

## ARTICLE

**THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE UFMA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IN SÃO LUÍS  
URBANIZATION PROCESS (1960-1980)****SAMUEL LUIS VELÁZQUEZ CASTELLANOS<sup>1</sup>**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0849-348X>**WILSON RAIMUNDO DE OLIVEIRA<sup>2</sup>**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6165-2924>

**ABSTRACT:** This article discusses the process of implementation and installation of the University College of the Federal University of Maranhão in the context of the modernization of education in the state (1960-1980) and its transfer and restructuring to the peripheral neighborhood of Vila Palmeira in São Luís as an Application College. The political-educational conjuncture that made possible the removal of this integrated unit from the university campus as a schooling modality restricted to a small and selective clientele, to a poor community in the outskirts of the capital is analyzed. The confrontations between strategies imposed by the educational policy/functionalist management of the state, and tactics of appropriation of teachers, employees, students, leaders and community organizations belonging to a local culture, which in function of interconnected interests, defended the institution as an instance of belonging, permanence and survival, are pointed out. Newspapers, legislation, and documentation from the school archives are used as sources guided by the theoretical and methodological framework of cultural history. We conclude that the constant defense of the local community, teachers and employees for the role/place of the Colégio de Aplicação as a symbolic and concrete image of overcoming in this suburban neighborhood and its effectiveness as a school-laboratory, internship field and space for permanent and adult education, constitutes a currency of exchange for these individuals to have access to the market of symbolic goods and a way to capitalize possibilities of social ascension via school success.

**Keywords:** University College, History of Education, Maranhão, high school education, Law No. 5.692.

**A REESTRUTURAÇÃO DO COLÉGIO UNIVERSITÁRIO DA UFMA NO PROCESSO DE URBANIZAÇÃO  
DE SÃO LUÍS (1960-1980)**

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**RESUMO:** Neste artigo debate-se o processo de implantação e instalação do Colégio Universitário da Universidade Federal do Maranhão no contexto de modernização do ensino no estado (1960/1980) e de sua transferência e reestruturação para o bairro periférico da Vila Palmeira em São Luís como Colégio de Aplicação. Analisa-se a conjuntura político-educacional que viabilizou a remoção desta unidade integrada do campus universitário como modalidade escolar de escolarização restrita a uma pequena e seletiva clientela, para uma comunidade pobre na periferia da capital. Apontam-se os confrontos entre estratégias impostas pela política educacional/gestão funcionalista do estado, e táticas de apropriação dos professores, funcionários, alunos, lideranças e organizações comunitárias pertencentes a uma cultura local, que em função de interesses interligados, defenderam a instituição como instância de pertença, permanência e sobrevivência. Utilizam-se jornais, legislação e documentação do arquivo escolar como fontes norteadas pelo referencial teórico-metodológico da história cultural. Conclui-se que a defesa constante da comunidade local, professores e funcionários pelo papel/lugar do Colégio de Aplicação como imagem simbólica e concreta de superação neste bairro suburbano e sua efetivação como escola-laboratório, campo de estágio e espaço de educação permanente e de adultos, se constitui numa moeda de troca destes indivíduos para ter acesso ao mercado de bens simbólicos e um caminho para capitalizar possibilidades de ascensão social via sucesso escolar.

**Palavras-chave:** Colégio Universitário, História da Educação, Maranhão, ensino de segundo grau, Lei nº 5.692.

### **LA REESTRUTURACIÓN DEL COLEGIO UNIVERSITARIO DE LA UFMA EN EL PROCESO DE URBANIZACIÓN DE SÃO LUÍS (1960-1980)**

**RESÚMEN:** En este artículo se debate el proceso de implantación e instalación del Colegio Universitario de la Universidad Federal de Maranhão en el contexto de modernización de la enseñanza en el estado (1960/1980) y de su transferencia e reestructuración para el barrio periférico de la Vila Palmeira en São Luís como Colegio de Aplicación. Se analiza la conyuntura político-educacional que viabilizó la remoción de esta unidad integrada del campus universitario como modalidad escolar de escolarización restringida a una pequeña y selectiva clientela, para una comunidad pobre en la periferia de la capital. Se apuntan los confrontos entre estrategias impuestas por la política educacional/gestión funcionalista del estado e táticas de apropiación de los profesores, funcionarios, alumnos, lideranzas y organizaciones comunitarias pertenecientes a una cultura local, que en función de intereses interligados, defendieron la institución como instancia de pertenecimiento, permanencia y sobrevivencia. Se utilizan periódicos, legislación y documentación del archivo escolar como fuentes examinadas a la luz del referencial teórico-metodológico de la historia cultural. Se concluye que la defensa constante de la comunidad local, profesores y funcionarios por el papel/lugar del Colegio de Aplicación como imagen simbólica y concreta de superación en este barrio arrabalero y su efectivación como escuela-laboratorio, campo de práctica y espacio de educación permanente y de adultos, se constituye en una moneda de cambio de estos individuos para tener acceso al mercado de bienes simbólicos y un camino para capitalizar posibilidades de ascensión social vía éxito escolar.

**Palabras clave:** Colegio Universitario, Historia de la Educación, Maranhão, enseñanza secundaria, Ley nº 5.692.

## INTRODUCTION

The modernization of education in the state of Maranhão gained momentum mainly from the 1960s (KREUTZ, 1982; PINTO, 1982; NASCIMENTO, 2013). It was a decade in which an intra-oligarchic rupture occurred (FAUSTO, 1997), responsible for the election of Governor José Sarney as political leader, who headed the attempt to modernize politically and economically the Maranhão society, by overcoming the old coronelista pact and inaugurating the period characterized by the alignment with developmental projects of the civil-military regime; plans that included Maranhão in the route of agro-industrial progress. Thus, the so-called "miracle from Maranhão" was triggered, an expression invented as a symbol of investment in infrastructure; a political strategy materialized in the construction of roads, bridges, electrification works and other actions that promoted socio-spatial transformations, generating among other effects, the great demographic explosion in the capital São Luís, which demanded the restructuring of public services, especially educational services.

This government (1966-1970), supported by the developmentalist rhetoric of the "New Maranhão", put into practice political-social strategies typical of the civil-military regime: it opened and paved roads; built the hydroelectric power plant of Boa Esperança; made the construction of the Port of Itaqui feasible; developed housing programs for the middle class, especially in the capital, among other actions. "Energy and transportation would constitute [infrastructural] aspects for the next step that would be the industrialization and the assembly of large [agricultural] projects in Maranhão" (PINTO, 1982, p. 84). Thus, was established the idea of the "Maranhão miracle" within the "Brazilian miracle"; expression used by the enthusiasts of the dictatorship in that context.

But the social order desired by this functionalist management (CERTEAU, 2012) never existed, because if we consider the new economic perspectives, which demanded high financial investments for the agrarian sector, when valuing immense amounts of land occupied by squatters who ended up migrating to the capital in search of a better life, we are left with the chaotic scenario formed by the rural exodus and the urban explosion of São Luís: a city of great social contrasts, where there was neither employment in sufficient quantity to absorb all the population that arrived from the various corners of Maranhão nor the offer of public services capable of attending such a numerous human concentration. In other words, such urban disorder impacted the social picture and intensified the abyss between luxury and poverty.

