

Teaching work and dismantling in Brazilian Higher Education: Old and New Discourses in the Context of Precarization

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of Brazilian teaching work and its different expressions in the face of the neoliberal drive of the last three decades. The aim is to understand how market dynamics consolidate a new materiality through the consequences of neoliberalism on/for teaching work. The analysis is based on a Marxist perspective, through bibliographical research that takes old and new debates as a premise for thinking about the precariousness of teaching work, using the categories: financialization and the commodification of education. We have highlighted the specificities of the precariousness of teaching work in Brazil, a country with dependent and late capitalism. As considerations, we reiterate the position of the state as an inducer of policies that favors the private mercantile sectors and which, by implementing legal and operational frameworks, benefits these sectors, corroborating in an intense way the consolidation of the precariousness of teaching work. Flexibility, intensification of working hours with no increase

in remuneration, multi-skilling, exacerbated demands for efficiency and results have become the new rules of neoliberal rationality. On the other hand, the struggles in defense of the public nature of the teaching profession are central to this context.

Keywords: *Precarization, Teaching Work, Brazilian high education*

Introduction

In the bigger picture, we can say that the world has been undergoing a reorganization and/or restructuring of its broader economic-political-social processes to accommodate more directive and profound neoliberal processes. In this logic, we understand that the neoliberal processes became hegemonic between the end of the 1980s and more deeply from 1990 onwards, in the countries of dependent capitalism, where Brazil is inserted. It constitutes a fundamental transformation not only in political issues or economic problems, but mainly they corroborate the construction of an ideological and social dynamic unprecedented in history.

According to Leher (2003), neoliberalism is characterized by the liberalization of markets in dependent (underdeveloped) capitalist countries, the flexibilization of social rights and the fulfillment of promises made only to the most entrenched interests of capital, whether in the domain of financial capital or in some of its industrial or quasi-monopolistic sectors (Mészáros, 2003 apud Leher, 2003), moving like a gigantic wave that devastates cities, countries and vast regions of the globe.

In Brazil, the deepening of the neoliberal ideology has been taking shape in the

bowels of Brazilian society, especially since the mid-1990s, through legal and legislative institutions that reconfigured not only the Brazilian institutional bases, but also the very dynamics of social functioning. According to Peroni (2003), an unprecedented administrative reform was carried out in the Brazilian state, aimed at reconfiguring public social policies and redirecting them towards the logic of the market. According to Oliveira (2003), educational policies were remodeled to meet the logic of minimalist training of the workforce.

The advance of neoliberal policies in Brazil has influenced successive reforms in the field of education. Throughout the first decades of the 21st century, the level of densification and liberalization reached what Behring (2021) calls the ultraneoliberal phase, with the post-2016 governments as the time frame. Mainly from the legal-parliamentary coup of 2016, Brazil has been suffering numerous attacks on democracy, science and public service in general, promoting a setback in social debates and a movement of precariousness and dismantling of public services (Leher, 2022).

The neoliberal project that has been assuming an ultraneoliberal stance in recent years transforms public goods and services into market objects, creating regulations that weaken public power and overvalue private sectors (Behring, 2021). Thus, policies aimed at deepening neo or ultraneoliberal processes need to transform the conditions of existence beyond the political and economic, also reaching the deeper ideological aspects to promote an adaptation to these processes in social reality in all its spheres.

Dardot and Laval (2016) corroborate this analysis by stating the need to

produce subjects and subjectivities suited to the market context, based on characteristics such as productive, efficient, adaptable, flexible and enterprising, within an individuality typical of neoliberalism. It is the ideological and symbolic production of individuals immersed in a social formation that meets market parameters, where merit, competition and production are configured as the north to be reached. Still in the analysis of Dardot and Laval (2016), the process of reconversion of society to the neoliberal model requires the dismantling of the old conception of the role of the State for the rise of a new institutional model of functioning.

