

TEACHER RETIREMENT UNDER ATTACK: THE S(S)TATE OF SOCIAL SECURITY REFORMS IN BRAZILIAN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (1998-2019)

APOSENTADORIA DOCENTE EM XEQUE: O E(E)STADO DAS REFORMAS PREVIDENCIÁRIAS NA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR BRASILEIRA (1998-2019)

LA JUBILACIÓN DE MAESTROS EN JAQUE: EL E(E)STADO DE LAS REFORMAS DE LA SEGURIDAD SOCIAL EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR BRASILEÑA (1998-2019)



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ABSTRACT: Exploratory, qualitative, documental, and empirical research, with the contribution of hermeneutics-dialectics and interviews. The problem asks: how does the State's unaccountability logic influence the perception of (un)protection in old age in Higher Education professors who have reached the age and time of contribution to retirement, but continue to work? The objective is to characterize the crisis of the capitalist state, its repercussions on the neoliberal reforms that subverted the protective character of the social security policy and the effects on education, through the adherence of 17 teachers to the Permanence Allowance, in an IFES in the North of Brazil. Results indicate that: the perception of helplessness in old age emerges from losses and eventual misfortunes in retirement; So, the interviewees mitigate such unpleasantness by adopting a modest lifestyle, making financial reserves, or projecting a return to work after retirement. Thus, continuing to work, enjoying a Permanence Allowance, represents the last objective instance of protection by the State.

KEYWORDS: State and neoliberalism. Pension reforms. Teacher retirement.

RESUMO: Pesquisa tipo exploratória, qualitativa, documental e empírica, com aporte da Hermenêutica-dialética e de entrevista. O problema indaga: como a lógica desresponsabilizadora do Estado influencia a percepção de (des)proteção na velhice em docentes da Educação Superior que atingiram idade e tempo de contribuição para aposentadoria, mas continuam trabalhando? O objetivo consiste em caracterizar a crise do Estado capitalista, suas repercussões nas reformas neoliberais que subverteram o caráter protetor da política de seguridade social e os reflexos na educação, por intermédio da adesão de 17 docentes ao Abono de Permanência, numa IFES da Região Norte brasileira. Resultados apontam que: a percepção de desamparo na velhice emerge de perdas e eventuais infortúnios na aposentadoria; então os entrevistados minoram tais dissabores adotando estilo de vida modesto, fazendo reservas financeiras ou projetam retorno ao trabalho, após aposentadoria. Assim, continuar no trabalho, usufruindo de Abono de Permanência, representa a última instância objetiva de proteção do Estado.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Estado e neoliberalismo. Reformas previdenciárias. Aposentadoria docente.

RESUMEN: Investigación exploratoria, cualitativa, documental y empírica, con aporte de la Hermenéutica dialéctica y entrevistas. El problema planteado es: ¿cómo la lógica desresponsabilizadora del Estado influye en la percepción de (des)protección en la vejez de profesores de Educación Superior que han alcanzado la edad y el tiempo de contribución para la jubilación, pero siguen trabajando? El objetivo es caracterizar la crisis del Estado capitalista, sus repercusiones en las reformas neoliberales que han subvertido el carácter protector de la política de seguridad social y sus reflejos en la educación, a través de la adhesión de 17 profesores al Abono de Permanencia, en una Institución Federal de Educación Superior de la Región Norte de Brasil. Los resultados indican que: la percepción de desamparo en la vejez surge de pérdidas y eventualidades en la jubilación; por lo tanto, los entrevistados minimizan estas adversidades adoptando un estilo de vida modesto, haciendo reservas financieras o planeando regresar al trabajo después de la jubilación. Así, seguir trabajando y disfrutar del Abono de Permanencia representa la última instancia objetiva de protección del Estado.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Estado y neoliberalismo. Reformas de las pensiones. Jubilación docente.

Introduction

In the historical relationship between the State and capitalism, Harvey (2005) understands that the former has always remained present, supporting the capitalist mode of production and consumption. In this process, the state transmutations that were necessary occurred due to the dynamics of maturity of capitalism itself. The author supports this based on the expansion of activities that materialized the State's action in defending and guaranteeing the interests of capital and the advent of bourgeois social democracy, which paved the way for the capitalist mode of production, dictating the rites and rhythm of the State's restructuring.