The protest movements that emerged, on the other hand, ended up demanding from the state some kind of response in the sense of providing, even if minimally, the population's access to public health and education, among other sectors. This social configuration engendered governmental strategies to expand the state school network. These actions started in 1966, when there was a strong pressure from the ludovician society for vacancies in elementary school. At the time, the state secretary of education had stated, via the press, that "[...] in the form of a government recommendation, the problem was practically solved, with the installation and operation of new intermediate shifts in most of the school groups in the capital and the interior." (O IMPARCIAL, 1966, p. 4).

During the administration of Dr. José Maria Cabral Marques, state secretary of education (1967-1970), the number of enrollments expanded throughout the state by adopting the following measures: the João de Barro Project (1967), aimed at creating rural elementary school in the interior of the state; the Bandeirante Project (1968), focused on the creation of gymnasiums (first cycle of high school), mainly in the inland cities, but also in São Luís; and the TV Educativa Project (1969), whose scope was the expansion of high school education in the capital and largest cities, in addition to the professional training of youth and adults (KREUTZ, 1982; PINTO, 1982; NASCIMENTO, 2013). In parallel, there was the inauguration of the Foundation University of Maranhão (federal) and the "[...] operation of the Faculties of Engineering, Administration and Pedagogy, which offered opportunities for higher-level technical qualification demanded by the development process itself" (O IMPARCIAL, 1968e, p. 8) in the state order.

Even so, huge challenges remained in the 1970s: 66% of children in the interior and 23% in the capital were out of elementary school; high school education was still mostly in the hands of private institutions, and higher education was only in its infancy. In this context, social, economic and political

pressure was mounting, compromising the discourse of the "New Maranhão", making it unpalatable. Strong tensions were coming and it was urgent the elaboration of new political-educational strategies; "[...] actions, which thanks to the postulate of a place of power [...] elaborate theoretical places [...] able to articulate a set of physical places where forces are distributed" (CERTEAU, 2012, p. 102).

Particularly serious was the situation of the capital, agitated by the demographic explosion that caused the emergence of neighborhoods without any urban structure. In this sense,

A new fact in the educational history of Maranhão and that well indicates the rightness that Dr. José Maria Cabral Marques [had been] imprinting to this Secretariat is that the Division of Primary Education is offering more than 1600 vacancies for elementary education in the school units of the capital after having expanded by 4000 the enrollments of primary school for the current school year. According to the notice [that had] been published in recent days by the press, there are vacancies for enrollment in many school groups in São Luís and those interested could enroll their children until next Tuesday in the [...] units that still have vacancies (*Jornal do Dia* "Daily Newspaper", 1968b, p. 5).

Parallel to these measures, the University of Maranhão Foundation (FUM), in 1968, decided "[...] to create the University College, aimed at students who attend the 3rd year of high school and, therefore, prepare themselves to enter a higher school (JORNAL DO DIA, 1968c, p.1 ); offer expanded by the internal regulation of the institution prepared in 1972, which modified its nature in an Application College, transformed into "[...] Field of internship, experimentation and application of the Faculty of Education" (SANTOS, 2012, p. 61). This change occurred in the context of the implementation of Law 5.692, of August 11, 1971, which had determined, among other changes, the transformation of the colegial (second cycle of High School) into a three-year high school with professionalizing characteristics. With this, starting in 1974, the University College began to offer vacancies from the first year of high school in three professional qualifications: Administration, Statistics and Secretarial work. However, as an internship and methodological experimentation field, its operation was compromised for several reasons: The student selectivity was extremely high, distancing the trainees from the educational reality experienced by most public schools; The physical structure was inappropriate, since the institution occupied rooms in the Cristo Rei Palace and other university buildings both in the historic center of Maranhão and in the university city located in *Vila Bacanga* (Baçanga Village); finally, the absence of the 1st grade (a stage conceived in the 1971 educational reform by unifying the old primary and junior high school) considerably limited the activities foreseen by that regiment.

Other attempts at educational modernization that emerged in this period came to life in the Program for the Expansion and Improvement of Secondary Education (PREMEM)<sup>3</sup>, which focused on "the improvement of secondary education, at the gymnasium level [that] should be stimulated by increasing the number of polyvalent schools" (BRASIL, 1968, p. 454) and in the Program for the Expansion and Improvement of Education (PREMEN)<sup>4</sup>, which aimed "[...] to improve the system of primary and secondary education in Brazil" (BRASIL, 1968, p. 454). These experiences were responsible for the construction of large school institutions in the capital and in the largest cities of the interior of the state. These architectural structures should have made the reform feasible, if it wasn't for the government's negligence that in part abandoned them, opening the way for the confrontation between political-educational strategies generated in the technocratic sphere and popular appropriation tactics regarding the use of these teaching-learning spaces, We highlight the restructuring of the University College through an agreement involving the State Education Secretariat (SEDUC) and the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), which resulted, on the one hand, in the transfer of the C University College to a school complex built in *Vila Palmeira* (Palm Village) via PREMEN, and, on the other hand, in the entrance of children, adolescents, youths and adults from the outskirts of São Luís into this special academic unit of UFMA.

Thus, in this paper we analyze to what extent the trajectory of the University College of the Federal University of Maranhão, from its conception, implementation and installation, to its transfer

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<sup>3</sup> Decree No. 63.914, of December 26, 1968.

<sup>4</sup> Decree No. 70,067, of January 26, 1972.

and restructuring as an Application College to the poor neighborhood of *Vila Palmeira* (Palm Village) with a specific dynamic, was guided by the constant and two-way confrontations between the strategies of imposition of the educational policy of the government and the state, with the tactics of appropriation of the subjects acting in the educational scenario as teachers and employees, and the individuals of the place belonging to a local culture? To do so, supported by the theoretical and methodological contributions of cultural history, we resorted to clues already listed in the newspapers of the time that were crossed with information collected in the legislation in force and in the school archives of the institution, considering here the press as a privileged source, because we understand the importance of local newspapers gathered in a "collection that - being stored in the 'Benedito Leite' Public Library, recognized as a great depository of memory (from the Empire to the present time), of the culture, arts and politics of Maranhão - not only [enabled] the rescue of the daily life of the capital city of São Luís, but also the past-present of other interior localities" (CASTELLANOS, 2012, p. 43), allowing us to understand the political, economic and educational panorama of Maranhão in the proposed period.

## THE PALM TREE VILLAGE

In São Luís, in the late 1960s, as part of the media strategy of the "New Maranhão", the government disseminated representations of the state under the sign of progress through the press. In January 1968, celebrating the two years of that administration, the chief of the executive inaugurated "[...] the 505 houses built in [the neighborhood of] Anil, by the Popular Housing Company of Maranhão, [through] financing from the BNH [National Housing Bank]." (O IMPARCIAL, 1968a, p.8), and delivered by the Department of Roads and Highways (DER) the 18 asphalted kilometers of Campo de Perizes on BR 135; "[...] redemptive highway [where] vehicles of all kinds run, from heavy cargo trucks from all over the country to luxury buses and the great aerowillis or galaxies" (O IMPARCIAL, 1968c, p. 4). In this logic, the attempt to decipher society in another way, allows us to penetrate into the skein of relations / tensions that constitute it from "[...] a network of specific practices, and [to consider] there is no practice or structure that is not produced by representations, contradictory or in confrontation, through which individuals and groups give meaning to the world that is theirs" (CHARTIER, 2005, p. 177). Thus, the power of representation has reached

[...] the high point of the celebrations [...] the inauguration of the bridge over the Anil River, in the Caratatiua district, on the new road that, connecting that district to the Olho D'água (Water's eye) bathing resort, shortens the distance between the capital and that beach by many kilometers. [...] inauguration of the Barreto School Group [and] the paving of João Pessoa Avenue in the João Paulo district (*Jornal do Dia*, 1968a, p. 1).