In this context, institutional controls become essential and among the many institutions that permeate the lives of subjects, we have education as a crucial space for ideological and symbolic constructions and deconstructions capable of embedding the ideas of neoliberal processes in the lives of individuals. In this logic, it is necessary to fight, as enemies, institutions aimed at social welfare and for this reason, education has been attacked, mainly, in the government of former President Jair Bolsonaro, within a conservative radicalism of fundamentalist orientations. Thus, the process of rebuilding society on a neoliberal base requires the 'reform' of educational institutions, as a neoliberal society presupposes a neoliberal education. Neoliberal education is a founding part of a well-designed political and ideological project that promotes the production and reproduction of subjects and values typical of a neoliberal context and with specific characteristics of existence that corroborate the formation of certain subjectivities that feed the system of society market. Utilitarian education (Laval, 2004) is the expression of a direct link between economic utility and training for work in a context of greater exploitation. From these elucubrations we can understand that neoliberal education is in line

with this utilitarian perspective.

In the words of Neves and Pronko (2008, p. 23), the incessant changes in the configuration of work in capitalism are related to the need to constantly increase the productivity of the work process - more specifically of the workforce - and the need for its ethical-political conformation to the incessant changes in capitalist social relations, with a view to their reproduction - and, concomitantly, to the stage of organization of the dominated classes with a view to defending their economic, corporate and ethical-political interests.

In the case of Brazil, in the first decades of the 21st century, education for the market was strengthened, and the progressive conversion of portions of the public fund induced the growth of private initiative, boosting the process of commodification and financialization of the area (Cruz et al, 2024). With the intensification of neoliberal policies in education, and consequently to the process of formation of educational oligopolies, the process of commodification of education has been present. Thus, making the financialization of this sector gain more and more materiality within the processes of transformation of society, causing the teaching career to be transformed and resignified in order to exercise the functions proper to an adaptive agent for the model of society that one wishes to affirm. Pavlidis (2024) analyzes how neoliberalism has deepened the process of proletarianization of teaching work. However, before thinking about the process of teacher precariousness and the processes and periods that made it reach these conditions, it is necessary to understand the place of education in this scenario.

In this sense, based on a larger study on the conjuncture of higher education in Brazil in recent years, this article presents the debate on how teaching work has been assuming different positions in the face of new work configurations in the Brazilian neoliberal context. The objective of the proposed analysis is to present the entrepreneurial and mercantile trends that have been consolidating a new way of thinking about education and the consequences of a neoliberal education in/for teaching work.

From a marxist perspective, we methodologically resorted to bibliographical research that takes as a premise old and new debates to think about the precariousness of teaching work, based on concepts such as commodification and financialization of education. In addition to the conceptual discussion work, we focus on a study that has as empiria the documents approved in recent years, in order to substantiate the proposed analysis and denounce the implementation of business values within public education.

The commodification of education and the financialization process that has been governing its institutions has been shaping it to neoliberal parameters and helping to feed the desires of a society eager for very flexible and adaptable individuals, preferably submissive and docile to the conditions imposed on them.

But what do the commodification and financialization of education mean? Leher (2022) conceptualizes marketization as a contemporary expression of the structural crisis and the corresponding financialization but points out that they are not exactly the same thing. We agree with the statement by Lucena, Magalhães and Dias (2023) that, although they dialog, the two concepts are not

equivalent:

[...] financialization is not equivalent to commodification; making a profit from the surplus value extracted from the labour process in the production and marketing of the commodity is not necessarily the main valorization mechanism of financialized capital, and, more importantly, the way of obtaining surplus value is transformed (Lucena; Magalhães; Dias, 2023, s/p).

The commodification of education, roughly speaking is a process that mischaracterizes education as a public good and a right for all, as it is advocated in the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988. Commodification is articulated with the privatization imposed on education, where educational processes are now conceived as commodity, which makes training processes and knowledge production precarious, since education assumes a condition of merchandise, in the perspective of profit, abdicating its role as a social right. According to Dourado (2002), commodification processes aggravate “the horizon of social conquests, by transforming rights into goods, subjugating their usufruct to the user's purchasing power, commodifying struggles in favor of citizenship through the cult of laws from the market” (p.236).

