

# Young people affected by the dam burst in Brazil and their socialization processes

## *Jovens atingidos pelo rompimento de uma barragem no Brasil e seus processos de socialização*

### *Jóvenes afectados por la ruptura de una represa en Brasil y sus procesos de socialización*

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**Abstract:** The failure of the Fundão Dam in the city of Mariana (Minas Gerais, Brazil), which received iron ore tailings from Samarco Mineração, is considered the greatest socio-environmental disaster in Brazilian history. It is in this context that the reality of the participants of this study is inserted: young people from Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo enrolled in High School and who were attending Elementary School in the schools of the destroyed districts. We are interested in understanding how their socialization processes were affected at a time of change in social environments and forced insertion in an urban space, in the headquarters of Mariana-MG. The methodological course of the research included conducting interviews with young people from these sub-districts, organized into configuration profiles and evaluated in the light of bibliographic and documentary research, with consultation of the articles produced about these young people and published in the newspaper *A Sirene*. In this text, we analyze three of these newspaper articles. The interviewees brought important information about the loss of the quiet routine experienced in the communities before the disaster and about the difficulties faced after moving to the headquarters, such as the fear of violence and the prejudice faced. The Fundão dam burst caused trauma to many affected people, therefore, analyzing how this experience has been lived by young people can contribute to the production of scientific knowledge about the context.

**Keywords:** youths; socialization; prejudice.

**Resumo:** O rompimento da Barragem de Fundão, na cidade de Mariana (Minas Gerais, Brasil), que recebeu rejeitos de minério de ferro da Samarco Mineração, é considerado o maior desastre socioambiental da história brasileira. É nesse contexto que se insere a realidade dos participantes deste estudo: jovens de Bento Rodrigues e Paracatu de Baixo matriculados no Ensino Médio e que cursavam o Ensino Fundamental nas escolas dos subdistritos destruídos. Interessa-nos

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compreender como seus processos de socialização foram afetados em um momento de mudança nos ambientes sociais e inserção forçada em um espaço urbano, na sede de Mariana-MG. O percurso metodológico da pesquisa incluiu a realização de entrevistas com jovens desses subdistritos, organizadas em perfis de configuração e avaliadas à luz de pesquisa bibliográfica e documental, com consulta aos artigos produzidos sobre esses jovens e publicados no jornal *A Sirene*. Neste texto, analisamos três artigos desse jornal. Os entrevistados trouxeram informações importantes sobre a perda da rotina calma vivenciada nas comunidades antes do desastre e sobre as dificuldades enfrentadas após a mudança para a sede, como o medo da violência e o preconceito enfrentado. O rompimento da Barragem de Fundão causou traumas a muitas pessoas atingidas, portanto, analisar como essa experiência vem sendo vivida pelos jovens pode contribuir para a produção de conhecimento científico sobre o contexto.

**Palavras-chave:** juventude; socialização; preconceito.

**Resumen:** El rompimiento de la represa de Fundão, en la ciudad de Mariana (Minas Gerais, Brasil), que recibía relaves de mineral de hierro de Samarco Mineração, es considerado el mayor desastre socioambiental de la historia de Brasil. Es en este contexto que se inserta la realidad de los participantes de este estudio: jóvenes de Bento Rodrigues y Paracatu de Baixo matriculados en la escuela secundaria y que asistían a la escuela primaria en las escuelas de los subdistritos destruidos. Nos interesa comprender cómo se vieron afectados sus procesos de socialización en un momento de cambio en los entornos sociales e inserción forzada en un espacio urbano, en la sede de Mariana-MG. El curso metodológico de la investigación incluyó la realización de entrevistas a jóvenes de estos subdistritos, organizadas en perfiles de configuración y evaluadas a la luz de la investigación bibliográfica y documental, con la consulta de los artículos producidos sobre estos jóvenes y publicados en el periódico *A Sirene*. En este texto, analizamos tres de estos artículos periodísticos. Los entrevistados trajeron información importante sobre la pérdida de la rutina tranquila vivida en las comunidades antes del desastre y sobre las dificultades enfrentadas después de trasladarse a la sede, como el miedo a la violencia y los prejuicios enfrentados. La ruptura de la represa de Fundão causó trauma a muchas personas afectadas, por lo tanto, analizar cómo esta experiencia ha sido vivida por los jóvenes puede contribuir a la producción de conocimiento científico sobre el contexto.