The symbol of the "miracle from Maranhão" was the Port of Itaqui, whose ongoing works led to the construction of the Bacanga Dam and the projection of an industrial city on the left bank of that river, which ended up causing a "[...] enlargement of the number of inhabitants [that] could be considered the most important part of the city. ] enlargement of the number of inhabitants [which] occurred, in part, by the growing exodus from the countryside to the city, due to the *grilagem*, violence and disintegration of the rural community that led the contingent of workers to the peripheries of urban centers (SOUZA, 2018, p. 44); increase of the urban mesh of the capital in the west direction that gave rise to the urbanization of the Itaqui-Bacanga axis. Political strategies that had the sense to establish the bases for the development of industrial capitalism.

In 1967 the Sarney government invested more than 2 billion cruzeiros in urban planning works in the capital of Maranhão, the most significant of which was the paving of 30 kilometers of streets and avenues. The urbanization of the Industrial District of Itaqui and the Bacanga dam were also begun. The secular São Luís, preserving its architecture, was modernized as a dynamic center of a development process (O IMPARCIAL, 1968d, p. 12).

Despite these investments in infrastructure, there was no urban planning that took into account the accelerated growth of the population. In a short time, a chaotic urban scenario was formed,

which "[...] culminates in a process of great population growth [...] and a gradual swelling of the city that in infrastructure ways does not meet all the demand that settles in the central areas and especially in the peripheral areas of São Luís (MOREIRA, 2013, p. 44). Land on the banks of the rivers Anil and Bacanga and mangroves that are invaded by low-income populations and by urban squatting, expand the inhabited space of the city both in the east and in the west.

The city of São Luís, whose urban perimeter is a strip between the sea arms, [at] the mouths of the rivers Anil and Bacanga, has a multiform expansion along the east-west axis. It is a city of urban landscape with a predominance of colonial townhouses and large houses, which contrast with some new residences on one side and on the other side with the misery of the stilts of the flooded areas and the shanty houses of the slums. Within the world panorama today, one of the most distressing aspects in São Luís is the lack of housing in terms of satisfaction of minimum standards, which depend on the economic level to be met, technological factors and local factors such as climate, socio-cultural aspects and others. By analyzing the income composition and its level, São Luís is one of the poorest in Brazil. Factors such as high unemployment, a very recent industrial expansion "take off", low electric energy production, whose cost still does not reach economic levels, and the wealth of the primary and tertiary sector in the formation of income of the entire state, contribute to the low capital circulation. A family with an average of six people and an income of between one and two minimum wages is barely able to provide for its basic needs. With an explosive demographic growth, low index of constructions for housing purposes (an index whose curve is on the rise, but far below the need) and with a critical per capita income, São Luís' housing problem tends to get worse and worse. The demand for jobs by those who make up the rural exodus band becomes more and more intense, concurring to a real race for renting residences. About this theme, the architect Sérgio Bernardes said: "every road that goes in search of wealth promotes rural exodus. The population that leaves the interior in search of better days, for the opportunity of jobs, empties areas that are of mineral complementation of the developed countries or empties an area of agricultural complementation of a starving population". The absence of housing offers in São Luís, forces, in turn, the formation of conglomerates of about eight families averaging forty-five people in real slums or in the multiplication of slums (O IMPARCIAL, 1968b, p. 4).

In this context the city, until then confined to the two "arms of the sea" where the rivers Anil and Bacanga flow, with its center bordering the São Marcos Bay, started to expand and left its initial urban core (see figure 1). The absence of housing offers and the formation of conglomerates that exposed the misery of the flooded stilts and shantytowns, the high unemployment rate versus the rush of renting residences by the interior inhabitants, the very recent industrial expansion, the low electric power production and the little capital circulation in the city, made it necessary to mobilize concrete governmental strategies to avoid urban suffocation; New neighborhoods were created in uninhabitable spaces that would discipline the soil and reduce inequalities as a goal of the project of depalafitting and containment (FERREIRA, 2014). In this dynamic, the Popular Housing Company of Maranhão (COHAB) built the residential complexes near the source of the Anil River through a loan granted by the BNH; houses that were delivered in several stages, giving rise to the Anil I, Anil II and Anil III complexes. A financial credit system through which the *Caixa Econômica* (Savings Bank) also built the Yolanda da Costa e Silva residential complex in the Caratatiua neighborhood.

To interconnect these different points bridges and urban arteries were built that would have beautified the city if it were not for the disorder caused by the rural exodus, conflicts that became much worse after the promulgation of the 1969 Land Law, which expelled the population from the countryside, who settled in the "voids" between the capital's neighborhoods; families sheltered in the Camboa neighborhood, on Via Kennedy and in *Vila Macaúba* (Macaúba Village), which if in 1968 were characterized as "[...] people without their own land, [...] the world of those who sweat to survive and who are being pushed by progress, forced to struggle, but who dream of someday having a brick house covered with tiles" (O IMPARCIAL, 1968f, p. 7). The balance of tensions that marks the struggles of representations, whose issue is the ordering, therefore the hierarchization of the social structure itself; "[...] symbolic strategies that determine positions and relations and that build, for each class, group or environment, a perceived-being constitutive of its identity" (CHARTIER, 2005, p. 184). Stilt dwellers who were fully aware of their clandestine condition, by which

Someday we have to get out of here. When there is no more mangrove, when the tides are pushed out and the "whites" can build their bungalows. Tractors and heavy machinery will come, and we will pick up our bundles and stake them in another piece of mangrove swamp with no owner. It is always like this. We are the ones who clog the city (O IMPARCIAL, 1968f, p. 7).

An innumerable multitude of families who left the countryside in search of a better life and fought for the "right to the city" (LEFEBVRE, 2001). Individuals who, attracted by the center of progress, at the same time that they were excluded by it, refused to abandon it, creating unforeseen spaces of action. In this logic, if the strategies pointed "[...] to the resistance that the establishment of a place offers to the expenditure of time; the tactics point to a skillful use of time, of the occasions that it presents and also of the games that it introduces in the foundations of a power" (CERTEAU, 2012, p. 102), insofar as, the stilt dweller or the supposed poor of any interior or of a non-place in the city, believed that:

If we were to count head by head the people who live on the mangrove, disputing space with chama-maré crab perhaps we would add up [...] bordering on seven thousand souls. But neither the official statistics nor the IBOP can inform with exactness: because the stilt houses undermine. It seems that he has a pact with the tides, in this coming and going between the ebb and flood tides (O IMPARCIAL, 1968f, p. 7).

This *non-place*, which refers to the ways of making the urban space by subjects without a place (CERTEAU, 2012), pushed its residents to seek better conditions of survival, occupying firmer land in areas not yet reached by real estate speculation and neither benefited by government projects. Uncontrolled urbanization that accentuated the social contrast verified in the city's housing forms, for "while the neighborhoods along the seashore and those in the Rio Anil noble area are endowed with [infrastructure], the other neighborhoods, in large part, do not have the minimum in terms of sanitation" (SILVA, 1987, p. 31-32); appropriation and resistance tactics that gave rise to peripheral neighborhoods, such as *Vila Palmeira*, which in a short time would become one of the largest human agglomerations in the capital. Representations that invoke "[...] against the immediate determinations of the structures the inventive capacities of the agents, and against the mechanical submission to the rule the strategies of the practice itself" (CHARTIER, 2005, p. 176).