This metamorphosis instigated the “liposuction” of the public sector in areas considered critical, to the detriment of others. This disproportion in aesthetic treatment resulted in the transfiguration of the State's features, which began to manifest a certain identity crisis. Regarding this, Faleiros (2010) argues that the crisis led by the State originates from its own nature, that is, from the responsibility of managing the social pact of citizenship. In this case, the solution, with the aim of increasing its governance power, was to abandon the burden arising from the expectations of well-being that hang over it, in search of the agility necessary for capital and an identity that appears pleasant to “Greeks and Trojans.”

Faleiros (2010) continues, indicating that in an attempt to remove “the social burden” from its shoulders, the State starts to convey that such abandonment is necessary. One of these burdens abandoned along the way was the Brazilian Social Security System, leaving hundreds of workers helpless in the most delicate moments of their lives. According to the author, this dynamic transformed the ideal of solidarity between generations into a territory governed by competitiveness and individualism – a space dominated by pension funds aligned with financial capital.

The transmutable context of social security rules, presented here, is confronted with issues linked to the political-economic sphere that plague the country. This implies, consequently, in the subjective aspects that feed the psychosocial crisis that accompanies the individual in his formal farewell of the world of work.

Costa (2003) argues that one of the most adopted strategies to resolve this crisis is to remain working or return to work after retirement – an attitude that is in line with the market's desire. Such dilemmas that revolve around the topic of retirement take on new contours, as the State has taken on less and less responsibility for funding decent salaries for workers who end their careers in the Public Service. These agents, conversely, are forced to supplement their income, joining the ranks of those abandoned by the State. Hence it is necessary to analyze the

losses and gains arising from this status, since changing the status of active worker to retired can have both positive and negative effects.

It is noteworthy that the choice of retirement as an object of investigation is based on the possibility of immersion in the ineffable territory that demarcates the border between work and non-work. Furthermore, in the case of the retirement of teachers from a Federal Institution of Higher Education (IFES), located in an area condemned to a more-than-peripheral logic of capital, the ongoing research takes on a different position, as it proposes to transition into amid conflicting questions, caused by the fact that it is the Public University that houses the class-that-lives-from-education, both embedded in this royal-labor context, rich in contrasts, flavors and unpleasantness. This specificity (re)creates dialectical relationships that blur the boundaries between losses and gains in the face of retirement; they narrow the limits between health and illness, compared by the working conditions presented to that category; transforms Higher Education in the Amazon, a land of “everyone and no one”.

In the present, the text initially reflects on the conditions that reconfigured the role of the State and disseminated neoliberal ideals to the social security sphere, composing the scenario that frames the peripheral culture of backwardness. Next, we discuss the devaluation to which public higher education teachers are subjected in the face of the “liposuction” measures of neoliberalism in consortium with the unprotective State, which has been imposing an increase in the useful lifespan and a decrease in the income of workers in general.

The reinventions of State of things sponsored by the pseudo-patronages of the “modernization” of Brazilian social rights

In an attempt to elucidate this state of affairs that transfers the obligations of the State to the private sector and the consequences of this on people's lives, one must consider the different conceptions of the **State**, according to authors in the area, with emphasis on those of Norberto Bobbio (1909 -2004). The author presents some definitions, which vary according to the historical period of reference, having as a point of convergence the conception that the State corresponds to a set of institutions that absorb, to a greater or lesser extent, the demands of society. In relation to this institutional apparatus as an instrument in the exercise of power between governments and the governed, the Italian thinker assumes that:

The State, or any other organized society where there is a public sphere, no matter whether total or partial, is characterized by relationships of subordination between rulers and ruled, or rather, between holders of the

power of command and recipients of the duty of obedience, who are relations between unequals; natural society as described by *jusnaturalists*, or market society in the idealization of classical economists, insofar as they are elevated to the model of a private sphere opposed to the public sphere, are characterized by relationships between equals or subordination (BOBBIO, 1987, p. 15, our translation).