In the analysis by Rodrigues (2011), the process of commodification of education involves two faces: the first, which refers to the expansion of privatization of education, especially higher education, with the expansion of private institutions in the scrapping and sale of education. Problematically placing it as an education-commodity, and the second, which is related to the submission of education to the needs and demands of the market, forming qualified individuals for capital and for the interests of the market.

With regard to financialization, this deals with a process by which the

economic and social spheres are subordinated to the financial sphere, as it values capital through financial processes and not by adding value given by the work of producing goods and services. To think about the process of financialization of education is to think about how the expansion of educational conglomerates occurs, understanding how the acquisition and expansion movements of large educational corporations under the control of investment funds take place; it is thinking about how education fits into a financial context. In the analysis by Lucena, Magalhães and Dias (2023, s/p),

[...] for there to be financialization, there must first be the process of commodification, that is, the production of goods and services and their transformation into circulating commodities that can enter the commercialization process - even if, in practice, , such commercialization does not occur (as, for example, in public education). (Idem, 2023, s/p).

Still in the authors' analysis, financialization deepens the process of transformation of teaching work initiated by the commodification of education, because in addition to the precariousness and intensification of work, these processes influence the form of configuration between teaching work and education management, also increasing the standardization of this worker and distancing him from a movement of autonomy of professorship, limiting his role in a context of teaching and learning.

The precarisation of teaching work

In Brazil, the process of precariousness of teaching work has intensified in recent years due to the reorganization of the set of educational policies, which has taken on a mercantile bias. In this sense, an analysis of the old and new discourses of the precariousness of teaching work is necessary, which consider:

[...] the dialectic materialist critique of the capitalist mode of production is, in addition to current, necessary, since the category of totality remains central to the understanding of society and that the form assumed by social public policy, as well as the deconstitution of social rights are configured as one of the conditions for replacing the assumptions of the capitalist mode of production (Sousa, 2014, p. 5).

Bearing in mind the need to analyze the precariousness of teaching work from the axes of productive restructuring, the intensification of ultraneoliberal policies in the field of education, which trigger the destitution of social rights in various parts of the globe. Moreover, causing significant changes in the field of teaching work, especially in countries on the periphery of the capital, as is the case of Brazil, we begin our reflection with Sousa's epigraph. Therefore,

From the point of view of work in general, the concepts of productivity, efficacy and efficiency, when incorporated into material production, imprinted it with new characteristics, from the so-called productive restructuring, which can be mentioned, among other things: the deregulation of work with a reduction in stable workers and formal jobs; increase in precarious female work; the exclusion of young people and older workers; expansion of the third sector; the transnationalization of capital and labor (Antunes; Alves, 2004 apud Macedo; Lima, 2017, p. 225-226).

This process was only possible because of the replacement of rigid accumulation by flexible accumulation, which is based on microelectronics, a branch that promoted a revolution in communications, that is in the scope of production. In this model, supply is based on demand with orders defining production. The automation of factories began to replace human labor, so that many workers lost their jobs; of these, some were rehired as outsourced workers.

In this sense, “the labor market began to be governed by the logic of flexible

arrangements of differentiated skills” (Kuenzer, 2021, p. 237). Within this new capitalist logic, which highlights the existence of unequal and differentiated jobs, it is necessary that we have [...] "learning strategies that are now also flexible, which allows hiring to be defined based on a worker profile with contributions of general education and ability to learn new processes, and not based on qualification”.

This new scenario also applies to education and teaching work. From this perspective, stable contractual relationships are increasingly replaced by contracts and outsourced, temporary, short-term or uberized.

In this sense, we emphasize that new elements that add to the old problems of precariousness of teaching work should be investigated in this process: approval of the new Labor Reform – Law No. 13,467/2017; National Common Curriculum Base – BNCC; BNC-Training; Covid-19 pandemic.