**Palabras clave:** juventud; socialización; prejuicio.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the Doctorate research, which resulted in the drafting of this article, we became interested in understanding how the processes of socialization of the young population of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo, sub-districts of Mariana, Minas Gerais, Brazil, have been affected by the impacts of the collapse of the Fundão Dam in 2015, which destroyed their territories, caused deaths and resulted in a complex situation of precarious living arrangements. In this article, we have analyzed interviews given by young individuals in three articles published in *A Sirene* newspaper, created in 2016 by the impacted communities of Mariana-MG

and Barra Longa-MG, for recording the memories of the impacted communities and for reporting their fighting for a full process of complete reparation.

The breaking of that dam, which receiving ore tailings from Samarco Mineração S.A., controlled by Vale S.A. and BHP Ltd., on November 5, 2015, is considered the largest socioenvironmental disaster in Brazilian history (Minas Gerais, 2016; Brasil, 2017; Cáritas Brasileira Regional Minas Gerais, 2022a). The extension of the damages is still not fully known, but it is known it directly killed 19 people, left more than 1.000 families unsheltered in Mariana-MG, and was responsible for the leaking of 30 to 60 million cubic meters of waste into the environment, which caused the death of approximately 11 tons of fish, in addition to other incalculable impacts on the fauna, flora and history heritage (Brasil, 2017; Meneghin; Silva, 2018; Cáritas Brasileira Regional Minas Gerais, 2022b).

This event profoundly changed the lives of residents of all other 45 municipalities where the mud passed until finally flowing into the Atlantic Ocean. In Mariana-MG, two sub-districts were destroyed: Bento Rodrigues, with a population of approximately 600 and located six kilometers from the dam; and Paracatu de Baixo, with a population of approximately 500 and located 76 kilometers from the dam. Sub-districts of Camargos, Bicas, Ponte do Gama, Paracatu de Cima, Borba, Pedras and Campinas also had some of their properties impacted (Cáritas Brasileira Regional Minas Gerais, 2022; Meneghin; Silva, 2018).

That is the context where the reality of the participants of this research exists: the young population of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo enrolled in High School and who, at the time of the Fundão Dam burst, over ten years ago, were in Elementary School in the municipal schools of their sub-districts, which were also destroyed by the disaster and were provisionally installed at the Mariana-MG headquarters. At this time, these young people had to face other transition processes, in addition to those caused by the destruction of their communities, which involve entering adolescence; adaptation to larger schools with more students; being away from classmates and friends from the sub-districts, with whom they had been in class thus far; the creation of new sociability networks; the first professional and romantic experiences; expectations as to the compensation and family or collective relocation and the consequences on their routine; the arising of perspectives on adult life; facing the prejudice and stigmatization manifested against them by residents of the central portion of the municipality.

Even considering that the young population need to occupy environments that promote and facilitate positive social behaviors, to the impacted juveniles, their relationships passed to be crossed by a singular event, that may have impacted the way they socialize, since their individual practices would require the socializing frameworks that would be offered by the locations where they lived (Lahire, 2007), now destroyed. Thus, the main goal that guides the development of this research is to understand how the processes of socialization were affected in the school spaces and in other groups of conviviality for the youth of Bento Rodrigues and of Paracatu de Baixo, currently enrolled in High School.

Theoretically, the analysis is based on studies conducted in Brazil and abroad on juvenile socialization and deterritorialization. On that subject, the articles of Bernard Lahire (1997, 2002, 2007), Juarez Dayrell (2007, 2012), Juliana Reis (2019) and Maria da Graça Setton and Adriana Bozzetto (2020), among others, have substantiated the discussion on the socialization of young people. In the scope of the analysis on the subject of study, we have been able to use the contributions of Marcela Santos (2018), Roberta Fontes (2018) and Marta Maia (2020), among others.