In relation to the power that is established between the state and social spheres, Harvey (2005) presents a concept analogous to that of Bobbio (1987), considering that the State, in the development of its activities, has become an instrument of domination, internally feeding a series of contradictions. One of them concerns the power exercised by the ruling class, which, ideologically, manifests itself in a veiled way. To this end, the aforementioned class, in an attempt to appease the conflict, produces the discourse that the State's reason for being lies in promoting the common good. The British thinker also points out that some specific instruments of domination can be transformed, through political action, into instruments for class domination. This is accomplished by introducing concepts such as justice, law, freedom, etc., which are presented as if they had a meaning detached from any interest.

Currently, the idea that the State has established itself as the faithful custodian of the interests of the class that owns the means of production is widespread. In this aspect, the conception of Marx and Engels (2008, p. 10, our translation) stands out that conflict would be the only way to change reality, given that:

Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, baron and serf, member of guilds and apprentice, in short, oppressors and oppressed, were in opposition to each other and involved in an uninterrupted struggle, sometimes disguised, sometimes open, which always ended with the revolutionary transformation of the entire society or with the joint decline of the conflicting classes.

According to Carnoy (1987), the State is configured as an apparatus for the exercise of power, dispensing with the general interest and welcoming that of a specific group – the dominant class. Therefore, the State, according to capitalist logic, assumes the task of mediating the irreconcilable class conflict that it nurtures within it, ensuring to maintain a type of order that reproduces the economic power of that social class. This is done through the governmental sectors, which create a system capable of organizing and concentrating repressive power as a tool to maintain the hegemonic class's control over the means of production and consumption, which thus capillarizes its relations of power and interest to the State and other social institutions.

To reveal the intricacies of the critical perspective, in the capillarization of business logic to strategic sectors of the State, Dardot and Laval (2018) explain how this invasion

subverted the protective character of the State, transforming it into an evaluative and regulatory agent, using its institutional apparatus to reconfigure the dialectical power relations between the Government and the governed. This metamorphosis began with the ideal of a Minimum State that supported the downsizing of the public sector, which once “liposuctioned”, gained momentum to carry out the structural changes that were on the agenda, then turning inwards.

With the necessary adjustments, the metamorphosis finally reaches its conclusion – the State takes the form of a company, moving away from the foundations of modern liberal democracy, reversing the social rights that gave relative citizenship status to individuals in private and contractual *rights* relating to the individual consumer. At this juncture, Dardot and Laval (2018) assert that the State has made its action hybrid in dealing with public entities, since the prerogative of thinking about public affairs, in addition to its political attribution to protect the common good, leaves the sphere of law public, becoming part of the space of private law, relegating popular sovereignty to an increasingly subordinate level.

Thus, business ideas crystallized within organizations. The term Governance, a construct adopted by neoliberalism, was consolidated in public institutions, mixing the State's way of managing with the way companies conduct and/or manage them. The aforementioned ideology, under the auspices of International Organizations, according to Santos and Souza (2022), encourages “good governance” and also serves as a parameter to intervene in “bad governance”, especially that of developing countries. The authors also list the main normative instruments that govern the policy in governance in public administration, including Federal Universities.

Regarding political action, the term governance gradually replaced the word sovereignty. Such a change, which seemed innocuous to the unwary, had a strong impact on the metamorphosis of international, geopolitical and geoeconomic aspects concerning the State. For Damasceno, Vargas and Mendes (2022, p. 3), the pressure that neoliberal ideology has exerted on the Brazilian State since 1990 has resulted in “the transition (or attempted reformulation) from a bureaucratic framework of public administration to a model management, in this same administration”, conclude the authors.

The real intention behind the transformations that consolidated the project that united capital, business and the State, was to open the curtains of the “house” to the visibility of internal creditors and external investors, so that they, when analyzing the arrangement of the house, or better, the quality of public action, clearly visualize the possible risks arising from state action contrary to their interests. This indicates that, in this relationship, the maxim that advises that

“friends, friends, business apart” prevails, in a foreshadowing that friendship, however good it may be, does not erase the sparks of distrust that surround the business world.

