and animal biodiversity, which is present in almost all the actions mapped, both by social movements and by associative entities and traditional communities. We found women's movements that combine environmental preservation with women's survival in the fields of culture and politics. In summary, 100 entities were found in videos, social networks, websites, and blogs, including cooperatives, unions, residents' and workers' associations, terreiros, quilombos, cultural entities related to capoeira, samba de roda, and environmental entities, as well as an NGO. Based on the findings, I created a table with the municipalities and their respective organizations and actions for environmental protection and preservation. The actions are similar according to the type of organization. For example, coo-

peratives tended to be more concerned with the preservation of plants and animals and local subsistence, while unions and associations prefer the preservation of biodiversity, recycling and preservation of crops, as well as land and water management. The more politicized settlements and quilombos work by debating with the community the preservation of territories with the promotion of public policies for the countryside. Cultural groups, such as capoeira and samba de roda, as well as women's groups, debate the preservation of the environment through the development of culture.

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