Methodologically, the study is treating the subjective apprehensions of the juveniles of Bento Rodrigues and of Paracatu de Baixo through a qualitative approach capable of understanding the meaning attributed to their practices, beliefs and feelings, to evaluate the way they observe their processes of socialization in the interior of their historical and social context. To that effect, the methodological path has contemplated the construction of data through reflexive interviews based on semi-structured scripts with juveniles, organized into configuration profiles, a genre of scientific writing where data is interpreted through a defined interpretative guidance, presenting facts theoretically built and the contextualization of information provided by the interviewees according to the model adopted by Bernard Lahire (1997). Knowledge garnered from the interviews is being assessed from the standpoint of bibliographic research conducted based on two analysis categories and complemented by documentary research, that includes the exam of technical and legislation reports e search of articles published on the young population of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo, published in the *A Sirene* newspaper.

In the scope of this article, we are specifically interested in analyzing interviews granted by juveniles in articles published by the *A Sirene* newspaper. We

searched, among the 92 editions released at the time of the search, in December 2023, those that presented articles about young people and, among those found, we selected three, which refer to the impacts of the loss of territory in the lives of these young individuals: “*O que ninguém te perguntou?*”<sup>2</sup>, “*Nossa brincadeira é coisa séria*” and “*As conversas de calçada*”. For analyzing them, resorted to the theoretical contribution of the Education Sociology, especially based on juvenile socialization studies.

## 2 THE VOICES HIT IN THE A SIRENE NEWSPAPER

The newspaper *A Sirene*, primary source utilized for the analysis of data on this study has contributed to narrate the story and the memories of the people and the communities impacted from their own accounts. Since February 2016, the newspaper has been produced by a team comprised of professionals and victims of the Mariana-MG and Barra Longa-MG incident, and also counts on the punctual contribution of victims from other cities or communities along the Rio Doce Basin. Besides the columns, signed by professionals or institutions that act beside these groups, it is the characteristic of the newspaper to present the complete reports of the people that were interviewed, between quotation marks and without interpretation (Fontes, 2018).

The newspaper is published on a monthly basis, every month on the 5th, both digital and in print. From 2016 to June 2021, the newspaper was maintained with money obtained from donations made at the time of the collapse, through a Consent Decree (TAC) signed between the MPMG, the Comissão dos Atingidos pela Barragem de Fundão (CABF) and the Archdioceses of Mariana-MG. After that, the newspaper passed to be maintained through collective funding and donations. We agree with Marta Maia (2020), in her analysis about the critical use of journalistic narrative memoirs about the breaking of the Fundão Dam, that journalism is “a space of production of meaning in the interior of society”, that presents stories about events and individuals through the course of time.

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<sup>2</sup> Newspaper *A Sirene*. Texts used: *O que ninguém te perguntou* (ed. 12, p. 6-7, mar. 2017. Available in: [https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/edi\\_o\\_42\\_-\\_outubro\\_issuu](https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/edi_o_42_-_outubro_issuu)), *Nossa brincadeira é coisa séria* (ed. 42, p. 6-7, out. 2019. Available in: [https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/edi\\_o\\_42\\_-\\_outubro\\_issuu](https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/edi_o_42_-_outubro_issuu)) e *As conversas de calçada* (ed. 42, p. 10, out. 2019. Available in: [https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/a\\_sirene\\_mar\\_o\\_ed12\\_issuu](https://issuu.com/jornalasirene/docs/a_sirene_mar_o_ed12_issuu)).

In the case of *A Sirene*, starting from the moment of the surveys for the articles to be analyzed we noticed a participation of children, adolescents and juveniles. The scarce recurrence of these individuals on journalism was in general explained, amongst other factors, as an attitude of caution before the exposure of these individuals, of their experiences and traumas. At the same time, the researchers reinforced the necessity of hearing these groups, because they're also responsible for keeping alive the memories and stories of their communities (Santos, 2018; Lebourg, 2024). In this sense, even if they're not a strong presence in the articles, the newspaper *A Sirene* collaborates to the end that this group of impacted individuals may manifest their points of view concerning the consequences of the disaster in their lives.