The message in both adages is that it is better to “check before you invest”, no matter what the business is or who is on the other side of the counter. This new order ratifies that this rule applies to both negotiations and friendships, regardless of the terms and magnitude of the agreement. In light of this logic, Dardot and Laval (2018) state that Governance and subjectivity shaping strategies, once connected to a market mediated by competition, transfer this *modus operandi* to subjects, forcing them to relate under the same market *conditions*, implemented by capitalism. This scenario, embodied by the dissolution of the real meaning of public services, reflects on the very idea of a political subject. Such an assumption must not forget the very dimension of what politics is. According to the authors, what was previously considered to be of collective interest and common good is lost in the void of individual and immediate consumption.

Hence the neoliberal subject re-emerges with full vigor, a model touted as inspiring, oriented towards personal fulfillment and success. An entity forged with “iron and fire” to withstand the instability of a globalized, competitive and liquefied market, this model reverberated in education. Laval (2018) set out to reveal the face of the new school order stamped in the dominant discourses and in the logic that underlies the sociocultural and political-economic trends that are modifying the school system. The author called this new order school neoliberalism, whose tentacles remain under analysis.

In this sense, it is necessary to reflect on the capillarization of neoliberal ideals to the sphere of social rights and, by extension, to Education, an aspect that finds resonance in Behring (2008). The author exposes the picture of globalized capitalism in its current thirst for reforms, which “under the skin” of the infamous structuring adjustments, were “benevolently” presented as safe conduct to peripheral countries that wanted to disembark on the island of modernity mentioned by Lyotard (1986). Then, it was Brazil’s turn.

Next, Behring (2008) evaluates that Brazil's late entry into "modernization" hastened the implementation of reforms, which potentiated the destructive effects of the measures adopted by the State. This was evidenced in the strong adherence to this new order in the governments of Fernando Afonso Collor de Melo, Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and also in the reconfiguration of the role of the State and social classes that culminated in the advancement of reforms oriented to and by the foreign market.

Peroni, Lima and Kader (2018, p. 17) agree that other Latin Americans were also late or even missed their encounter with the welfare state. In this way, the dictatorships and the developmentalist National State, experienced on this side of the tropics, imposed on us historical characteristics of little democratic culture. According to the authors, we literally need to “democratize democracy”. The problem is that, here, democracy becomes the responsibility of the Third Way, through the participation of the third sector in the execution of tasks under the State's jurisdiction, mainly in the scope of social policies. The aspect under consideration leads to different understandings about the definition of democracy and the role that such a regime plays in a country. An example of this is that democracy now has different weights and measures: while for neoliberalism, democracy hinders the free movement of the market, for the Third Way, democracy must be strengthened, as it guarantees its survival.

In this game of interests, according to Peroni, Lima and Kader (2018), there is a risk that the democratization of public education is something far away. This is because the private ends up influencing or defining the public, not only in the agenda, but in the execution of policies, determining the content and direction of education, with consequences for this area. With the changes in the concept of equality, already mentioned, there is reinforcement of individualized policies, focused on developing skills and capabilities, with a return to the strong Human Capital Theory and meritocracy, in which success and failure are at the risk of those clients, and not subjects, involved, with rights that should materialize in social policies. The latter, in this sense, represent a “burden” to the State and, consequently, to public policies.

In this aspect, reflections on the redefinitions of the role of the State, the limits between public and private, the endless crisis of capital and its inflection on democracy and social rights, have found in Shiroma and Evangelista (2014) conceptual richness and analytical. The authors add that in such redefinitions it is possible to verify a significant change in priorities, strategies and ways of governing education. They also emphasize that in this process great emphasis is placed on management reform and teacher training. Such changes, sponsored by a range of neoliberal actors, are supported by the cunningly constructed argument about the inadequacy of education to the demands of the 21st century.

Apple (2003), when revealing the positions, interests and expectations of the New Right regarding the educational process and the school, states that the strategies of this hegemonic group permeate the discourse of precariousness, always filled with content that has a close connection with people's reality. The plot (re)affirms itself in the mantra of loss: neoliberals sustain their discourse of improvement, based on the idea of loss of market and competitiveness

due to the inadequacy of the educational system to the demands of the economy, blaming parents, teachers and students; the neoconservatives claim loss of its traditions and customs; authoritarian populists complain about the loss Christian values and; Finally, the new middle class joins the chorus of “lamentations”, complaining about the loss of quality of education, placing its expertise at the disposal of capital.