Law nº 13.467/2017, known as the New Labor Reform, introduced a new model of employment contract, which can be applied to teachers, the so-called intermittent contract. In it, “the provision of services, with subordination, is not continuous, occurring with alternating periods of service provision and inactivity.” (Brazil, 2017, s/p). Furthermore,

This reform, by allowing outsourcing even in the public sphere, expands and deepens the phenomenon of precarious work in qualified and professionalized work, assuming a structural character that cuts across all professions, including teaching in basic education, which ranges from kindergarten through the third year of high school. It seeks to problematize how teaching work at this stage of school education has been reformulated through the dissemination of flexible and temporary contracts, standardized assessments of individual performance linked to goals, results and payments differentiated by

productivity (Previtali; Fagiani, 2020, p. 224).

In line with the macroeconomic policy, we had the approval of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), which brings in its conception the concept of socio-emotional skills. In this respect, we have the Instituto Ayrton Senna (IAS), one of the main exponents of this practice which in partnership with other third sector foundations, has played a fundamental role in guiding educational policy in recent years. This has occurred mainly in view of the blackout that occurred in the Ministry of Education in the government of former President Jair Bolsonaro.

The Ayrton Senna Institute is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1994 by the sister of the Formula 1 driver of the same name who died that year. The institution offers training for public managers and educators in the country, in addition to creating components for educational policies. The central debate of the IAS involves the hybrid and volitional socio-emotional dimensions, as well as the skills necessary for teachers to act in the 21st century (IAS website, s/p, July 9, 2023).

Nationally, IAS operates in more than half of the municipalities offering training, guidance and monitoring of curriculum reforms. In studies on the entrepreneurship of education in Brazil, the IAS is analyzed as a representation of national class fractions linked to entrepreneurship. Therefore, we start from the analysis of this Private Apparatus of Hegemony (in the sense used by Antônio Gramsci, 2007) that conforms the mercantile ethos to human formation, under a utilitarian logic, whose simplification of knowledge happens through the behavioral emphasis, of social appeasement.

About the BNCC, the justification for its implementation is that the device intends to “ensure students the development of ten general competences, which embody, in the pedagogical scope, the rights of learning and development” (BNCC, 2017 p. 8 - emphasis in the document). The concept of competence is defined as:

[...] the mobilization of knowledge (concepts and procedures), skills (practical, cognitive and socio-emotional), attitudes and values to solve complex demands of everyday life, the full exercise of citizenship and the world of work” (BNCC, 2017 p. 8).

However, we agree with Laval (2004, p. 55) who defines competence as being “[...] that for which the individual is useful in the productive organization”. This logic will imply in the disqualification of the diplomas, while the evaluations start to verify the competences of the evaluated individual.

According to Saviani (2011),

[...] the school's customer is the company or society, students are products that educational establishments supply to their customers. In order for this product to be of high quality, the “total quality method” is used, which, with a view to customer satisfaction, engages all participants in the process and their forms of organization in the task (p.440).

The reorientation of educational policy demands that public schools implement a curriculum centered on the pedagogy of competences/skills as a strategy for training workers able to compete in the globalized and peripheral world. This movement triggers the proletarianization of teacher activities, as well simultaneously the redefinition of relations between work/education and theory/practice. Thus, new responsibilities and assignments are required of

teachers, while this teaching professional is reduced to a mere tutor and mediator. Therefore,

At the BNCC, the teacher is not represented as responsible for decisions about what, when and how to teach, as the pedagogical relationship is not observed as an attribute of the teaching and learning subjects, but objectified in the contents to be distributed : the teacher contextualizes ; does not produce, but identifies strategies to present, represent, exemplify, connect and make meaningful. Thus, it does not participate in curricular decisions and has an instrumental role in school activities (Galian; Pietri; Sasseron, 2021, p. 7).