Being a periodical that focuses almost exclusively on the challenges faced by the population impacted by the disaster of Fundão and through the whole extension of the Basin of Rio Doce, *A Sirene* is an example of journalistic practice that works with the "critical use of memoirs in extreme situations" (Maia, 2020, p. 2). Its analysis has collaborated to the reflection on the phenomenon, of the temporalities and of the experiences lived and narrated by the impacted people. Roberta Fontes (2018), in a study that analyzed the narrative disputes between hegemonical media (*Estado de Minas* and *Folha de S. Paulo*), institutional (the miners' newspaper) and anti-hegemonical (*A Sirene*), called out to the importance of the means of communication as mediators of social perception. The newspaper *A Sirene* was seen as a strategy of social organization of the impacted communities, of empowerment, resistance and struggle for the assurance of their rights. It presents itself, thus, as a strategy for communication, mobilization and elaboration of the challenges confronted and assumes a role of construction, along with the population, of an understanding of their new reality.

### **3 SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES AND THEIR CHALLENGES FOR THE YOUNG INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY THE COLLAPSE OF FUNDÃO DAM**

The concept of socialization, especially that of juvenile socialization, may collaborate with the discussion about what the participants of the research have experienced now that they have become teens. Through life, we cross environments and social groups that pass to form our personal history, in interactions able

to influence and transform our biological beings. We are socially and historically situated in communities and, there, we develop knowledge about ourselves and about the world. We are, as suggested by Bernard Lahire (2007), the product of several socialization processes and need to be understood from that perspective. Personality, preferences, practices, actions and reactions in childhood, youth, adulthood and old age “[...] are incomprehensible apart from the social relationships between them and the other members of the social constellation in which they are immersed” (Lahire, 2007, p. 24).

It is through socialization, an interdisciplinary concept that relates to the opportunities that the individuals have to build and rebuild (Setton; Bozzetto, 2020; Weiss, 2012), that we establish relationships with others, that we suffer influence from converging or diverging profiles, that we exercise our communication skills, that we define and redefine aspects of our personalities. In contemporary society, we are all exposed to multiple socialization processes, which occur for the constant transformation of our identities, which will be mutable all through life and will vary based on the choices we make, our interests and relationships, as highlighted by Juarez Dayrell (2007) in a study that analyzed the role of schools in the socialization of young individuals, especially those in popular layers.

Bernard Lahire (2007) defined socialization as a process whereby a biological being is transformed into a social being within a society. Socialization, associated to the subjectification processes and historic and social contexts where we are inserted, contributes to determining, during one’s entire life, the constitution of one’s behavioral and mental dispositions, one’s way of being and living in the world.

All social beings, including the young population, the focus of this research, are individuals whose identities are built based on the association of their personal characteristics and the experiences they live, through their social relations, as suggested by studies such as the one conducted by Bernard Lahire (1997), Juliana Reis (2019) and Maurício Perondi (2021). Usually immersed in deep processes of individualization, the way young people find their place in society tends to result, also, from a reaction to association of several socializing milestones (Lahire, 2007). Therefore, juvenile socialization may work as a mechanism for acquisition of knowledge and information, which influences the constant process of formation of the identities of these individuals, in the adoption of new styles, cultural practices and definition their projects for the future (Dayrell, 2007; Weiss, 2015; Reis, 2019).

Socialization plays, consequently, a central dimension in the formation of the identity of juveniles, and in entering groups of peers, in school, in leisure or work spaces, it is fundamental for building it, as argued by Geraldo Leão, Juarez Dayrell and Juliana Reis (2011), in a research that heard juveniles from the State of Pará (Brazil) for learning about the relations they established between their public High Schools and their projects for the future. Socialization, in youth, is responsible, consequently for cooperating in building the identity and the way of being of these individuals.