Here, then, is the reflection of the faces of the patrons, entangled in their sordid and rejuvenated plots who, weaving complicities, took a “turn to the right”. Regarding these circumstances, Evangelista (2014) draws the metaphor that it would be as if the reformist actors on the scene insisted on forming a “new type of man” to act in an “old type” world.

From this perspective, it must be considered that it was not by mere chance that Higher Education (HE) teachers had to face the unpleasantness of the political-educational and social security reforms that took shape, coincidentally, from the 1990s onwards, in the assessment of Silva (2018), contributed to the aforementioned professional category emerging as one of the most studied in terms of the relationship between work and the occurrence of physical and mental illnesses.

Regarding this transmutation, Gallo (2006, p. 558, our translation), supported by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), adds that “the theoretical and practical revolutions in Western history present themselves and legitimize themselves most of the time as 'recoveries', rebirths, returns,” a situation analogous to the verses “I see the future repeating the past, [...] a museum of great novelties”, expressions used here in reference to the song *O tempo não para*, written by Cazusa and Arnaldo Brandão, composed in 1988. In this case, we are faced with a haunting scenario, built on the rubble of stillborn social protection. These faithful representatives of capital “rise from the ashes” with an air of newness, enveloped in a mist of endless voracity.

State, (un)protective of the weak and oppressed: who does the aging worker turn to?

Retirement, sometimes, does not mark entry into the idyllic “bed of roses of leisure”. For some, this phase is accompanied by worsening health conditions and bereavement, manifested in concrete losses (deaths) or symbolic losses. Furthermore, the aforementioned statute, created with the purpose of providing coverage in these delicate moments of life, has offered some categories of workers, after numerous reformulations, a very fragile security, giving rise to yet another concern that those applying for retirement convey to their hidden spaces, demarcating the (un)desirable act of “hanging the boot”.

The plot created to dispel the real intentions of the advance of the reformist machine on retirement was supported by changes in the demographic profile of the population, the remodeling of labor relations and production, combined with the growth in unemployment rates and informality (CAVALLIERI, 2009). All influenced by the threat of an imbalance in public accounts, implying a departure from the social protection principle of social security and the opening of space to the private pension market and the exploration of a promising and profitable market niche – retirement supplementation.

The process in question began in the 90s. XX, the time in which neoliberal reforms arrived in Brazil that outlined the phenomenology of the Brazilian crisis (ANTUNES, 2018). This occurred during the administration of the aforementioned Presidents of the Republic Collor (1990-1992), FHC (1995-2002), Lula (2003-2010), as well as in the governments of Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) and Michel Temer (2016-2018) – responsible for gradually institutionalizing the package of measures that relieved public coffers and burdened workers, whether active or retired. It is noteworthy that the periods of greatest adherence to this perverse logic in the area of Social Security occurred during the time of FHC and Dilma, who approved four and six changes, respectively, thus modifying the calculations and organizing the supplementary retirement regime in the Public Service.

The panorama in focus exposed the signs of super-exploitation of work, clarified by the intensification of productivity, deregulation of working conditions, outsourcing, union breakdown, wage flexibility, informality, precariousness of social security and illness of the working class. From the exposure of workers to this precarious scenario emerges what Antunes (2009, p. 142, our translation) called the *new morphology of work* and the *new proletariat*, going back to the scenario in which Brazil underwent significant changes in the representation of the social forces of work during the phase of financialization of capital and techno-scientific advancement – a phase in which “informality, precariousness and unemployment, all structural, increased intensely. This movement [...] did not occur without bringing profound changes to the class struggle in Brazil”. In the restructuring of capital, this category laid bare the features imprinted on work, marking new directions in contemporary Brazil.