In line with this, Resolution CNE / CP No. 2, of December 20, 2019, was approved, which defined the National Curricular Guidelines for the Initial Training of Teachers for Basic Education, and established the Common National Base for the Initial Training of Basic Education Teachers (BNC-Formação), reducing teacher training to:

i) standardize educational policies and actions, in this case, the initial and continuing training of teachers to the National Common Curricular Base; ii) contemporary social demands, essential learning and the right to learn; iii) professional skills based on the UN's 2030 Agenda; iv) international experiences (Sena, Lima & Uchoa, 2020, p. 102).

Given the above, we understand that in the current scenario in which Brazilian society and the globalized world find themselves, teacher training is restricted to training teachers to teach the BNCC. The teacher's career is transformed and resignified, that is the professional begins to exercise the functions of tutor and applicator of materials that arrive ready-made.

Barreto (2004) states that the designation of a teacher as “facilitator”, “animator”,

“tutor” and “monitor” would represent “a synthesis image of the precariousness of work” (p. 1,186), that is, a softened devaluation of the teaching function and the work of teaching. In this sense, we agree with Cruz and Almeida (2022) who state that the instrumentalization of the BNCC and the BNC-Formação promotes a true “erasure of teachers' autonomy and their professional training within schools”.

Another important element for our analysis is the use of virtual platforms. With the Covid-19 pandemic and the social isolation caused by the context, there was an acceleration in the use of technologies. In this context, education secretariats bet on the use of TICs as a strategy to 'soften' the effects of the pandemic on education. In this scenario, the professors' work routine had been substantially altered, since the professor was transformed into an operator of executive and corporate platforms for the private sector.

This phenomenon could also be observed in the growth of courses and activities in the Distance Learning Modality (EaD), both in basic education and in public higher education. In this sense, neoliberalism saw an opportunity in the tragedy of the Covid 19 pandemic, since “capitalism always takes advantage of the crises it creates to concentrate more income, generate more inequality and eliminate jobs”. (COSTA, 2021, p. 340).

Given the above and in conjunction with the platforming process , we understand that the use of platforms as new ways of obtaining employability is a fundamental part in understanding the contemporary dilemmas of the world of work, since it does not only affect education professionals, but a significant range of workers who are increasingly subjected to precarious working conditions (Antunes, 2018; Fontes, 2017), as a result of rising unemployment and the seductive discourse of

entrepreneurship. Thus, old and new discourses are incorporated into the precarious process of teaching work.

Legal transformations in Brazilian higher education: a necessary periodization

The 1990s were axial in marking a series of counter-reforms implemented by the Brazilian State, in line with the neoliberal guidelines coming from the Private Apparatuses of Hegemony of capital - APH's (Gramsci, 1984), that is, international organizations (World Bank, FMI, UNESCO, OCDE).

In this context, the government of the then President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) was responsible for putting into practice the main structural counter-reforms of the Brazilian State Apparatus with a view to inserting Brazil in the new competitive stage of globalized capitalism. In this scenario, Brazilian higher education experienced a new stage of flexibility and deregulation that generated numerous impacts, such as: the increase in enrollments in private HEIs, the significant growth of these HEIs, the incorporation of distance education into the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN 9394/96) and also reflected on the need for changes in universities, which should assume a new role in the production process, based on the re-functionalization of scientific knowledge under the logic of capital.

The reformulations in Higher Education continued and intensified during the government of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, due to a “wider process of reordering the capitalist State, considered as one of the main strategies of the international bourgeoisie to face the structural crisis of capital” (Lima et al, s/a, p. 9). In this sense, a series of initiatives are underway, such as: the University for All Program/PROUNI (Law No. 11,096/05); the National Higher Education Assessment System/SINAES

(Law No. 10,861/04); Decree No. 5,205/04, which regulates partnerships between federal universities and support foundations, making it possible, based on the proposal for a Draft Law on Higher Education, to raise private funds to finance public education activities.

