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FELIPE TIAGO GOMES AND THE STUDENT MOVEMENT FOR THE CREATION OF POPULAR GYMNASIUMS INSPIRED BY VÍCTOR RAÚL HAYA DE LA TORRE: MEMORY OF AN IDEAL

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ABSTRACT

The study deals with the student movement for popular gymnasiums creation, started in 1943, in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, under the leadership of Felipe Tiago Gomes, originally named Poor Ginasian Campaign (CGP in Portuguese), inspired by the action of Peruvian political leader Haya de la Torre. In the late 1940s, the movement received the federation support, acquired a national character, and was renamed as National Campaign of Free Schools (CNEG in Portuguese), with the aim of promoting junior secondary education throughout the Brazilian territory. In this sense, a historical narrative about the creation movement of "Free Gymnasiums" was traced, denominated CNEG, based on texts, testimonials and documents written about the Campaign, where one can find the records, interpretations and memory of the movement.

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INTRODUCTION

The study deals with the history of Felipe Tiago Gomes' protagonism, inspired by the action of Peruvian political leader Haya de la Torre, with the secondary school students' movement from the city of Recife, Pernambuco, started in 1943, called the "Poor Ginasian Campaign" (CGP), from the memory's perspective. In the late 1940s, the student movement, aiming to promote popular gymnasiums' creation, took on a new policy, gained a national character, and became officially known as the "National Campaign of Free Schools" (CNEG). In the 1950s, the proposal for the CNEG's "free gymnasium" creation was disseminated throughout Brazil, by the Federation's states, in its various locations, and became also known as the "cenegista movement". In this sense, the study highlights the trajectory and currents of thought that instigated Felipe Tiago Gomes, a young man who, in the 1940s, still a high school student, began reading about American anti-imperialism in Latin America and around the

world in the library in who worked, and then in Law School, when the Campaign for the "Free Gymnasiums" creation began to materialize. Without losing sight of the student movement's memory in Recife, a historical narrative that highlights the participation of Felipe Tiago Gomes in the movement for the "free gymnasiums" creation was traced, called CNEG, based on texts, statements and written documents about the Campaign, which contains the records, interpretations and memory of the movement. The documents used consist of several publications, including books, articles, official texts and, mainly, notes published by the press, where one can find the speeches and representations about the "cenegista movement" conveyed at that moment. One agrees with Maurice Halbwachs (1950), when the author points out in his classic text, "The Collective Memory", that memory is constituted within society, of their references, in which individuals and social groups move in a given time, space, forms of expression, language etc. In this sense, history and memory were conceived in their relationship of

complementarity and as a product of the same reality. Therefore, memory is constituted not only as a source, but also as a means of expression, as a set of social voices to be resumed. It is these elements that make the even more intense dialogue between History and Collective Memory possible, as a way of representing the past experience. Memory converts itself as an intellectual construction that entails a selective representation of the past, which is never only that of the individual, but of the individual or groups of individuals, inserted in a family, social, national context, and can be presented through documents or even through testimonials, evidences, among other modalities. In this way, memory becomes the historian's raw material by becoming the source, resource and object of historical work. (Fentress; Wickham, 1992). Thus, the study focuses on the student movement initially called the Poor Ginasian Campaign (CGP), from its origin, inspired by the action of Peruvian intellectual and political leader Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, based on texts containing information on the subject, in addition to reports and publications, testimonies and evidences about CNEG's historical memory and Felipe Tiago Gomes' life trajectory of, as the movement's protagonist..

Felipe Tiago Gomes and the contact with Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre's ideas: Before becoming a secondary school student, Felipe Tiago Gomes had never left his hometown of Picuí, in the state of Paraíba. He would leave for the first time to take the junior secondary school entrance exam aiming to continue his studies in the city of Campina Grande. However, leaving his homeland to enter secondary school in another place, his only option, was not very easy. At that time, few boys completed primary school and entered secondary school. Felipe Tiago belonged to the first class of the city that went out to study far from home. (Garcia, 1976, p. 18). The city of Picuí suffered from constant dry months and long droughts that punished the cattle and its residents. Despite the financial difficulties, the boy's father decided for him to leave Picuí, although he did not even know how to leave that city. In 1936, Felipe Tiago had to go to Campina Grande by himself. He took the entrance exams and passed, ranking fifth. His father, very pleased with the news, immediately agreed to the boy's stay in the city. In Campina Grande, Felipe studied at Colégio Pio XI. Although he missed his family and friends in his early months, he did very well in his studies.