It is also mentioned that in this rejection of the mechanisms of citizenship and worker protection, the retirement statute can mean encouragement to those who, faced with this instability, resort to their protection. This makes retirement a strategic solution for those who manage to safeguard some acquired rights – for those who remain active, it has become a reason for caution and concern. França (1999) mentions that some even intend to retire, however they

would not like to completely end their productive trajectory and so carry out another professional activity; others express the desire not to actually work, however, without proper preparation, they have no idea what to do after retirement.

Faced with this impasse, the State saw the chance of extending the productive life span of workers, increasing the minimum age for full retirement, with the adoption of the so-called “three-point rule” – the sum of age and contribution time, which should result in 85 points for women and 95 for men. This rule, introduced by Law 13,183/2015 (BRASIL, 2015), allowed workers to access retirement without the incidence of the social security factor, a calculation that considers the contribution time, age and life expectancy of the population. Only professionals who did not meet the requirements for obtaining special retirement would comply with the transition rule (middle ground between the new and old rules).

With regard to the loss of rights in the Public Service, Higher Education teachers have accumulated many losses, notably following the Amendment Constitutional – EC 20/98 (BRAZIL, 1998), engendered in the wave of neoliberal reforms post-promulgation of the Federal Constitution – CF/1988, which took on part of the task of stripping the State of its “heavy” social garments. The aforementioned Amendment subjected university professors to the calculation of the social security factor, placing the professional category within the dictates of neoliberalism, as it laid the foundations for increasing their contribution time and decreasing their income. This EC also revoked the special retirement earned by the ES teacher, demoting him to the rank of ordinary taxpayer, a measure that broke class equality with his counterpart in Basic Education.

In this process, EC 41/03 (BRAZIL, 2003) constitutes yet another instrument at the service of this ideology, by encouraging adherence to the Permanence Allowance – a statute that suspends the contribution pension monthly of Server – public servants who, having fulfilled you requirements for retirement, choose to remain active. This political maneuver guarantees a qualified and experienced workforce to perform essential services and ensures savings on the payroll, with a positive impact on the adjustment of public accounts.

As a result, federal employees benefiting from this benefit reached a record number of 101 thousand, which saved the Government R\$11.9 billion, according to data from the Ministry of Planning (BRASIL, 2018). Finally, the advent of EC 103/19 (BRAZIL, 2019) brought the Public Service retirement rules closer to those of the private sector, further cementing the inequality in the correlation of forces between capital and workers. In the scenario in which Public Servants prefer to “pay” for their stay in the Public Service while waiting for the best

moment to “hang on their boots or sneakers”, conditions are flourishing for private entities to increasingly plant their “supports of good intentions” at the heart of the public sphere that, it seems, has learned to live with such hosts in its bowels.

In this area of losses, in the social security sphere, theoretical-methodological procedures emerge that support the results of research of a documentary and empirical nature, an exploratory and qualitative approach, carried out with Higher Education teachers, whose purchasing power has been diluting in the period limited to time frame of this study. This is the period that began in 1998, with the edition of EC 20/98 – which includes the extension of the worker's useful life, in addition to the reduction in social security coverage –, lasting until 2019, with EC 103/19, which took away civil servants' rights, bringing public service retirement rules closer to those of the private sector, cementing inequality in the correlation of forces between capital *and* worker.

Regarding the *locus*, it consists of the Federal University of Amapá (UNIFAP), located in the Northern Region of Brazil, created by Decree 98,977/1990. The aforementioned IFES in the 2020-2024 four-year period, according to the Institutional Development Plan (PDI), has 651 permanent teachers (UNIFAP, 2020a). The document analyzed states that these employees have shown, by age group, a significant tendency towards aging, in the period from 2015 to 2019, distributed as follows: 40-49 years old (jumps from 29.2% to 32.2%); 50-59 years old (from 18% to 24.9%); 60-64 years old (rising from 3.3% to 17.8%), reaching the highest rate by age group; 65 years old [...] (changes from 0.4% to 1.5%). The trend observed among UNIFAP teachers, whose average age rose from 45 to 47 years in the aforementioned four-year period, corroborates, as a rule, the projected growth of the Amapá population over 65 years of age which, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), it will increase from 4.11% to 17.87% of the inhabitants (BRASIL/IBGE, 2018) in forty years.