Dourado (2002, p.244) explains that the legislation implemented “made the structure of higher education more flexible in the country, breaking with the guarantee of inseparability between teaching, research and extension as a basic parameter for higher education”. Furthermore, we agree with the reflections of Chaves (2010, p.490), pointing out that LDBEN 9394/96 enabled the creation of institutions such as for-profit companies.

Therefore: the liberalization and deregulation of this sector, with the relaxation of the rules for opening courses and new institutions, tax exemptions, scholarships for needy students, through the Educational Credit program, today transformed into the Financing Fund to Higher Education Students (FIES), financial loans at low interest rates from official banking institutions, such as the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES), the University for All Program (PROUNI), among other forms of stimulus, which contributed decisively for the materiality of a tertiary higher education (Barreto and Leher, 2008). The process of commodification of higher education induced and fed back the financialization of this educational modality.

The financialization process in the country was boosted from 2007 onwards, when we observed the growth of acquisitions, mergers of educational institutions and we began to monitor the conversion of educational groups into corporations (publicly held and privately held). It is in this same cycle that concessions of ownership titles

(shares) of educational institutions on stock exchanges proliferated. With tax breaks and incentives, the public fund has guaranteed the unprecedented growth of these groups in Brazilian Higher Education.

Financialization has been unleashed through the provision of face-to-face and distance courses, the preparation of training materials and educational consultations. In addition, the expansion of commercial private Higher Education has been promoted by state agents, mainly in the scope of the democratization of access with ballast, also, in policies aimed at teacher training that have occurred through courses offered in the distance modality.

The 2018 Higher Education Census (Brazil, 2019), carried out by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), highlights this ongoing process of commodification and financialization, thus the number of students enrolled in distance learning degrees (50.2%) exceeds the number of students enrolled in face-to-face degrees (49.8%).

In view of the above, we understand that the relevance of the issue regarding the privatization of higher education in Brazil and its consequences, including in stricto sensu postgraduate studies, is due to the fact that this debate is intrinsically related to the transformations that took place in the last decades of the 20th century. During the 20th century, with the intensification of ultraneoliberal policies (Behring, 2021) in education, and consequently the process of formation of educational oligopolies.

The resignification of Science and Research under the logic of the market has been gaining ground in institutional environments, transforming them according to the new training demands for complex work linked to the needs of capital-imperialism

(Fontes, 2010), reiterating the logic of heteronomy cultural and dependency (Leher, 2018) through the refunctionalization of knowledge, under the utilitarian bias (Laval, 2004).

In Brazil, especially since the 2016 legal-parliamentary coup, attacks on democracy, science, research and the public service, promote a movement of precariousness and dismantling of public services. The ultraneoliberal project tries to transform public goods and services into market objects, creating regulations that weaken public power and help private enterprises. In this logic, “it appears that the action of the neoliberal current [...] causes changes in the way of managing policies, directing them to the benefit of the market” (Tessaro, Costa e Souza, 2020, p. 8).

In this sense, we analyze that the set of laws approved after -1996 were crucial for inducing the process of financialization of Higher Education in the country, being inseparable from the role of the state agency (legislation, economic induction, deregulation and flexibility) for the materiality of the transformations. In producing a large empirical systematization of the set of laws produced since the 1990s, we identified three phases of the process of commodification/financialization of education.

The first phase is linked to the deregulation and legal flexibility of higher education operated between 1990 and 2004, during the FHC government. The second stage of the financialization process took place during the governments of President Luís Inácio da Silva (Lula) and President Dilma Rousseff, who, by directing generous slices of the public fund to reserve and induce vacancies in private Higher Education Institutions via FIES and PROUNI corroborated for a robust growth in enrollments and the concomitant processes of mergers and acquisitions of these commercial

private HEIs by large publicly traded groups.

The third and current phase identified refers to the moment after the 2016 parliamentary legal coup in which President Dilma Rousseff was illegitimately deposed from her democratically elected office. This phase refers to the governments of presidents Michel Temer, and his subsequent, Jair Messias Bolsonaro. The legislation produced in this period embodies a phase of radical redirection of the public fund with the sedimentation of the subsidiary role of the Brazilian State, which now operates in a complete way for the induction of the commercial private sectors, intensely diluting the boundaries between the public and the private in the set of social policies.