Felipe Tiago had to make a great sacrifice to attend school. The absence of family members, the lack of resources, the family's struggle to send change. Whenever he could, he returned part of the money he received from home. He was aware of the lack that money made, "it was a total shortage". However, he considered it had very good will on the part of the school board, as he did not starve inside the school. Felipe was impressed by the fact that the rich students, "those who had money and could afford school", would not leave the gymnasium. From his class, only he and Inácio Batista, precisely the poorest, got to college, the others only studied until junior high school (Garcia, 1976, p. 19, translated). The same year he graduated from junior secondary school, on May 13, 1940, Felipe Tiago's mother passed away. Four years later, his father also died. When he finished gymnasium at Diocesano Pio XI, he once again had difficulty moving to another city, precisely because of his lack of financial resources. (Gomes, 1976, p. 97-8). At that time, schools were few or far between, but they had good libraries and labs. It was also few students attending secondary school. "Only those who

really had the conditions, or a lot of courage, could study" (Gomes, 1976, p. 98, translated). Felipe considered that perhaps, because of the small number of schools, there was only a small elite studying, or parachutists like him, who decided to study amongst a privileged elite out of stubbornness and courage. Pernambuco welcomed, in January 1941, a penniless young man who ventured to obtain a bachelor's degree. He did not know Recife, a huge city, the third in Brazil (Gomes, 1976, p. 98). Soon after arriving in Recife, Felipe Tiago Gomes got a vacancy and moved to the Student House of Pernambuco. Getting a place at the Student House was a dream coming true for many boys at the time. There he would answer the phone, assist the people, clean the floor and wash the bathrooms. Soon after, he was promoted to work at the Library, where he began to let himself loose. The Pre-Legal Course would last for two years. Felipe's flunk in the first year aroused his greater interest in reading and research. With more time, working in the Library, he devoted himself to books with greater use. From then on, he researched and acquired, according to him, "a reasonable general culture". With no money for the movies, theater and other types of entertainment, he took the time to read and kept researching. He learned a lot from exchanging ideas with students from other fields, such as Engineering and Medicine. Thus, he became aware of the possibilities of teaching, broadened his view of the world and, especially, of Brazil.

It was on this occasion that, to his delight, he came across the book *Inside Latin America* by American writer John Gunther. Felipe Tiago Gomes visualized the experience carried out in Peru by the "university students who created free courses for the poor classes". At that time, he "felt in his own flesh the suffering of the poor boy who desired emancipation through culture [...]" (CNEG, 1953, p. 1, translated). For Gunther, Haya de la Torre, a student, became "one of the most remarkable men in the Americas", becoming "a revolutionary chief almost overnight", when Leguía was Peru's president (Gunther, 1943, p. 215, translated). In 1921, the Popular Universities were founded in Lima, where, at night, students gave free instruction to students who were too poor to attend regular courses, whose motto: "Long live Culture! Long live the School!" (Gunther, 1943, p. 225). Popular Universities were named after González Prada, an initiative conceived and largely organized by Haya de la Torre, with the participation of José Carlos Mariátegui (Teixeira, 2001). Haya de la Torre, in his 1931 political project, increasingly emphasized the importance of education and culture in face of the need to "culturally liberate the millions of men" who were oblivious to every possibility of a "truly civilized life", considering it to be essential to "realistically distinguish the way and take the first steps" (Haya de la Torre, 1931, translated). Thus, the problems faced by poor students in gaining access to secondary education in Brazil, with which Felipe Tiago identified himself, would become the focus of their interest. Instigated by the ideal of providing access to junior secondary school and assisting the less fortunate, Felipe Tiago advocated the creation of a "free gymnasium" in the city of Recife. On the occasion, Felipe Tiago could count on the support of his colleagues, also secondary school students, when he mobilized a campaign in favor of the poor ginasian. The gymnasium, the result of the movement made by the group, would be created to serve the students of that locality and would work in the same way as the Peruvian experience, according to the group.