Figure 1. Urbanization of the island of São Luís do Maranhão.



Source: Authors' adaptation from Souza (2018, p. 46)

From this map we can see the city's expansion movements: the area restricted to the surroundings of the historical center until 1948 (green color); the formation of Bairro João Paulo and the COHAB housing developments until 1970 (red color); the emergence of the residential developments COHAMA, Bequimão and COHATRAC; the conformation of *Renascença* (Renaissance), *São Francisco* and *Ponta D'Areia* (middle and upper class neighborhoods), in parallel with the growth of peripheral communities of *Anjo da Guarda*, *Vila Embratel* and *Vila Palmeira* until 1980 (orange color), among other later occupations. We highlight here the distance established between the Federal University of Maranhão and *Vila Palmeira* via location; peripheral neighborhood near the sea and the sources of Anil River to where UFMA's University College was transferred and restructured as an Application College, a place where shacks and stilt houses gave origin to a "city over the mangrove" built by the appropriation tactics of those who don't plan simply because they don't have a place and Thus, they represent the expectation of a victory of time over place, since they play according to the occasion because, being from a non-place, they strike blows, act by cunning and, attentive to each move, they do not propose the game, but stay on the defensive and bet on the counter-attack (CERTEAU, 2012).

By Municipal Law No. 1904, of September 21, 1970, "[...] the locality situated on the left bank of *Avenida dos Franceses* (Avenue of the French), between Vila Ivar Saldanha and the stretch of Outeiro da Cruz" (LIMA, 2002, p. 228) is called *Vila Palmeira*. Originated in the demographic explosion that hit the capital of Maranhão since the late 1960s, this Village resulted initially from the occupation of land on the banks of Anil River by poor families coming from rural areas in the interior of the state in search of jobs promised by the government's development propaganda, which announced an era of prosperity based on economic growth (SILVA, 1987), as if this alone could solve the social conflicts that, in fact, derive from various forms of inequality. Contradictions that resulted in popular engagement and struggles for the realization of citizenship, including not only the rights to housing, basic sanitation, social assistance and medical services by the state, but also the right to public education, which was not offered in the area until the late 1970s. A history of struggles that had repercussions in the restructuring of the University College from a poor urban community culturally

structured in rural/urban traits. Local popular culture that influenced the school culture and the specific dynamics of the Application College of UFMA that became unique.

From the 1970s on, in face of the real estate speculation that overvalued the land, parallel to the occupation of the most valued areas of the city by social groups with higher purchasing power, forming the neighborhoods of *São Francisco*, *Renascença*, *Calbau*, *Olho D'água* and *Ponta da Areia*, other housing cooperatives developed programs similar to COHAB, which resulted in the emergence of new complexes: *Cobatrac*, *Turu*, *Vinhaes*, *Cobama*, *Cobafuma*, *Bequimão*, among others. However, the housing policy did not include the families affected by the "[...] drama that the *Coronados* neighborhood was going through, a pile of more than eight hundred shacks behind the ceramic neighborhood" (O IMPARCIAL, 1972a, p. 6).

Communities such as *Coroados*, *Vila Palmeira* and dozens of others in various parts of the city were represented by the term "invasion" because their residents had no titles to the properties they occupied. The City Hall's disciplining of the urban soil met with several forms of resistance, from the reconstruction of houses torn down by the police, often resorting to violence, to the creation of the "*União de Moradores*" (Residents' Union) in each neighborhood, as a form of community organization that was eventually recognized by the City Hall; surviving underground through an innumerable activity (the construction of shacks without property registration) that stubbornly unfolded in a thousand ways of doing, inventing other practices (sports, leisure, trade, etc.) increasingly heterogeneous (CERTEAU, 2012) that can also be read as cultural practices, if we consider that these relate to

[...] not only [to] the making of a book, an artistic technique or a teaching modality, but also [to] the ways in which, in a given society, men speak and keep silent, eat and drink, sit and walk, talk or argue, show solidarity or hostility, die or get sick, treat their madmen or welcome foreigners" (BARROS, 2003, p. 157).

Social configuration that, by enabling the emergence of leaderships and community organizations (Union of residents, improvised schools, religious congregations, etc.), disseminated among its agents the spirit of claim and stimulated them to fight for the urbanization of the place, as well as for the right to an Application College later on that would guarantee in theory the secondary education to the whole population of the neighborhood with age range determined by law for this level of education. Networks of reciprocal dependencies "[...] that make each individual action depend on a whole series of others, but modifying, in turn, the very image of the social game [...] that can represent this permanent process of chain relationships [...]". (ELIAS, 2001, p. 13). Educational practices that "[...] act[ra]m and influence[ra]m the lives of subjects in a broad, diffuse and unpredictable way" (FRANCO, 2016, p. 536), inculcating in them the desire to consume the cultural goods provided by the exercise of citizenship.

In 1972, the Society for Improvements and Urbanism of the Capital (SURCAP), in partnership with the National Department of Works and Sanitation (DNOS), filled in a flooded area on the right bank of Avenida Kennedy, in a place near Bairro de Fátima, where "[...] almost two hundred families lived there, who [had] their houses built of *taipa* and *pau-a-pique* (houses built of mud and wood), some even covered with tiles, others with frames" (O IMPARCIAL, 1972b, p. 12), as part of a campaign to de-pollute the capital.

The area to be totally occupied, in a short period of time, is destined to gather all the people living in the capital's stilt areas, starting with the victims of the fire that broke out on the other side of Kennedy Avenue, in the beginning of this year, resulting in the total destruction of approximately 120 shacks. These people are already living there, in 16 blocks drawn by SURCAP, constituting 224 plots of land. The other residents from other neighborhoods such as *Vila Palmeira*, *Coroados*, *Avenida dos Franceses*, etc, should move to this SURCAP area". (O IMPARCIAL, 1972b, p. 12).

The project of de-population of São Luís, launched during the administration of Mayor Haroldo Tavares (1971-1975), foresaw the transfer of 50,000 people to plots of 10 x 25 meters, financed by the BNH at prices estimated at 10 to 12 cruzeiros per month, in an urbanized area, with water, electricity, sewage system, schools, etc. Despite the media platform around the program, Costa

Cavalcanti even spoke (as interior minister, in a platform set up at *Areinba* beach - Madre de Deus district) at the opening ceremony of the agreement between the city hall and BNH, of the "[...] concern that involved President Médici [1969-1974], when he came to our capital, verifying with his own eyes the subhuman conditions in which our stilt houses lived" (O IMPARCIAL, 1972c, p. 12). 12), the families living in stilt houses and hovels were not able to participate in that plan, either because the conditions of poverty in which they lived did not allow them to afford the financing costs, or because they did not believe in the fulfillment of the promises made by the mayor, or even because they did not want to leave where they were.

In *Vila Palmeira*, specifically, the families that were threatened of eviction for occupying an area belonging to the Social Welfare Institute of the State of Maranhão (IPEM), where a housing complex would be built for the state employees, were not encouraged by the BNH lots, insisting in staying in that place. For this reason, IPEM appealed to Governor Pedro Neiva de Santana (1971 - 1975) "[...] for a possession of land in Calhau, on the right margin of MA-53 [...] thus avoiding [that] a social problem of calamitous proportions be created, with the eviction of all those poor people" (O IMPARCIAL, 1972d, p. 1).