2.1 - First phase

In mapping and identifying legislation approved between 1990 and 2004, we recognize LDBEN 9394/96 as a fundamental milestone, which brought new organizational and operational norms to higher education, corroborating the flexibility of the system in the country. After LDBEN, we found approximately 16 laws that changed the structure of the modality, introducing the semi-presential model, instituting large-scale evaluation models, modifying the laws for charging tuition fees, redesigning educational credit by creating the FIES and providing joint-stock companies with the creation of the Real Estate Securities Commission. Some of these legislations affect higher education directly, others address peripheral points, which also influence the organization of the educational field.

Most legislation operates a fundamental reorganization of higher education in accordance with the model of tertiary education (understood as services), following the recipe of the Declaration of Bologna, which, according to Sobrinho (2007):

Basically, the “Bologna Declaration” is the formal record of an important process that aims to create a solid convergence in European higher education, so that it responds adequately and efficiently to the problems, opportunities and challenges generated by the globalization of the economy. (p. 112)

The transformations initiated in European higher education were disseminated worldwide by international organizations that, in the name of economic globalization, imprinted a new nature on the process of scientific production. In this logic of re-functionalizing scientific knowledge, there is a direct connection between the economic utility of higher education and the training of the workforce from the perspective of capital-imperialism (Fontes, 2010).

Finally, it is imperative to point out that in this first phase, the legislation as a whole set precedents for the expansion of the commercial private sector through a process of liberalization of legal constraints. On the other hand, there were years of disinvestment in public higher education that culminated in a historic strike in federal public higher education in 2001. The attempt to directly privatize the area was a recurring agenda of the FHC government, which, despite not having succeeded in directly, corroborated for the opening of the dilution of the borders between the public and the private through the state agency.

2.2 - Second phase

The second phase of financialization mapped from the legislation produced by the Brazilian State showed a robust number of norms around two programs to induce enrollment in private mercantile universities, PROUNI and FIES - Only in 2014 did Provisional Measure MP 642/14 open an extraordinary credit for FIES in the amount of R\$4.9 billion. This period, which encompasses the 2007-2017 time

frame, had an approximate number of 21 approved legislations with numerous modifications that strongly appeal to the process of expanding enrollments in commercial private higher education, combined with the discourse of democratization of access to the modality.

Concomitantly, we identified mergers and acquisitions in the period induced by a giant growth of private higher education institutions. The increase in enrollments resulted from the State increase (financing by the public fund) and corroborated to the intensification of the processes of purchase and merger between educational companies. According to Seki (2021), between 2008 and 2017, 257 operations of this type took place in Brazilian education at all levels.

The process of financialization of capital in the form of provision of educational services has grown in higher education, especially since 2007, with the entry of large corporations on the stock exchanges (SEKI, 2021). Corporate structures, information devices, communication systems, and all available technology are now geared towards maximizing companies' net results. Behind the hundreds of financial reports, the flesh and blood subjects of teaching activities are hidden teachers and technicians, the real producers of wealth, and students and their families hoping for better future expectations, who are mere abstract components of the data, where there is no concern for human knowledge.

On the other hand, it is possible to identify, in this period, the growth of public higher education with the creation of the Federal Institutes of Education. However, this does not change the national scenario of predominance of private HEIs. According to data from the 2014 Higher Education Census, we had 2,070 private HEIs (including colleges, university centers and universities), while the public

sector had only 298 higher education institutions.

The disfavor of the public modality was also induced by approved laws that followed with the re-functionalization of the role of the State. Among these laws, we find one that deserves to be highlighted, Law nº 11,079, of December 30, 2004, which deals with contracting and bidding rules via public-private partnerships (PPP's). The law liberalized the contracting and outsourcing of strategic areas within public services. In this scenario, the teaching staff and technicians of public HEIs were being replaced by temporary professionals, without rights and without labor benefits.