Families and schools are educational and socializing instances fundamental for this process of constitution of individuals, of the formation of their subjectivities and of production of their moral and identify values (Simkin; Becerra, 2013). The process of socialization of juveniles, resulting from cultural, political, historic and social interactions, is influenced in these two instances, as indicated by Rosa Coutrim, Rosana Carvalho and João Paulo Almeida (2012), in an analysis about the socio-historic construction of the relations between families and schools.

When reaching their teenage years, often the circle of friendship expands more, and families tend to cease to occupy the core reference role in the lives of these individuals. In the case of those who study, their schools are environments of socialization and learning in which a great part of these relations occur and spaces whose affectivity, sociability and learning are marked by conflicts, rearrangements and diverse forms of power exertion (Lahire, 1997, 2007; Charlot, 2002; Reis, 2019).

In schools, socialization processes may characterize possibilities for individualization, where students pass to interface with others, not those in their school structure, and to experiment new influences and, potentially, transforming their ways of being and acting (Sposito; Tarábola, 2017). In a reflection that sought to articulate school experiences with the processes experienced by juveniles in other situations, Juarez Dayrell (2012) highlighted that these individuals frequent different institutions and groups, where they choose their own fights and fields of force, which are the result of multiple socialization processes.

Out of the schools, the juveniles have occupied different cultural and social spaces, whose options change according to their tastes and possibilities. The juveniles transit frequently between groups, through environments in which their identities tend to combine with that of other juveniles. In this phase of life, the



group of friends, romantic pairs (or other forms of love and/or sexual engagement) usually represent an opportunity for living outside the tutelage of older people. These relations tend to be characterized by a volatility, with more or less recurrent matches and mismatches (Weiss, 2012, 2015; Perondi, 2021).

Many of our social skills are developed based on our interactions with others and socialization processes that contribute to our formation as individuals are influenced by the constant transformations society undergoes. The juveniles, as plural actors, live socializing experiences in each social scope, in their families, at school, at work, in cultural spaces, amongst others, which grants them dispositions, reflexiveness and different logics of action (Lahire, 2002). In this sense, the hearing and analysis of the processes of socialization of the juveniles whose trajectories were cut through the destruction of their communities by war, crimes, conflicts or disasters, as is the case of the juveniles impacted by Fundão Dam in Mariana-MG, which is the focus of the research that resulted in this article.

#### **4 EXCERPTS OF A SIRENE NEWSPAPER**

After analyzing how the socialization of individuals is impacted by the relations they establish in society, especially with their families and schools, we bring to discussion some perceptions of juveniles from two sub-districts of Mariana-MG destroyed by the collapse of the Fundão Dam interviewed by *A Sirene* newspaper for trying to know what they think, feel and how they passed to behave in light of the changes that impacted in such a deep manner their way of being and existing.

For setting the context, it is necessary informing that until 2015, residents of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo lived a routine frequently limited to their region of origin, with countryside and rural characteristics. After the disaster, they passed to experience a process of provisional living conditions, since they were installed at the center of the municipality of Mariana-MG waiting for decisions and outcomes of lawsuits relative to their compensation/reparation claims (Minas Gerais, 2018). This situation seems to have altered their ways of live substantially, since they passed to live in a more populated location, with approximately 60 thousand residents, with a predominantly urban setting (IBGE, 2025).

This is a reality dramatically imposed on these communities, since, in addition to losing their physical and intangible property, their livelihood and their territories, they passed to live in a routine that has been involving red tape,

meetings, and decision-making processes that are not always favorable to them. That is so because social crises caused by disasters originated in great enterprises end up accentuating other difficulties previously experimented and promote a process of exclusion of the impacted population, who lose their homeplace, their income sources, become impoverished and start dealing with the fracture of their social bonds, in a situation of fragility and exposure to risks (Zhourri *et al.*, 2016; Valencio, 2019).