The student movement for the creation of popular gymnasiums: The discovery of the Peruvian leader experience led Felipe Tiago to inquire about the world problems and his condition as a high school student in the city of Recife. At that time, students were experiencing the conflicts and contradictions caused by World War II and were clamoring for freedom at rallies against Germany, Japan and Italy. The city of Recife, kept in the dark, for security measures, "suffered the most from the dictatorship" (Gomes, 1965, p. 18, translated). Felipe Tiago reflected on how many of his comrades went to war, "like Amando Cunha, who, after returning, was no longer able to continue his studies, he had to stop" (Gomes, 1976, p. 104, translated). He did not go. So he kept thinking about taking a stand on the facts. "If the others went to fight in Italy" (Gomes, 1976, p. 104, translated), in defense of the country, he should also prepare a front here in Brazil. Felipe Tiago considered that the greatest internal enemy that Brazil had was illiteracy. He was also having a conscience problem when he thought of founding the Campaign. "For this reason, influenced by Castro Alves and even more by the reading he had made of Haya de La Torre" (Gomes, 1976, p. 104, translated), he decided to start the movement. "What good is the liberation of the world if Brazil remains a slave?" (Gomes, 1976, p. 104, translated). Haya de la Torre "had created literacy schools for the Indians, whose teachers were students, who taught for free" (Gomes, 1965, p. 18-9). Hence the resolution to create a free gymnasium for poor students.

The first meeting was summoned by Felipe Tiago and took place at the Student House on July 29, 1943. Carlos Luis de Andrade, Florisval Silvestre Neto, Joel Pontes and Eurico José Candegue attended it, students from the Pernambuco Gymnasium (today, Pernambuco State School) and the Carneiro Leão School, two by two. In Recife, the Pernambucano Gymnasium, even being an official establishment, was not entirely free. Nationwide, there was not "one establishment without school fees!" (Gomes, 1965, p. 20, translated). Hence the difficulties faced by modest classes in pursuing high school education. During the meeting, Felipe Tiago explained the movement goals. His words were well received by those present, who soon joined the Campaign. Thus, instigated by the ideal of education democratization, they came to call the movement, which began there, the Poor Ginasian Campaign (CGP) (Gomes, 1965).

The Poor Ginasian Campaign (CGP)

Although the movement was formed from the beginning by a heterogeneous group, according to Pontes (1978), what they originally intended was to found a free gymnasium in Recife. A gymnasium with no uniform, no hiring teachers because they themselves would teach; no room rent, because some would be borrowed by God's grace; the books would appear by donation, their own would serve, though they had already been bought in the city's second-hand bookstores. However, what to do in the face of absolutely unavoidable expenses? They would have to ask and earn... These questions would be resolved afterwards (Pontes, 1978, p. 69-72). Felipe Tiago insisted on the idea that, firstly, it was necessary to have the Gymnasium running and then take care of the rest. How to get money? They had to raise money by asking or working. It was when they had the idea to start the Pernambuco Student Theater (Garcia, 1976, p. 43). A "golden book" was also created to collect "the opinion of the good men of the earth" on the work begun with the Campaign. These men would be the