In this logic, it seems that the National Housing Policy did not enjoy a good reputation in São Luís. In 1973,

The survey of borrowers in arrears with the monthly fees of COHAB's houses was still/is still being carried out [...] And the Legal Department [...] was already in possession of 500 eviction lawsuits, and it is believed that others were being prepared [...] On the other hand, the [...] lawyer of the Popular Housing Company of Maranhão, declared to be studying a formula with the borrowers, in order to avoid mass evictions of the residents of the three complexes (O IMPARCIAL, 1973, p. 1).

The problem of popular housing followed its dynamics for the following years without major changes, with constant instability in the "invasions" spread throughout the city. Social groups that inscribed their marks in the urban landscape, transforming that space in the movement of their own survival (CERTEAU, 2012). Unbalanced urbanization that caused "[...] housing shortage, leading to the constitution of tenements and slums; [...] insufficiency of essential urban services, such as public transport, water supply, sewage system, or equipment such as hospitals, school etc." (GOUVÊA, 2005, p. 30). In response to this reality, the residents of this locality formed in 1975, "[...] a commission to seek the [...] CEO of the Maranhão Electric Power Plants (CEMAR) and request the installation of energy, since [...] *Vila Palmeira* [was] perhaps the only neighborhood in São Luís that still did not have light" (O IMPARCIAL, 1975a, p. 5). However, at the end of the year, the neighborhood was still unprovided without the minimum infrastructure services, although they were to be implemented, "[...] at least as far as the installation of lighting is concerned, which is one of the main needs, since we cannot even talk about water, because there is none [...] Besides a lot of poverty and dust, in those surroundings there was a gang of criminals that [was] leaving the whole region in an uproar [...]" (O IMPARCIAL, 1975b, p. 5).

The socioeconomic survey conducted by social workers from the Superintendence of Urbanism and Planning (SURPLAN) detected that the inhabitants were workers "[...] manual laborers without steady employment and employees who earned a minimum wage [and] some merchants who appeared there with mere '*quitandas*' (greengrocery) [...] getting rich off what poverty buys, and that is not always sold at reasonable prices" (O IMPARCIAL, 1975c, p. 7), almost all of rural origin. They grouped together in unpaved streets that formed a community that was lacking schools, health services, security, housing, sanitation, etc., without receiving attention from the public authorities, except for "[...] the police [who] walked around here in the beginning, and tore down the frames of houses, warning that it was forbidden to build: but it was no use [...] the mud huts, covered with clay and with straw roofs [...] multiplying everywhere" (O IMPARCIAL, 1975c, p. 7). Moreover, *Vila Palmeira* often figured in the police pages of São Luís newspapers, which circulated negative representations of the neighborhood, at that time "the biggest invasion" of the capital. Socially stigmatized and unassisted by the State, it never stopped growing. With more than 2,800 houses built disorderly and inhabited by people of very low income and exposed, "[...] according to observations of social assistance, by all sorts

of delinquency, along with malnutrition and, consequently, record dehydration and an important range of other diseases (O IMPARCIAL, 1976a, p. 1), even so, this neighborhood was established in the city and fought for the rights of socialization, schooling and citizenship.

In this sense, other diverse principles of differentiation could account for cultural deviations if we were dealing with objects, forms, codes, and not social groups. "In fact, cultural cleavages are not necessarily organized according to a single social grid, which would supposedly command both the unequal presence of objects and the differences in conduct" (CHARTIER, 2005, p. 181). The inverted perspective must first trace the composite social area in which circulate a corpus of texts or a class of printed materials, a production or a cultural norm, a *Colégio de Aplicação* (Application School) as a 1st and 2nd grade institution or a body of teachers and employees willing to irradiate knowledge, values and conducts of another order, consecutively feeding back into a neighborhood/local culture that depends beyond the social, on sexual or generational belonging, on religious adherences and educational traditions, on territorial solidarities and on the habits of the trade.

This survey was part of the neighborhood urbanization project, prepared by technicians from SURPLAN, during the administration of the mayor Antônio Bayma Júnior (1975-1978). From the visits made, the suggestion to transfer those families to a more appropriate place or at least temporarily relocate them was born, because according to the final report any attempt to intervene in the area in those conditions was unfeasible, with "[...] the construction of shacks [...] invading the surrounding mangroves [...]" (O IMPARCIAL, 1976b, p. 7). However, despite this attempt, there was no resettlement, probably because nobody wanted to leave their piece of land, for fear of losing their only survival space; on the other hand, the Residents' Union kept claiming for the installation of the electric grid. The rapid population growth put *Vila Palmeira* under the scrutiny of councilmen and other authorities, arousing electoral interests and governmental concerns. The population, in turn, used this as a tactic of appropriation to get the electric lighting and other urban equipment; thousands of families that, without means to plan the future, created the conditions for survival and permanence as belonging to the place. In 1980, the mayor Roberto Macieira (1980-1983) authorized the sending of machines from the Municipal Department of Highways (DMER) for the earth-moving works of several streets in the neighborhood, "[...] one of the largest urban agglomerations in the outskirts of São Luís and one of the most lacking in public services" (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980d, p. 1). Demographic concentration and social deprivation that certainly weighed heavily in the choice of the locality to receive one of PREMEN's works; school equipment whose arrival caused great expectation, whether in the consumption of symbolic goods, or in the community/personal achievement via schooling aimed at insertion in the labor market and social integration.

## THE COLUN'S RESTRUCTURING PROJECT

In the 1970s, besides the continuation and expansion of the João de Barro, *Bandeirante* and *TV Educativa* (educational tv) projects, the inclusion of Maranhão in the High School Expansion and Improvement Program (PREMEM) under Governor Pedro Neiva de Santana (1971-1975) was the result of an agreement signed between the Ministry of Education (MEC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), having as its initial goal the creation of a Gymnasium in each capital city. Based on the North American High Schools<sup>5</sup>, which, in turn, had some inspiration in John Dewey (a reference of the new school education in the United States), they should work as a model in the dissemination of a curriculum capable of uniting humanism, science and technology, with subjects of general education (mathematics, sciences, letters) and special education (agricultural techniques, commercial, industrial and home education) (PEDROSA & BITENCOURT JÚNIOR, 2015). Its

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<sup>5</sup> Since the first decade of the 20th century, Brazil's tendency to equip itself and compare itself to the curriculum of the North American education system was a concrete practice. According to Barbosa de Godois (1910), "The States spread instruction in single-master schools (isolated schools) and in graded schools that received the name of infant school, in which reading, writing, arithmetic, arithmetic, drawing, music, geography, morals and German and English were taught; primary school, in which to these subjects were added - history, arithmetic, algebra and physics; grammar school, in which were taught, besides these subjects, political economy, physical and natural sciences, cosmography, logic, Latin and Greek and high school, whose program corresponded to those of the higher courses" (p. 6).

implementation demanded international, national and local investments (SANTOS, 2012), since it provided a modern and large structure with laboratories and workshops to support the projected training. In 1971, in his first speech as State Secretary of Education, Professor Luiz Rêgo guaranteed that

The Secretary is attentive to the obligations of the Agreement to receive a Model Gymnasium, to be installed in São Luís. Fulfilling Mr. Governor Pedro Neiva de Santana's recommendation, we have already been to Guanabara, in contact with PREMEM's technicians. The Gymnasium is work-oriented, located on *Avenida dos Franceses*. It derives from USAID aid. The state will have it built, the teachers and administration recycled, the teachers prepared for the educational practices, four workshops installed. It is the start to change the panorama of verbalistic and academic teaching (O IMPARCIAL, 1971, p. 4).