Still in November 2015, both school institutions of the sub-districts, that offer Kindergarten and Elementary School passed to operate in the building of a municipal school located in the outskirts of the center of Mariana-MG which was provisionally loaned by City Hall for students to be able to complete their school year. From 2015 to 2018, these students and the team of professionals of the schools underwent several change processes, in a routine different of the one they knew, and had to handle situations, trauma and the problems resulting of the disaster. In the school they passed to attend, they shared, at once, a space that did not belong to them and over which they had no autonomy. In 2016, the Paracatu de Baixo school was transferred to the facilities of decommissioned school, located in another borough in the outskirts of the city. Since that building had structural damage, in 2018, the institution once again moved to another address, that time, to a building located in midtown, built to receive a supermarket, and which was adapted by Fundação Renova, created by Samarco Mineração S.A. for trying to repair the damage caused by the collapse of Fundão Dam. In 2017, the Bento Rodrigues school passed to occupy a rental house, adapted by the same foundation, but which still did not offer, as reported by the principal, adequate conditions for all school activities (Costa, 2019).

In addition to matters pertaining to the loss of the physical structure of the original schools and the provisional situation of the years following the disaster, we identified several important variations in the number of students failed and school drop-outs among students of the two impacted schools, according to QEDU data (2023a, 2023b), based on the school census. In the case of Paracatu de Baixo, for example, the impacts of deterritorialization were quite visible in 2016, with failed student rate all across Elementary School, in excess of 20% of enrolled students.

A few years after their communities were destroyed, many of these students finished Elementary School. Those who decided to continue with their

basic education passed to attend High School in different schools of the city of Mariana-MG, close to their current residences. For these juveniles, enrolling in High School represents gains, such as the possibility of living their juvenile condition in the school space (Sposito, 2008). With the obtention of a diploma, their opportunities for entering the work market, professional success and chances to access College Education increase (Senkevics; Carvalho, 2020; Lebourg; Coutrim; Silva, 2021). However, there are also losses: in the new schools, many are backing away from their classmates and friends of the sub-districts, which represents a rupture in their sociability bonds that may negatively impact their building as individuals (Oliveira, 2021; Lebourg, 2024).

There are many stories of people and communities impacted by the collapse of the Fundão Dam to be told. The articles published by *A Sirene* newspaper, built based on reports of these individuals, have contributed to that effect. In this article, we analyzed three stories. In “*O que ninguém te perguntou?*”, the objective was reflecting how hard it has been for these juveniles to be heard in the reparation processes. In the interviews, these individuals, ages between 12 and 18, residents of Bento Rodrigues, told where they were and what they thought at the time the waste mud reached the sub-district. They also told how they felt relative to the impacts caused by the loss of territory in their lives.

Traditionally, the newspaper reserves part of sections in the editions of October for celebrating Children’s Day. For that reason, edition 42, of October 2019, focuses more on children, teenagers and juveniles. In “*Nossa brincadeira é coisa séria*”, interviewees, ranging between 13 and 16 years of age, residents of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo, talked about their favorite games and how that playing was, in many cases, interrupted after they passed to live on a provisional context. Talking on the sidewalk, a habit in both sub-districts, also became unlikely after the impacted communities were moved to the center of the municipality. That was approached in “*As conversas de calçada*”, which heard a group of friends between ages 13 and 14, who lived in Bento Rodrigues.

In the three articles analyzed, the ages of interviewees range between 12 and 18 years. Even older kids say that playing with their classmates and friends was part of their routines. Certainly, children, juveniles of both sub-districts had fun in their homes, but, according to the interviews, playing seemed to mean the possibility of contact with the streets and backyards, even in the evenings,

because they felt safe in their communities. Many told their favorite games were dodge ball, truth or challenge, hide and seek, soccer, volleyball, “panelinha”, “belisca” and chase.

Concerning their friendships, two inhabitants of Bento Rodrigues, aged 13 and 14, remember where they met to chat and what they used to do for fun:

*[...] each day it was at a different spot. Sometimes at the door of her home, or at the door of my home, or at the door of that Mister over there. We would walk around Bento, Cascalho over there... We would talk about a lot of different things. We planned ‘stealing’ fruit, how we would surround and trap chicken [...]* (A Sirene, October 2019, p. 10).

The reports about these games highlight the fact that, upon the destruction of these communities, these situations ceased to happen, in many cases, permanently. An inhabitant of Bento Rodrigues, aged 14, said:

*[...] the games I liked the most were soccer, dodge ball and hide and seek in the evening. I don’t play anymore, because here [in downtown Mariana-MG] there is no room. Even if there was, I’d still not have friends, because they are far away* (A Sirene, October 2019, p. 7).