group's own teachers. Subsequently, they provoked a letter from Álvaro Lins, "all praise of the best tone" to facilitate the group's transit in unfamiliar areas (Pontes, 1978, p. 73, translated). This made it possible for Campaign members to ask for help from traders and industrialists, and with the money raised, they were able to publish The CGP Bulletin. The CGP Bulletin No. 1 was released on August 30, 1943, as a publication of the Poor Ginasian Campaign (CGP), with the purpose of spreading the idea of creating a free gymnasium and seeking the population's support. In his article, Felipe Tiago pointed out: "Recife sees the emergence, now and for the first time in Brazil, a group of enthusiastic young men to open new ways and turn new lights on in the minds of dozens of poor boys" (Gomes, 1965, p. 23-5, translated). In the "Bulletin", Felipe Tiago sought to make explicit that the Campaign would be launched to cater to those who have only primary school and cannot, for financial reasons, continue their studies (Gomes, 1965). The repercussion of "The CGP Bulletin" – as a vehicle for spreading the Campaign's objectives – contributed with new and valuable adhesions and further motivated the group to continue spreading the movement. The Campaign had repercussions in other states of the Federation, so the group had the press support and managed to increase the number of adhesions to the movement in favor of the free gymnasium creation. From July 1943 to July 1944, the movement's promoters were concerned with spreading the ideal of the Poor Ginasian Campaign. In this sense, "they went through Recife's suburbs, sometimes performing plays, sometimes giving lectures at the Workers Educational Centers" (CNEG, 1953, p. 2, translated). From April 15 to 21, 1944, under the sponsorship of the CGP, the "1st National Culture Week" was held in Pernambuco. At the time, most of the founders of CGP had already entered higher education. Thus, the 1st National Culture Week was considered the biggest event of the Campaign activities' first year. At the same time, visits to higher schools and collegiate institutes had already been carried out in Recife, with lectures and flyers about the movement.

"Castro Alves" Gymnasium creation and the Popular Gymnasiums Campaign: The Campaign's first anniversary was celebrated with the movement around the installation of the first "Free Gymnasium. Due to the need for specified direction to agree with the Ministry of Education, the first Board of the movement was elected, which was organized as follows: 1st Counselor, Felipe Tiago Gomes; 2nd Counselor, José Rafael de Menezes; 3rd Counselor, Genivaldo Wanderley; Artistic Department Director, Severino Florêncio Teixeira; Finance Department Director, Clóvis Miranda; General Secretary, Severino Oliveira; Artistic Department Secretary, Joel Pontes; Finance Department Secretary, Stélio dos Santos; and Advertising Department Secretary, José Irineu Cabral; Newsletter Director: Felipe Gomes; and Editor, Genivaldo Wanderley. At that time, the board of directors and the name of the new school were also elected. The Campaign began to receive its first contributions. With the aids received and the income from the Pernambuco Student Theater shows, 50 school desks were acquired. The year 1944 was considered to have ended with two major victories: the acquisition of 50 desks for the Castro Alves "Gymnasium" Admission Course and the Miguel Couto Library, which were solemnly opened with fiery speeches (Gomes 1989, p. 41). The year of 1945 was considered a sad one for the Campaign. In January, students eagerly awaited recognition of the "Castro Alves" Gymnasium. According to the CNEG Report (1953, p. 8),

more than 70 students were prepared to attend the exam board. In February, young Felipe Tiago Gomes, Genivaldo Wanderley and Juarez Gomes Lopes, almost penniless, on a FAB plane, went to Rio de Janeiro to join the Ministry of Education and Health to handle the official functioning of Castro Alves Gymnasium, with no great successes. Admission examinations were performed, but not recognized. Even so, the "first series" were already being held at the Pernambucano Institute building, at Avenida Rosa e Silva, 1627, kindly provided by the academic José Brito, who was also part of the Campaign's Deliberative Council.

Faced with the negative answer, "after asking a lot and achieving nothing, they returned disappointed with the public authorities. Thankfully, Madam Darcy Vargas ordered to pay for their accommodation, otherwise they would have been arrested" (CNEG, 1953, p. 8, translated). The reporter of the newspaper *O Globo* called them "The Three Musketeers." However, "discouragement almost struck down the intrepid phalanx of idealists" (CNEG, 1953, p. 8, translated). Following the return of the Campaign leaders to Pernambuco, in view of the problems they faced, and amid the climate of political effervescence in the country, there was the dispersion of the founding group, with the adhesion of many of its members to the electoral campaign. For the first time, there was a deep divergence between the leaders of the organization. There was a division in the group, "with dismal consequences." At the time, Brazil was agitated by violent political campaign. "Felipe Tiago Gomes and others left the Campaign and became involved in the electoral turmoil that excited the four corners of the country" (CNEG, 1953, p. 9, translated). At that same year (1945), the leaders of the movement, instigated by new ideals, thought of changing the organization's name to "Popular Gymnasium Campaign". For Felipe Tiago Gomes, "Poor Ginasian Campaign" gave the impression that it was a sentimental work. The struggle undertaken at that moment began to have a different meaning. Popular Gymnasium Campaign lent "the idea of joining forces, of people's struggles in defense of the education of our people. The right name for a well-timed Campaign" (Gomes, 1965, p. 60, translated). Despite the conflicts arising from the new political climate experienced by the movement founders, "after the electoral meltdown in which almost all members of the Campaign took a stand, it was hinted they should reunite the movement's pioneers" (Gomes, 1965, p. 60, translated). According to Felipe Tiago Gomes, new values were discovered, with "the resurgence of new ideas, well in line with the new philosophy of life, emerged from the ashes of World War II" (Gomes, 1965, p. 61, translated).