But the *Ginásio Polivalente* (Multipurpose Gymnasium) of *Avenida dos Franceses*<sup>6</sup>, which should be a model, became a failed experience, especially because of all the conditions provided for its operation, the construction and equipping of the building were the only actions achieved, being inaugurated belatedly with the presence of the Minister of Education Jarbas Passarinho, in 1973. In this sense, there was not the announced teaching and technical qualification. The few teachers, besides being poorly paid and initially with no definitive link to the State, were incorporated slowly, but still unable to dedicate themselves exclusively to it. That is, in 1976, this Gymnasium was about to "[...] close its doors, for not offering the minimum conditions of operation of an establishment of this kind" (O IMPARCIAL, 1976c, p. 6).

In 1972, on the other hand, in the context of adaptation to Law 5. 692, of August 11, 1971, when compulsory education was extended from four to eight years, among other changes, not only was basic education divided into two grades (the 1st, uniting primary and junior high school and abolishing admission exams for the latter, and the 2nd, integrating high school and technical education through professionalization); The program for Expansion and Improvement of Secondary Education was absorbed by the new PREMEN (Program for Expansion and Improvement of Primary and Secondary Education), focusing on the improvement of these levels of education. Its actions materialized in new modalities, inter-school centers, integrated colleges or integrated units to make possible the implementation of the Law in the states where the educational service was more deficient. This was the case in Maranhão, especially as regards secondary education, mostly in the hands of the private sector. Until 1978, it was offered in a few public establishments, 6 of which were in the capital, namely: *Liceu Maranhense*, *Centro de Ensino Gonçalves Dias* and *Centro de Ensino Coelho Neto* (state network); *Escola Técnica Federal*, *Colégio Agrícola* and *Colégio Universitário* (federal network). Among the inland cities, the state network had public high schools in: Imperatriz, Caxias, Chapadinha, Pedreiras and São Bento.

In this scenario, PREMEN delivered to the State Secretary of Education 6 buildings, built in the architectural pattern of the *Gymnasio Polivalente*. Except for Caxias and Imperatriz, with one unit each, these new teaching facilities were located in São Luís, one in Bairro de Fátima, another in Vila Ivar Saldanha and two in *Vila Palmeira*. The latter (the Integrated Unit Laura Rosa, for 1st grade and the 2nd grade teaching center Cônego José de Ribamar de Carvalho) were built in the perspective of the same school complex, in order to serve as a model for the implementation of the program. These works projected the 1st and 2nd grade education in the molds foreseen by Law #5.692/1971. The implementation of the teaching model foreseen by the program, however, ran into problems of teacher qualification and professionalization, which were still very serious at the time.

On the other hand, the little importance of the University College was unjustifiable, if we take into account that the panorama of 1st and 2nd grade education demanded urgent changes in relation to the number of schools, but also with regard to the training of teachers and the teaching methods employed. The gap was felt in higher education due to the high failure rates in the vestibular exams and the high dropout rates in undergraduate courses. This educational reality compromised the state's administrative, agricultural and industrial modernization projects. In 1980, the results of UFMA's vestibular exposed the desolate picture of high school: "[...] by its characteristics of failure even in the

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<sup>6</sup> This is where the 02 de Julho School of the Maranhão Military Firefighters Corps currently is.

first tests, it was a warning cry for the poor quality of teaching in high school" (O IMPARCIAL, 1980a, p. 1). The teaching crisis affected all levels or stages of schooling, to the extent that,

[...] has long been criticized for its ineffectiveness at all levels, from the 1st grade to the University, where the school dropout rate reaches frightening limits. The unpreparedness of teachers who choose "teaching" to do odd jobs or are simply accepted in low-quality schools, for low salaries of up to 15 cruzeiros per hour/class, have contributed to the desperate bankruptcy of teaching (O IMPARCIAL, 1980b, p. 7).

Bankruptcy of teaching that was not only in private schools, usually installed in inappropriate spaces and with most of the teachers being laymen; but also in the public network, especially in elementary school that were multiplying without any planning to meet the growing demand in areas of higher demographic concentration and neither took into account the unpreparedness of teachers nor the choice made by the teaching staff to do "odd jobs" as denounced by the local press. The picture of primary education was approaching complete chaos in the neighborhoods of São Luís.

Concerned with the low quality of teaching from primary school and the expansion of the student contingent at child age, the mayor of São Luís, Mauro Fecury [1979-1980], was studying a plan to use all the neighborhood union headquarters for the installation of public schools. The plan was already being brought to the attention of the population by Federal Deputy João Alberto de Sousa, who had been holding systematic meetings with the presidents of the Residents' Unions, making them aware of the importance of the project, which aimed to offer education to thousands of children at the primary level (O IMPARCIAL, 1980c, p. 5).

Given these clamors and supported "[...] in the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Culture, since the Circular Notice 935/79 [...] advise[d] the Brazilian university to develop new experiences and active participation in state and municipal education programs" (COLUN, 1980, p.1), UFMA proposed the expansion of the University College as of 1980, with a view to making it a model of teaching-learning; a restructuring project conducted by a group of professors from the former College of Education, by then already dismembered into two departments: Education I and II. Presented as "[...] an idea [that] aims [to] enhance the teaching career, training teachers for a better performance of the noble task of teaching" (COLUN, 1980, p.1), the document brought in its core the strategies of UFMA in order to act in favor of building a modern society.

Concerned with improving the programs of official and private education, the University reveals full awareness of its role as a legitimate social institution. To execute the restructuring project of the University College, a working group was created, consisting of two coordinators (Joseth Coutinho Martins Freitas and Maria de Jesus Pinto Ferraz), six components (Conceição de Maria Pires Ferreira Lago, Conceição de Maria Ribeiro Quadros, Durval Cruz Prazeres, Lucinete Marques Lima, Maria Michel Pinto de Carvalho, and Vanilda Loyola Rodrigues), four collaborators (Maria Theresa Soares Pflueger, Nizeth Carvalho Bastos, Paula Franssineti Silva e Souza, and Ruth Cunha Diniz), and a special advisor (COLUN, 1980, p. 1).

According to José Maria Cabral Marques, at the time rector of UFMA (1979-1988), "[...] each year, the University College functioned in a building, in a room [...] and had problems with teachers [;] problems with everything [...] but it could not continue like this [...]" (FARIA & MONTENEGRO, 2005, p. 296). The survey of the conditions of this establishment showed the inadequacy of the physical facilities, the insufficiency of its teaching staff, concluding that "[the] College could not] fully achieve its objectives for technical and administrative reasons and the inadequacy of the guidelines recommended by specific legislation" (COLUN, 1980, p. 5). Resenting the lack of a school building, where there would be space and time dedicated exclusively to educational practices "[...] that act and influence the life of subjects, in a broad, diffuse and unpredictable way" (FRANCO, 2006, p. 536); and to pedagogical practices, which "[...] are performed in order to organize/populate the school's activities" (FRANCO, 2006, p. 536). ] are carried out to organize/potentiate/ interpret the intentionalities of an educational project [...] by a reflective thinking about what occurs [...] as well as by a critical thinking of what the educational practice can be" (FRANCO, 2016, p. 537-538); the College had difficulties regarding pedagogical ordering. Moreover, because its target audience was not

significant in view of the need for internships of undergraduates, many of whom were active teachers in public and private networks - although they did not yet have the diploma - this reality strengthens the discourse of technicians and professors of the university in favor of restructuring. A change that would contribute in a "[...] natural way to the improvement and elevation of the qualification of Maranhão's 1st and 2nd grade teachers" (COLUN, 1980, p. 6); although, on the other hand, "[t]he understandings with the State Secretariat of Education evidenced the availability of two Colleges integrating the school complex of Vila Palmeira, built and equipped for 1st and 2nd grade teaching" (COLUN, 1980, p. 1).