In the same article, an inhabitant of Paracatu de Baixo, aged 16, said:

*[...] today, I don’t play anymore, because the friendships we had grew apart, were split by distance, there no way we can play. That’s bad, because we don’t have who to play with. Who are we going to play with? With people we don’t know? I miss playing* (A Sirene, October 2019, p. 7).

Still in that regard, an inhabitant of Paracatu de Baixo, aged 15, said:

*[...] today, I don’t play at all. I grew up and everything is now boring. I miss playing catch. I don’t play anymore, there is no room, there are no people to play with. I’d like to go back in time and play those games again. But I think that’s not possible, because we lost touch. I’ll teach the games I used to play to my children, so they will know how my childhood, my culture was [...]* (A Sirene, October 2019, p. 6).

As we can see in the reports, a frequent complaint talks about the loss of freedom and of the possibilities for playing games. If before, they had fun in the streets and in the sub-districts and could transit around fearlessly, now, at the siege of the town, they’ve gone under a process of isolation decurrent from a combination of various factors: the dispersion of the community through different neighborhoods, the traumatic transition to the new space, an attempt of

preserving themselves before so much public exposure, and the lack of solidarity and welcoming by a part of the siege community (Santos, 2018; Ortiz López, 2020; Oliveira, 2021).

Besides the difficulty in keeping friendships close, an inhabitant of Bento Rodrigues, aged 17, spoke about the lack of safety she started to experience ever since she had to leave the community where she lived and about the impossibility of talking to her friends on the sidewalk as they used to do on the sub-district: “[...] *now, we don’t see each other anymore, there’s no way. And you can’t go and talk on the sidewalks of Mariana, because it isn’t safe. It’s too risky staying there on the street late, talking*” (A Sirene, October 2019, p. 10).

Even though they can bring up trivial subjects the conversations between the juveniles work as means for reflection, for knowing other opinions, for practicing trust amongst themselves. With their groups of pairs, generally, they talk about different subjects than those shared with their families, which tends to strengthen their connection (Weiss, 2015). With the destruction of their territories, the youth of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo have lost the opportunity to be in frequent contact with one another and to experiment the effects of these relations on their lives.

And the fear of living in this new, larger, more violent space and with people they don’t know, was shared by an inhabitant of Bento Rodrigues, aged 13. In his interview he mentioned how much he missed the routine of his sub-district, that seemed safer to him:

[...] *one of the things I miss the most is being able to ride my bike in Bento. I never forget the day I got it as a Christmas present. That day I was late at night on the street riding the bike. There we played all day long, we don’t get to do that here* (A Sirene, March 2017, p. 6).

In the same article, an inhabitant of Bento Rodrigues, aged 12, expressed her sorrow: “*we are all impacted, but nobody notices*” (A Sirene, March 2017, p. 7), referring to the fact that she noticed that her and her friends were not being listened to in the lawsuits seeking reparations to the impacted communities.

Another difficulty faced by the impacted community, and which also impacts the younger population, is prejudice, common consequence in other disaster-stricken communities (Valencio, 2009; Valencio; Valencio, 2018; Zhouri *et al.*, 2016). That has happened because part of the residents of Mariana-MG passed

to blame them for the partial interruption of mining activities in the region, which resulted in financial loss to the city and the loss of jobs. An inhabitant of Bento Rodrigues, aged 18, told that: “[...] *things nowadays are not bad, but it’s very hard because of the other people, the prejudice we suffer. They blame us all the time*” (A Sirene, March 2017, p. 6). Another inhabitant of the same sub-district, aged 16, said:

*I was at school when the dam broke. I thought it was water and that when it stopped, everything would go back to normal. Such an illusion! To me, the most difficult thing is adapting. Is tough enough, not to mention everyone judges me. It’s a lot of prejudice everywhere. It pains me to think our history will ever be recovered and that what we lived there will always be in our hearts* (A Sirene, March 2017, p. 7).