In January 1946, the commission formed by the CGP leaders programmed a new visit to the Republic Capital in order to recognize the course held by the "Castro Alves" Gymnasium. During the trip's route, the commission had the opportunity to visit the newspaper *A Tarde*, in Salvador. The commission's passage was reported by the newspaper of January 26, 1946 with the publication entitled: "Pernambuco Students Embassy". The matter contained the purposes and actions performed with the movement. (Gomes, 1965, p. 64). CGP leaders sought to spread the Campaign's action program in the newspapers of the cities they passed. In Rio de Janeiro, the Minister received the intention of the boys with sympathy and determined the recognition of the Gymnasium. According to Felipe Tiago Gomes, on April 10, the first official entrance exams were held for the "first free gymnasium to function as

an entirely private initiative in Brazil" (Gomes, 1965, p. 64, translated).

The national campaign of free schools (cneg): In 1946, the founding group gets stronger again, being also held the 3rd Culture Week. At the time, the Communist Party was at its height, making its leader the federal district's senator. However, to prevent the movement from being confused with a communist work by using the word "popular", owned by the party, the organization's name was changed to Campaign of Free Schools. Therefore, that same year, the movement had two denominations: "Popular Gymnasiums Campaign" at the beginning, and "Campaign of Free Schools" (Gomes, 1965, p. 65) at the end; and the 3rd Culture Week would be very successful. In 1947, Felipe Tiago served as president of the Faculty of Law Academic Directory and mobilized students to raise funds in support of the Campaign of Free Schools to help the Castro Alves Gymnasium, as well as to found another gymnasium. At the time, the Castro Alves Gymnasium already had a 3rd grade in operation, but still had the same financial difficulties - with no aid and no subsidies. There remained only "the anonymous work of Geraldo Magella Costa, Itamar Vasconcelos, Péricles de Souza Dantas, Terezinha Santos, Laércio Pacheco, and others" (CNEG, 1953, p. 10, translated), who upheld the free education ideal. Back in Rio, Felipe Tiago had the opportunity to expose "the popular education plan" started in Pernambuco to Minister Clemente Mariani, in 1943, with the purpose of creating free gymnasiums. He returned to Recife with the promise of help and subsidy from the Ministry of Education, also glimpsing the possibility of installing other gymnasiums, which would spread throughout the country (Gomes, 1965, p. 67).

At that time, it was believed that a new phase was being inaugurated in the movement's history for the creation of free gymnasiums. This phase would be characterized by the Campaign's diffusion by the Federation States. Thus, to this end, the movement's leaders delegated to Felipe Tiago Gomes the power to represent the Campaign of Free Schools in any part of the national territory. Felipe Tiago, after graduating from SESI, where he worked, obtained a ticket from the Air Base Commander to Belém do Pará, to where he boarded, on September 12, 1948. Thereby, the struggle for the adhesion of the States and Municipalities to the free gymnasiums cause began. In Belém, Felipe Tiago discovered the formula to be followed for the campaign's dissemination in the Federation States. As President of the Recife Central Student Directory, he sought the support of the Academic Directories and the State Student Unions in the federation units. The transportation from one state to another would be at the expense of the state and the accommodation would be at the expense of City Halls. Besides Pará, Felipe Tiago visited the states of Amazonas, Maranhão, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará and Paraíba, spreading the idea of free gymnasiums, seeking the press and local authorities support. Upon returning to Pernambuco, he accounts for the mission undertaken and communicates the goal of moving forward to the Southern States with the same purpose as early as 1948. Thus, Felipe Tiago continues his marathon through the States towards the south, leaving, initially to Alagoas, heading towards Sergipe, Bahia, Espírito Santo, Federal District, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Upon arriving in the Federal District, after an interview with Minister Clemente Mariani, who was in favor of the Campaign, Felipe Tiago received guidance from Lourenço Filho, Director of the National Department of Education, who