The PREMEN units in *Vila Palmeira*, located at Arame Street, no number, formed a single architectural complex conceived in the perspective of a school complex. In 1979, under pressure from the residents who demanded improvements for the neighborhood, the Integrated Unit Laura Rosa started operating in the 1st grade building, opening enrollments for 600 students; attendance short of the expected, if we consider the physical structure available: 19 classrooms only for the 1st grade, the possibility of offering at least two shifts and the huge population concentration in the area. An underutilized building that seemed to be heading towards the same destiny as the Gymnasium in *Avenida dos Franceses*, showing the inefficiency of educational policies as an old mark of the Maranhão governments<sup>7</sup>. While the population was waiting for the other building to be opened, where the high school would be located, the Secretary of Education agreed to establish a University College there, through an agreement with the Federal University of Maranhão.

In this perspective, although the chosen building and site remain and can be observed through the representations recorded in the press, the role of the institution as designed technology seems obscure, since the ways of operating, the various discommodities and irregularities implicit in the dynamics of any school space, as well as the exits, conveniences and surrounding environments that derive from these establishments, and even the quality of light and heating or not of the classrooms were not mentioned or described in the mining of the records. In this logic, although the designer is treated as a quality of architecture and construction exacerbating its symbolic and strategic image of power and acclaim, in reality it has real and distinct meanings and senses for teachers, insofar as pedagogical or educational practices, resources in use, or intentionalities in learning stem from the way a school was designed to design the ideas of institutions, education, and consumer public that it advocates and was created for: the promotion of mass production and social efficiency. Movements of industrial efficiency that emphasized particular forms of school organization, social control, and differentiated courses, where technology in referencing school architecture, pedagogical ordering, school equipment as the material culture of the school, school times, compartmentalization of curriculum and subjects, divisions by class, age and cognitive maturity, and the resources used, is placed within a particular pedagogical form; system of production of the school form of schooling that relies on industrial efficiency, social control, and technology to produce a managerial and material form that is intended to reproduce or produce specific practices according to disembodied intentionalities (VIÑAO FRAGO, 2001).

According to the rector José Maria Cabral Marques, *Vila Palmeira* was chosen because the buildings

[...] had everything to be a great undertaking for the University, especially in the social and educational aspects. It was a poor neighborhood, totally unprotected in the area of schools, and we were going to give it a quality school. I told Governor João Castelo [1979-1982]:

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<sup>7</sup> According to Castellanos, "The cinematic instantaneity of the governments in Maranhão of the I and II Reinado, and the non-continuity or mismanagement in the governmental corral (MEIRELLES, 2001), sustained by the struggles of the partisan dualism between conservatives and liberals, brought with them the non-compliance of reforms in the long term, whether in the social or educational scenario. Presidents of expedients who could not (by the dynamism in the constant administrative change of their functions) plan reforms aimed at the improvement of the public good and much less execute them; if we consider that by the personal vanity of some governors, instead of completing some great works already started, they preferred to discard them, thus erasing the public image of their predecessors" (2007, p. 82). As examples of this stagnation of policies without application, we can also mention the institution of normal schools for the training of teachers that, according to the province presidents and/or state governors, "did not have the expected effect", mainly because the gap between the theoretical preparation received by the trainees and the difficult reality of schools in the interior of Maranhão was huge (CASTELLANOS, 2007), and the operation of school groups that, in fact, were marked by precariousness in terms of physical facilities and training/appreciation of their teachers (SILVA, 2017).

"Governor, you will win and you won't have to maintain these buildings. The University will keep them. You leave the teachers from the 1st grade, who are already there, and, if you can, give us some more administrative staff, to help us with the 2nd grade; as for the teachers and students from the 2nd grade, they will be our responsibility. He was great. He understood the social significance for that neighborhood and did as I had asked, without putting up any resistance [...] We established that only those who lived there could study at *Vila Palmeira College*, because, otherwise, soon, the quality of the school would rise and everyone would want to send their children there, even if there was a selection test, as in fact happened (FARIA & MONTENEGRO, 2005, p. 297).

Beyond the "social and educational aspect" or the "social significance", the solution found, in fact, saved the University from the burden of constructing a building, and the state government from the responsibility of maintaining a school of those dimensions, avoiding something similar to what had happened with the *Gymnasio Polivalente* on *Avenida dos Franceses*. Thus, after a peregrination through the city center, from the *Cristo Rei Palace* (1968-1971)<sup>8</sup>, *Quinta do Macacão* (1972-1973)<sup>9</sup> and *Rua das Hortas* (1974-1975)<sup>10</sup> and through buildings such as *Pomba*<sup>11</sup> and *Pimentão*<sup>12</sup> in the *Bacanga Campus* (1975-1979), the *Colégio Universitário* was preparing its transfer to *Vila Palmeira*, with the objective of accomplishing its expansion as an Application School. However, the decision to guarantee all vacancies for those living in the neighborhood, in order to "give them a quality school", was not established immediately. In January 1980,

The Coordinator of the 1st grade ordered the suspension of the enrollment of new students in the Integrated Unit Laura Rosa in *Vila Palmeira*, which last year enrolled six hundred students and now, due to the new rule established, has received only four hundred students, because many have gone there in vain, without getting the expected vacancies, A fact that has been angering many teachers and parents who are forced to leave their children without a school, since they can't pay the expensive monthly fees demanded by the private schools. They also say that, according to what is said, this is due to the fact that the building of that establishment has been given by the Secretary of Education to the Federal University of Maranhão [...] parents of students [...] possessed of a great revolt reported the situation in which their children live at the moment, without getting places to study [...] One of the employees of Laura Rosa, who did not want to give her name, emphasized: "this situation is really very difficult, because *the children here are generally daughters of poor parents, who cannot afford private schools and, sometimes, not even buses every day to another distant place, and what we see is that they are accepting registrations only from the veterans, and who needs to enter to study, how is that?*" (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980a, p. 6, our emphasis).

It can be seen that, at the beginning, the University did not intend to attend the entire contingent of the Village, perhaps because it wanted to level the students by selection, as was the tradition of the College, or because it wanted to include other nearby neighborhoods, given the lack of schools in that region of the city, or even because it did not intend or could not afford to hire enough teachers to do so. It is also noted that the employees of the Integrated Unit, absorbed by the University under the terms of the agreement, were people linked to the community who defended the parents' point of view in conflict with the interests of the school. Only with these movements that took place before the inauguration of the high school building, where the tactics of appropriation and resistance of those residents to resort to the press to show their dissatisfaction became evident, and from the first contacts of the university with the neighborhood, did the restructuring project start to gain its definitive contours, by determining the priority to that community:

One of the neighborhoods of São Luís, with a stable but low-income population, *Vila Palmeira* had an accentuated unemployment rate. Despite having a labor force in which unqualified labor predominated, it showed interest in improving living conditions (COLUN, 1980, p. 2).

<sup>8</sup> In this period, the rectory and the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Languages of FUM functioned there.