Following consultation on the PDI – four-year periods 2010-2014, 2015-2019 and 2020-2024 (UNIFAP, 2012, 2015, 2020a), no specific policy for retirement was found. This gap affects the life of the Servant: a servant about to retire does not receive any type of guidance during this process. The same applies to those who, faced with imminent retirement, opt for the Permanence Allowance. As for retired Servants, they also do not benefit from any differentiated institutional support.

UNIFAP professors who in 2020 had reached the objective criteria (age and length of contribution) to retire, but continue to work, benefiting from the Permanence Allowance (Integrated Administration System of Human Resources - SIGRH/UNIFAP, 2020b).

With regard to the Method, it was based on the assumptions of Hermeneutics-dialectics, which, in accordance with Minayo and Deslandes (2002), allows the interpretation of the implicit aspects of the textual *corpus*, a characteristic that enabled the insertion of categories, *insights*, theories and discussions undertaken during the work, along with the semi-structured interview script, along the lines of the guidance adopted by Minayo, Deslandes and Gomes (2011). With due care regarding the requirements of CNS Resolution n. 466 (BRASIL, 2012), the research in question was submitted to Plataforma Brasil, obtained approval from the Research Ethics Committee/UNIFAP, according to CEP/UNIFAP Opinion n. 56948922.3.0000.0003.

Below, we see part of the testimonies of research participants about the empirical category **State and (lack of) protection in old age**, whose objective was to investigate the influence of the State's de-responsibility logic on the subjects' perception of (lack of) support in old age:

E11 - Dr. JOICE classifies as “inhumane” the treatment that the State gives to aging workers, after a lifetime of work and social security contributions. She feels affected by such lack of protection, expressing anguish at the possibility of being vulnerable to this (un)protective agent, precisely in the misfortunes of life. This time, he protects himself under the shelter of the Permanence Allowance, while he waits for the best or worst moment to “go out in the rain” and risk the path to retirement: “It becomes *inhumane, because you provided services to society and at the time when His health is weak, the State's public policies do not help. If you don't have a health plan or money to get rid of your illness, you will be at the mercy of luck.*”

Dr. Joice's concern about the effects of losses arising from retirement and the impact of this on misfortunes (illnesses) that may occur in the future is shared with E5 - Dr. VILMA, E13 - Dr. RITA and E14 - Dr. EUNICE. The first, when expressing her opinion about lack of protection in old age, states that “*if they take away this symbolic retirement, I won't feel unprotected [...]. I am a person who works and invests from what I can have. Now I think it's so unfair that you are a professional who gives life to so many people and still faces your last days with a salary that doesn't match [...]. Tomorrow, if I need to make high health expenses and cannot invest in health, that is sad in old age. On the other hand, we also think about our children...*”

E13 - Dr. RITA, from a similar angle, analyzes the effects of the statute (un)protection on old age as follows: “*I think they don't affect it now, but from the moment I retire, it does [...].*”

It is the INSS value that will be deducted again [...]. So, this will be a big disadvantage for anyone who is going to opt for retirement.”.

For Dr. Rita, adhering to retirement exposes the worker to various losses, and economic losses, undeniably, are one of them. Thus, the accumulation of losses brought by time, whether objective or subjective, finds its first outcome in retirement – an unwanted situation that, according to E14 - Dr. EUNICE, requires caution and preparation: “ *as you get older, you need more things – It’s a health plan that increases, medicine to buy, tests to take, etc. [...]. Everything is much more difficult, so this is a concern at retirement time, when you need to be very organized for this.* ”

Interviewee E1 - Esp. BENTO feels the weight of lack of protection throughout his journey: “ *I feel unprotected and that doesn't just start when we retire, no. It is during the entire working period*”. It appears that for those who have become accustomed to living with the perception of (lack of) protection from the State, the tendency is to view this state of affairs as something natural, even knowing that the scenario is heading towards a significant worsening with the advent of retirement. Furthermore, the teacher sees the postponement of his working life as an opportunity to invest in the progression of his career, with subsequent financial gains to compensate for salary losses resulting from retirement. He also stated that even when he is retired he can return to the job market, only in the private sector.