advised him to draft a campaign statute nationwide. In Rio de Janeiro, together with the president of the Faculty of Law Academic Directory, they drew up plans for the movement's expansion in the state, where it received the support of the Secretary of Education. In order to give the movement national scope and following the recommendations of Lourenço Filho, Felipe Tiago returns to the South with the idea of holding a congress of free gymnasiums state representatives. On December 17, 1948, with the installation of the Castro Alves Gymnasium provisional headquarters, at 237 Barão de São Borja Street, the activities of the 1st National Campaign Congress in Recife began, under the chairmanship of Professor Geraldo Magella Costa.

The congress lasted until December 22. In addition to the Minister of Education representative, Dr. Valdemir Miranda, and the students from Pernambuco, representatives from Paraná, Paraíba and Bahia were present. The first statute, conferring national scope to the organization, which was based in Recife, was voted and approved by those present. The entity was renamed CNEG, and at that time the first National Board was elected, with Dr. Benedito Narciso da Rocha as President and Felipe Tiago Gomes as Delegate, alongside with the other states of the Federation. The idea of creating a permanent delegation in Rio de Janeiro to "carry out the Campaign program" mobilized Felipe Tiago to the Federal Capital, after completing Law School and returning from a trip to his homeland (Picuí, in the state of Paraíba), where he received honors and Pereira Lira's promise, Chief of the Presidency of the Republic civil House, to get him a job, although the situation did not go as he wished. On January 3, 1949, the Campaign Delegate arrived in Rio with no money and no job. In the Capital of the Republic, after a few visits, he stopped going to Catete Palace and went to the Federal Deputies offices, being nicely welcomed when he received a cash grant, at a time he considered hard (CNEG, 1953, p. 13).

The Legislative branch support contributed with favorable results to CNEG and great repercussion in the city of Rio de Janeiro press. At the time, the help of Paraíba Deputy Plínio Lemos competed for a meeting in the Legislative, on June 7, attended by representatives of the eleven states: Amazonas, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Espírito Santo, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Mato Grosso, São Paulo and Paraná. The round table, chaired by Deputy Munhoz da Rocha, was followed by an Education and Culture Committee of the Federal Senate, another of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio and another of the Brazilian Press Association (ABI in Portuguese). At the time, according to Felipe Tiago, Plínio Lemos presented the bill No. 199/49, published in the Congress Diary, which benefited the Campaign with the value of Cr\$ 520,000 (five hundred and twenty thousand cruises), although the amount was not paid by the Federal Government (Gomes, 1965, p. 84-5).

On the 8th, all newspapers from Rio and Niterói highlighted the event news. According to the CNEG Report (1953, p. 17-8), the Rio press contributed greatly to the success of the activities and provided invaluable services in spreading the Campaign's ideals. Thus, the enthusiasm for the *cenegista* cause with the encouragement of the press, politicians and the Ministry of Education, contributed to new and important adhesions to the movement. On July 12, 1949, the newspaper *Diário de Notícias* published:

I do not know this boy Felipe Tiago Gomes, who put in his head the idea that we need to democratize education in Brazil and who chose as his and his companions task to found free gymnasiums, and has already started five - in Amazonas, Pernambuco, Paraíba, Paraná and the state of Rio.

This NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF FREE SCHOOLS proposes to found 68 gymnasiums throughout the country. [...]. The next states to benefit from it are Espírito Santo and Paraíba with two gymnasiums each. [...].

There is, in the poor sections of our population [...] a real thirst for learning [...]. They are also the ones that deserve, in the first place, attention, in a country that is in the phase of economic development in which it has to have an increasing number of workers of a certain cultural level.