<sup>9</sup> Square in the historic center of São Luís.

<sup>10</sup> In this period, the Faculty of Education of FUM functioned there.

<sup>11</sup> Current Center for Basic Studies, in the "university city" (name of the university's campus).

<sup>12</sup> Current Center for Social Sciences, in the "university city".

The high school building opened its doors on March 15, 1980, to celebrate the first year of João Castelo's administration (1979-1982). On the occasion, it was announced "it is a University College, whose school clientele would be the students of the *Vila Palmeiras* neighborhood" (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980b, p. 4). Inaugural act that can be read as a synthesis or convergence point of several interests: of the government, which wanted to imprint its mark associating its name to that work; of the educational policy initiated with the idea of a Polyvalent Gymnasium that ended up materializing in another school modality; of the professors and technicians of the University who wanted to restructure the University College, making it effective as a school-laboratory, internship field, vehicle for the improvement of teaching and space for permanent and adult education; of the residents of *Vila Palmeira* who in their majority were not educated and could not pay for the education of their children, but dreamed of seeing them in a public and qualified College. In this moment of representational struggles (BARROS, 2003), it was the governor who apparently had the upper hand. In the midst of the poor children, he linked his image to that historical achievement. Authority, coercion, and reactions, which reinforce in the powerful concealed devices of self-coercion, characterizing "[...] each social formation or figuration from the specific network of interdependencies that link individuals to each other, [understanding them directly] in their dynamics, reciprocity, and in the relations maintained by the different groups" (ELIAS, 2001, p. 23). Symbolic image (PESAVENTO, 2012) reinforced in the speech of the Secretary of Education, Raimundo Medeiros Lobato, when relating the educational policy of the State to what was just a horizon pursued by the University College.

Improving the quality of education is to adapt it to the reality of the learner, is to give real conditions for learning, offering more motivated teachers, because better trained and paid, offering school material, facilities and equipment essential to the work of teachers, is to make learning an answer to the enigmas and problems of life (O ESTADO MARANHÃO, 1980b, p. 4).

The social agents present at that ceremony, on the other hand, also used in their own way, within the possibilities and in an unplanned or perhaps even unconscious way, the visibility given by the newspapers to the event. If the government used the show to promote itself, they silently celebrated the achievement obtained by their families who resisted the possibility of transferring the Integrated Unit to another space and had their complaints heard, by saying that "[...] the State governor and the Secretary of Education should take action so that the Laura Rosa Unit does not leave here, because it serves many children who need to study with the advantage of being close to where we live." (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980a, p. 6). No less symbolic image, the patriotic gesture of the governor and his secretary of education, holding the national and state flags, which had the political purpose of producing the representation of a government that valued education as a way to "[...] make Maranhão contribute to the solution of the great national and regional problems" (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980c, p. 7). This gesture was accompanied by the crowd gathered there, which, although caught by the same newspapers in a posture of reverence for national symbols, was not only made up of active participants in the ceremony or civic cult; it occupied, in fact, the space that was about to be "[...] vacated for the University of Maranhão" (O ESTADO DO MARANHÃO, 1980a, p. 6) and appropriated it as the only way to obtain some currency of exchange for the symbolic goods market, in order to capitalize possibilities of social ascension through school success (MICELI, 2007; LAHIRE, 2008; ZAGO, 2011).

With this, COLUN<sup>13</sup> had its new profile outlined by cultural exchanges arising from the intersection of interests among teachers, trainees, technicians, students and community residents. The power relationship responsible for the implementation of a College of Application that, if it remained restricted until then, to the classificatory circle of the university, from 1980 on, it embraces the periphery as target audience; restructuring not only in physical, disciplinary, organizational or school grammar terms, but, above all, in terms of its specific culture or unique identity. In other words, "economic and social relations are not prior to or determinative of cultural ones; they are themselves

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<sup>13</sup> This is the acronym that has identified the College since 1980.

fields of cultural practice and cultural production - which cannot be deductively explained by reference to an extra-cultural dimension of experience" (HUNT, 1992, p. 9).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Within the political-cultural perspective of modernization of the Brazilian society, referenced in the North-American civilizational pattern, whose social form has as axes the urban-industrial dynamization and the search for universality of the schooling processes, which can guarantee that the cultural inheritance prevails over the hereditary factor, the idea of democracy as a more modern configuration of the current political form gained strength in the middle of the authoritarian regime; "[...] singular men forming among themselves figurations of diverse types or societies that are nothing but figurations of interdependent men" (ELIAS, 2001, p. 41), where the freedom of action and the position's room for maneuver depend on the balance of tensions imposed by the principles of differentiation and cultural deviations.

Thus, the educational projects financed by the World Bank under the MEC-USAID agreements, which aimed to disseminate model polyvalent gymnasiums for educational reform, brought in their core pedagogical conceptions derived from the North American school model. At the same time, Brazilian universities were urged to recognize in primary and secondary education the support point to transform Brazilian education, in tune with the pace of capitalist modernization; a situation that implied the engendering of a new school culture with a democratic base.

Inserted in the context of modernization of education at the state level, the transfer of the University College to *Vila Palmeira* in 1980 was made possible by an agreement between the Federal University and the State Secretary of Education. Mediated by the Education Expansion and Improvement Program (PREMEN) in the scope of the MEC/USAID agreements, the implementation of the *Colegio de Aplicação* in that neighborhood was the strategy adopted by the state government and the university with the objective of expanding the educational services to reach needy areas; making 1st and 2nd grade education more dynamic would make possible the insertion of the popular classes in the agro-industrial market and, above all, would constitute the internship field for UFMA undergraduates.

Thus, the University College of the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA), created in 1968 as a 3rd grade preparatory school for higher education, became an Application College for the internship field of the university's undergraduates in 1972 (COLUN, 1972). Its transfer to the PREMEN building, recently built in the *Vila Palmeira* neighborhood, in 1980, is due to the inability of its function as an internship field, which it had been carrying out painfully, not only because of the insufficient capacity to absorb students and the high selectivity, but also due to the restricted offer to the then 2nd grade and the lack of a building of its own for its operation.

For the community, the school represented the hope for the improvements that its residents had fought for since the occupation of the area in the 1960s and 1970s. Underprivileged social groups of rural origin, with little schooling (inhabitants of *Vila Palmeira* and some neighboring neighborhoods - *Barreto*, *Radional*, *João Paulo* and others), formed the public served by COLUN. A population stigmatized by the negative image circulating in the city, notably through the press, where they were represented under the sign of violence and misery. A growing population that originated from the urban swelling verified on the island of São Luís during the decades from 1960 to 1980.

From this interaction, a social field was formed by members of the community, of the College and of the University, in confrontation with state and government educational policies, who positioned themselves around various intersecting interests and on different fronts in defense of this school space they reinvented: active interlocutors, mostly belonging to the place of dispute, which by singularizing their actions gave it an identity of its own and particular to this institution; *Gymnasium Polivalente* in principle that materialized in another school modality: the Application College of Maranhão, effected not only as a school-laboratory and internship field of the university degrees, but also a vehicle for the improvement of teaching and a space for permanent and adult education. A school culture in formation that is inserted in a local culture, a COLUN that by reinventing itself, projects in a poor neighborhood of São Luís, a rise in the educational, social and cultural sphere.

\* The translation of this article into English was funded by the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de Minas Gerais – FAPEMIG – through the program of supporting the publication of institutional scientific journals.

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**Submitted:** 09/09/2020

**Approved:** 05/01/2021