As we observed, the processes of commodification and financialization of higher education were led by ultraneoliberal action fronts in the public and private sectors concomitantly. While the increment for one followed the line of encouraging growth, for the other it was in the sense of precariousness of the workforce.

2.3 - Third phase

The last phase, 2017-2022, evidenced a moment of radical redirection of the public fund in the set of social policies. Investment in distance learning modality (Decree No. 9057, of May 25, 2017) gained emphasis and not coincidentally converges with the change in the enrollment pattern in private HEIs, which under the management of the funds were redirecting robust portions of on-site enrollments to the EAD modality.

In this sense, there is a change in the pattern of workforce management in these HEIs that has been drastically reducing the teaching staff and leading to platformized work for professionals who were spared from layoffs. Institutions that

have been adjusting to the molds of this process have remade internal relations with a view to reducing costs, reducing the workforce, among other fundamental factors for adapting to the patterns of extraction of surplus value.

The panorama of the financialization of education intensified with the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic, which corroborated a quantitative leap in distance education in higher education, leveraged by the need for social distancing. The process that was already under way gained new dimensions driven by the 'boom' in the platforming of work.

It is worth noting that, in the Bolsonaro government, legislation produced during the pandemic continued to redirect portions of the public fund to social programs for the financial recovery of the poorest population through the humanitarian and economic crisis aggravated by the Covid 19 pandemic. The greatest losses were precisely in the educational field. In the case of Brazil, normally these losses are not recomposed, and it is difficult for them to revert to previous levels.

Laws/amendments were even proposed that would definitively unlink the mandatory constitutional minimum amount to be spent on public education and ensured by the 1988 CF, which would constitute a gigantic setback in the guarantee of the constitutional right to public education.

What is evident in these three phases is precisely a continuity in the advancement of neoliberal/ultraneoliberal policies with direct action by the state agency that has conducted a set of legal reforms with an organic character linked to the demands of financial capital.

Concluding Remarks

The issues that revolve around the commodification and financialization of education, as well as their interconnections with teaching work, are linked to the neoliberal context and are inseparable from “movements, crises and contradictions of capital and its conformations as a capitalist mode of production” (Leher, 2022, p. 79).

Based on Leher's statement (2022), on the interconnections between teaching work and the processes of commodification and financialization of education, it is necessary to point out that not only historical conditions are responsible for neoliberal advances in Brazilian society, but that a large part of the conjuncture current situation is posed by virtue of the role of the Brazilian State in the dismantling of public institutions and incentives for the private sector.

After analyzing the bibliographic surveys and presenting the empirical systematization of the set of laws produced since the 1990s, where three phases of the process of commodification/financialization of education were identified, we affirm the position of the State as an institutional facilitator of public policies that favor private sectors by implementing and approving legal frameworks for entrepreneurship in education, consolidating a precarious working condition for teachers, especially in higher education, where flexibility, intensification, multitasking and the exacerbated demand for efficiency and results have become the new rules.

There is no way to take this statement in a fatalistic way, but it is essential to have a vision of the reality of education in the neoliberal context, as an important institution that has been guaranteeing the production of a conformed and flexible

workforce and the reproduction of its own values capital and a society governed by market ideas. As already pointed out by movements fighting for education, 'Education is not a commodity', or at least it shouldn't be. In this context, the teaching worker cannot submit to the imposition of an ideology that places him as a part of this chaotic scenario that has become Brazilian education.

It is essential that teachers get involved in the struggle to guarantee education as a right that must be promoted by the State, fighting the processes of commercialization/financialization that have been scrapping education, leaving it on the margins of social needs. Only from a critical understanding of Brazilian education, it will be feasible to think about possibilities of a new educational situation, where the teacher again assumes his transforming role in the teaching and learning process, envisioning a scenario of changes.

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Acknowledgment

Carlos Chagas Filho Foundation for Research Support in the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ)

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