A similar situation was found in the testimony of E3 - Dr. REGIS who, apprehensively, does not rule out the possibility that future governments will reduce the value of retirement, despite their acquired rights: “ *one of the things that suffocates me is exactly retirement [...] a government comes in that reduces our salary*”. In this case, the perception of lack of protection in old age takes on other contours and dimensions, caused by the threat of pension reform that reduces income to a level incompatible with the demands of old age.

In the manner of E16 - Dr. CÉSAR, the solution to remove the feeling of lack of protection in old age from your horizon is to internalize the logic of capital in the following way: “ *and I took care of making my reserves [...]. My life is very simple and what I earn is enough. Oh, I'm not going to retire because it's going to decrease by 30%, 40%? No, this reduction will not change anything*”. Dr. César's argument, from a particular angle, resembles, to a certain extent, that of his colleague Dr. VILMA, when justifying his simple lifestyle, in addition to his financial reserves, as a prophylactic action against the problems related to lack of protection of old age.

After all, the results of the empirical category **State and (lack of) protection in old age** indicate that the context of helplessness, illustrated here, collides from different angles and intensities in the perception of lack of protection in old age, on the part of the interviewees. However, the effect of such logic manifests itself with greater intensity at the end of the teaching career, in the form of fear of lack of protection in old age, aggravated by the separation from the objective protection of work and physical vigor. Hence the postponement of landing in the “idyllic territory” of retirement.

Final remarks

This text, which resulted in a Master's Dissertation in Education, aiming at theoretical approaches to the theme of Teacher Retirement in Higher Education, brings as its motto some reflections on the positions taken by capital and the State in facing their crises. The *modus operandi* adopted by such agents involved blatant interference from private Social Security administrations in the public sphere, resulting in the State's lack of responsibility for guaranteeing a series of social rights, including free, quality public education, as well as providing a retirement that allows its workers to age with dignity.

It is reasonable to believe that the reformist odyssey of retirement in Brazil was driven by narratives about increased longevity, technological development in the health sector and improved quality of life. Sung to the “four winds”, this narrative was imbued in people's memories with the stanza that the scenario now outlined threatened the balance of public accounts (Social Security System) demanding, finally, the (re)formulation of policies that took away rights and forced the worker to remain active longer.

The plot now in focus pointed to the capitalist machine looking for a target: the Public Servant. This agent and the public apparatuses that surround him have been potential victims of market exploitation, at the same time that the corrosion and discredit of democratic apparatuses is sponsored, especially those that defend the rights of individuals who hold the most tense and worn-out side of this string. In effect, it was necessary to bend the State to the demands of the international market, by introducing an institutional hybridism that mixed the way of managing the State with the way of conducting and/or managing companies. The justification for this transmutation lay in the promise of overcoming the much-vaunted “crisis” that was plaguing the way public affairs were managed, especially in peripheral countries.

It is noteworthy that the empirical information obtained through semi-structured interviews with participants points to the prospect of achieving the formulated objective. Throughout the study, we sought to characterize the crisis of the capitalist State, which subverted the protective character of the social security policy, analyzing the effects on the permanence of Higher Education teachers in active employment, through the Permanence Allowance.

Regarding the formulated research problem, the findings indicate that the State's non-responsibility logic regarding the perception of (lack of) protection in old age among Higher Education professors, who could end their career in the chair, but continue working, emerges from projections of losses arising from retirement, as well as misfortunes that may occur in old age. Therefore, objective preparation measures are useful to alleviate such unpleasantness, such as: adopting a modest lifestyle, taking care of financial reserves, counting on “acquired” rights and/or continuing to work. In this scenario, continuity in work, supported by the Permanence Allowance, represents the last objective instance of protection from the State.

Thus, this “precarious and ephemeral roof” that mainly houses such workers, denotes that retirement, as a synonym for old age protection, increasingly succumbs to the logic of individual-capitalist consumption. In the portrait now drawn, it is urgent that social policies meet the desires of the teaching category, which has contributed so much to Education and finds itself on the threshold of its task, full of dilemmas and insecurities that call into question the prospects for a milder and more dignified aging process.

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