To that respect, Erwin Goffman (1981) signaled that, when an individual is stigmatized, the development of their social relations may be strongly affected, once they start being faced as an inferior, reduced person, and not anymore as a common being. The researcher also talked about how stigmatized individuals aren’t plainly socially accepted. They’d be perceived as morally inferior and disqualified regarding the social conventions and would pass on to be undesired by the others. In the case of the communities impacted by the disaster, this process of stigmatization started happening immediately after the breaking of Fundão Dam. Since stigmatized individuals are not socially accepted, this process may have further affected the development of their social relationships and the strengthening of their self-esteem (Croizet; Martinot, 2003). The consequences of this problem are still not entirely known, but it’s possible to anticipate that it may result in more suffering to the impacted individuals, which includes the youth.

Through their stories, we can understand that friendships and the conflicts they experienced are an important part of the socialization processes of these juveniles and which, possibly, will forever mark their formation as individuals (Lahire, 1997; Dayrell, 2012; Reis, 2019). In the case of those interviewed by A Sirene newspaper, we can identify, moreover, the pain and the trauma they suffer. In addition to adapting to the new routine, downtown, being far from their classmates and friends, the way of living in a larger urban setting and the prejudice they suffer are potential hindrances to the development of sociability bonds that will bring them confidence and help in strengthening their self-esteem.

The scientific studies have investigated scarcely the form with which the infantile-juvenile public deals with disaster situations. Besides, the publications on the theme do not focus or deepen into collective and social aspects related to the mental health of children, and even less so, of juveniles that have experienced these contexts. For that reason, we have retaken the study of Marcela Santos (2018) to explain the traumas, the hostilities suffered on the process of reterritorialization, the feeling of isolation and the fear of making new friendships were factors that generated depressive symptoms, panic, anxiety, aggressiveness and insomnia on the impacted teens and juveniles. Besides that, some of them started abusing alcohol and other drugs, while the cases of scholar evasion and early pregnancy have also increased.

We know that, especially in families and groups of friends, socialization can mean the possibility of reducing some of the negative consequences imposed by limitations in the social reality of many young individuals. For forming their ways of being, it is necessary for them to interact with the world around them, based on family and social influences and each individual builds, in their own way, their way of living reality, of handling their expectations and problems (Leão; Dayrell; Reis, 2011). In the case of the juveniles from Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo, in addition to other complexities deemed “expected” in these processes, there seems to be other factors that making these living experiences even more complicated.

## **5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In this article, we sought to analyze how the socialization processes of juveniles of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo were affected by the impacts of the collapse of the Fundão Dam. To do that, we examined three articles with interviews published by *A Sirene* newspaper in 2017 and 2019. In the selected stories, interviewees spoke about losing the safe and unconcerned routine they had in their communities before the disaster. Because they were always together, went to the same schools, played in the same spaces. Downtown, since they went living in homes located in different boroughs, they started to meet less often, mostly in schools, during school hours. They also mentioned the difficulty they were facing after moving to the urban portion of the municipality, the fear of violence and the prejudice they face.

These young individuals – but not only them – live with multiple ruptures imposed to them, and with a possibility of facing others, such as relocation and the conclusion of their reparation proceedings. And they did not choose this fate or destination and, certainly, an event of the proportions of the collapse of the Fundão Dam causes behavioral changes and trauma in many of the victims, which are escalated by successive embarrassing situations and humiliation faced ever since.

In this sense, understanding how this experience has been lived by the young of Bento Rodrigues and Paracatu de Baixo enrolled in High School may contribute to produce scientific knowledge that begins to be built on this context. Analyzing socialization processes can also help to understand their probable behavioral changes and to identify how the dynamics of their current social relations has been affecting their sociability bonds, their school trajectory and their prospects for the future.

At the same time, this reflection should be within a broader debate, concerning socialization processes of juveniles in relocation situation, such as those in groups of nomads, refugees, disaster-impacted communities, war-ridden places, or even those impacted, by design by dams, individuals still not subject to a great deal of Education research in Brazil and abroad.

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