There is a request in the Assembly for a 5 million and three hundred thousand cruises credit to help, next year, the NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OF FREE SCHOOLS. Many parliamentarians may never have heard of this movement. Well, try to meet it.

Obviously, it is for the nation, unable to carry out the enormous work of education that is needed on its own, to help concretely, with indispensable reservations and precautions, but in a positive way, such movements. These movements show that there is still much generous boost in this country that does not back down from the astonishing mediocrity of so many sectors of public life. There are people wanting to move this thing forward. [...]. Poor people, millionaire with humanity (Gomes, 1965, p. 91-3, translated).

The year 1950 was considered prosperous for CNEG. More than 19 gymnasiums have appeared, "as if by charm, in the various regions of the country" (CNEG, 1953, p. 19, translated). In Felipe Tiago's opinion, Brazil would have woken up for a moment and became aware of the National Campaign for Free Schools. "On the *cenegista* ground, watered by the constant zeal of Brazilians interested in the progress and well-being of the nation, sprouted vigorous trees that were welcoming the castaways of Brazil's school situation" (CNEG, 1953, p. 19, translated). That same year, the II National Congress was held, when important decisions were made for the movement, "including the relocation of the Campaign headquarters to the Federal District" (CNEG, 1953, p. 22, translated). At the closing meeting, a new board was elected, as follows: Felipe Tiago Gomes - President; Antunes de Oliveira - 1st Vice President; João Gonçalves - General Secretary; João Antonio Monteiro - Chief Financial Officer. CNEG receives the first Federal aid (CNEG, 1953, p. 22, translated). Therefore, the 1950s began with a year of great victories. Of the 5 existing establishments in 1949, the number of "free gymnasiums" created by CNEG was increased to 26 in 1950. In addition to the Federal District (1), the states of Amazonas, Pará (1), Maranhão (1), Paraíba (3), Pernambuco (1), Alagoas (4), Espírito Santo (2), Mato Grosso (2) and Goiás (5) would be contemplated with the new *cenegista* schools. Visiting States and Municipalities, and touring the whole country, Felipe Tiago Gomes announced the project to create "free gymnasiums" in the places he passed, especially where this need was already beginning to occur. He publicized the Campaign's purposes and guided the creation of popular gymnasiums along the lines established by CNEG, most of the time getting the acceptance of his ideas and adherence to his

project by local leaders in the communities he visited. Thus, CNEG's creator manages to disseminate his project in various places of the Federation states. In Felipe Tiago Gomes' view, at that time, the “*cenegista* school” was beginning to establish itself throughout the country as a result, in part, of the community effort. The educational proposal, named National Campaign of Free Schools, represented a political alternative that enabled the articulation of private interests and the interests of the nation. In addition to receiving donations from the community, the Campaign also received grants and public resources to fund its actions, which enabled the installation of “free gymnasiums” and their dissemination throughout the country.

Final Considerations

The movement's history and memory for the popular gymnasiums cause, which began in the 1940s in Pernambuco, led by Felipe Tiago Gomes, were conceived in their intersections, based on a broader process involving trajectories and currents of anti-imperialist thoughts that circulated in Latin America and around the world. In addition, the “*cenegista* movement” history and memory is viewed by members of the founding group as the memory and history of an ideal, the fruit of Felipe Tiago Gomes' dream and (heroic) boldness, inspired by the action of the political leader Haya de la Torre in Peru. Thus, the “*cenegista* movement” memory and history would be constantly linked to the life story and the biographical and autobiographical memory of Felipe Tiago, considered its most important leader (an exemplary memory), the main protagonist and responsible for the CNEG diffusion in Brazil and the States of the Federation, where the secondary student's ideal materialized and concretized in the various locations of the Brazilian territory's vast extension, with the movement's “free gymnasiums” creation. In this sense, it was pointed out the absence of the nation (Cunha, 1991, p. 389) in the public educational services provision and the urgency in the secondary education provision, in response to the aspirations and popular demands, around the creation of public

or free gymnasiums, highlighting the resources matter (public and private) intended to maintain the “free gymnasiums”, under CNEG's responsibility, so that they could remain in this condition.

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